

### Support Groups

When indicated, we can provide support groups, in which people can access structured support within an informal, welcoming environment. Groups are facilitated by specialist workers and are a safe arena for people to respectfully share thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Additionally, groups aim to improve confidence and self-esteem, develop coping strategies and create practical solutions. Groups also act as a forum for consultation with clients in relation to our service delivery and to local/national issues concerning sexual violence.

### Mission Statement

The Sexual Violence Aftercare Support Services aim to be Centres of Excellence in the provision and delivery of services to individuals and families who have been affected by sexual violence.

### Equality & Diversity

We are fully committed to equal opportunities throughout all aspects of our work. We strive to create an inclusive and accessible environment that actively promotes an ethos of appreciating difference.

We are committed to challenging myths and stereotypes and aim to work in an anti-discriminatory way at all times.

### Complaints

In the event that you are unhappy with any aspect of our services, please speak to the Centre Manager who will attempt to resolve your difficulties. Should such actions fail to resolve the problem, you have the right to request an independent person to activate the grievance procedure

### Confidentiality

Any information you disclose will remain confidential unless we feel that you, or someone else is at risk of harm. In such a situation, we may be obliged to share this information with appropriate and relevant agencies.

**Our centres are located in all five boroughs of Merseyside.**

**To access the centre most convenient for you please call us on**

**0151-558-1801 for Wirral, Sefton and Liverpool**

**[www.rasamerseyside.org](http://www.rasamerseyside.org)**

**OR**

**0330-363-0063 for Knowsley and St Helens.**

**[www.rapecentre.org.uk](http://www.rapecentre.org.uk)**

**[www.victimcaremerseyside.org](http://www.victimcaremerseyside.org)**



## Sexual Violence Aftercare Support Services





## Rape and Sexual Abuse Aftercare Support Service

We offer support and counselling to people who have been affected by any form of sexual violence. We offer support to men, women and children, regardless of age, socio-economic status, gender, race or religious belief.

### How We Can Help

If you have been affected by sexual violence if you have been affected by sexual violence and would like to talk about it, you can get in touch.

We will listen to you. We will respect you and we will believe you.

We accept self referrals as well as referrals from other agencies. You can contact us by phone, by email or through our websites.

We will then contact you so that we can explain the services we are able to offer and try to answer any question that you may have.

Services include counselling; ISVA support; children and young people's services; support groups; advice and information. You will not have to make an immediate decision about taking up the service.

## After Rape or Sexual Assault

If you have experienced the trauma of rape or sexual assault it is important that you keep yourself as emotionally and physically safe as possible. Although the experience can be overwhelming, there are several issues that will need your consideration, such as:

- **Reporting the incident to the police**
- **Preservation of forensic evidence**
- **Risk of HIV and access to early treatment intervention**
- **Risk of sexually transmitted infections**
- **Risk of pregnancy**

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors are trained to help you to address these issues whilst providing you with emotional support.

### Effects of Sexual Violence

Individuals who have been affected by sexual violence may experience a wide range of short and/or long term emotional and physical effects which can have a negative impact on their lives.

People respond to rape and sexual assault or abuse in many ways - these could include a sense of being numb; feelings of rage or anger; a sense of fear; confusion; guilt; and/or many other emotions. Physical effects may include injuries to the body; pregnancy; sexually transmitted diseases; etc.

Sexual violence can impact upon how individuals see themselves and how they relate to others. Each person has their own way of coping, there is no right or wrong way to react to sexual violence.

## Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)

ISVA's are specially trained to work sensitively in response to the needs of individuals who have experienced sexual violence.

They give practical and emotional support to people who have been raped or sexually assaulted. ISVA's can provide advocacy and support through reporting to the Police and with any subsequent legal proceedings

ISVAs can help with health issues, such as GUM appointments as well as liaising with other social support agencies as required.

### Counselling

We offer a specialist counselling service to people who have been affected by sexual violence, including both recent and non-recent incidents.

### Children and Young People

We offer advocacy, support and counselling to children, young people, and their families. Children of any age can be referred to our service.

Specialist Children & Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors can plan individual pathways of care to meet the needs of children who have experienced sexual abuse or rape.