

Focus on Survivors 2025

Your Voice Matters: A Survey for Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

Thank you for considering taking part in this important survey. We recognise that sharing your experience takes strength and courage, and we are grateful for your time. We will use your responses to help shape better services for survivors.

Who is conducting this research?

This research is being hosted by **Healthwatch Suffolk (HWS)** in partnership with **Survivors in Transition (SiT)**.

- **Healthwatch Suffolk CIC (HWS)** is a social enterprise providing services to include people's lived experiences in the development of health, care, and wellbeing support locally (in Suffolk), regionally, and nationally. It also manages Suffolk's local Healthwatch service.
- **Survivors in Transition (SiT)** is a Suffolk-based specialist support centre for survivors of sexual abuse.

About the survey

In 2015, SiT led a national study to better understand how survivors of childhood sexual abuse experienced support both during childhood and as adults. That research provided vital insights that informed service design, policy development, and survivor-led approaches across the country.

Now, 10 years later, we are revisiting this work to explore how survivor's experiences, needs, and outcomes may have changed. Your input will help us assess what progress has been made and what more still needs to be done.

This survey is anonymous. We will not ask for your name or any information that could identify you or other people. Your full individual response to this survey will only be seen by the Healthwatch Suffolk research team completing the report. It is important to know that anonymous quotes of things you tell us may feature in the final report, which will be shared with the public online by HWS and SiT.

What will the survey ask?

The survey will ask general questions about your experience of childhood sexual abuse (e.g., how old you were when the abuse started and ended, whether you reported the abuse, the number of perpetrators). You will **not** be asked to share specific details.

You will then be asked about the support you received, the services you accessed, whether you felt heard, and how things could be improved.

All questions are optional, and you can skip any questions if you prefer not to answer it. The survey should take around **20 minutes** to complete so please ensure you are in a comfortable space and have the time available to complete it. If you've used several services, it

may take a little longer. Please feel free to focus only on the services most relevant to your experience.

Need support?

If you feel you need support at any time, please consider reaching out to one of the following:

- **Local organisations in your area** - you can find them on the Survivors Trust website: <https://thesurvivorstrust.org/support-in-your-area/>
- **Rape Crisis 24/7 Support Line** - call 0800 500 2222 or visit <https://247sexualabusesupport.org.uk/>
- **Survivors in Transition** - contact support@survivorsintransition.co.uk or visit <https://www.survivorsintransition.co.uk/>

Please return this form by **24th December 2025** in an envelope to:

FREEPOST Healthwatch Suffolk

There is no need to include a stamp or any other address on the envelope. By returning this form, you understand that your details will be stored by Healthwatch Suffolk and used as indicated in your response.

1. Please confirm that you have read and understood the information above and consent to take part in this survey?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

2. Please confirm you are over the age of 16.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

3. Please confirm if you took part in the survey conducted in 2015.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

About you

4. What is your current age?

5. Please describe your gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ I prefer not to say

☐ I prefer to describe my gender in another way (please specify):

6. Please tick all statements that you feel apply to you:

☐ I have a mental health condition

☐ I have autism, Asperger's syndrome or autistic spectrum disorder [ASD]

☐ I have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder [ADHD]

☐ I have a physical disability and/or sensory disability

☐ I have a special educational need

☐ None of the above

7. Which region of the UK do you currently live in?

☐ East

☐ East Midlands

☐ London

☐ North East

☐ North West

☐ Northern Ireland

☐ Scotland

☐ South East

☐ South West

☐ Wales

☐ West Midlands

☐ Yorkshire and The Humber

Your experience

8. Approximately how old were you when the sexual abuse started?

9. Approximately how old were you when the sexual abuse ended?

10. Was there more than one perpetrator?

☐ Yes

☐ I would prefer not to say

☐ No

11. Where did the abuse take place?

☐ Within your family or extended family

☐ At school or during a school trip

☐ In foster care

☐ In a hospital

☐ In someone else's home

☐ Within a club or organised group

☐ In a children's home or residential care

☐ Other

12. Have you ever shared your experience of abuse with anyone?

☐ Yes

☐ I would prefer not to say

☐ No

If you have not shared your experience of abuse with anyone or received support, this survey will not be relevant to you. This survey is designed to understand survivor's experiences with support services.

Shared experience

13. Approximately how old were you when you first told someone about the abuse?

14. When you first shared your experience, was it because someone asked you directly, or did you decide to tell someone on your own?

☐ I was asked directly

☐ I would prefer not to say

☐ I chose to tell someone on my own

15. Who did you share your experience with?

☐ A friend (who was a child at the time)

☐ A parent

☐ A sibling

☐ Another family member

☐ A teacher

☐ An adult friend

☐ A doctor or health professional

☐ The police

☐ A helpline

☐ A social worker

☐ A counsellor or therapist

☐ A partner

☐ I have not shared it with anyone

☐ Other (please specify):

Reporting

This section asks about any experience you may have had reporting your abuse to the police. Please only respond to the questions you feel comfortable answering. You can skip any question.

16. Was the abuse reported to the police?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No **(please skip to question 20)**
- ☐ I would prefer not to say

17. If you reported to the police, are you aware of the outcome of your case?

- ☐ The police took no further action
- ☐ The CPS took no further action
- ☐ I chose to withdraw from the case
- ☐ The suspect was prosecuted and convicted/found guilty
- ☐ The suspect was prosecuted and acquitted/found not guilty
- ☐ The police investigation is still ongoing
- ☐ The suspect was charged and is awaiting trial
- ☐ I don't know the outcome of my case

18. How supported did you feel during your experience with the criminal justice system (including the reporting and investigation stages)?

- ☐ Fully supported
- ☐ Mostly supported
- ☐ Somewhat supported
- ☐ Slightly supported
- ☐ Not at all supported



19. In your own words, how did your experience with the criminal justice system impact you? You may like to talk about any effect on your wellbeing, health, relationships, work, education, or other areas of your life. (If your case is still under investigation or before the court, please do not share any specific details about it. Please focus on how the experience has affected you personally)

We know there are many reasons why people choose not to go to the police, and it is every survivor's choice how they respond to their own personal experience.

20. Which of the following, if any, have influenced your decision not to report to the police? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Fear of retaliation from the perpetrator(s)
- ☐ Concern for personal safety or the safety of family members
- ☐ Lack of trust with the police and justice system
- ☐ Belief that I wouldn't be taken seriously
- ☐ Emotional distress and shock
- ☐ Threats to remain silent
- ☐ Cultural stigma around reporting
- ☐ Dependence on the perpetrator(s) for housing, finances, or immigration status
- ☐ Previous negative experience with law enforcement
- ☐ Something else
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Services and Support

The next set of questions are about what support services you have accessed in relation to your experience of child sexual abuse. You only need to share as much as you feel comfortable with, and you can skip any questions you would prefer to not to answer.

21. Are you currently receiving, or have you previously received support from an organisation due to your experience of abuse?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you have not shared your experience of abuse with anyone or received support, this survey will not be relevant to you. This survey is designed to understand survivor's experiences with support services.

22. Approximately how long in total did you receive some form of support?

- ☐ Less than 1 month
- ☐ 1 to 3 months
- ☐ 4 to 6 months
- ☐ 7 to 12 months
- ☐ 1 to 2 years
- ☐ 3 to 4 years
- ☐ 5 to 6 years
- ☐ More than 6 years
- ☐ I didn't receive any support

23. Which of the following organisations or services have you accessed in relation to your experience of childhood sexual abuse? *(If you have used multiple services, please feel free to select the ones you have engaged with most frequently)*

- ☐ GP Services
- ☐ Social Services
- ☐ A&E or hospital services
- ☐ Voluntary sector mental health services (e.g., MIND or another charity organisation)
- ☐ Statutory sector mental health services (e.g., Taking Therapies, Mental Health Trust)
- ☐ Drug and alcohol advice
- ☐ Sexual health services
- ☐ Voluntary sector sexual abuse and rape support services
- ☐ Voluntary sector counselling or therapy services
- ☐ Statutory sector counselling or therapy services
- ☐ NSPCC, Barnardo's or other children's charities
- ☐ ChildLine or another helpline
- ☐ Faith-based support groups
- ☐ The Samaritans
- ☐ Police
- ☐ Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC)
- ☐ Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA)
- ☐ Victim Support

Support service 1

Please note the service from above you are telling us about:

24. Approximately how old were you when you first spoke to the above organisation in relation to your experience of child sexual abuse?

25. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience of speaking to the above organisation:

	Yes	No
Did you feel believed?	☐	☐
Did you feel listened to?	☐	☐
Did you feel respected?	☐	☐

26. Overall, how would you rate the support you received from the above organisation.

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Neither good nor poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor

Support Service 2

Please note the service from above you are telling us about:

27. Approximately how old were you when you first spoke to the above organisation in relation to your experience of child sexual abuse?

28. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience of speaking to the above organisation:

	Yes	No
Did you feel believed?	☐	☐
Did you feel listened to?	☐	☐
Did you feel respected?	☐	☐

29. Overall, how would you rate the support you received from the above organisation.

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Neither good nor poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor

Support Service 3

Please note the service from above you are telling us about:

30. Approximately how old were you when you first spoke to the above organisation in relation to your experience of child sexual abuse?

31. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience of speaking to the above organisation:

	Yes	No
Did you feel believed?	☐	☐
Did you feel listened to?	☐	☐
Did you feel respected?	☐	☐

32. Overall, how would you rate the support you received from the above organisation.

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Neither good nor poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor

Support Service 4

Please note the service from above you are telling us about:

33. Approximately how old were you when you first spoke to the above organisation in relation to your experience of child sexual abuse?

34. Please answer the following questions in relation to your experience of speaking to the above organisation:

	Yes	No
Did you feel believed?	☐	☐
Did you feel listened to?	☐	☐
Did you feel respected?	☐	☐

35. Overall, how would you rate the support you received from the above organisation.

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Neither good nor poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor

Experience of Support and Services

36. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt professionals and organisations clearly explained the support available to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was able to easily find information online about support available.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found enough information online about services and support for my specific needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

37. What type of support have you found most helpful in relation to your experience?

38. In your view, how could services and support be improved for people who have had similar experiences?

39. Are there any types of support or help you feel you need, but have not been able to access?

83. In your opinion, how has the support available for survivors of childhood sexual abuse changed over time?

- ☐ It has improved
- ☐ It has stayed the same
- ☐ It has gotten worse
- ☐ I'm not sure

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your views are extremely important to help us ensure there are better services available for survivors.

If this survey has brought up anything which has made you feel uncomfortable or there is anything you would like to discuss please contact support@survivorsintransition.co.uk and we can direct you to support in your area.

For immediate advice, support, and guidance you can also contact the 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line on [0808 500 2222](tel:08085002222)

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