

01 When supporting an adult/child disclosing sexual abuse, it is imperative to respond confidently and be aware of **the local pathway of support**. The adult/child should receive a consistent response, keeping them safe and ensuring a holistic response to their needs and any identified risks. There is no right or wrong way for an adult/child disclosing sexual abuse to react or behave.

02 Respond: Practitioners taking a disclosure or supporting an adult/child disclosing sexual abuse should offer a safe, confidential space, **belief** and promote **choices** where possible. Safeguarding risks may limit some options but a sensitive approach, revisiting your agency policy/protocols & explanation of the processes can also help the adult/child's sense of **control** & understanding.

07 RASASC offer **Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) support**. ISVAs provide independent advice and support and can help clients explore their choices and options. When the incident has been reported to the police, ISVAs can provide crucial practical and emotional support throughout the criminal justice process; from report to court the ISVAs are on hand to support adult/children at every step. ISVAs work with all age ranges and can provide support directly to parents/carers.

03 Act & inform: Consider when/where the incident happened and if anyone remains at risk. Contact the **Police** on 999 /101 if necessary. For all child cases contact the **MASH team**: 0151 443 2600. Joint Strategy / Investigation. Inform the adult/child (or parent/caregiver) of the specialist immediate/acute support and aftercare support available & make relevant referrals.

For all child cases contact the relevant SARC (4) for expert health and forensic advice from a forensic clinician – regardless of nature of abuse or time elapsed.
For all adult acute (recent) discuss SARC attendance and make a referral if appropriate (SAFEPlace). A report to the police is **not** compulsory for SafePlace attendance and self-referrals are also accepted.

06 Counselling - RASASC provide **trauma-focused therapy** for survivors of sexual violence. This service is open to adults and children.

04 Acute support: SARC (**Sexual assault referral centres**) provide immediate, & specialist support to adults & children/families. It is vital that **the holistic needs** of an adult/child are considered by a forensic clinician who can provide expert advice. Provide adults/children & their families accurate information on the SARC, the support available and the benefits of attendance. Adults/children have a choice re attendance, and they will never be made to comply with any part of an examination they feel uncomfortable with. SARC attendance is not re-traumatising & SARC attendance is not limited to a forensic medical exam (FME). SARC support can include advice and support, mental health exploration, capacity assessment, safeguarding referrals, sexually transmitted infection screening, emergency contraception, Hep B & HIV pep treatment, body mapping and forensic medical examination (FME). If a report has not been made to the police, forensic swabs can be stored (for 2 years) in the event a report to the police is made in the future.

Rainbow Centre (Alder Hey): 0152 252 5609 / 0151 228 4811. *<15 /LD & Looked After Children < 18.
SAFEPlace Merseyside: 0151 295 3550 www.safepacemerseyside.org.uk 16> 24hours a day, 365 days a year.

05 Aftercare support: Consider the **ongoing/long term support needs** of the child/adult disclosing. Discuss aftercare support options and referrals. RASASC is a registered charity committed to supporting all survivors of rape or sexual abuse. They offer independent, free, community-based support: Counselling, ISVA (independent sexual violence advisors), group work and volunteer opportunities. They also have specialist services for children and parents/carers. 0330 363 0063 / support@rapecentre.org.uk
Referral for Professionals:
<https://www.dpmscloud.com/external/referralformorgcheshirerc>
Consent of adult required for RASASC referral. Consent of parent/carer required for <16
*RASA Merseyside provide support to adults/children in Liverpool, Sefton, Wirral (0151 558 1801)

7 Minute Briefing

Aftercare Pathway for Children and Adults who have experienced Sexual Violence.