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**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
PROVINCIAL OFFICE FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS



**ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FROM THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS**

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# **GUIDANCE ON THE PASTORAL CARE FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BOTH PAST AND PRESENT**

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This guidance is for those at all levels of church life who might be involved in or responsible for pastoral ministry and the provision of care, whether within or from the local church, diocese or at national level. This includes those providing ministry and pastoral care in schools, hospitals, prisons and further education. Some of those who read these guidelines will be adult survivors of sexual abuse or know someone who is a survivor. Others may have little or no previous understanding of the issues relating to sexual abuse. People's experiences of abuse, the impact it makes and the responses to this vary and this guidance will not provide all of the answers but it might assist in the process of understanding and supporting those who have experienced abuse. It is through an increased awareness of the issues for survivors of abuse that we will move towards our churches being safer and more inclusive places.

*The Scottish Episcopal Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults, and the establishing of safe and caring communities.*



The use of the word 'survivor' rather than 'victim' throughout this document is deliberate to acknowledge the strength and courage required of the women and men who survive sexual, physical, and emotional violence. Survival is understood as a physical, emotional, and psychological process; just as everyone experiences sexual violence in different forms, so every survivor's experience with its effects will differ. It is recognised that the healing process is difficult and highly individual and accepted that there is no right way to heal and anyone finding themselves in the position of having to deal with disclosures of this nature should consider themselves as facilitators and helpers rather than experts. Speaking truthfully about sexual violence can be an important part of the healing process, both for the individual survivor and for the larger community of survivors. Healing is possible and the victims of sexual violence can heal themselves as survivors.

The Scottish Episcopal Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults, and the establishing of safe and caring communities. It has worked hard to improve its culture of informed vigilance, the practices of safer recruiting, and protecting vulnerable people at every level in Church life but it is conscious that there is always more that can be done and that this is work in progress. Everyone involved in the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church must always strive to safeguard those that choose to worship within it and the most effective way of responding to abuse of any kind is to try to ensure that it never happens again.

Abuse is endemic within our society and statistics clearly indicate that child sexual abuse remains prevalent, along with the sexual abuse and exploitation of women and men, including those who



are particularly vulnerable. The majority of victims find little or no redress within the criminal justice system and few resources to meet their needs within the wider community. Survivors are people with particular needs and the advice contained in this document is intended to be a resource for everyone who would want to ensure they do not suffer further harm as a result of a poor response from the Church.

This guidance document is intended to assist in focusing on the needs of those who have suffered from and survived abuse and it complements and extends the other safeguarding and protection work that the Church promotes through its Policy documents. It is important that the Church supports all those who are struggling in their own journey and process of healing through the quality of our listening and understanding and through reaching out with them to obtain the justice, support and care that they need.

The Church recognises the need to minister to survivors of sexual abuse and, while progress has been made in recognising the consequences of sexual abuse, the Church needs to ensure that survivors understand that there is support for them and action will be taken in recognition of their suffering and pain. They need a Church that provides a safe environment for them where their experiences of abuse can be heard, and appropriate support offered.

Churches can be well placed to offer safe places for survivors to come and where they can share their experiences; there is a need to reach out in a suitably compassionate way to those who need our support. In many situations this will only mean developing or adapting existing good work where pastoral ministry is given to those in need or marginalised within society (e.g. bereavement support) so that the experience and skills within such fields can be extended in compassionate response to survivors of sexual abuse. In doing this, the Church is likely to benefit hugely from the wisdom and the knowledge of the survivors themselves, who can contribute greatly to our Church communities.



*Most survivors want to be heard and to have their very real pain and hurt acknowledged.*

Most survivors want to be heard and to have their very real pain and hurt acknowledged. They also want a compassionate response from the Church and to see action where this is needed to ensure others are safe. In cases where the context of abuse has been the Church, those who have been abused often want to be listened to and heard directly by someone in the Church with the authority to take the necessary action.



Whether we realise it or not, it is likely that most of us know someone who has been abused as a child. Abuse knows no boundaries of gender, class, race or religion and people are affected by it in different ways and to different extents. Survivors live their lives just like anyone else, but for some there are long-term effects:

- Mental and physical health problems;
- Alcohol and drug misuse to cope with trauma;
- Homelessness, self harming behaviors and suicide attempts;
- Mistrust, hatred or fear of the church.

Not all survivors go on to have these problems, but many suffer long-term trauma in one form or another which can be compounded by fear, secrecy, shame, anger and grief. Creating a climate where abuse is recognised, tackling its consequences, and, most importantly, taking effective steps to minimise the likelihood of it happening, are central to improving support for survivors. Everyone who has been the victim of sexual violence and abuse reacts differently and it is not unusual for feelings to change from day to day and with time.

## 2.

# CHILD ABUSE

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What do we mean by child abuse? The World Health Organisation defines child abuse or maltreatment as all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Abuse can take place anywhere and perpetrated by anyone, for example:

- Within and outwith the family;
- Local authority residential care and foster care;
- Religious establishments;
- Charitable organisations;



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*Sexual abuse is sexually, physically and emotionally abusive. It breaches the personal boundaries to which all human beings are entitled.*



What is child sexual abuse? This is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that:

- he or she does not fully comprehend,
- he or she is unable to give informed consent to,
- he or she is not developmentally prepared for, or
- that violates the laws and social taboos of society.

Children can be sexually abused both by adults and by other children who are – by virtue of their stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.

Sexual abuse can include:

- Inducing or coercing a child to engage in sexual activity;
- Involving a child in prostitution or other sexual practices;
- Involving a child in pornographic performances and materials.

Sexual abuse is sexually, physically and emotionally abusive. It breaches the personal boundaries to which all human beings are entitled.

It is unlikely that the exact extent of childhood sexual abuse will ever be known and our knowledge, albeit that it is improving, will probably always be an under-estimate. Only a small percentage of sexual crime against children is ever detected, recorded or prosecuted, most perpetrators do not admit their actions and many survivors do not wish to disclose their experiences through fear of consequences or previous reactions when they tried to disclose.



*There is an assumption that people who have suffered childhood sexual abuse are damaged and incapable of living a normal life. This is a fallacy as many survivors manage to live successful lives in a range of professions, achieving important goals in life, career and relationships.*

Adults who have experienced sexual abuse, in common with adults who have suffered other trauma, respond in a wide variety of ways. Some people forget or minimise the abuse for long periods but then re-experience the trauma at a later date which can be triggered by flashbacks, nightmares or anxiety attacks. Some survival strategies are positive, some unhelpful. Some may be helpful in the short term but become problematic in the longer term (e.g. anger; use of alcohol). Some may intensify the person's vulnerability, whilst others will enhance recovery.

There is an assumption that people who have suffered childhood sexual abuse are damaged and incapable of living a normal life. This is a fallacy as many survivors manage to live successful lives in a range of professions, achieving important goals in life, career and relationships. This shows that it is possible to recover from many of the effects of abuse and come to terms with what has happened. However, some survivors find that difficulties remain with them for the rest of their lives. Finding the type of help and support that is best for them is important and there is a range of therapeutic approaches available including cognitive behavioural therapy, person-centred counselling, psychotherapy, psychiatry and psychology. There is also a range of support agencies across Scotland who provide services including one-to-one counselling, group support and advocacy.

People recover from adversity in different ways. Individuals who have been abused are likely to feel powerless, confused and hurt. Sometimes they may carry these same fears and anxieties into other situations. Childhood abuse in particular can render survivors more vulnerable to inappropriate compliance and submission, sometimes resulting from a heightened need for acceptance or approval. This can mean they are susceptible to further abuse where others exert power or control over them.

Abuse can lead to physical, mental and emotional health problems. People who have experienced abuse are at increased risk of a wide range of mental health illnesses. There might be a great sense of loss and grief which can be linked with overpowering anger; feelings of self blame, guilt and shame, or a loss of a sense of self, along with a sense of worthlessness or humiliation; an ongoing sense of deep hurt; a loss of confidence; powerlessness, feeling trapped; a diminished sense of hope or optimism linked with a diminished sense of joy or pleasure; and dissociation from reality. There can also be a sense of continual return to the emotional state of childhood. This may limit recovery until such time as the trauma is addressed.





These powerful emotions impact on the way adults or children who have been abused live their future lives. There can be difficulties in relationships, at school or at work; parenting problems; alcohol or drug abuse; involvement in anti-social behaviour; and for some people, involvement in prostitution or other sexual dysfunction; or may become abusers themselves. Conversely someone who has been abused can seek to limit the impact and work very hard to develop success in education, work and future relationships or may use overachievement to disguise underlying fears, vulnerability or shame.

Surviving abuse and coping with this depth of impact across the whole of a person's life, can lead to the development of huge personal strengths. Part of this will involve making decisions about breaking ties with, or confronting, the abuser. Survivors can demonstrate huge compassion and a commitment to addressing abuse, oppression and injustices suffered by others; they can experience the joy of better and more healthy relationships; of speaking out and receiving support; and of making a difference for others through fighting back for example speaking publicly or helping other survivors.

*The consistent support of family and/or friends can be invaluable and good pastoral support can help a survivor to overcome a troubled period.*



The consistent support of family and/or friends can be invaluable and good pastoral support can help a survivor to overcome a troubled period. However, dependent upon a number of factors then specific counselling is likely to be needed to help a person to recover. It should be recognised that such resources can be difficult to access.

Historically, it was assumed that most sexual abuse was perpetrated on females and research literature, studies and support services have tended to focus more on female survivors, especially on the physical and mental health effects of childhood sexual abuse. However, greater awareness has changed this misconception and it is now recognised that the incidence of sexual abuse of boys and young men is much greater than was previously thought. Unfortunately, we still don't have accurate figures because abuse of males has always been under-reported. However, the past decade has seen a growth in those prepared to speak up publicly and the development of support services available to them. Abuses in, for example, care homes and religious institutions have affected both sexes, but these cases have particularly brought to light the extent of assaults against boys.



While many issues are the same for male and female survivors, some are of special concern to men. These include:

- Fears about masculinity, male identity and sexuality;
- Intense shame at being a victim;
- Very low self-esteem and self-hatred;
- Fear of being perceived as a perpetrator of abuse, when the majority are not;
- Difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships;
- Anger issues, including extreme risk-taking behaviours;
- Male prostitution;
- How abused male patients are perceived and treated in drug; alcohol and mental health services;
- Receiving diagnoses of psychosis and anti-social personality disorder;
- Meeting their needs in prisons, forensic services and special hospitals;
- Issues connected with fatherhood.



Since the late 1970's and early 1980's, female survivors have played an important and active role in campaigning against childhood sexual abuse. They have been more prepared to speak of their experiences and volunteer at agencies and self-help groups supporting other survivors, thus raising awareness of survivor issues. While many issues are the same for both male and female survivors, some are of special concern to women. These include:

- How abuse trauma effects the experience of pregnancy;
- Fertility, childbirth and post-childbirth;
- Links with domestic abuse, other "intimate partner violence", rape and prostitution;
- Very low self-esteem or self-hatred;
- Fear of being perceived as a perpetrator of abuse, when the majority are not;
- Wider impacts on women's sexual health;
- Difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships;
- Issues connected with mothering;
- How female survivors are perceived and treated in physical and mental health services;
- Receiving a diagnosis of borderline personality disorder;
- Meeting their needs in prisons and special hospitals.

Many female survivors report that stereotyped prejudices against women persist today.

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*Sexual abuse doesn't simply affect those who have experienced it, it can also profoundly affect partners, families and friends.*

Sexual abuse doesn't simply affect those who have experienced it, it can also profoundly affect partners, families and friends. Many survivors will not disclose their abuse until adulthood and realising that a partner has experienced such a trauma can be baffling and upsetting. However, it can also help make sense of patterns of behaviour or problems in the relationship, and bring greater trust and understanding. Many survivors find trust and intimacy very difficult, and partners can blame themselves for this. To be the first person a survivor confides in can seem overwhelming but it is also a compliment, and it's tremendous for the survivor to be believed and accepted. It can be a catalyst to moving forward, and to recovery.

Sometimes non-abusing members of families can find it difficult to accept that a child or sibling of theirs has been sexually assaulted, perhaps over many years. Whilst this might be understandable, it can prove damaging to everyone concerned and seeking help, advice and support is essential to help families deal with highly charged and contradictory emotions. Abusers can divide and isolate family members and use threats or undermine the survivor. Bringing past abuse into the open is challenging, but it can also be rewarding by bringing people who care for each other together again.



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Research shows that the people who help survivors do not come from any one professional background or use a particular therapeutic approach and they do not necessarily have high professional status. The majority have not attended specific training courses on child sexual abuse, although they may well have gathered expertise in other ways. However, they did do the following:

- They were secure and firm about boundaries, but related with warmth and kindness;
- They were informed and aware about the main effects of the trauma of childhood sexual abuse and had examined their own personal issues around working with sexual abuse;
- They worked non-hierarchically, consulting respectfully with survivors about what their main needs were and what their service could offer; and
- They neither hid behind confidentiality nor broke it insensitively.



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CLERGY NEED TO REMEMBER THEIR WIDER DUTY TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND THEIR ACCOUNTABILITY TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN MATTERS OF SEXUAL ABUSE. WHETHER OR NOT THE ALLEGED ABUSE HAS TAKEN PLACE WITHIN A CHURCH CONTEXT, A CRIME MAY HAVE BEEN COMMITTED AND OTHERS COULD BE AT RISK.

IF YOU THINK THAT ANYONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER PLEASE DIAL 999.

IF A CHILD COMES TO NOTICE AS HAVING SUFFERED ABUSE WHEN YOUNGER, A REFERRAL WILL NEED TO BE MADE TO THE POLICE OR THE LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT. THE PROVINCIAL OFFICER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FURTHER ADVICE AND HAS DETAILS OF THE APPROPRIATE CONTACTS.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSIVE CONDUCT THAT OCCURRED SOME TIME AGO WHICH IS ONLY NOW BEING DISCLOSED AND ABUSE THAT IS OCCURRING AT THE TIME OF DISCLOSURE.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND CONSULTATION SHOULD ALWAYS BE OBTAINED – A LIST OF POSSIBLE SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS AND RESOURCES IS PROVIDED BELOW



Abuse, which thrives on secrecy, loses some of its power to harm when this secrecy is broken. However, the survivor needs to give careful thought about who to tell, when, and for what purpose. Being able to talk to a close friend or relative who is able to hear, support and care, is for many people the most useful help in healing. For some, this trusted relationship is with a clergy person.

Thus, in the course of their work, priests and those offering pastoral support in the Church may find themselves hearing disclosures from adults of abuse that happened to them when they were children. It is important to remember that some people have been further hurt when the person to whom they decide to disclose has not been able to cope with the disclosure and has responded inappropriately.

If it appears that abuse is happening at the time of disclosure, immediate action is required and local arrangements for child or adult protection may require to be instituted. It is important to remember that the Church's responsibility is to refer such cases, not to investigate them. That is the role of local child protection services within the police or social work services.



*There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of previous abuse by an adult but the wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important.*

If the perpetrator is in a position where he/she could well be abusing children today then the person disclosing – the survivor - should be encouraged and supported to report the matter to the police if this has not already been done as a prosecution may be possible. The survivor should also be made aware that if, the alleged abuser is known to be still working with children, either in an employed or a voluntary capacity, a referral to the Provincial Officer for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults must be made. This can be either by the person to whom the disclosure is made or the local child protection coordinator who should, in any case, be informed. If the alleged abuser is not working with children but caring for them, then either the person to whom the disclosure is made, the child protection coordinator or the Provincial Officer should make a referral under the local child protection procedures to the police or the social work department. The timing of any such referral should be carefully judged in order to support the survivor on their journey of disclosure while if at all possible not creating a sense that all initiative has been removed from him or her completely.

There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of previous abuse by an adult but the wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about the experiences can be a powerful healing event and the pastoral care of the person who has been abused



*A person will disclose that they were sexually abused only when they feel it is safe so to do.*



will be important. Seeking some kind of therapeutic help may be an option and it may be that, within such help or discussions with a member of clergy, consideration is given to what else needs to be done.

A person will disclose that they were sexually abused only when they feel it is safe so to do. Some might deliberately say something to test the reaction of the person to whom they are making their disclosure. This could be something shocking or simply a hint. Once they feel it is safe to proceed then responsibility falls upon the person to whom they have made that disclosure. Here are some simple but important points:

- a) Is the time and place appropriate? If not care must be taken to assure the person making the disclosure that any suggested change is because there is a willingness to listen well. Make sure that a discussion takes place in a private place but be mindful that there is a need to balance privacy with any difficulties that the survivor may have with feelings of being 'unsafe' in such a setting. A public location, such as a hallway is not secure. It is always best to let a survivor speak when they are ready; do not suggest they come back another day or at another time without at least letting the listening begin immediately.
- b) Offer confidentiality but be clear about the limits on confidentiality where there is any continuing risk or a risk of harm to others. Privacy and confidentiality is governed by legal provisions such as the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act where the aim is to safeguard personal information but it is important to note that, in law, no-one can ever be assured of absolute confidentiality and, even in counselling, there may be circumstances where a person's confidence must be broken. Although there are professional ethics, legislation and guidelines around confidentiality, there is still considerable scope for people to use their individual judgement about when a breach of confidentiality is justifiable or necessary. It should be explained to the discloser that, whilst the matter will be treated very discreetly, it might be necessary to share that information with others. This should be explained carefully so that the person can understand the reasons and their consent to this obtained.

**(NOTE – Confidentiality as explained in this subsection relates to individuals who are or have been victims of abuse. The matter of confidentiality as it refers to possible perpetrators of abuse is a separate matter and is referred to below.)**





- c) Does another person need to be present? If so check carefully that this is going to be acceptable to all involved.
- d) A distinction could be made between a listener and anyone who might provide counsel or advice. Perhaps at this stage a good listener is all that is needed. The person listening should never venture into the area of counselling or advice unless they are appropriately trained.
- e) Ascertain what the person making the disclosure is expecting. This might simply to be heard and understood. On the other hand they might be seeking further help or hoping for some action to be taken regarding the abuser if he or she is still alive.
- f) Stay calm. This does not mean acting uninterested or showing no understanding of how difficult it must be for the person making the disclosure. Staying calm, but not distant, can be hard when you are shocked, angry, disgusted, or otherwise upset, but an overly emotional response creates a risk that the person may not tell everything about their abuse and may even retract the disclosure. It is much better to be open, whilst staying calm, and say to the discloser that you find the information – for instance - distressing, shocking or disgusting but they are not to blame. This will validate the experience of the discloser. A genuine heartfelt expression of sympathy and/or words of recognition that you can see that s/he has been deeply hurt by the experience may also be appropriate.
- g) Show that you take seriously all that you are being told. Survivors of abuse almost always fear that they will not be believed. While it is clear that you are only hearing one side of a story, possibly the most important thing you can do for a victim of abuse is to let her or him know that you believe their statements. This is often a crucial factor, especially to those who have made a previous unsuccessful attempt to be heard (possibly in childhood). Some will have terrible recollections of having their stories denied by others unwilling or unable to face the painful truth.
- h) Do not make judgments or statements. Listen, listen and listen again! It can be hard to take in all the implications. It is hard to hear a fragmented and traumatised story. Allow the person to tell the story in the words of her/his choice and at her/his own pace.
- i) Forgiveness is a complex issue for those who have been sexually abused. Experience with survivors indicates that they are often actively encouraged to forgive or, even worse, pushed towards



forgiveness that is often accompanied by a belief that it is required if they are to ever recover. This is not the case; in fact, this can severely traumatise the survivor further and add to their confusion and helplessness. Forgiveness is something that only the survivor can offer, only when they wish and then in their own way. **Within the Christian Church there are some who believe that forgiveness must take place, this has to be carefully handled and the survivor should be allowed time to reflect on this expectation. However, they may never be able to forgive and should never feel that the Church judges them with regard to this, this is a matter in God's grace and hands.** It is inappropriate to require a survivor to forgive the perpetrator immediately, when often the full extent of the abuse has not been recognised. This often reflects more on our being uncomfortable with facing the real extent of the pain. To do so can be dangerous as it can leave the victim open to further abuse or s/he may think that s/he now has to remain silent, whilst the abuser continues to pose a risk to others. It can also have the effect of curtailing the disclosure.



*Sexual abuse thrives in secrecy. Once the secret is made public, it is much more difficult for the abuse to continue. It might be helpful to give an assurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.*

- j) Survivors of abuse often need to repeat the account many times. This can be frustrating to the hearer but is cathartic to the one disclosing and helps the process of their understanding all that happened and where the blame lies.
- k) Sexual abuse thrives in secrecy. Once the secret is made public, it is much more difficult for the abuse to continue. It might be helpful to give an assurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- l) Talk through in a calm manner what are possible next steps. If the incident is recent is the person still at risk? Are others at risk? Is there someone more competent to offer pastoral care or counselling? Is this a matter that you should refer to or consult with the Provincial Officer? Take care if at all possible not to take the matter out of the hands of the person who has made the disclosure. Sexual abuse involves a loss of personal control so be careful not to add to that, while remaining supportive.
- m) The person may require several meetings and should be able to control when and where. Sometimes words are too difficult and other ways of communication may be easier. Where possible, it should be jointly agreed who should have any documentation and when, if at all, a contact with the police or other authorities should be made. Often support should be offered if other agencies are to be approached. On a more general level the church can do much to foster an air of sanctuary and hospitality to make the discloser more comfortable.



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*Ensure that your relationship remains consistent. Keep in contact and ensure that you have other appropriate interaction off topic.*



n) Be prepared to be in it for the long haul. Whether as a listener, or as the person responsible for the provision of pastoral support, the person making the disclosure needs to know that you will continue to be there for them. Be clear about what you might be able to offer but guard against the dangers of transference in long term counselling.

o) Ensure that your relationship remains consistent. Keep in contact and ensure that you have other appropriate interaction off topic. It is all too easy for a survivor of abuse to feel they have lost friendships by disclosing.

In some cases the subject of the allegation may have died or be untraceable. If the Church was involved in any way, it may be necessary to examine the actions that were taken, if any, at the time and consider whether they were appropriate in the light of what was known then and good practice developed since. The police should be consulted in case there are links with potential abusers still living or other matters of concern. In all disclosures of past abuse, a record should be made and filed in accordance with SEC Policy in this respect.



A member of clergy may find themselves being sought out by someone who wishes to admit to having been the perpetrator of some form of abuse on another, either at some point in the past or ongoing at that time.

**IF THE ABUSE IS ONGOING AND SOMEONE IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK, THE PRIEST SHOULD DIAL 999.**

If an abuser discloses abuse outside the seal of the confessional, the priest has a responsibility to report this matter to the Provincial Officer. A person disclosing abuse should always be advised that the matter will be reported to the relevant statutory authorities.

Canon 29 of the Code of Canons makes it clear that a priest may not divulge anything that has been revealed in Confession nor refer subsequently to such matter without leave of the penitent. The seal is absolute and is not abrogated on the death of the penitent. However, the priest should advise the penitent that such behaviour requires external intervention and he or she should be directed to make contact with the Provincial Officer so that matters may be properly dealt with.

If the priest is subsequently contacted by the penitent outside the Seal of the Confessional, the priest must make it clear that the Seal of Confession no longer applies and, if the information is repeated, the priest must explain that he/she has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to protect anyone who is at risk of being or who has been abused.



**The Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC)** facilitates the provision by Christians of quality counselling and pastoral care. It provides nationwide standards for Christian counselling and care and a nationwide system for the accreditation of Christian counsellors broadly acceptable to Christian churches, counselling organisations and the wider community.

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

0845 124 9569/0845 124 9570

**Breathing Space** is a free and confidential phone line service for any individual, who is experiencing low mood or depression, or who is unusually worried and in need of someone to talk to.

**[www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk)**

0800 83 85 87

**The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)** works with large and small organisations within the sector including advising schools on how to set up a counselling service, assisting the NHS on service provision, working with voluntary agencies and supporting independent practitioners. BACP also participates in the development of counselling and psychotherapy at an international level.

**[www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)**

01455 883300

**The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOPS)** is dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. It is part of UK policing, tracking and bringing offenders to account either directly or in partnership with local and international forces.

**[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)**

0870 000 3344

**CHILDREN 1ST** supports families under stress, protects children from harm and neglect, helps them to recover from abuse and promotes children's rights and interests.

**[www.children1st.org.uk](http://www.children1st.org.uk)**

**First Person Plural** is a small UK-wide registered charity led by abuse survivors with first hand experience of complex dissociative distress. [www.firstpersonplural.org.uk](http://www.firstpersonplural.org.uk) or [fpp@firstpersonplural.org.uk](mailto:fpp@firstpersonplural.org.uk)  
**Izzy's Promise** is a charity organisation based in Dundee, Scotland (UK) that offers free and confidential support services to: ritual/organised abuse survivors; refugees; asylum seekers; ethnic minorities and people trafficked via rituals.

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

01382 206222



**The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (LFF)** is a child protection charity committed to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. LFF's staff work with adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours, survivors of abuse and other family members.

[www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk)

01527 591922

**Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors – MACSAS** is a support group for women and men from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by ministers or clergy, as children or as adults. It provides support for survivors who have remained within their Christian communities and for those who have left.

[www.macsas.org.uk](http://www.macsas.org.uk)

0808 801 0340

**The National Association for People Abused in Childhood - NAPAC** is a registered charity, based in the UK, providing support and information for people abused in childhood.

[www.napac.org.uk](http://www.napac.org.uk)

0800 085 3330

**One in Four** offers a voice to and support for people who have experienced sexual abuse and sexual violence.

[www.oneinfour.org.uk](http://www.oneinfour.org.uk)

020 8697 2112

**Open Secret** offers support and a safe space to people aged 12 and over who have been affected by abuse. Its services are confidential and free to anyone living in the Forth Valley.

[www.opensecret.org](http://www.opensecret.org)

01324 630100

**Safe Space** offers support, counselling, group work and Justice Support to male/female survivors of sexual abuse aged 12 and upwards in Fife. The service is free and confidential. They also deliver awareness raising and training courses.

[www.safe-space.co.uk](http://www.safe-space.co.uk)

01383 739084

**Samaritans** provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide. They offer their service by telephone, email, letter and face to face in most of their branches.

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

08457 90 90 90



**Sexual abuse survivors** are a group of individuals who have had their ability to enjoy sexuality as a sacred, life-enhancing experience violated as a result of sexual abuse. As sexual abuse survivors, they let the power of the group help them heal what they refer to as “The Split.” The split is our tendency to disassociate from our bodies during the sexual act.

**[www.sexualabusesurvivors.com](http://www.sexualabusesurvivors.com)**

**Stop it Now** is a campaign, managed by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, which aims to prevent child sexual abuse by raising awareness and encouraging early recognition and responses to the problem by abusers themselves and those close to them. Stop it Now! believes sexual abuse is preventable and urges abusers and potential abusers to seek help and gives adults the information they need to protect children effectively. Stop it Now! encourages adults to create a society that no longer tolerates the sexual abuse of children.

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

0808 1000 900

**SurvivorScotland** oversees the National Strategy for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Its work is done in a variety of ways, including funding of support organisations, a national training programme for front line workers, data collection projects and sharing of best practice. Its Website provides helpful information for those affected by child abuse in any way. SurvivorScotland’s directory enables survivors, their families, friends and health and social care practitioners to contact a range of local and national agencies offering information, help and support to anyone affected by childhood sexual abuse. It does not advocate specific services, but, by providing a list of agencies and contact details it hopes to make it easier to find out about services available in Scotland.

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

**Victim Support Scotland** is the lead voluntary organisation in Scotland helping people affected by crime. It provides emotional support, practical help and essential information to victims, witnesses and others affected by crime. The service is free, confidential and is provided by volunteers through a network of community based victim and youth justice services and court based witness services.

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

0845 603 9213

**NOTE – This list of support agencies and services should not be considered exhaustive and other resources more relevant to an individual’s needs may be available.**