



Male survivors



Easy Read Version

Male Survivors



This booklet can help if you are a male survivor of sexual assault, abuse or violence.

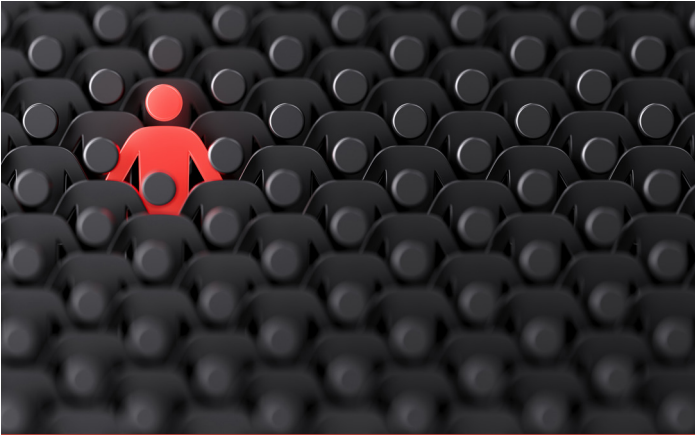


You may be feeling lots of different things such as shame, guilt, sadness, anxiety and many others.



We want to help you get control over these feelings. We will give you some tools to help you cope with how you feel about yourself.

We will also tell you how to get help if you are struggling.



There are lots of ways that being a male survivor of abuse can affect your life.

Everyone is different and will feel different things.



A lot of what male survivors feel will be the same as female survivors, but male survivors also have to deal with bad social attitudes.



This could be things like being told you should have fought them off as you are male or that you are not strong and so on.

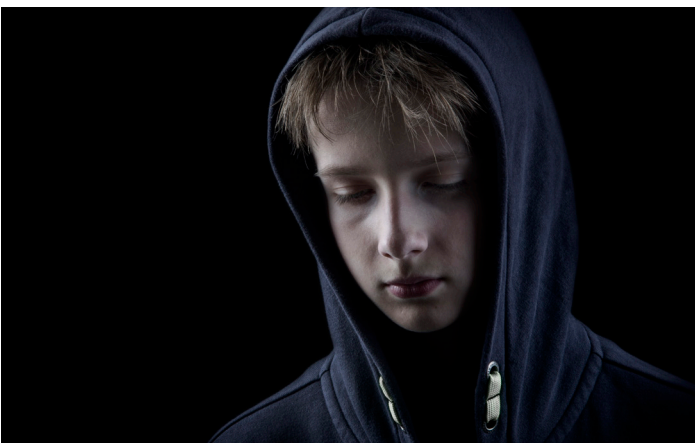


All abuse is wrong and harmful. It does not matter if you are male or female.





Here are things that you might hear about being a male survivor of abuse. Some are true and some are false.



FALSE - Sexual abuse is not more harmful to girls than boys.

Sexual abuse is harmful to everyone.



TRUE - Boys are more likely to have body injuries from the abuse than girls.



TRUE - Sexual abuse does not change your sexual identity.

TRUE - Sexual abuse on boys can make them aroused even if they don't want it to. This does not mean they enjoyed it or wanted it. It does not mean it is their fault it happened.



Understanding Shame



Shame is when you feel bad about yourself because of what has happened to you.

You might feel that you deserve other people to think badly of you.



Shame can cause anger and pain.

Shame can make you think bad thoughts and blame yourself for what has happened.



You might feel embarrassed, anxious, sensitive and humiliated.



Shame is not the same as guilt. You have not done anything wrong.



Just because you are a man does not mean you have to be strong and hide your feelings.

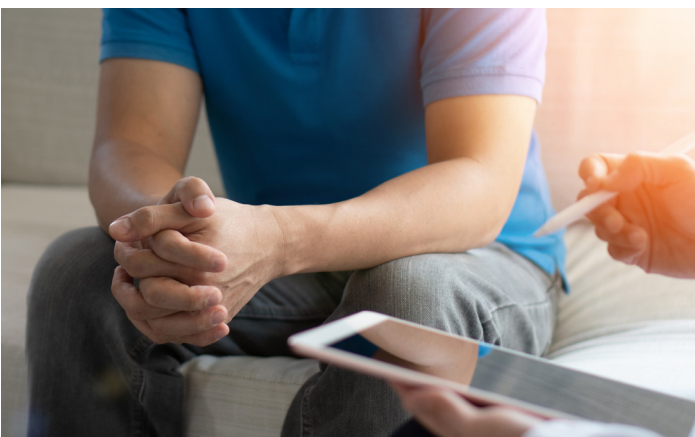


Try not to feel angry about the way your body responded when you were abused.

It is not your fault that it happened.



Shame can make you feel that you should have done something to stop the abuse from happening.



Feeling a lot of shame can be very harmful to you. It is important to get help and learn how to take control.





Self-compassion



Self-compassion is being kind and understanding to yourself when you are going through a hard time.



It is really important to do this if you are feeling shame because you are a male survivor of abuse.



Tell yourself every day that you are amazing and that you are a survivor.



Shout STOP to yourself when you have bad thoughts. Write down all the things you like about yourself.





Take better care of yourself by eating healthily and doing some exercise.



Be around positive people that support you.



Try something new like a hobby or exercise class.



Remind yourself that you are doing this because you want a happier life.



Building resilience



Building resilience is about being able to recover quickly from difficulties.



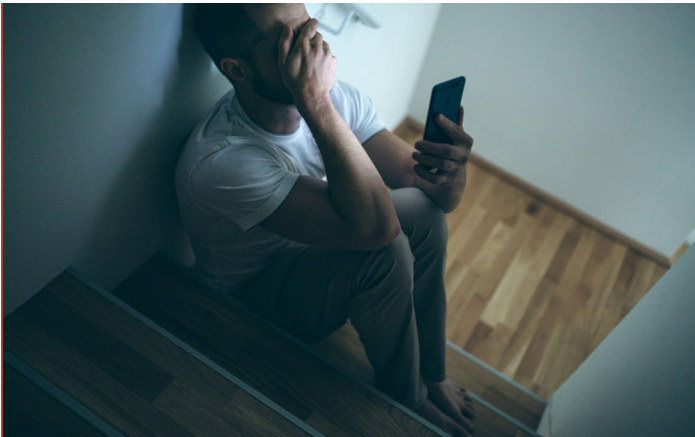
It will help you to recover and cope with the stress you might be feeling after your abuse.



There are lots of different things you can do to help build your resilience:

- Start writing down what you feel. Ask someone you trust to help you if you need to like a family member or friend
- Think about your problems and how you will deal with them. Write them down and tick them off when you have dealt with them





- Have some self-compassion. See page 7 of this booklet for ideas to help you



- Be around people who support and care for you



- Make a list of things to do which make you feel good about yourself. Make a plan to try something new



- Get help from a professional if you need to.



Getting help



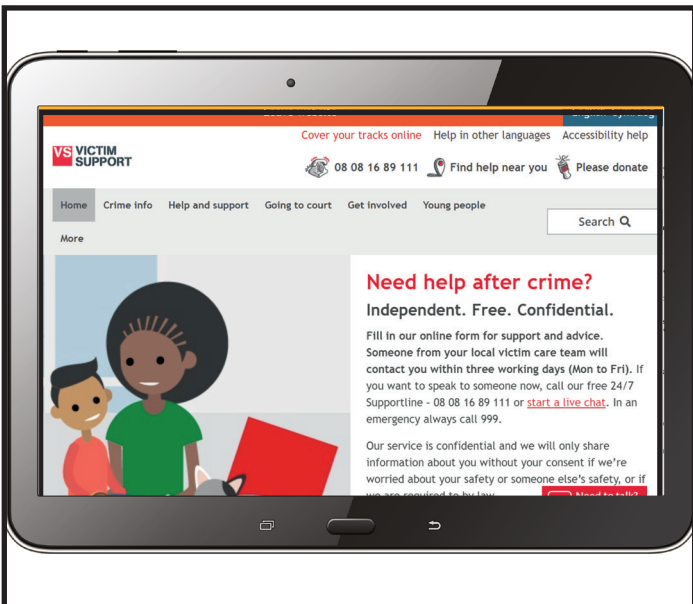
We are an independent charity offering free, confidential support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.



For more information and support contact us by:

Calling Supportline 08 08 16 89 111

Using Next Generation Text (add 18001 before any of our phone numbers).



Online at www.victimsupport.org.uk



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