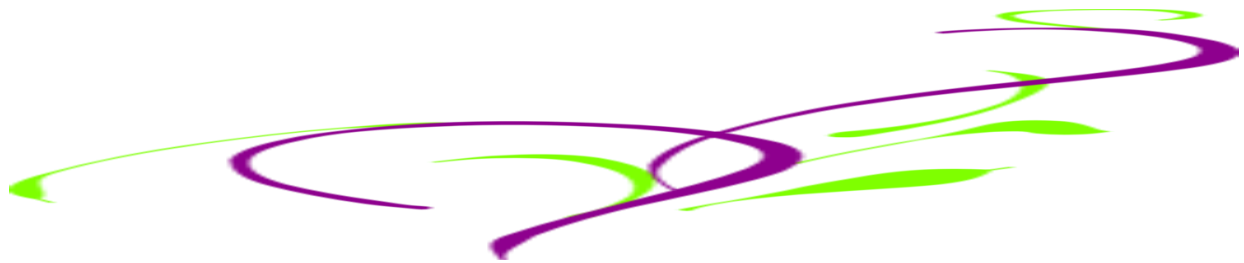


## SARSVL's Young Person's ISVA Service

### A Guide for Parents and Carers



**SARSVL Contact details:**

**Tel: 0113 243 9102**

**Email: [advocacy@sarsvl.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@sarsvl.org.uk)**

**Website: <https://supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk>**

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## About SARSVL

Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds (SARSVL) is the Rape Crisis service for Leeds. We are a specialist organisation offering a range of services to women and girls aged 13 and over who live in Leeds, and who have been through child sexual abuse (CSA), child sexual exploitation (CSE), rape, or any kind of sexual violence. We also welcome non-binary people who feel our women-centred approach is right for them.

We're specialist because we understand sexual violence, and abuse, the trauma it can cause, and the impacts it can have.

We offer three Services – Helpline, Counselling, and Advocacy (sometimes referred to as our ISVA Service). All of them are free, and independent of other agencies such as the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, and social services.

You have been give this Guide because your child has been referred to our Advocacy Service.

## Our Values

Our values shape all the work we do at SARSVL, and are at the very core of our three Services.



## SARSVL's ISVA Service

Our ISVA Service is an independent service working with women and girls aged 13 and over in the Leeds area, who have been affected by rape or sexual violence at any time in their lives, and who are considering reporting, or who have reported to the police.

Support is provided by an Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA). At SARSVL we have a specialist Young Person's (YP) ISVA who only works with women and young girls between the ages of 13 and 24.

ISVAs are specially trained independent advocates who provide crucial emotional and practical support throughout the criminal justice process - from making a report to the police, through to providing support at Court if the perpetrator is charged with an offence(s).

ISVAs can help with:

- Providing information about how to make a report to the police, and what happens once a report has been made;
- Liaising with the Police, Courts, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and other agencies;
- Keeping your child informed of developments in their case;
- Assisting with Court if there is a trial – such as arranging for your child to visit the court beforehand, informing them about their options around giving evidence, attending Court with them to provide support on the day they give evidence;
- Informing them of their rights and options within the criminal justice process, and making sure the police, and the CPS, are aware of their wishes, and decisions;
- Signposting, or referring them to other support agencies, with their consent, to meet any needs they might have which cannot be met by their YP ISVA;
- Providing Information on criminal injuries compensation.

## The Empowerment Model

You have been given this Guide because you are aware that your child has been referred to SARSVL for ISVA support. We completely understand that you will want to know who we are, and the kind of support we are providing to your child.

Sexual violence involves the perpetrator taking control over the victim/survivor, and that loss of control, and sense of being powerless, can lead to the victim/survivor being unable to set appropriate boundaries in their lives, and have difficulty trusting their own judgements.

At SARSVL we recognise that regaining a sense of power and control is a crucial part of the healing process, and in order to support your child to do this, we use the “empowerment model”.

The empowerment model means helping your child to reestablish a sense of control, and their own agency. It means allowing them to recognise their own strengths, and capabilities, helping them to find the information necessary to make their own decisions, and to take actions they are comfortable with.

If victim/survivors of sexual violence are not empowered to make their own choices, it can feel re-traumatising because they are again in a situation beyond their control.

It is for this reason that from the outset we will encourage young people to work with their ISVA on a one to one basis. In our experience we find that this helps to build a relationship of trust between the ISVA and the young person, and gives the young person time and space to make their own decisions, and reclaim control.

However, we do recognise that some young people will feel unable to meet, or speak, with their ISVA on their own, or they will be feeling very anxious about it. We will always be guided by what the young person wants, and needs, and if they feel that they cannot engage with their ISVA without their parent, or carer, then we will respect their wishes.

## How this Guide can help you

Throughout this Guide we use the word “child”, or “young person” to refer to anyone under the age of 18.

We use the term “victim/survivor” for someone who has experienced any form of sexual violence and abuse, recently, or in the past.

We use the term “sexual violence and abuse” to cover all forms of sexual harm, which includes rape, child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, sexual assault, sexual harassment, image based sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, so-called honour based violence, trafficking. This is not an exhaustive list.

We use the term “perpetrator” to describe the person who committed the acts of sexual violence.

We use the term “parent and carer” to include anyone who may have caring responsibilities for a child or young person – for example, a parent, foster carer, an adoptive parent, a grandparent, a step-parent, a sibling, or a member of the extended family.

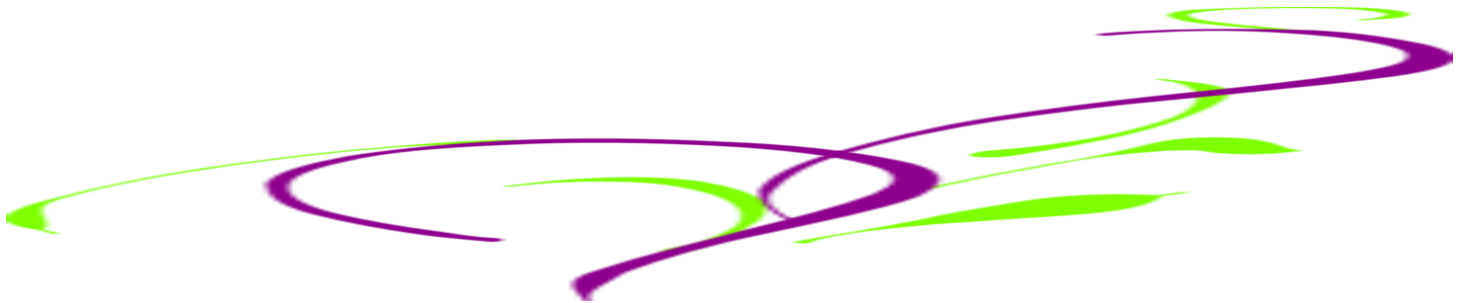
Becoming aware that your child has experienced sexual violence can be devastating, and can often cause complex and overwhelming feelings for parents and carers. You may be struggling to make sense of what has happened, and experience many confusing feelings of sadness, frustration, guilt, helplessness, and shock.

Whilst these feelings are all totally understandable, remember that what happened is neither yours, nor your child's fault. The only person responsible for the sexual violence is the perpetrator.

It is important, for you, as a parent or carer, to seek emotional and practical support, and look after yourself. When you are feeling well, physically and emotionally, it is easier for you to help and support your child.

This Guide will suggest ways of keeping yourself physically and emotionally strong whilst you are caring for, and supporting your child. *See the section Looking After Yourself (page 12).*

There is a list of useful contacts and support services at the end of the Guide *(page 14)*



## Responding to Disclosure

“Disclosure” is the word which is used when a victim/survivor tells somebody else that they have experienced sexual violence and abuse. If a report is made to the police, the person who was told is referred to as a “disclosure witness.”

When the victim/survivor is a child or young person, they may tell a parent or carer about what happened, but they may choose someone else to talk to. They may tell a friend, or a teacher at school, or another adult they trust – this can leave you feeling hurt and confused, and maybe even angry. But it is important to understand that there are lots of reasons why a child or young person would choose to speak to someone other than their parent or carer.

Here are some common reasons for why a child or young person who has experienced sexual violence may find it difficult to talk about what has happened:

- Fear about what the perpetrator will do if they find out. Perpetrators of sexual violence often use manipulation, and/or threats so that the victim/survivor feels too scared to tell anyone;
- Fear of the impact on the family unit, particularly if the perpetrator is another family member, or someone who is trusted by the family;
- Fear of being blamed, or judged;
- Fear of being taken into care;
- Fear of not being believed;
- Shame and discomfort about talking about very personal and intimate experiences;
- Fear of being forced to talk to the police

- Fear of feeling responsible for other people's reactions, and emotions, to disclosures of sexual violence

Remember, these are the child or young person's perceptions of what might happen, and these kind of thoughts and beliefs make it incredibly difficult for them to speak out.

However it was that you became aware of what happened – whether your child told you first, or you found out from someone else, the most important and simple thing you can do to support your child is listen to them, and believe them :

- Believe what your child says, and listen calmly. Allow them to talk at their own pace, and in their own words. Try, if you can, to remain calm – you may be feeling very upset, shocked, and angry, but be conscious of the emotions you are showing, as your child may think you feel this way towards them.
- Reassure them it is not their fault, and they are not in trouble.
- Remain patient – they may appear confused, and be unable to find the right words. Don't push for details if your child isn't ready to tell you.
- Take them seriously, and treat all their feelings equally seriously.
- Try and encourage them to do things for themselves – you can empower them to affirm their own strengths and capabilities by not doing for them what they can do for themselves.
- If the perpetrator is a close family member, family life is likely to be impacted – if you can, try and keep normal routines going as far as possible.
- Support them to explore their options – it's important that your child feels in control of what happens next. Discuss options with them, but avoid telling them what to do – allow them to make their own choices.
- You can't change what has happened, but you can let your child know that you love them, and are there for them.
- Remember to think about what you need, and seek support if you need it. In order to take good care of your child, you must take good care of yourself.

Children and young people often tell us that in the aftermath of sexual violence, their parents/carers have become strict with boundaries, such as limiting how much time they are allowed with friends, or taking their phone off of them. Whilst this is a completely understandable reaction, and comes from a place of care and worry for your child, young people tell us that they then feel like they are being punished for what happened, that they are to blame, and that it feels as though their parents/carers no longer trust them.

Of course, it is important to keep your child or young person safe, and some boundaries will need to be put in place and will be considered reasonable. However, where possible it is best to try and agree boundaries collaboratively with your child, and explain the reasons behind them, and reassure them they are not in trouble, or being punished.

For a parent/carer, it can be a very difficult balancing act between allowing your child some freedom, whilst protecting them and making sure they feel safe. However, if you work **with** them, as opposed to imposing rules **on** them, your child is more likely to feel contained, safe, and trusted, and respect the boundaries you have agreed on together.

## Sexual Violence as Trauma

Sexual violence is a violation of body, trust, and mind. This means that it is experienced as a trauma by the nervous system.

The word “trauma” can be used to describe any event which:

- Threatens a person’s safety
- Is unexpected, or not a normal experience
- Is beyond a person’s perceived ability to cope
- Impacts the person’s everyday life and functioning

Different people will experience different events as traumatic, and what is traumatic for one person, may not be for another. Sometimes people who are not well informed about trauma will say things which they think are being helpful, such as “she’s only young, she’ll get over it”, or “it could have been worse”, but that’s not how our brains work. When our safety is threatened, it is natural and normal to find it difficult to cope for a very long time after the event, and everyday life can be impacted as a result.

## Responses to Trauma

When a person has experienced sexual violence, it is likely that they will also experience deep behavioural, emotional and physical reactions to this trauma. **These reactions are normal reactions to an abnormal event.**

You might have noticed changes in your child which you are finding difficult to manage and/or understand.

Some common **behavioural reactions** include:

- Flashbacks – having vivid images of the traumatic incident(s), making the person feel like the incident is happening all over again
- Nightmares
- Panic attacks
- Hyper-vigilance eg: jumping at the slightest noise, overly aware of everything going on around them
- Dissociation/zoning out – this might look like the person is daydreaming, in a world of their own
- Over-reacting/shouting or swearing/”kicking off” ie: a tantrum or meltdown which seems out of proportion to what is happening in that moment
- Changes in eating patterns
- Cutting or self-harm
- Not turning up to school/college
- Isolating from others
- Twitching, tapping fingers, jiggling legs etc
- Drinking and/or drug use
- Personal neglect



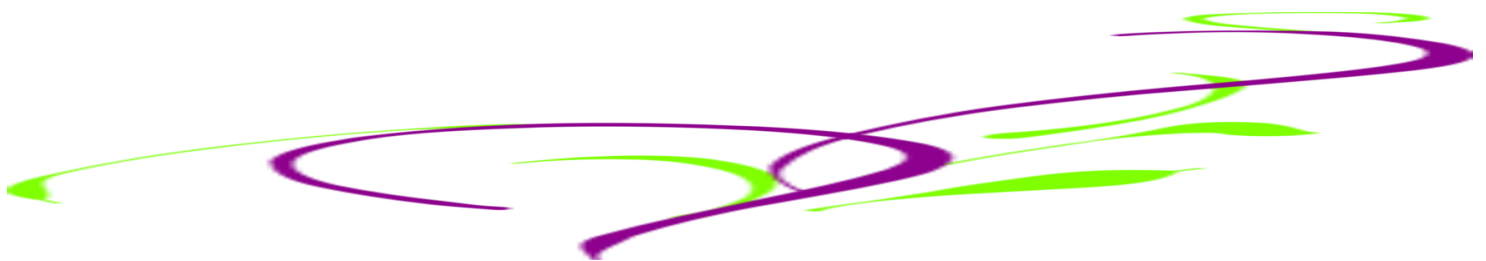
There are always reasons, emotions, or thoughts behind changes in your child's behaviour.

Some common **emotional reactions and thoughts** include:

- Guilt: it was my fault/why didn't I run away etc
- Self-loathing: I am dirty and disgusting
- Irritability: nobody understands me
- Low self-esteem: I am worthless
- Low self-confidence: I can't do this
- Mistrust: I can't trust anyone
- Anger: why me?
- Hopelessness: I will never be the same again
- Anxiety: nobody will believe me
- Depression: I don't want to be here any more/what's the point?
- Insecurity: what will people think of me?
- Fear: I don't feel safe

Some common **physical reactions** include:

- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Sweating
- Trembling or shaking
- Muscle tension
- Dizzy spells/funny turns
- Palpitations
- Stomach ache
- Shortness of breath
- Tightness in chest
- Tiredness and exhaustion
- Hyperactivity



## Suggested Techniques to Support Your Child

Unfortunately, many trauma responses in a child or young person can come across as “bad behaviour” – and this can mean that they are punished or reprimanded for behaviours that they have little or no control over.

Their behaviour could lead to them getting into trouble at school or college for example, and their academic performance might deteriorate because they are having trouble concentrating, or they are having periods of absence.

Their friendships might be affected, and they might find it difficult to interact with other people generally.

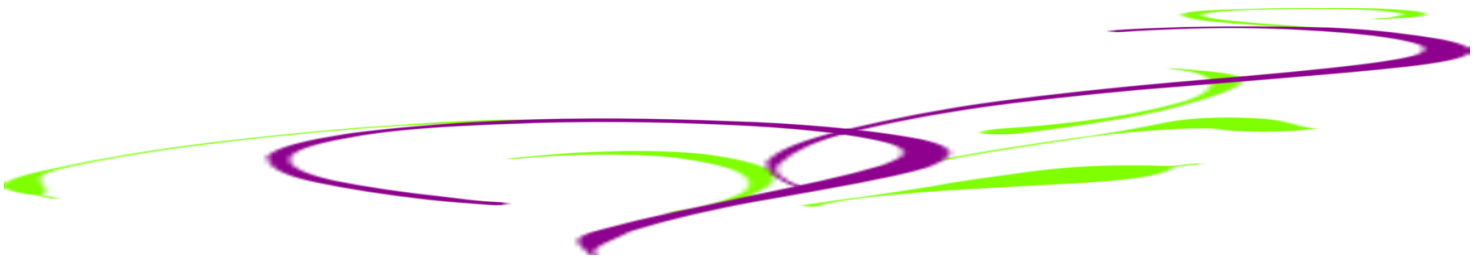
As a parent, or carer, you may find these impacts on your child very difficult to manage, and this will be upsetting and stressful for you.

It's important to remember that when someone experiences sexual violence, no matter how old, or young they are, they have had their power and control taken away by the perpetrator, so many behaviours are about trying to take back their power and control. Your child's behaviour, even when it is incredibly difficult to manage, is a normal response to an abnormal event.

Here are some suggested techniques which may help you to support your child. Please remember that they are only suggestions – and some may work better than others, and there are some which may not feel comfortable for you, or your child.

- **Time** – you may find that your child demands more of your attention, or they may withdraw from you. Try to set aside time that they know is specifically for you to spend time together, and as far as is reasonable, let them make the decision as to what you do with the time;
- **Talk** – you may feel tempted to not talk about the difficult emotions your child may be experiencing because you don't want to cause them any more distress. However, talking about emotions can be really helpful, and enable them to deal with difficult feelings. Talking will also help them to process those feelings, rather than keeping them bottled up inside. Helping your child to name their emotions, and talk about how they are feeling can make it easier for them to cope;
- **Boundaries** – boundaries are essential for children and young people to feel safe. When they push boundaries it is their way of checking the boundary is secure, and you are keeping them safe. This is a normal part of childhood, especially as they grow older. However, if your child has experienced any form of sexual violence, they may test boundaries even more as they will not be feeling that their world is safe. This can be very challenging for you as their parent or carer. Remember to try not to take their behaviour personally – if you are a safe adult for your child, you are most likely to see the worst of their behaviours because they know you will still love them. Try explaining why the boundary is necessary for you, and be predictable and consistent in the behaviours you expect from your child. Try to be patient, and let them know when you have noticed positive changes (*Also see pg 7 – Responding to Disclosure*).
- **Self-esteem & Confidence** – remember that it is very common for victim/survivors of sexual violence to have very negative thoughts about themselves. It can be very difficult for them to receive compliments, or praise. However, the words you use with your child can be very powerful, and can really help them to develop self-esteem and confidence. You may find that your child ignores you, or dismisses what you are saying, but that doesn't mean that they are not hearing you, and taking it in.

- **Grounding techniques** – grounding is a technique which focuses on the here and now, and helps to slow down our minds, and restore us to a state of calm. It is an extremely useful tool for victim/survivors of sexual violence as it can help them to manage extreme feelings. The next section explores grounding techniques in more detail.



## Grounding Techniques

Grounding can be a useful technique for people dealing with self-harm, flashbacks, panic attacks, difficult emotions, and any kind of stressful situation.

Victims/survivors of sexual violence may experience some, or all of these – and if they have reported to the police, navigating the criminal justice system can be extremely stressful, on top of any other difficulties they may be experiencing.

So, what is grounding?

- Grounding is all about staying in the here and now by focussing on the present, and not the past, or the future.
- Grounding can be done anywhere, and at any time, and nobody needs to know you are doing it.
- Grounding can be done when you are on your own, or with someone else.
- Grounding can be used as soon as someone feels like harming themselves, using a substance eg: drugs/alcohol, or dissociating from their surroundings.
- It is best to keep eyes open whilst practicing grounding.
- Grounding is more than just a relaxation strategy. It can be used to distract, and help a person to deal with extreme negative feelings, and it is believed to be more effective for trauma than relaxation techniques alone.

There are various different grounding techniques – some are mental and some are physical. Some will work better than others, and it can take time for a person to develop the techniques which work for them.

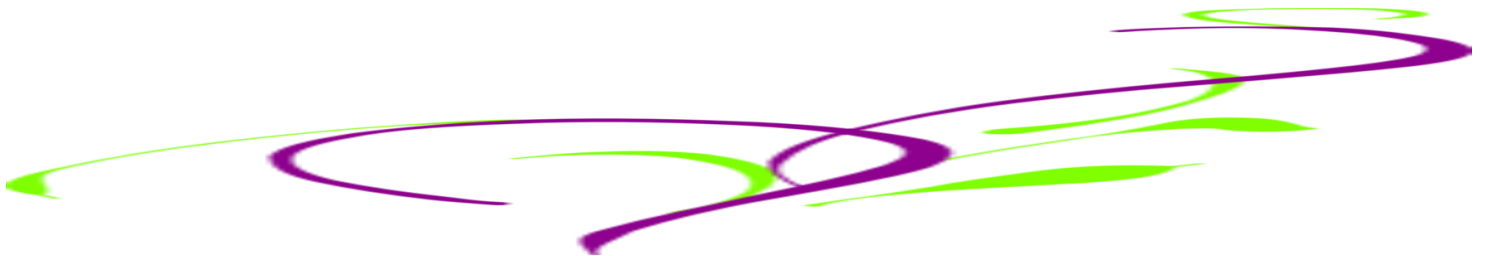
Explore the following suggestions with your child, and ask them if they would like you to practice them together, or would they rather be on their own.

## Mental Grounding

- **Observing surroundings** – look around your surroundings and describe them to yourself in detail, either in your head, or out loud eg: I am sitting in the living room, there is a TV in the corner, the carpet is cream ....
- **Mental games** – for example, go through the alphabet and think of types of animal, names, etc beginning with each letter
- **Safety statements** – have an affirmation you can repeat to yourself to remind you that you are safe, eg I am safe; I am OK; I will get through this
- **Use concentration** – eg say the alphabet to yourself backwards, go through times tables, try to say the lyrics to a whole song out loud.
- **Counting** – count all the green/red/blue objects you can see around you
- **Imagery** – picture people you care about, or imagine a safe place, or somewhere you would like to go eg the beach or beautiful mountains

## Physical Grounding

- **Water** – put your wrists under a cold tap, splash water on your face
- **Breathing** – focus on breathing deeply and slowly ( breathe in through the nose for a count of 4, hold your breath for a count of 4, breathe out through your mouth for a count of 8)
- **Touching** – feel the texture of different objects around you eg cushions, a pen, your chair, a glass
- **Smell** – smell something you know you like eg a favourite perfume, coffee,
- **Sound** – listen really hard and see how many different sounds you can identify
- **5-4-3-2-1 grounding** - look around and name 5 things you can see; 4 things you can feel; 3 things you can hear; 2 things you can smell; 1 thing you can taste
- **Clenching** – clench your fists for a count of 4 as hard as you can, then release – and repeat
- **Exercise** – intense exercise for short amount of time eg 10 star jumps, running on the spot for 30 seconds



## Looking After Yourself

The knowledge that your child has been harmed by sexual violence can be traumatising in itself. You may find that you experience your own trauma responses, which can be similar to those experienced by your *child* (see pgs 8-9, *Responses to Trauma*)

This is called vicarious, or secondary, trauma – and it means that your body and mind are dealing with similar feelings to those of your child. You may experience physical symptoms, such as headaches, sleep problems, weight loss/gain. You may notice behavioural changes such as increased drinking, eating, or smoking. You may find that your emotions are affected and you are irritable, anxious, or depressed – or you may feel completely numb.

These are all perfectly natural and normal responses when someone you love and care for has been harmed.

Like many parents, and carers, your instinct might be to ignore how you are feeling, and what you need, and prioritise the needs of your child. But, in order to take good care of your child, it is essential that you take good care of yourself. This is not a selfish thing to do – it's a sensible thing to do, and is for the benefit of your child.

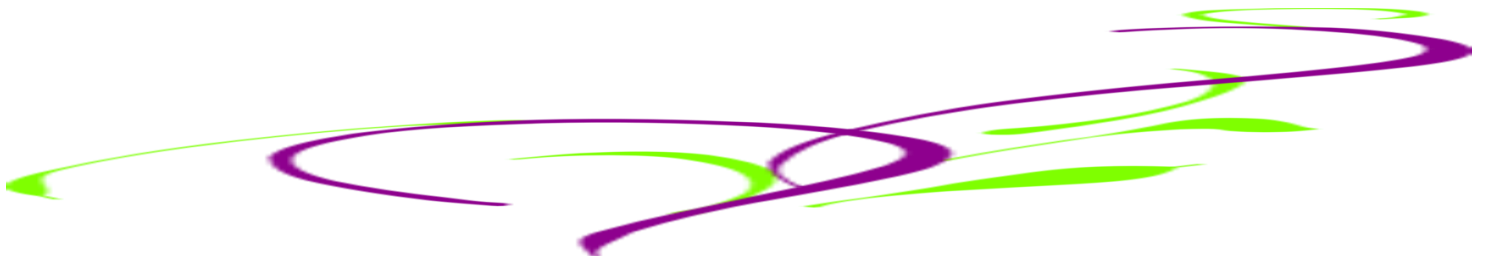
Looking after yourself is sometimes referred to as “self-care”.

The following suggestions are things you can try in those moments when you are struggling to cope, and feel overwhelmed by your emotions. They may help you to tolerate your feelings for long enough to stop the situation from getting worse. You might find that not every suggestion will work, so you may need to try a few before you feel any positive results.

- **Break down your day** – break it down into hours, and focus on getting through each bit at a time. Thinking about the whole day ahead of you can feel overwhelming, so plan what you need to do to get breakfast done, then the school run, then lunch, and so on
- **Maintain hobbies & interests** – try and continue to do the things you enjoy as this will help you to keep emotionally strong
- **Exercise** – try to get moving in some way every day. Exercise will help to deal with anxiety and stress. Choose an activity you will enjoy, and is realistic. Taking a walk is as beneficial as a full-on gym session.
- **Sleep** – if you are struggling to sleep, try and establish a good bedtime routine and stick to it so that your body gets into a rhythm. Try and take time to unwind and relax by having a bath, or a hot milky drink (avoid caffeine), read, or listen to music. Try and avoid using screens (TV, tablet, phone etc) for at least half an hour before going to bed.
- **Relax** – try and take a break from talking or thinking about what has happened to your child. Plan to do things which will be a distraction, such as meeting friends, watching a film, do a jigsaw .....
- **Food is Fuel** – make sure you eat regular meals, and make sure you take time to have drinks throughout the day, even if you do not feel hungry or thirsty. You need to have energy, and be properly hydrated to feel physically well enough to care for your child.
- **Mental health** – if you feel mentally unwell, or are struggling to cope, make an appointment to see your GP, and let them know how you are feeling. There is a list of contacts for mental health support services at the end of this Guide - *Page 14 Useful Contacts & Support Services*
- **Talk to someone you can trust** – it is often helpful to have someone who is non-judgmental who you can talk to in confidence. This could be family member, or friend, but you might want to consider talking to

someone who is trained professionally, like a counsellor, or specialist Helpline worker. SARSVL's Helpline is open to supporters of survivors, and contact details can be found on [Page 14](#)

- **Be Informed** – contact specialist agencies and organisations – see [Page 14 Useful Contacts & Support Services](#). By finding out more about trauma responses, coping strategies, and recovery, you will feel more empowered, and better equipped to support yourself, and your child.
- **Grounding techniques** – these can be useful for you, as well as for your child. Explore techniques that work for you and use them if you are suffering from panic attacks, anxiety, or stress.



We hope that you have found this Guide helpful. If you have any questions, or would like further information, about our ISVA Service, or any of the topics raised in this Guide, please contact us by email: [advocacy@sarsvl.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@sarsvl.org.uk), or call 0113 243 9102

## Useful Contacts & Support Services

**SARSVL Helpline:** [www.supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk/services/helpline](http://www.supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk/services/helpline)

**Phone:** 0808 802 3344 / **Text:** 07860022880 / **Email:** [support@sarsvl.org.uk](mailto:support@sarsvl.org.uk)

SARSVL's Helpline provides free, confidential and anonymous emotional support to women and girls in Leeds aged 13 and over who have been impacted by sexual violence at any time in their lives. You can call, text or email - please see our website for contact details, and opening hours.

**Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line:** Phone: 0808 500 2222 / Webchat: <https://247sexualabusesupport.org.uk/>

A free phone and online chat service for anyone aged 16, and over, in England and Wales, who has been affected by sexual violence. It is open 24/7, every day of the year.

**Police:** In case of immediate danger please call 999. For non-emergency calls please call 101

### Social Services

Information for people who need extra support to access services and feel safe living in Leeds.

**Leeds Adult Social care** 0113 222 4401 9am – 5pm / <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/adult-social-care>

**Child Social Services 0113 222 4403 9am – 5pm / <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/children-and-families>**

## **Mental Health Services**

**NHS 111 (Freephone) – open 24/7.** If you are worried about your mental health, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option

**NHS Leeds Community Mental Health Service/ <https://www.leedsandYorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/community-mental-health-service/>**

The Leeds CMHS provides specialist community mental health services for adults aged between 18 and 65, although this can vary depending on need. See website for further information, and how to make a referral.

**West Yorkshire 24 hour Mental Health Helpline – open 24/7 Phone 0800 183 0558 (Freephone)**

Offers support, advice and information for anyone in Leeds

**Live Well Leeds: 0113 219 2727 / <https://livewellleeds.org.uk>**

A mental health community-based support service for adults living in Leeds who have mild to moderate mental health support needs. It delivers a range of services that include one to one support, peer support, group work, befriending, and all services are based around recovery, maintaining wellbeing, and social inclusion. See website for further information.

**MindWell / <https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/>**

A mental health website for people in Leeds providing information about all the different kinds of support that is available in the City, and a range of psychoeducational tools to help with common mental health problems.

**Leeds Survivor-Led Crisis Service [www.lslcs.org.uk](http://www.lslcs.org.uk)**

A service-user led mental health charity providing support to people in acute mental health crisis through face to face , telephone, and video chat support, as well as offering group work. See website for further information.

## **Self-harm and Suicide**

**Samaritans: Call 116 123 (Freephone) / [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

24 hour helpline for anyone going through difficulties and wanting someone to talk to.

**Papyrus: Call 0800 068 4141 / [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)**

A charity providing confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide.

**Battle Scars: [www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk](http://www.battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk)**

Support group and services for anybody affected by self-harm to break down stigma and help people struggling to feel less alone.

## **For Parents/Carers**

**Ivison Trust 0113 240 3040; / <https://ivisontrust.org.uk>**

Iverson Trust works alongside parents and carers of children who are – or are at risk of being – sexually exploited by perpetrators external to the family. (Formally known as Parents Against Child Exploitation)

**We Stand: Call 0800 980 1958 / <https://www.westand.org.uk>**

We Stand offers a range of services for non-abusing parents and carers across the UK.

**Young Minds: Call 0808 802 5544 / <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents>**

Young Minds is a national charity committed to promoting and improving the mental health of all children and young people. It also provides parents/carers with information and advice, and there is a Parents Helpline and online chat support service.

**Family Lives: Call 0808 800 2222 / <https://www.familylives.org.uk>**

Family Lives is an organisation to support parents/carers offering Helpline, and online chat support, as well as parenting advice videos, and online courses.

**Parents Protect: Call 0808 1000 900 / <https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk>**

Parents Protect helps parents/carers to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation by providing child safety resources.

Also see **Night Owls** below (under Children & Young People)

### **Alcohol and Drug Services**

**Forward Leeds: Call 0113 887 2477 / [www.forwardleeds.co.uk](http://www.forwardleeds.co.uk)**

The alcohol and drug service in Leeds for adults, young people and families through group work, harm reduction work, and one to one work.

### **Children and Young People**

**Childline 0800 1111 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

Free, 24 hour confidential helpline for children and young people who need to talk. Trained counsellors are there to provide comfort, support and advice on any problems.

**NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 / [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)**

Working to protect children and prevent abuse, and providing support to children living in abusive situations.

**MindMate Leeds 0300 555 0324 (SPA Team) <https://mindmate.org.uk/about-mindmate/>**

Mindmate Leeds is the name for all the different ways children and young people in the city can get support with their mental health and wellbeing. This website is an information hub about support services, advice and information on common issues, self help guidance, plus young people's stories and experiences.

The Mindmate SPA is a service run by the NHS which helps children and young people find support with their mental health, and identify the most suitable service for them. See website for further information.



**Night Owls: Call 0800 148 8244 Open 8pm – 8am every night/ <https://www.lslcs.org.uk/services/night-owls-helpline>**

A confidential support line for children, young people, their parents and carers who live in West Yorkshire

Also see **Young Minds** above

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