

This pack gives you information about who we are, what is involved in volunteering on our Helpline, and about our Basic Helpline Training Course.

Before you read on, please check that you are available to attend **all** of the dates below.

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| **Session** | **Date** | **Time** |
| Selection Day | 10/03/18 | 9:30 – 16:30 |
| Violence against women and rape | 17/03/18 | 9:30 – 16:30 |
| Listening Skills 1 | 22/03/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Listening Skills 2 | 29/03/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Oppression | 05/04/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse | 12/04/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Listening Skills 3 | 19/04/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Listening Skills 4 | 26/04/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking | 03/05/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Listening Skills 5 | 10/05/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |
| Email and Text Emotional Support | 19/05/18 | 9:30 – 16:30 |
| Face to Face Emotional Support, and Record Keeping | 26/05/18 | 9:30 – 16:30 |
| Good Practice and Overview | 02/06/18 | 9:30 – 16:30 |
| Post Course Interviews | 07/06/18 | 17:45 – 20:45 |

Because each session builds on knowledge and skills gained in previous sessions we do ask that you attend every session. If you are unable to attend even one of the sessions we will not be able to consider your application.

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| **Who is SARSVL?** |
| Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds (SARSVL) is a Rape Crisis Centre. We are a member of Rape Crisis England & Wales.  We are a charity, and our mission is to support women and girls who have been affected by sexual violence of any kind, at any time in their lives.  We are a volunteer led service, run by women for women, and our Centre is a women only safe space.  We provide support through our helpline service, and through our Advocacy and Counselling services, as well as carrying out outreach and awareness raising work. |
| **Who can use our services?** |
| Our services are open to all women and girls in Leeds and beyond.  This includes Trans women and girls at any stage in their transition.  The services can be used by women and girls who have been raped or sexually assaulted, and also by the women around them—their friends, family and partners—who may also need support.  Our service is not available to men or boys, but we will provide initial support and help male callers find an appropriate service for their needs. |
| **What qualifications or experience do I need?** |
| You don’t need any special qualifications or experience to become a SARSVL Helpline Volunteer.  However, there are a few basic requirements that all Helpline Volunteers need to meet to be able to carry out the work on the helpline.   * Self identify as a woman * Be aged 18 or over * Be available to do one regular 3—4 hour shift each week. * Have basic literacy and numeracy. Good spelling or grammar are not important, but you must be able to read and write basic English. * Have access to email and/or a mobile phone. We can provide support to set up an email account. * Have a good level of spoken English. You don’t need to be a native English speaker, but you must be able to understand spoken English, including dialect, accents, and slang, and make yourself understood clearly and effectively. * Be able to use a telephone headset, and sit in an adjustable office chair for 2 –3 hours at a time. * Commit to being a Helpline Volunteer for a minimum of 12 months.   Please do think carefully whether you feel that you can carry out the work. You are the best judge of your ability. If you are unsure please contact us, as we can often provide support with access needs and learning. |
| **What do Helpline Volunteers do?** |
| Helpline volunteers:   * Provide emotional support and listening to women and girls on the phone, by email and SMS, and face to face. * Listen to callers talk about their experiences and feelings. * If the caller needs something we can’t help with, you’ll help her find a service that can help her. * Complete admin and paperwork. * Work alongside at least one other Volunteer * Attend two sessions of ongoing training per year to learn new skills and ensure a high standard of service on the helpline.   Helpline volunteers **do not:**   * Work alone * Tell women and girls what to do, or offer advice. * Answer legal or medical questions. * Tell women and girls anything personal about ourselves.   We’ll talk more about why this is important during the course. |
| **What training will I get?** |
| Your basic training, which all volunteers have to complete, is 12 sessions which cover a range of topics about sexual violence.  We want to prepare you with the skills to support any woman or girl, regardless of her background or what has happened to her. So the skills we teach are universal, and can be used to support **all** women and girls.  After you finish the course you will listen in to real helpline calls, so you can listen to experienced volunteers.  You will have a 6 month probation period. During that time you will attend two more training sessions. To pass probation you must demonstrate that you can deliver the service appropriately, and that you are reliable.  You are encouraged to carry on learning more in your own time, and SARSVL has a small resources library which you are very welcome to use. |
| **How will I be assessed? Is there an exam?** |
| There is no formal assessment or exam. Instead, as you go through the course you will be observed by your trainers. If the trainers think you need any extra support, or think there is a problem, they will speak to you privately.  You will also be asked to complete a Learning Journal for each session. This is a short report on what you’ve learned and how you feel.  It’s important that you think about how you are doing on the course, and speak to the trainers if you are worried about anything. |
| **What happens after the course?** |
| After you complete the training course you will have a post course interview. You will be given feedback and told whether you have passed the course. You can also discuss anything that's come up for you personally during the training.  You will then have an induction session where you will be shown the Helpline room and where to find everything.  Next, you will observe at least two helpline shifts. You will listen in to real helpline calls and take part in debrief after each call.  Once you feel ready, you will start taking calls yourself, with support from an experienced volunteer. |
| **I worry that listening to women’s stories might be upsetting for me. What kind of support is available?** |
| We understand that helpline work can be upsetting for volunteers, and that you need support. We have lots of support available. This includes:   * Regular group support sessions with an external facilitator. * Debrief after each call and shift with shift partners. This is a chance to talk through the call and discuss how you feel. It’s also a chance to learn and improve your call practice. * Peer support. Volunteers support each other, and you are encouraged to form friendships and bonds with other women, and to both ask for support and offer it to others. * Volunteer Coordinator. She is there to provide additional support and guidance if you feel you need it. For example if you can't shake a particular call from your mind, a chat with the Volunteer Coordinator can help.   We ask all volunteers to think about their own sources of support outside SARSVL. Remember that confidentiality rules mean you **can't** talk about the content of a call with anyone outside SARSVL, but you **can** talk about your feelings. |
| **Follow On Training** |
| After you have been on the helpline for 2 – 3 months, you will have a follow on training session. This will give you the chance to talk about any issues that have come up in your first few shifts. We’ll also give you a refresher on some of the basic skills.  You will also have the chance to tell us what you thought of the course and whether you think that it prepared you for the work of a Helpline Volunteer.  After 6 months you will attend a second follow on session. After this you will be told whether you have passed your probationary period. Once you have passed probation you will be a full Helpline Volunteer. |
| **Ongoing Training** |
| Once you are through probation you will be expected to attend two sessions of ongoing training each year. These sessions cover a wide range of topics that might not have been discussed in basic training.  You can make suggestions for topics you would like to see covered. Recent training topics include Working with Interpreters, Female Genital Mutilation, and Dissociative Disorders. |
| **I have some support needs – who should I talk to?** |
| If you have any additional support needs, please tell us on your application. A trainer will get in touch with you to talk about what you need.  If you’d like to talk to us about your support needs before you apply, please email the training coordinator on the address given at the end of this booklet. |
| **I have a criminal record – can I still volunteer?** |
| Most of the time a criminal record will not stop you from volunteering, but it’s important that you tell us about convictions. If you don’t, you’ll asked to leave the training course.  We carry out enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks on all our Helpline volunteers, so we will see any convictions, including ‘spent’ convictions.  This means that you should tick ‘yes’ on the application form if you have any prior convictions, even if they are considered ‘spent’.  We understand that telling us about your criminal record might be embarrassing. We won’t judge you, and we’ll keep everything you tell us confidential.  If you’d like to talk to us about your past convictions before applying, please email the training coordinator on the address given at the end of this booklet. |
| **I want to volunteer! What should I do now?** |
| Check that you:   * Meet the minimum requirements for the course, * Are able to attend every training session * Are able to do a weekly shift.   Complete the Service Delivery Volunteers application form which accompanied this booklet. Fill out the form as fully as you can.  Fill out the Equality and Diversity form. This isn't compulsory, and it will be separated from your application form. It helps us to ensure that we are recruiting a diverse group of women to the helpline.  Send your completed forms to us:   * By post to: SARSVL, PO BOX 826, Leeds LS1 9PN * By email to: [sarsvl.helpline.training@gmail.com](mailto:sarsvl.helpline.training@gmail.com) |
| **I’ve got a question – who can I contact?** |
| The training co-ordinator is your main point of contact for any questions or concerns during the application process and during the course.  You can contact her by email at sarsvl.helpline.training@gmail.com and can expect a response within 48 hours. |
| **I’m not sure the Helpline is for me – is there any other way I can volunteer?** |
| Yes! There are lots of ways to volunteer with SARSVL outside of the helpline. You could:   * Become a volunteer Advocate or Counsellor and work with women on a one to one basis providing practical support. * Join our Steering Group and help with administrative and policy decisions. * Join a sub group. We have groups that deal with Human Resources, Fundraising, Making Links, Advocacy, Communications, and lots more. * Fundraise for us. * Donate your skills and time. We would especially welcome plumbers, electricians and handypersons, as well as lawyers and accountants or women with experience in digital technology. * Something else that we haven't thought of! If you have a skill that you think we could benefit from, please do get in touch.   To find out more about volunteering with SARSVL, check out our website at www.supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk/volunteer or contact [info@sarsvl.org.uk](mailto:info@sarsvl.org.uk) |

**General Enquiries:**

e. info@sarsvl.org.uk

t. 0113 243 9102

**Training Coordinator:**

e. Sarsvl.helpline.training@gmail.com