

Each month we will be focusing on a different safeguarding theme to raise awareness and signpost to resources.

Child Sexual Abuse

Think the Unthinkable

For October, our theme is
Child Sexual Abuse



#CSAspotthesigns
#Bcurious



Follow us on:



Or via email:

safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk



Contents

Health warning: You may find some of the content of this resource difficult to read due to the subject matter. If this triggers or upsets you please look after yourself and seek some support.

The hyperlinks will assist you to navigate this document and to identify what information is most relevant for you/your agency/service.

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Context

Child Sexual Abuse is a Strategic Priority for Safeguarding Partners in Swindon

- In November 2024 the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) published its report ["I wanted them all to notice"](#) which investigated the experiences of children who were sexually abused by a family member. It explores the challenges in identifying, assessing and responding to child sexual abuse within the family environment.¹
- The findings and recommendations included:
 - the importance of speaking to and listening to children
 - the need to understand parents' vulnerabilities and challenges
 - the need for robust risk assessments
 - how to effectively respond to concerns of intrafamilial sexual abuse.
- These findings and recommendations together with those from the NSPCC CSA snapshot and [DfE Tackling Child Sexual Abuse progress update](#) underpin the work of the [Safeguarding Partnership Child Sexual Abuse sub group](#).



Key findings and themes are included in the next slides including links to the report and summary.

“I wanted them all to notice”



Image by Freepik

Key finding 1: Hearing children's voices and understanding their needs

- Not relying on children to tell
- Talking to or listening to children
- Believing children when they do tell
- Exploring or taking account of children's race ethnicity and culture
- Exploring and taking account of the needs of children who have disabilities
- Listening to children's wishes around visual recorded interviews (VRI) or achieving best evidence (ABE) interviews
- Responding to children in extreme distress as a result of sexual abuse
- Children having access to appropriate support following abuse



- [National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-review-into-child-sexual-abuse-within-the-family-environment)
- [Summary of the National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment: CASPAR briefing | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning-and-research/caspar-briefing/)

“I wanted them all to notice”

Key finding 2: Understanding parents' and carers' needs and contexts

- Understanding of parents' contexts and vulnerabilities
- Exploring and taking account of parents' race, ethnicity and culture
- Relying on parents to protect their children
- Sharing with and believing parents and carers
- Support for parents and carers

- [National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-review-into-child-sexual-abuse-within-the-family-environment)
- [Summary of the National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment: CASPAR briefing | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning-and-research/summaries/summary-of-the-national-review-into-child-sexual-abuse-within-the-family-environment-caspar-briefing/)



“I wanted them all to notice”

Key finding 3: Identifying signs, understanding risk and raising concerns

- Identifying signs of intrafamilial child sexual abuse
- Quality of risk assessment for sexual offending

Key finding 4: Responding to concerns of intrafamilial sexual abuse

- Exploration and recording of concerns
- Evidential thresholds
- The importance of information-sharing
- Collaborative working
- The impact of drift and delay
- Opportunities and interventions to address offending thoughts and behaviour



- [National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-review-into-child-sexual-abuse-within-the-family-environment)
- [Summary of the National review into child sexual abuse within the family environment: CASPAR briefing | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning-and-research/caspar-briefing/)

What is Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)?



Image by Freepik

Child Sexual Abuse – is an umbrella term that includes different types of abuse, including for example,

- Intrafamilial CSA,
- online CSA and
- Child Sexual Exploitation

Source: [Summary of the National audit on group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

Further information on other types of child sexual abuse are included on the following slides.

What is Child Sexual Abuse

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (page 162) clearly defines sexual abuse:

- Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.
- They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males.
- Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.



What is Child Sexual Abuse continued

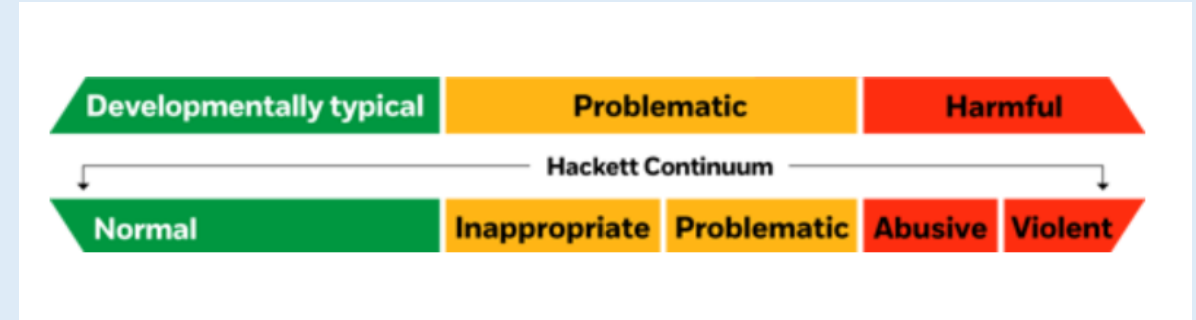
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (page 154) clearly defines child sexual exploitation:

- Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity
 - (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
 - (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.



Harmful Sexual Behaviour including child on child sexual abuse

- Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive. Source: [Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- Peer-on-peer sexual abuse is a form of HSB where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development. Child-on-child sexual abuse is a form of HSB that takes place between children of any age or stage of development. Source: [Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)



Hackett's continuum presents sexualised behaviour as a range from 'normal' to 'inappropriate', 'problematic', 'abusive' and 'violent' (Hackett, 2010¹).

There are some very useful resources which explain Hackett's continuum and some examples of developmentally typical behaviours.

- Visit these webpages to find out more
[Understanding sexualised behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning](#)
 - [How to tell if a child's sexual behaviour is appropriate for their age - Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#)
- [See also the resources section to find out more.](#)

New! SSP Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol



Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol

For use if there is suspicion, allegation or observation of a child or young person having carried out harmful sexual behaviour (HSB).

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Revised: September 2025
Review Date: September 2027
Author: Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
Document owner: Swindon Safeguarding Partnership



- Not all sexual behaviour in children and young people is problematic or harmful; some sexual behaviour is part of healthy development.
- Sometimes it can be difficult to differentiate between what is developmentally appropriate and what is concerning.
- The SSP protocol has now been published and is available on the SSP website – click on this link [Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- This document provides information and guidance for professionals to aid decision making and risk assessment.

Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) offending can take a number of different forms, which include:

- **Online Grooming** - the act of developing a relationship with a child to enable their abuse and exploitation both online and offline.
- **Live Streaming** – Live streaming services can be used by Child Sex Offenders (CSOs) to incite victims to commit or watch sexual acts via webcam. CSOs also stream or watch live contact sexual abuse or indecent images of children with other offenders.
- **Online coercion and blackmail** – coercion or blackmail of a child by technological means, using sexual images and/or videos depicting that child, for the purposes of sexual gain (e.g. obtain new IIOC or bring about a sexual encounter), financial gain or other personal gain.
- **Possession, production and sharing of IIOC and Prohibited Images**– CSOs can use online platforms to store and share IIOC and prohibited images. Online platforms can also be used to facilitate the production of IIOC, for example screen-recording of CSEA perpetrated over live streaming.
- **Indecent Images of Children (IIOC)** are images of, or depicting, a child or part of a child which are judged to be in breach of recognised standards of propriety. IIOC includes photographs, videos, pseudo-photographs and tracings.
- **Prohibited Images of Children** are non-photographic images, for example CGI, cartoons etc, which portray a child engaging in sexual activity, a sexual act being performed in the presence of a child or focus on the child's genital or anal region.



Further information is available on the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) website [What is online child sexual abuse \(ceop.police.uk\)](https://www.ceop.police.uk).

Important to Remember!

- Children and young people may not always understand that they are being sexually abused (IICSA, 2022).
- Children and young people of any age, including very young children and babies, can experience sexual abuse.



Source: [Protecting children from sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

How Many Children Experience Sexual Abuse?

The following slides includes infographics and data from the [NSPCC](#), [Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse](#), and [Vulnerability Knowledge & Practice Programme, National Police Chiefs Council \(NPCC\)](#)

Data can only ever tell part of the story.

Sexual abuse is usually hidden from view.

Adults in the child or young person's life may not recognise the signs of sexual abuse and the child may be too young, too scared or too ashamed to tell anyone what is happening to them.



NSPCC Briefing

Child sexual abuse: NSPCC briefing published in January 2025 suggests:

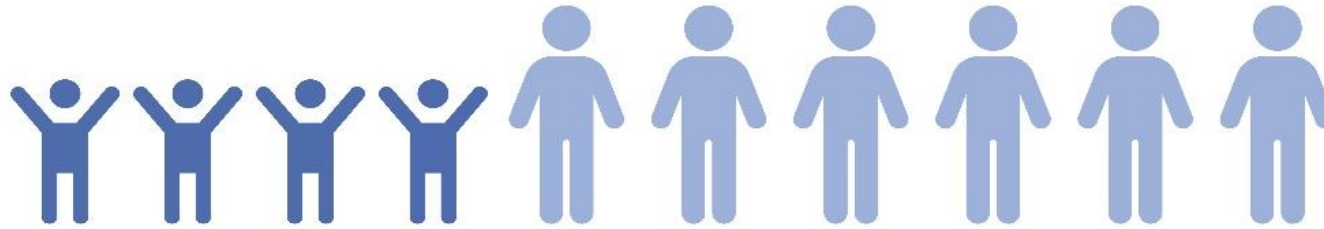
- An estimated 1 in 20 children in the UK have been sexually abused
- Concerns around sexual abuse have been identified for over 2,400 children in the UK who are the subject of a child protection plan or on a child protection register.
- Over a third of all police-recorded sexual offences are against children.
- Girls and older children are more likely to experience sexual abuse.
- The vast majority of children who experience contact sexual abuse were abused by someone they knew.

Further information about the available data and statistics about child sexual abuse can be found in the briefing [Statistics on child sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

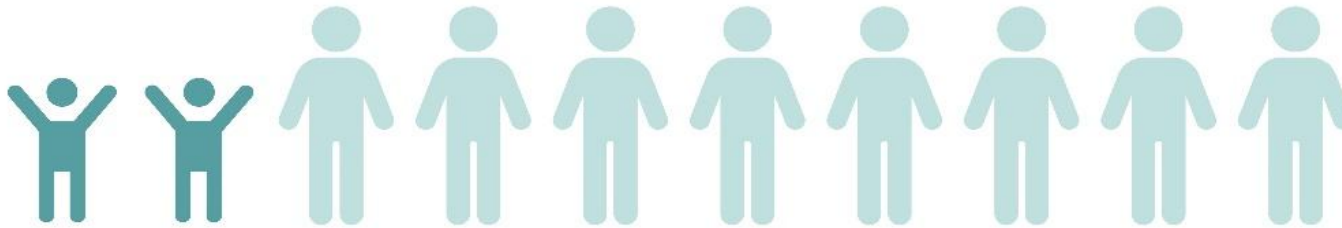


Children are disproportionately likely to be victims of sexual offences

Child sexual abuse in 2022/23: Trends in official data
[csacentre.org.uk](https://www.csacentre.org.uk)



They are the victims in 40% of all sexual offences



Yet make up only 20% of the population

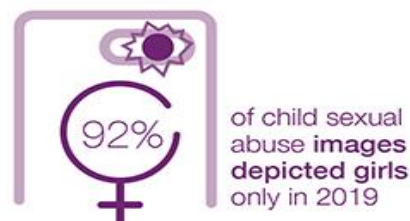
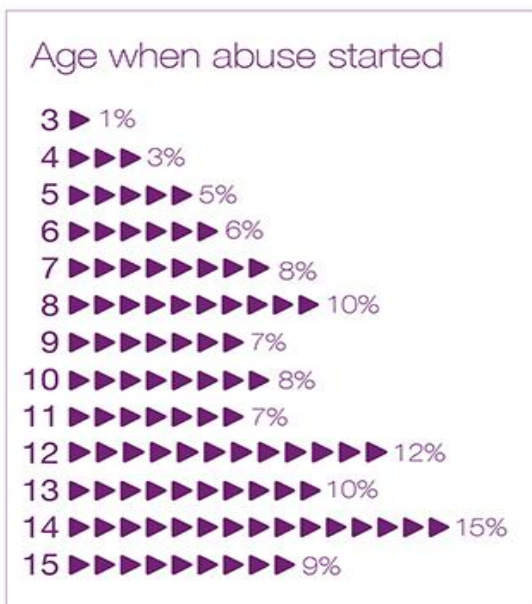
We must formally recognise that children represent a significant proportion of victims and ensure their specific needs are met with sufficient and appropriate support.

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2023: Sexual offences prevalence and victim characteristics, England and Wales...

Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse

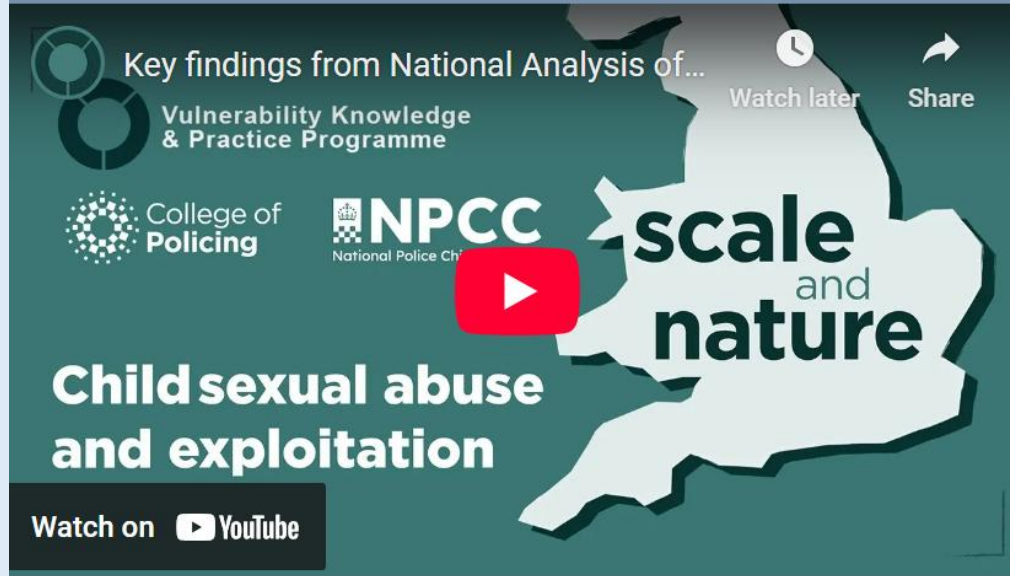
A snapshot of child sexual abuse

Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse



References: Department for Education: Characteristics of children in need: 2019 to 2020. Home Office Police Recorded Crime and Outcomes, year ending March 2020, updated 28 October 2020. Calculated using single-year prevalence estimates by age group (Radford et al, 2011, Childhood abuse and neglect in the UK today) and the Office for National Statistics 2019 population estimates. To read the full report - The scale and nature of child sexual abuse: Review of evidence 2021 - visit www.csacentre.org.uk

National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Crimes Report 2023



Access the webpage which includes the video clip (duration 3:16 minutes) and report: [National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Crimes Report 2023 | Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme](#)



Key findings:

- **Total of 115,489 CSAE offences were recorded by police in 2023**, reflecting the consistent growth in CSAE and the long-term trend of increased reporting to police. **Evidence continues to suggest many crimes remains unreported.**
- **Sexual Assault on a Child** - most common crime type recorded in 29% of CSAE crimes, followed by Indecent Imagery of Children (27%) and Rape of a Child (18%).
- **Contact abuse against children remains consistently high compared to that seen in crimes recorded in 2022**, accounting for 68% of CSAE offences in 2023.
- **CSAE remains a heavily gendered crime** with males (82%, of all CSAE perpetrators) predominantly abusing females (79%, of victims)...
- A relationship between victim and perpetrator was recorded for 44% of offences. Of those, **80% of victims knew their abuser.**
- **CSAE within the family environment** remains a common context for the abuse of children, accounting for almost a third (31%) of reported CSAE crime. 93% of these crimes are contact abuse with almost half (45%) of victims under 10 years of age.

Continued on the next slide

National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Crimes Report 2023

- Policing continues to receive the lowest reports of CSAE offences during school holidays, indicating an **important role that the education system has in identifying and facilitating disclosure of abuse.**
- Perpetrator age was recorded for 63% of offences. Where recorded, just **over half of CSAE (52%) involved reports of children aged 10 to 17, offending against other children**, with 14 being the most common age, similar to that reported in 2022.
- **Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) offences account for 41% of offences committed by children.** Analysis of a representative sample identified that 4 in 5 (80%) of these involve self-generated indecent imagery (SGII). Further analysis showed 62% of SGII involving multiple children had aggravating factors such as the subsequent sharing of images on social media or blackmail (commonly referred to as sextortion).
- **Group-based CSAE accounts for 4.6% of all CSAE in 2023** with **contact offences accounting for 3.7%** and group-based non-contact offences accounting for just under 1% This is consistent with 2022. Group-based CSAE ranges from unorganised peer group sharing of imagery, to more organised complex high harm cases with high community impact.
- At least 35% of police recorded CSAE has an online element, 76% of which relates to IIOC offences **The online space plays a role in facilitating contact abuse of children, though under 5% (n.3,610) of contact offences were flagged for having an online element.** Of concern is the rapidly emerging threat of the sexual extortion of children.



Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse: Data Insights Hub

The Data Insights Hub gives instant access to local CSA data and can be accessed via this link [Microsoft Power BI](#)

This interactive dashboard takes information from official records on CSA held by local authorities in England and Wales.

Only a small minority of sexually abused children come to the attention of official agencies so this information also shows the estimated number of children sexually abused in the local area and based on what is known about the scale of CSA from survey data.



Child Sexual Abuse: Data Insights Hub

- This chart is an example of the data available and shows data for Swindon – assessments: child sexual abuse.
- Information was last updated in March 2025
- To explore other search options available click on this link [Microsoft Power BI](#)



Local safeguarding data

Select a local authority

Swindon

Select the indicator

- ☒ Assessments: child sexual abuse
- ☐ Assessments: child sexual exploitation
- ☐ Child protection plan/register: sexual abuse

This page draws on official data from the [Department for Education](#) and the [Welsh Government](#). **Data on assessments is available for English local authorities only.**

The first chart shows the **number** of assessments or child protection plans/registrations related to child sexual abuse in your selected local authority **per 1,000 children** living in the area. This number is compared with demographically similar local authorities ('[statistical neighbours](#)') in England, or with geographical neighbours in Wales.

The second chart presents the **actual number** of assessments or child protection plans/registrations related to child sexual abuse in your selected local authority over time.

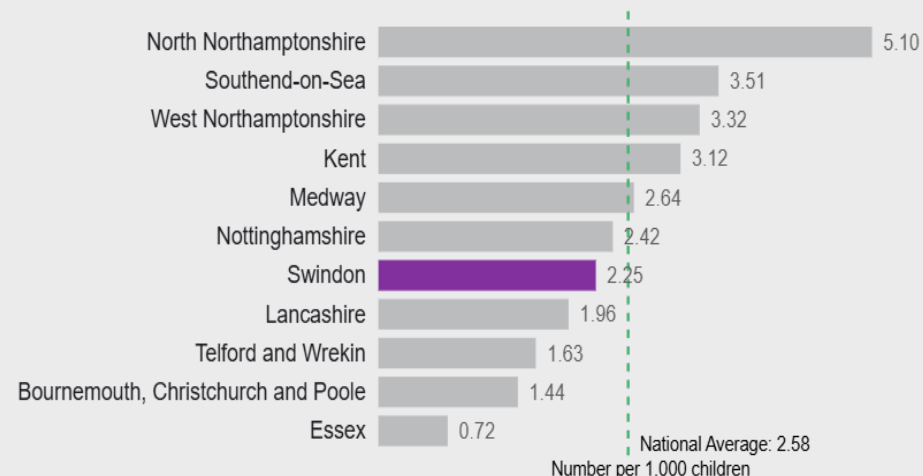
Numbers below 6 are marked as 'C' for data protection reasons.

The numbers indicate the level of *identification or recording* of child sexual abuse, not the scale of that abuse. For more information about this data, see the [Technical note](#).

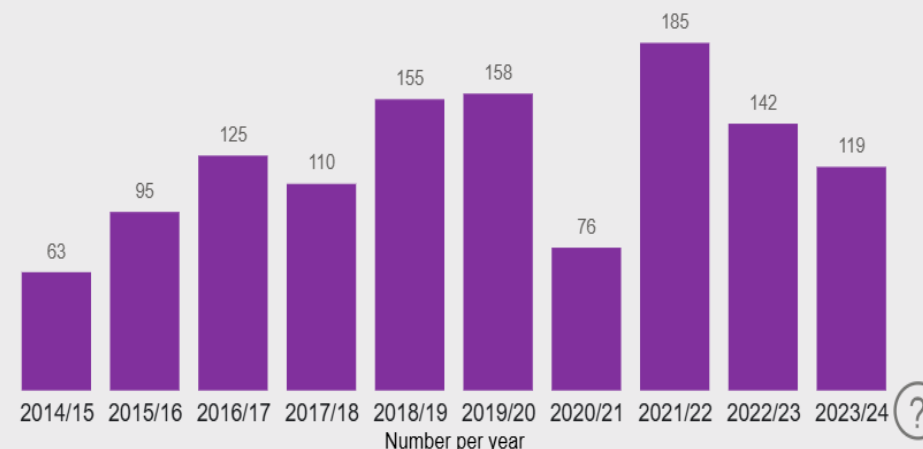
← Main menu

← National data

Swindon & statistical neighbours (Assessments: child sexual abuse)



Trends over time: Swindon (Assessments: child sexual abuse)



Scale and Support Services by Local Authority

This chart compares the official data with the estimated scale of CSA in Swindon.

Also the number of support services for children affected by sexual abuse. Information was last updated in March 2025

A comprehensive list of support services both local and national can be found via this link [Find a support service | CSA Centre](#)



Select a local authority

Swindon

This page compares the estimated scale of child sexual abuse in your local area with the official data on child sexual abuse recorded by your selected local authority, and where possible, with the recorded offences from the local police force. The crime data is only available when your selected local authority covers the same geographical area as the relevant police force. In all other cases **this data is not publicly available and is marked as 'N/A'.**

Below the iceberg you can see how many support services respond to sexually abused children in your local authority area. **To see the details of the services in your area, [click here](#).**

For data sources and further information, [click here](#).

← Main menu

Far more children are sexually abused than statutory services identify in Swindon

Child sexual abuse: Data Insights Hub
csacentre.org.uk



There are 5 support services that respond to the sexual abuse of children living in Swindon.



Explore other search options by clicking on this link [Microsoft Power BI](#)

Risk and Vulnerability Factors

- Any child could potentially experience sexual abuse and exploitation and if not protected by adults around them.
- Some groups of children may be more at risk including but not limited to children/young people who are:
 - d/Deaf
 - disabled
 - from ethnic minority backgrounds
 - LGBTQ+
 - experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACES)
- **Reminder:** under the Equality Act 2010 – those with protected characteristics are protected from discrimination.
- **Important to consider - Intersectionality:** a recognition that people occupy multiple, overlapping identities and social positions – is crucial when thinking about the impacts of child sexual abuse (source: The impacts of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre).



This is not an exhaustive list and you may be able to identify some other settings or environments where there are additional vulnerabilities.

Resources to find out more

- [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\)](#)
- [Why language matters: children who have disabilities rather than disabled children | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Why language matters: why professionals need to talk about child sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Safeguarding children from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Children in care \(looked after children\)](#)
- [child mental health](#)
- [Understanding child brain development | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Intersectionality - Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Podcast: intersectionality in social work practice | NSPCC Learning](#)

4Rs of Safeguarding

- **Recognise possible abuse:**

- Recognise signs that may suggest a child is being abused.
- Recognise the behaviour of the abuser.

- **Respond**

- quickly and appropriately to possible concerns.
- Sometimes a concern is obvious, sometimes it is not
- Remember use of appropriate language.

- **Report**

- your concerns to the appropriate person/agencies
- ASAP

- **Record**

- Immediately or ASAP
- your observations and concerns – distinguish between fact and opinion – be clear and explicit
- include the actions you and others have (or haven't) taken.
- Use words used by child/young person



Remember: Be Professionally Curious!
Think the Unthinkable!

Recognising the Signs

Below are some physical, emotional and behavioural indicators that may be a sign that a child has experienced sexual abuse. **This is not an exhaustive list – see the resources to find out more.**

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you would not expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Sudden mood changes and/or frequent crying.
- Becoming withdrawn, quiet, emotionally flat and disinterested and isolated.
- Becoming hyperactive and/or aggressive.
- School problems – poor attendance and/or poor school work.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Bruises, bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy

Important to remember!

There may be no physical signs on examination.

There may be no overt signs/behaviours being displayed.



**Remember: Be Professionally Curious!
Think the Unthinkable!**

Recognising the Signs

- Sexual abuse is difficult for children and young people to talk about.
- Research, guidance and children themselves have told us to notice the signs and indicators of child sexual abuse.
- Children need to be listened to and professionals need to be professionally curious and ask children what is happening to them and not wait for them to tell a professional or otherwise.
- Not all children will recognise that they are being abused, particularly if they have been groomed.
- Many children will not disclose if they are being or have experienced any other type of abuse.
- Research indicates that professionals are least confident in dealing with this category of abuse.



Remember: Be Professionally Curious!
Think the Unthinkable!

Signs in Babies and Young Children

- It can be difficult to recognise and identify that a baby or very young child is experiencing sexual abuse. Children at these early developmental stages can't always communicate their experiences.
- Children in their early years experiencing sexual abuse might display disruption or regression of normal development such as toilet training, eating and interacting with other children. They may also resist or become distressed with intimate care such as nappy changing. Source: (Birch, 2022; CSA Centre, 2021).

Useful resources to find out more:

- [Communicating-with-children-guide.pdf - csacentre.org.uk](#)).
- [Identifying and responding to disclosures of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#)
- [Protecting children from sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [eLearning | CSA Centre](#) identifying and responding to intra-familial child sexual abuse



Remember: Be Professionally Curious!
Think the Unthinkable!

Recognise signs and indicators template



The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse have developed a template to assist in identifying and recording concerns of child sexual abuse.

It is designed to support professionals across a range of organisations in systematically observing, recording and communicating their concerns about possible child sexual abuse.

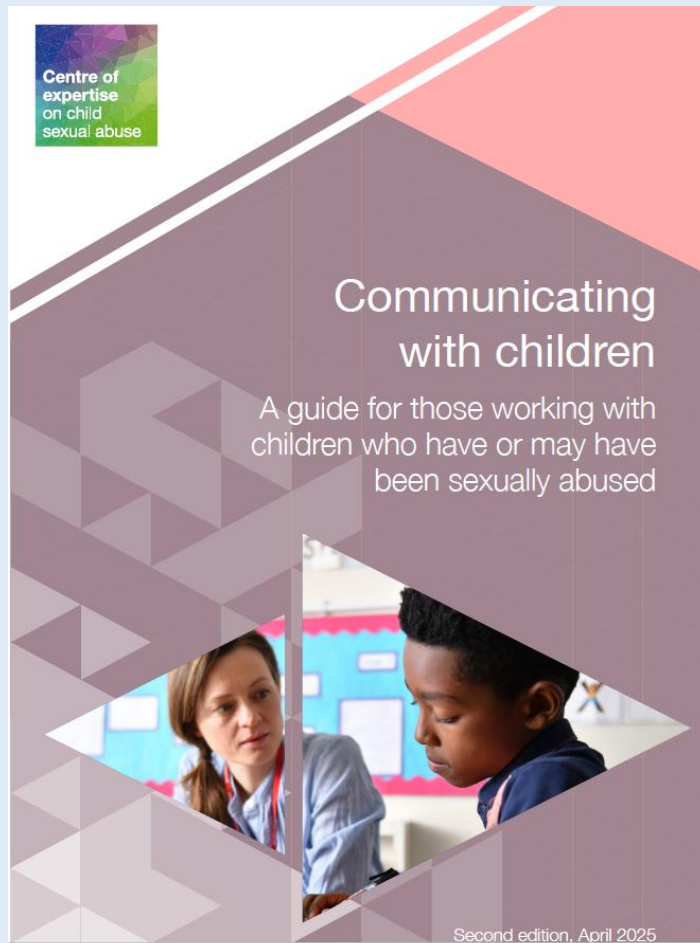
This template considers the physical, emotional, sexual and non-sexual behaviour of the child and the behaviour of those around the child. It also includes some prompts to assist completion.

Click on the link below to access the webpage, which includes additional information and a link to the template: [Signs and indicators of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#)



Communicating with Children

Centre of
expertise
on child
sexual abuse



- This guide is for anyone whose role brings them into contact with children.
- It aims to:
 - help you communicate with children in relation to child sexual abuse, whether you have been told or discovered that abuse has taken place, or you have concerns that such abuse may be happening.
 - give you the knowledge and confidence to overcome any fears of 'getting it wrong', 'opening a can of worms' or not knowing what to say, which so often prevent children getting the help and support that they need.
- It also emphasises that you can and should talk to children about your concerns without worrying about 'contaminating evidence' or affecting a criminal trial, and explains how to do so.
- Throughout, it stresses the paramount importance of safeguarding the child and supporting their welfare, and demonstrates the huge difference that confident, direct communication can make to children who need help to tell.
- Find out more by accessing the document:
<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/communicating-with-children/>



Behaviour of the Abuser

Recognising possible abuse also relates to consideration of the behaviour of the abuser, there is some information and resources below to assist with this.

Below are some short video clips from Parents Protect /Lucy Faithfull Foundation website: [Advice - Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#)

- [Recognising the warning signs in adults - Parents Protect learning module 9](#) (duration 1:40 minutes)
- [How abusers do it - Parents Protect learning module 7 – YouTube](#) (duration 2:29 minutes)

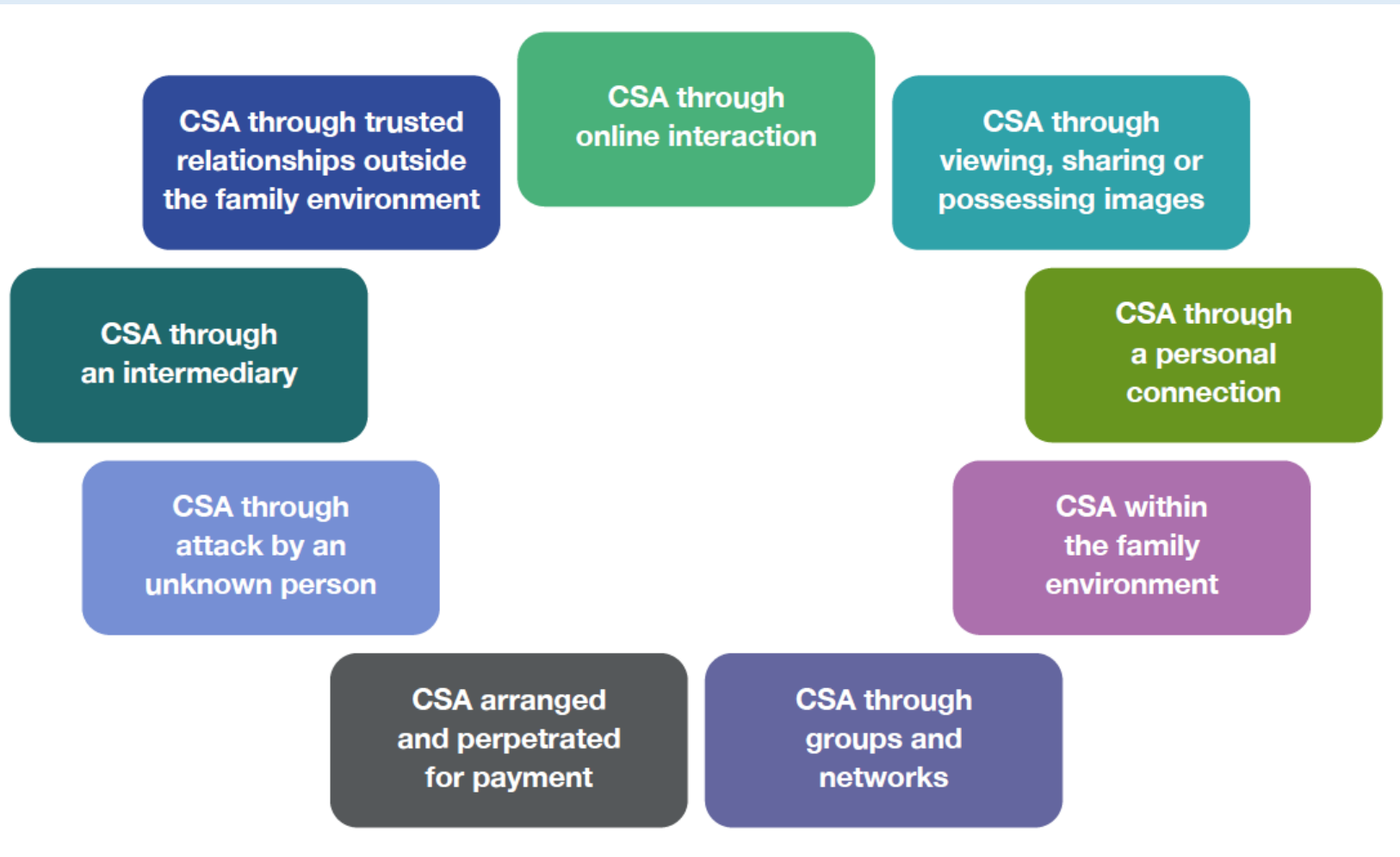
There are some additional resources and websites to find out more:

- [Recognise the signs and indicators template](#)
- [Parent's Protect - Stop It Now](#)
- Helpline: [Helpline - Stop It Now](#)
- [Resources - Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#)
- [Not just a man's crime: understanding and preventing child sexual abuse by women - Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#)
- Research [Child sexual abuse perpetrated by adults | CSA Centre](#)



A new typology of child sexual abuse offending

Centre of
expertise
on child
sexual abuse



Source: Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse - A new typology of child sexual abuse offending (p.5, March 2020)

Thinking the Unthinkable

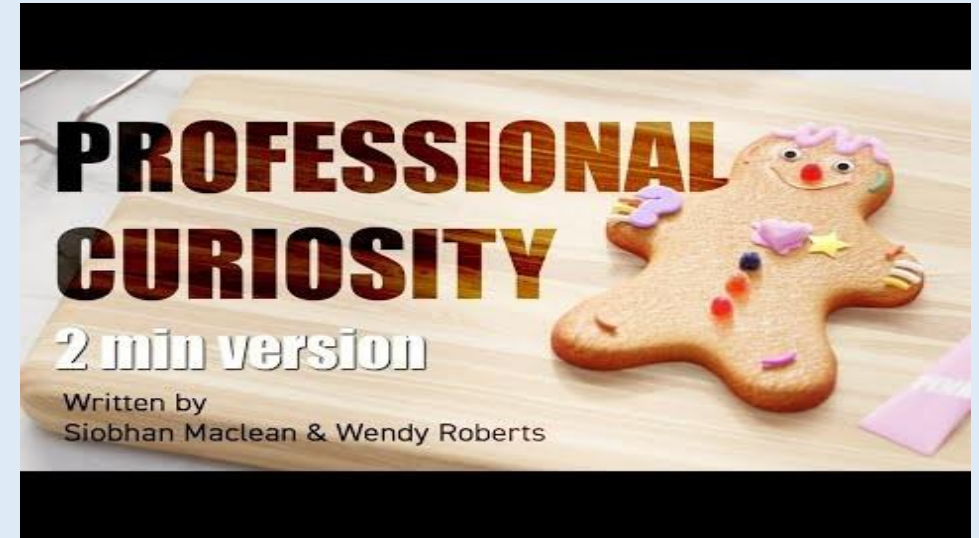
***Safeguarding is thinking the unthinkable and then figuring out how to reduce the probability of the unthinkable happening”
(Graham Fawcett, 2018)***

[Safeguarding -Not For the Fainthearted. -Thrive Worldwide \(thrive-worldwide.org\)](https://thrive-worldwide.org/)

- Children rarely disclose abuse and neglect directly to practitioners which makes identifying abuse and neglect difficult.
- Practitioners need to develop relationships with children, away from carers, and practice ‘**respectful uncertainty**’ to any information they receive, keep an open mind and think objectively about the evidence presented, even if this may be challenging and difficult to imagine.

Consider the following...

- Remember, children **can** be abused by anyone, such as carers, other children, family members and professionals.
- Always, **think the unthinkable** and be **professionally curious** – see webpage for additional information: Professional curiosity - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- Always seek to obtain the views and feelings of the child.
- Be open-minded, don't take everything at face value.
- Never assume and, be wary of assumptions already made.



This short animation by Siobhan Maclean provides a new way of looking more deeply at what professional curiosity means.

Click on this link [Professional Curiosity SHORT version](#) (duration 2 minutes)

More detailed videos can be found on this webpage [Professional curiosity - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Telling someone about child sexual abuse

- May also be referred to as disclosure - it is the process by which children/young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others.
- This can take place over a long period of time – it is a journey, not one act or action.
- Children may tell directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order.
- Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or a case being taken to court, but all disclosures should be taken seriously.
- It takes extraordinary courage for a child to go through the journey of disclosing abuse.
- It's vital that anyone who works with children and young people undertaking this journey is able to provide them with the support they need.

Children and young people may tell about abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- directly– making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways
- Children/young people may not always be aware that they are disclosing abuse through their actions and behaviour.



Source: NSPCC Recognising and responding to abuse Recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect | NSPCC Learning

Telling someone about child sexual abuse continued

- Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures of abuse. This means they give some details about what they've experienced, but not the whole picture. They may withhold some information because they:
 - are afraid they will get in trouble with or upset their family
 - want to deflect blame in case of family difficulties as a result of the disclosure
 - feel ashamed and/or guilty
 - need to protect themselves from having to relive traumatic events.
- When children do speak out it is often many years after the abuse has taken place (McElvaney, 2015).



Source: NSPCC Recognising and responding to abuse [Recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect | NSPCC Learning](#)

See also: [Why language matters: why professionals need to talk about child sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

Let children
know you
are listening



[Responding to a Child's Disclosure of Abuse | NSPCC Learning – YouTube](#) (Duration 2:13 minutes)

Language Matters

- Language is powerful. It is important to consider the words, phrases and jargon used when speaking to/about children/young people and adults.
- This includes language used verbally and written in files, referrals, assessments and reports. Rarely do individuals intend to use victim-blaming language but may do so unconsciously.
- Any language suggesting a child/young person is responsible for their abuse and/or crime they are subjected to must be avoided. A failure to do so may mean that the child/ren are not safeguarded appropriately.
- Victim blaming language is any language or action that implies (whether intentionally or unintentionally) that a person is partially or wholly responsible for abuse that has happened to them. It is harmful and can wrongfully place responsibility, shame or blame onto a victim, making them feel that they are complicit or responsible for the harm they have experienced. Source: Challenging victim blaming language and behaviours when dealing with the online experiences of children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Language Matters

- Victim blaming language may reinforce messages from perpetrators around shame and guilt. This in turn may prevent the person from disclosing their abuse as they may feel fear of being blamed by professionals.
- Unclear language can lead to confusion, misunderstanding or even harm, as in the case of the term 'child pornography'.
- This phrase, continues to be used today, is a perfect example of how harmful language can be.
- Child sexual abuse material is a result of children being groomed, coerced, and exploited by their abusers, and is a form of child sexual abuse. Using the term 'child pornography' implies it is a sub-category of legally acceptable pornography, rather than a form of child abuse and a crime. Source: NSPCC Blog: [Why language matters: why we should never use 'child pornography' and always say child sexual abuse material | NSPCC Learning](#)

Resources to find out more



This short video clip helps to understand the impact on young people of victim blaming language (clip lasts 1:46)

Source Waltham Forest Council: [Victim blaming language \(youtube.com\)](#)

Other resources to find out more:

- ✓ [Language practice briefs for those at risk of exploitation - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [Why language matters: why to avoid the term 'victim' to refer to children who have experienced abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- ✓ [Why language matters: how using terms like 'recruited' and 'working' minimise children's experiences of criminal exploitation | NSPCC Learning](#)
- ✓ [Child Exploitation Language Guide | The Children's Society](#)
- ✓ [Challenging victim blaming language and behaviours when dealing with the online experiences of children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ✓ Video clip - [Carlene Firmin - Language in Social Work - Contextual Safeguarding \(youtube.com\)](#) Language in Social Work but also relevant to other professionals. Source: YouTube. Clip lasts 4:47.

Adultification

- National and local reviews have highlighted incidents where it appears some young people have been treated differently from their peers by professionals and the criminal justice system.
- As defined in statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the term 'child' refers to anyone under the age of 18.
- Adultification is a type of bias which skews the perception of certain children leading to professionals viewing them as more grown up than their peers which can lead to lapses in safeguarding and unfair treatment.
- There are various contexts in which adultification occurs, all of which relate to a child's personal characteristics, socio-economic influences and/or lived experiences, for example –
 - transphobia,
 - homelessness,
 - young carers,
 - domestic abuse,
 - poverty,
 - being a Cared For or Care Experienced child.



Continued on the next slide

Adultification

- Research has shown that black children are more likely to experience adultification, where professionals think about black children differently from their peers and do not recognise their own discrimination and bias. Child Q's review where a young black girl was strip searched inappropriately is an example of adultification.
- Intersectionality plays a part in this concept. Age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality all affect how children are viewed by professionals.
- Black girls can be seen stereotypically as innately hypersexual and this can impact on how they are identified as victims of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). Another stereotype is that black children are seen as resilient and strong.

Resources to find out more



- Watch this clip where Jahnine Davis explains the adultification bias after black schoolgirl strip searched by police.
- Link: [Jahnine Davis explains the adultification bias after black schoolgirl strip searched by police \(youtube.com\)](#)
Duration 1:55 minutes)

Find out more:

- [NSPCC learning resource](#)
- SSP 7 minute briefs
- [Adultification - September 2024 - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- Child Q [Child Q - safeguarding practice review - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Adultification bias in child protection & safeguarding - Russell Webster](#)
- [Adultification bias within child protection and safeguarding \(PDF, 528 kB\)](#)
- [Adultification bias of black children: Q&A with Jahnine Davis \(farrer.co.uk\)](#)
- [It's silent – race, racism and safeguarding children – National Panel Report](#)

Responding to Concerns

If you have concerns about a child it's important to think first
‘what if I’m right?’ rather than **‘what if I’m wrong?’**

The experiences of victims of child sexual abuse shows that, too often, adults don’t act on this question.
If you are concerned that a child or young person has suffered harm, neglect or abuse, contact Children and Families Contact Swindon by either

- Telephone: 01793 464646
- E-mail: contactchildrenandfamilies@swindon.gov.uk

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call the Police on 999.

You can also refer to the resources below to assist in your decision making and evidencing concerns:

- [The Right Help at Right Time guidance - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#) assist in assessing the levels of need and identifying the most appropriate support.
- [CSA centre resource: Signs and indicators of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#)
- [Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\): Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)



Consider if there should there be a medical examination?
Professionals should be familiar with forensic timescales when responding to concerns/disclosures of child sexual abuse.
Further information about this is included on the next slide.

Forensic Medical Examinations

Professionals should be familiar with forensic timescales when responding to disclosures of child sexual abuse.

- Consideration of a medical examination should be discussed during any strategy discussion held and health professionals invited as per local guidance. See Health Attendance at Strategy Discussions - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership - flowcharts on pages 14 & 15 provide further information.
- **Forensic Medical examinations** for children living in Swindon are conducted at The Bridge Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), Bristol. Refer to The Bridge webpage for up to date guidance Professionals – The Bridge ([thebridgecanhelp.org.uk](https://www.thebridgecanhelp.org.uk)) there is a document titled Timescales for Medical Care which offers further advice <https://www.thebridgecanhelp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Timescales-for-Medical-Care.pdf>
- As of 25/9/24 the timescales for medical care guidance indicates that *The Bridge will see all children (aged 0-18 years) up to 7 days following an allegation or suspicion of sexual assault, regardless of the type of incident. Forensic timescales vary on the type of assault and whether or not the child is pre-pubertal or post-pubertal, however it will be the decision of the Paediatric Sexual Offences Medicine Specialist which forensic samples to take. For all children under 18 who have experienced a recent sexual assault, please contact The Bridge and an expert will be able to provide advice, information and support.*



Non–Recent Medical Examinations

- If the suspected sexual abuse is outside of the forensic window, a medical examination may still be appropriate as there may be therapeutic benefits of a medical examination including mental health and well-being/reassurance.
- Swindon has a non-recent CSA service and will see children following a strategy discussion and social work referral.
- Dr's at Great Western Hospital are able to offer non-recent medical examinations. There is no time limit to be offered a medical examination and its aim is to empower the young person and ensure they are getting support/reassurance.
- Children should be offered a medical examination even if there is no police investigation. The safeguarding team and also The Bridge SARC should be invited to strategy discussions.
- if the individual does not wish to have a medical examination, it may be advisable to consider a sexual health referral. However, the individual should not be sent directly to the service at Carfax street.



See also: [Health Attendance at Strategy Discussions - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Record



Below are some points to consider:

- Name, age, gender and ethnicity of child/young person – include family details (parent/carer, including any siblings). Ensure correct spellings.
- Detail of the concern – when and where
- What the child said, as closely as possible to the original.
- Who else was present
- What was happening before the concern was raised
- What was said or done and by whom.
- Record immediately or as soon as possible
- Distinguish between fact and opinion – be clear and explicit.
- Use proper names for body parts
- Record actions taken and decisions made and also any not made or taken.



The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse

Below are excerpts from the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse – key messages from research on the impacts of child sexual abuse report: [The impacts of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#) (March 2023). Further reading is recommended.

- Victim-survivors of child sexual abuse can be affected in a wide range of ways, but the nature and extent of the impacts experienced vary: no two people are affected in exactly the same way.
- victim-survivors themselves are the best experts on how they have been and are being affected, and any attempt to understand the impact on an individual should begin with them.
- Research indicates that many victim-survivors report adverse impacts on their mental health and wellbeing, including anxiety disorders, depression, eating disorders and disturbances, sleep disruption and insomnia, and dissociation.
- Long-term clinical psychiatric diagnoses associated with child sexual abuse include post-traumatic stress disorder and personality disorders.

Factors influencing impact include:

- child's age when the abuse occurred,
- their relationship to the person who harmed,
- the duration of the abuse,
- other childhood experiences (including other forms of child abuse),
- attachment to non-abusing parents or carers,
- whether or not the abuse is discovered/disclosed, and responses to its discovery/disclosure (both in childhood and adulthood).
- Impact may also be affected by the victim-survivor's sex, culture, ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- It is **therefore important to centre an understanding of intersectionality when thinking about the impacts of child sexual abuse.**

Professionals can support victim-survivors effectively by...

- Providing compassionate and consistent responses to disclosures of child sexual abuse.
- Creating safe and supportive spaces for victim-survivors to explore the impacts of abuse.
- Believing disclosures and recognizing signs of child sexual abuse.
- Offering trauma-informed and non-judgmental responses to improve willingness to seek support.
- Supporting non-abusing parents and caregivers, particularly mothers, to enhance emotional and behavioral outcomes.
- Encouraging secure attachment to caregivers and fostering social support networks.
- Identifying abuse early and providing supportive responses to reduce long-term adverse impacts.
- Using evidence-based resources to guide practice and improve outcomes for victim-survivors.
- Acknowledging intersectionality and tailoring responses to the victim-survivor's unique social and cultural context.

Professionals play a key role in mitigating the impacts of child sexual abuse for both children and adults.



Source: [The impacts of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#) (March 2023).

Useful Information, Training and Resources for Professionals

The information on the next slides is not an exhaustive list – if you are aware of any additional resources then please let the safeguarding partnership know email
Safeguarding Partnership: safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk .



Developing an Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)

- This two-day course has been developed by the NSPCC to provide professionals working with children and families with a base-level understanding of CSA.
- Participants will be provided with the opportunity to review and consider insights from the research base for CSA.
- You will be supported to work through a case study using the 4Rs of safeguarding:
 - Recognising Abuse/ Behaviour of offender:
 - Responding: Reporting and
 - Recording,
 - And to look at the impact of CSA, on the young person, the family and wider community/society.
- To find out more and to book a place please click on this link [Developing an Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse \(CSA\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)



Levels of Need Workshops



Working Together to Support and Safeguard Children in Swindon

Levels of Need Workshops

The aim of these sessions is to support professionals to work in partnership to provide a graduated response to the needs of children and families.

The sessions will enable professionals to have confidence to make good referrals and share information appropriately.

Through multi-agency discussion the sessions will provide an opportunity to consider the levels of need and application of the Right Help at The Right Time guidance.

The sessions will explore the following key themes relating to support and safeguarding and will include the use of case discussions:

- Make a good referral
- Application of levels of need (*thresholds*)

The sessions are face to face and facilitated by local multi-agency professionals working in Swindon.

Places are limited so please ensure you book your place.

Date and times:

- Session 2 - Tuesday 16th September 2025 1000-1300
- Session 3 - Tuesday 25th November 2025 - 1000-1300
- Session 4 - Tuesday 13th January 2026 - 1000-1300
- Session 5 - Tuesday 3rd March 2026 - 1000-1300

Booking your place: Click on the <https://forms.office.com/e/Uf7Zx8sZEF>

Please select which date you wish to attend

If you have any questions please contact Swindon Safeguarding Partnership via email: safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk

The sessions are to support professionals to work in partnership to provide a graduated response to the needs of children and families. The sessions will explore the following key themes relating to support and safeguarding and will include the use of case discussions:

- Make a good referral
- Application of levels of need (*thresholds*)

The sessions are face to face and facilitated by local multi-agency professionals working in Swindon. Places are limited so please ensure you book your place.

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Booking your place: Click on the <https://forms.office.com/e/Uf7Zx8sZEF>



Protecting Children in a Digital Age

Understanding Internet Safety



Protecting Children in a Digital Age Understanding Internet Safety

This session will be facilitated by Cybersecurity Expert, Simon Goodwin and Youth and Early Intervention Officer Jon Akehurst, Wiltshire Police.

This is an opportunity for professionals to find out more about protecting children in the digital age and will focus on the following topics:

- **Understanding Online Risks:** Explore the most common threats children face online, including cyberbullying, predators, and exposure to inappropriate content.
- **Practical Safety Tips:** Learn actionable strategies to keep your family safe, such as privacy settings, parental controls, and recognizing red flags.
- **Digital Footprint Awareness:** Understand the importance of managing your family's digital footprint and the long-term implications of online activities.
- **Safe Social Media Practices:** Discover how to guide your children in using social media responsibly and safely.
- **Protecting Personal Information:** Gain insights into safeguarding your family's personal data against identity theft and fraud.

This session will be delivered face to face and is **free** to attend.

Date and time: Thursday 12th November 2025 1130-1330

Owing to capacity at the venue you are advised to book early.

To book a place please click on the link below:
<https://forms.office.com/e/79XdChbSyz>

If you have any questions please contact Swindon Safeguarding Partnership via email: safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk

This is an opportunity for professionals to find out more about protecting children in the digital age and will focus on the following topics:

- **Understanding Online Risks:** Explore the most common threats children face online, including cyberbullying, predators, and exposure to inappropriate content.
- **Practical Safety Tips:** Learn actionable strategies to keep your family safe, such as privacy settings, parental controls, and recognizing red flags.
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- **Safe Social Media Practices:** Discover how to guide your children in using social media responsibly and safely.
- **Protecting Personal Information:** Gain insights into safeguarding your family's personal data against identity theft and fraud.

This session will be facilitated by professionals from Wiltshire Police.

It is delivered face to face and is **free** to attend.

Date and time: Thursday 12th November 2025 1130-1330

Please click on the link to book a place: <https://forms.office.com/e/79XdChbSyz>



Understanding Medical Examinations for Child Sexual Abuse Concerns



SSP Learning Event

Understanding Medical Examinations for Child Sexual Abuse Concerns

This session will provide you with:

- An overview of the referral pathway for medical examinations at The Bridge (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and services offered.
- An overview of the referral pathway for medical examinations at GWH and the services offered.
- What happens during a medical examination and the restorative and therapeutic benefits for children and young people.

This is a free online session and facilitated by Dr Claire Broomfield, Named Doctor Safeguarding Children.

Date and time: 09:30 – 11:00 – Tuesday 14th October 2025

This session will provide you with:

- An overview of the referral pathway for medical examinations at The Bridge (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and services offered.
- An overview of the referral pathway for medical examinations at GWH and the services offered.
- What happens during a medical examination and the restorative and therapeutic benefits for children and young people.

This is a free online session and facilitated by Dr Claire Broomfield, Named Doctor Safeguarding Children.

Date and time: 09:30 – 11:00 – Tuesday 14th October 2025

Join on the day by clicking the Microsoft Teams link below:

[Join the meeting now](#)



SSP Practitioner Forum

- The theme for the practitioner forum is Child Sexual Abuse
- **Date/time:** 15th October 2025 from 9.30am to 11.30am
- This will be online via MS Teams
- This will include an update on national and local learning and a presentation by colleagues from the Disabled Children's Team – Communicating with Disabled Children and Young People in the context of this theme.
- We also want to hear from you about your experience of working with children and families.
- There is no need to book you can join on the day by clicking on this link:
[Child Sexual Abuse](#)



Modern Slavery Awareness Event

The Medaille Trust as part of modern slavery awareness week will be hosting an in person event on October 16th from 12.30 - 2 pm at the SBC Council Chambers.

About the event: Ten years ago, the Modern Slavery Act was introduced with the purpose of protecting the most vulnerable and putting an end to exploitation. Yet a decade on, modern slavery has not disappeared. It remains a hidden crime—happening in our communities, on our streets, and sometimes even in plain sight. This Anti-Slavery Week, we are hosting an event to shine a light on this reality. We will reflect on the progress made, confront the challenges that remain, and explore the ways we can all be part of the solution. The event will focus on the real impact of modern slavery in our local community, and you will hear powerful accounts of survivors. **Change begins when we refuse to look away.** Join us as we mark ten years of the Modern Slavery Act, honour survivors' voices, and commit to building a future free from exploitation and slavery.

Event link here: [Anti- Slavery week - Modern Slavery awareness Tickets, Thu, Oct 16, 2025 at 12:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Please share with all of your colleagues.



The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse and Recovery

This session will provide you with:

- An overview of the definition of child sexual abuse
- Prevalence of child sexual abuse
- The impact of child sexual abuse on family/home, school, relationships and mental wellbeing.
- How to support recovery from sexual abuse.

This is a free online session and facilitated by Jo Holder and Kathleen Kinloch from Barnardo's Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project.

Date and time: 09:30 – 1030 – Monday 20th October 2025

Join on the day by clicking the Microsoft Teams link below:

[Join the meeting](#)



SSP Learning Event

The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse and Recovery

This session will provide you with:

- An overview of the definition of child sexual abuse
- Prevalence of child sexual abuse
- The impact of child sexual abuse on family/home, school, relationships and mental wellbeing.
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This is a free online session and facilitated by Jo Holder and Kathleen Kinloch from Barnardo's Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project.

Date and time: 09:30 – 1030 – Monday 20th October 2025

Join on the day by clicking the Microsoft Teams link below:

[Join the meeting](#)

If you have any questions please contact Swindon Safeguarding Partnership via email: safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk



Local Policies, Procedures and Guidance for Professionals

- **South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP)**
<https://swcpp-swindon.trixonline.co.uk/>
- **Swindon Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) children and young people policies and guidance**
https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/14/policies_and_publications/67/children_and_young_people_policies_and_guidance
- **SSP webpages for professional's full directory:**
https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/15/for_professionals
- **NEW guidance:** [Guide to safeguarding and supporting young people - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- **NEW guidance:** [Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Recording in the Video archive - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#) – recorded webinar - understanding local pathways for supporting those impacted by child sexual abuse.

Some useful webpages are included below:

- [Child Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Early Intervention Youth and Community Strategy](#)
- [Child Exploitation and Harm Outside The Home](#)
- [Request for help and support](#)
- [The Right Help at The Right Time](#)
- [Neglect](#)
- [Harmful Sexual Behaviour](#)
- [Learning from reviews](#)
- [Information sharing and consent](#)
- [Professional curiosity](#)



Useful SSP Resources – 7 Minute and Practice Briefs and eLearning

- [Child Q - safeguarding practice review - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Child sexual abuse - Intra-familial sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, peer-on-peer abuse and consent - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Practice brief - female genital mutilation October 2022 - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Parents guide to online exploitation - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Language practice briefs for those at risk of exploitation - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Resource pack - Professional Curiosity - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Trauma-informed practice learning from reviews - Practice brief - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Saraha's Law and CSODS – child sex offender disclosure scheme - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Capturing the voice of the child in records - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

eLearning

- [Supporting and Exploring Child Development \(awareness level\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation - 'Keep them safe' - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)



Local Support Services

This is not an exhaustive list.

Please view the websites for further information about the services provided.

- SARC The Bridge - Help after rape and sexual assault (thebridgecanhelp.org.uk)
- First Light Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Swindon & Wiltshire - First Light
- Animation: Sexual assault referral centres animation (youtube.com)
- Barnardo's Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project [Welcome to Barnardo's Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project | Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project](#)
- FearFree: Swindon and Wiltshire Sexual Violence Therapeutic Service - FearFree
- Letting the Future In NSPCC therapeutic service for children who have been sexually abused. Find out more via this link <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families/letting-the-future-in>. To make a referral please Contact NSPCC Swindon on [01793 683100](tel:01793683100)



Local Support Services

- We Stand support for families impacted by child sexual abuse.
- Victim Support: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/you-co/types-crime/>
- Swindon survivor pathway is a guide for anyone wanting to know more about specialist sexual violence support services in Swindon
<https://www.survivorpathway.org.uk/swindon/>
- BeU Swindon - FREE, Early Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Support service for Children and Young People in Swindon. Website: beuswindon.co.uk
- [Out of the Can Swindon LGBTQ+ youth](#) LGBTQ+ Youth Group in Swindon
- You can also find out more about local services by searching on this webpage [Get support | CSA Centre](#)



Out of the Can+ is a youth group for LGBTQ+ young people.



We're based in Swindon and meet in the town centre on Tuesday evenings. We provide a safe space where you can meet other young people like you.

We have lots of interests and do a range of fun activities throughout the year, including:

- Table tennis/ Card games etc
- Learning about queer history
- Cool science activities
- Arts & crafts projects
- Film/ Pizza nights
- Halloween party
- Go to Swindon & Wiltshire Pride



We run two different groups each week:

GROUP 1 is for young people in Year 8 - Year 10 (aged between 12-15 years old): 5:00pm to 6:30pm

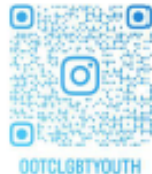
GROUP 2 is for young people in Year 11 - College (aged between 15-19 years old): 6:45pm to 8:15pm

We welcome all LGBTQ+ young people and have a diverse group of members representing different ethnicities, abilities, and neuro-diversity.

If you'd like to join Out of the Can+, then send us a message through our website at: outofthecan.org or scan our QR code.



Keep up to date with our news and follow us on Instagram.



Listen to us, Encourage us, Believe us, And we will thrive.

Out of the Can+ LGBTQ+ Youth Group in Swindon

Offers a safe space for young people who feel they belong to the LGBTQ+ family. There is a diverse group of members representing different ethnicities, abilities, and neuro-diversity.

There are two groups on Tuesday evenings in Swindon town centre (*to keep it a safe space, the location is not advertised*).

Group 1: anyone in Year 8 - Year 10 (Ages 12 - 15), and runs from 5pm - 6:30pm.

Group 2: anyone in Year 11 - College (Ages 15 - 19), and runs from 6:45pm - 8:15pm.

Sessions and all activities are free to attend, and run throughout the year including most school holidays.

Find out more by visiting the website: Out of the Can Swindon LGBTQ+ youth

There is also a short film [Watch: The Me I Want to Be](#)

NSPCC Schools Service

The NSPCC provide a range of free resources to support schools in education children about Sexual Abuse.



Including:

- Talk PANTS – aimed at 3-11yrs
- Speak out Stay safe – aimed at 5-11yrs
- Talk Relationships – aimed at 11-18yrs

All programmes include resources suitable for pupils with additional needs.



NSPCC - Primary

Talk PANTS – [search NSPCC Learning PANTS](#)

Simple conversations can make a big difference and that's what **Talk PANTS** is all about.

Talk PANTS aims to encourage and enable professionals, parents, carers & other safe adults to feel confident to have simple, age-appropriate conversations with children (aged 3-11) to help protect them from sexual abuse.

Our updated resources include:

- Teaching Guidance
- Lesson Plans, PowerPoints and resource sheets for year groups from nursery to Y6
- Display Pack
- SEND lesson plan and supporting Makaton resources
- Parent/carers letter template and guides



Speak out Stay safe – [search NSPCC Learning Speak out Stay safe](#)

Teach children about the different types of abuse in an age-appropriate, child-friendly way and to empower them to speak out to a safe adult if they need to.

Resources include:

- Teaching Guidance
- Lesson Plans, PowerPoints and resource sheets for year groups R - Y6
- Display Pack
- SEND lesson plan and supporting Widgit resources – NEW this Autumn!
- Parent/carers letter template and guides
- Free volunteer-led Workshops for Y2, 5 and 6 where we have availability



NSPCC - Secondary

Talk Relationships – *search NSPCC learning Talk Relationships*

Talk Relationships supports secondary school teachers to confidently deliver sex and relationships education. We want all young people to understand healthy behaviours in relationships and recognise their right to be safe, heard and respected. And we want them to know how to get help from a safe adult if they need it.

Talk Relationships consists of a suite of **FREE** resources that schools can use to deliver high quality sex and relationships in their settings.



**Talk
Relationships**



Talk Relationships includes:



An **e-learning course for educators** to help them feel confident when delivering sex & relationships education



An **e-learning course for school leaders**; implementing a whole school approach



15 lesson plans created by experts from PSHE Association & NSPCC



6 specialist lesson plans for young people with **SEND/ASN/ALN**



A **dedicated helpline** to provide advice and guidance to secondary school educators who deliver sex education



A **Whole School Approach Framework** to sex and relationships education

TalkPANTS Insight Sessions

Sarah Smith - NSPCC Schools Service Co-ordinator for Swindon and Wiltshire, will be holding free 20min online insight session after school on the following dates to walk you through the Talk PANTS resources in more details.

Wednesday 15th October	4:00 – 4:20pm
Tuesday 21st October	4:00 – 4:20pm

These online sessions are open to everyone - why not join as a group as part of your staff meeting.

You can either email Sarah for the link to join a session - email: Sarah.Smith@NSPCC.org.uk or by completing the MS form – click on this [link](#).



Beyond Therapy Festival

- Beyond Therapy Festival focuses on Child Sexual Abuse and takes place in Bristol.
- This years event happened in the Spring and you can find out more about that and details of the 2026 event when published by clicking on the link below.
- Webpage: [Our Events - The Green House](#)





The Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse

Offers a range of resources <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/> including:

- **Signs and Indicators:** template for identifying and responding to concerns of child sexual abuse <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/signs-and-indicators/> also a supporting video: <https://youtu.be/Ox7PiWaqbnc>
- **Understanding medical examinations for child sexual abuse concerns:** [Understanding medical examinations for child sexual abuse concerns \(The CSA Centre\) – YouTube](#)
- **Communicating with children:** A guide for those working with children: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/communicating-with-children/>
- **Supporting parents and carers:** A guide for those working with families affected by child sexual abuse. <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/supporting-parents-and-carers/>
- **Key Messages from Research:** <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/key-messages/>
- [The impacts of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre](#)
- **Resources for Education:** a range of resources can be found on this webpage [Resources for education settings | CSA Centre](#)
- **12 part short film series:** distils key information from resources for professionals. <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/practice-resources/film-series/>
- **Introductory eLearning Course - Identifying and responding to intra-familial child sexual abuse:** relevant for anyone working with children <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/training-events/elearning/>
- **Events** some are free to attend details on this webpage: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/events/>



NSPCC Resources

- [Protecting children from sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [NSPCC \(2020\) Definitions and signs of child abuse](#)
- [Sexual abuse | NSPCC](#)
- [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)

Learning from case review briefings:

- [Child sexual abuse: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Understanding sexualised behaviour in children – NSPCC](#)
- [CSA Resources and Information for Professionals](#)
- [Statistics Briefing Child Sexual Abuse:
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/statistics-briefings/child-sexual-abuse](#)
- [Children and Young People's experience in disclosing child sexual abuse
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2023/disclosing-child-sexual-abuse-children-and-young-peoples-experiences](#)
- [PANTS resources for schools and teachers:
PANTS resources for schools and teachers | NSPCC Learning.](#)
- [Learning from Reviews
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/learning-from-case-reviews/child-sexual-abuse](#)

- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour includes a range of podcasts:**
 - [Podcast: harmful sexual behaviour in schools](#)
 - [Podcast: assessing sexualised behaviour](#)
 - [Podcast: preventing harmful sexual behaviour | NSPCC Learning](#)
 - [Podcast: preventing the sexual abuse of disabled children | NSPCC Learning](#)
- **Talk Relationships** [Talk Relationships: resources to deliver sex and relationships education | NSPCC Learning](#) a service to ensure secondary school-aged young people across all four nations can learn about sex and relationships in a safe education environment that recognises, responds to, and prevents abuse.
- **AGENDA.** [AGENDA: Promoting positive relationships in schools and communities | NSPCC Learning](#)
- **It's Not OK** [It's Not OK: online teaching resources | NSPCC Learning](#)
- **Podcasts/blogs:**
- [Podcast: Protecting boys from financially motivated sexual extortion | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Blog: Why language matters: how we talk about sibling sexual behaviour and abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Why language matters: why professionals need to talk about child sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Why language matters: why we should rethink our use of the term 'sextortion' | NSPCC Learning](#)

Other National Resources

- **Barnardo's** Child sexual abuse and exploitation | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)
- **UK Trauma Council has a range of resources and articles on childhood trauma** Website: UK Trauma Council
- Effects of CSA - Effects | The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (nctsn.org)
- **Recorded webinar Anti- social Media Webinar** - The violent, sexual and illegal content children are viewing on one of their most popular apps Anti-social Media Webinar - YouTube (2023 – Duration 1.20 minutes)
- **Stop it Now** - run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, the only UK-wide charity dedicated solely to preventing child sexual abuse. We are here for anyone with concerns about child sexual abuse and its prevention. Webpage – a range of information and resources - Stop It Now | Preventing child sexual abuse and FAQ s about child sexual abuse - Stop It Now
- Parents Protect
- Research (2024) Situational prevention: the practical approach to preventing child sexual abuse (lucyfaithfull.org.uk)
- Rights of Women Home | Rights of Women
- From report to court: A handbook for adult survivors of sexual violence | Rights of Women handbook which explains the different stages of the legal process.
- Understand, identify, intervene: Support young people in relation to peer-on-peer abuse, domestic and sexual violence | Rights of Women – legal guide for to find out more about legal options available to young people experiencing particular forms of violence.
- Welcome to Marie Collins Foundation
- Closer to home national resource



Online

- **Safer Internet** - Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre information for professionals and children, parents and carers
- **CEOP**: What is online child sexual abuse (ceop.police.uk)
- Online abuse | NSPCC
- Eliminating Child Sexual Abuse Online | Internet Watch Foundation IWF
- **Centre of expertise on CSA**: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/key-messages/key-messages-from-research-on-child-sexual-abuse-by-adults-in-online-contexts/>
- Welcome to Marie Collins Foundation – technology assisted child sexual abuse – information for children/young people, parents/carers and professionals working with young people.



Useful Resources for children, young people, parents and carers

The information on the next slides is not an exhaustive list – if you are aware of any additional resources then please let the safeguarding partnership know
email Safeguarding Partnership: safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk



Local Support Services

Please view the websites for further information about the services provided.

- SARC [The Bridge](http://thebridgecanhelp.org.uk) - Help after rape and sexual assault (thebridgecanhelp.org.uk)
- First Light Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) [Swindon & Wiltshire - First Light](#)
- [Sexual assault referral centres animation](#) (youtube.com)
- Barnardo's Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project [Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project | Swindon & Wiltshire Phoenix Project](#) (barnardos.org.uk)
- FearFree: [Swindon and Wiltshire Sexual Violence Therapeutic Service](#) - FearFree
- [We Stand](#) support for families impacted by child sexual abuse.
- [BeU Swindon](#) - FREE, Early Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Support service for Children and Young People in Swindon.
- You can also find out more about local services by searching on this webpage [Get support | CSA Centre](#)
- [Out of the Can Swindon LGBTQ+ youth](#) LGBTQ+ Youth Group in Swindon



Support for children/young people

In addition to some of the services on the previous slide:

- Childline - whether it's happening now or happened in the past, Childline can be contacted 24/7. Calls to 0800 1111 are free and confidential. Children can also contact Childline online.
- Childline has information and advice for children and young people about sexual abuse and rape and sexual assault.
- Victim Support: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/you-co/types-crime/>
- Swindon survivor pathway is a guide for anyone wanting to know more about specialist sexual violence support services in Swindon
<https://www.survivorpathway.org.uk/swindon/>
- Fearless - <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless/what-is-fearless>
- Shore: Home – Shore – safe space for teenagers worried about sexual behaviour
- [Out of the Can Swindon LGBTQ+ youth](#) LGBTQ+ Youth Group in Swindon

Out of the Can+ is a youth group for LGBTQ+ young people.



We're based in Swindon and meet in the town centre on Tuesday evenings. We provide a safe space where you can meet other young people like you.

We have lots of interests and do a range of fun activities throughout the year, including:

- Table tennis/ Card games etc
- Learning about queer history
- Cool science activities
- Arts & crafts projects
- Film/ Pizza nights
- Halloween party
- Go to Swindon & Wiltshire Pride



We run two different groups each week:

GROUP 1 is for young people in Year 8 - Year 10 (aged between 12-15 years old): 5:00pm to 6:30pm

GROUP 2 is for young people in Year 11 - College (aged between 15-19 years old): 6:45pm to 8:15pm

We welcome all LGBTQ+ young people and have a diverse group of members representing different ethnicities, abilities, and neuro-diversity.

If you'd like to join Out of the Can+, then send us a message through our website at: outofthecan.org or scan our QR code.



Keep up to date with our news and follow us on Instagram.



Listen to us, Encourage us, Believe us, And we will thrive.

Out of the Can+ LGBTQ+ Youth Group in Swindon

Offers a safe space for young people who feel they belong to the LGBTQ+ family. There is a diverse group of members representing different ethnicities, abilities, and neuro-diversity.

There are two groups on Tuesday evenings in Swindon town centre (*to keep it a safe space, the location is not advertised*).

Group 1: anyone in Year 8 - Year 10 (Ages 12 - 15), and runs from 5pm - 6:30pm.

Group 2: anyone in Year 11 - College (Ages 15 - 19), and runs from 6:45pm - 8:15pm.

Sessions and all activities are free to attend, and run throughout the year including most school holidays.

Find out more by visiting the website: Out of the Can Swindon LGBTQ+ youth

There is also a short film [Watch: The Me I Want to Be](#)

Support for Parents /Carers

- ✓ Supporting parents and carers | CSA Centre
- ✓ Let's talk PANTS | NSPCC
- ✓ Talk Relationships: delivering sex and relationships education - NSPCC website
- ✓ Sarah's Law (Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme) | Wiltshire Police
- ✓ **Stop it Now** - Lucy Faithfull Foundation, UK-wide charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse includes information for anyone with concerns about child sexual abuse and its prevention – webpage: Stop It Now | Preventing child sexual abuse and FAQ s about child sexual abuse - Stop It Now
- ✓ Connected site for parents and carers - Parents Protect - tips and resources to support with safety planning.
 - ✓ Parents Protect - Leaflets for parents and carers
 - ✓ Parents Protect - Effects of sexual abuse on children
 - ✓ Parents Protect - Create a family safety plan
 - ✓ How to tell if a child's sexual behaviour is appropriate for their age - Parents Protect
 - ✓ Parents Protect - Internet safety handouts for parents and children
- ✓ Swindon survivor pathway - guide if you want to know more about specialist sexual violence support services in Swindon
<https://www.survivorpathway.org.uk/swindon/>
- ✓ Rights of Women Home | Rights of Women
- ✓ From report to court: A handbook for adult survivors of sexual violence | Rights of Women – explains the different stages of the legal process.
- ✓ Understand, identify, intervene: Support young people in relation to peer-on-peer abuse, domestic and sexual violence | Rights of Women – find out about legal options available to young people experiencing particular forms of violence.
- ✓ We Stand support for families impacted by child sexual abuse.
- ✓ Victim Support -
<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/>
- ✓ [Ivison Trust - We support families affected by child exploitation.](#)
- ✓ <https://www.bespaceaware.co.uk/>

Resources for previous monthly safeguarding themes

- [SSP Safeguarding theme March 2025 - all age exploitation - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Safeguarding theme May 2025 - Mental Health Awareness - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Safeguarding theme June 2025 - Child Neglect - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Safeguarding theme July 2025 - Self Neglect - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Safeguarding theme August 2025 - Think Family - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [SSP Safeguarding theme September 2025 - Prevent - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)



Email signature

If appropriate please add the text below to your email signature

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership's Theme for October 2025 is

Child Sexual Abuse

Find out more by visiting the SSP Events webpage
[Events - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

or follow us on

@SwindonSafegua1



#CSASpotthesigns
#Bcurious



**Child Sexual
Abuse**

**Think the
Unthinkable**



And finally...

Please let us know if the information and resources have been helpful to you.

You can give your feedback by clicking on the link below
<https://forms.office.com/e/uKEQ7bvt2Q>

or scanning the QR code.



It will take you two minutes!



Are you on our circulation list?

Do you want to be kept updated about SSP related matters such as training, learning resources and our newsletter?

You can sign up to our circulation list circulation list by clicking on this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/f7CRNF6Wax>

Or using the QR code.



You can ask to be removed at any time by emailing safeguardingpartnership@swindon.gov.uk

