



It HAPPENED to me Now WHAT?

I feel disoriented I can't believe this happened to me

Victims of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) manifest different personality disorders in response to the violations suffered. These include excessive fear, sporadic outbursts of anger, multiple personality traits, confusion, isolation, drug and alcohol abuse and are often in conflict with themselves and the society. All these are efforts to suppress the pain and anguish of Child Sexual Abuse. Feeling of guilt and shame are also frequent reactions.

Because of the cultural complex attached to CSA, victims often get adaptive blame themselves, doubt their own judgment, or wonder if they were somehow responsible for the assault. Since society has so many myths when it comes to sexual assault, the victim receives a lot of criticism and gets blamed for the violation.

The pains and trauma of CSA are quite real and often times victims get deceived that if they don't talk about it, the pain will go away. This is not true at all. Your feelings are real!

Talking about the assault is difficult, but talking releases help and help lessens the pain. Talking is the beginning of the road to recovery.

Physical Responses

Physical symptoms of CSA include headaches, pelvic pains, stomach aches, sleep disorientation, lack of concentration, engaging in risky behaviour and contemplation of suicide.

You Are Not Alone

Many children have been victims of sexual abuse. Making disclosures and reaching out for help will help deal with your feelings and help determine the next line of action which is a giant step towards recovery. Remember you have the right to decide what step to take.

"Talking about the assault ... is the beginning of the road to recovery"

This happened so long ago- Why can't I just forget it?

The trauma of CSA lasts for weeks, months, even years. The rate of recovery varies from individual to individual. Suppressing feelings and trying to deny it never happened are vain forms of denial. Some victims resort to one form of denial or the other during their recovery process. Unfortunately, denial only goes so far and may lead to unhealthy behavior patterns such as eating disorders, drug/alcohol abuse and post traumatic stress disorder. Child Helpline

(CHL) is available to address these issues. Contacting CHL on **0800 800 8001** can help resolve these issues.

Feelings are never the same after each case of CSA. Making disclosures and asking for help will teach effective ways of recovery.

I can't sleep. I haven't been able to eat. I am so angry, how could I have trusted him.

Do I Need To See A Counselor?

Seeking professionals who are experienced in handling CSA matters can be very helpful. A child psychologist and a Child Mental Health Services provider can be very helpful. CAC is a one stop service center on CSA matters. The Multi-Disciplinary Team approach provides for all care and services needed to recover from the abuse.

Medical And Legal?

Medical attention is very important for victims of sexual assault, no matter how long ago the incident took place.

Treatment and testing for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy are available. In addition, sexual assault referral centres can provide these services along with gathering forensic evidence, which can be of great value to the case. CYF in conjunction with its partner organisations provide medical and legal support to victims of CSA

Timely reporting of the abuse at the police station is key to effective prosecution. Most people believe a police report must be taken

immediately after a crime has been committed. However, it is not uncommon for victims to hesitate before reporting to the police, but the sooner the sexual assault is reported, the stronger the case for prosecution.

CYF Child Advocate will assist you in making a formal report at the nearest police station. This can be very empowering for victims, and helpful to law enforcement in other sexual assault investigations.

CYF counselors have necessary training and information to provide you with an

We Are Here To Help

The Cece Yara Child Advocacy Centre provides children who have experienced sexual abuse and their loved ones with:

- Crisis intervention and support
- Assistance and support through medical treatment.
- Accompaniment through interviews with law enforcement
- Information and referrals
- Short-term counseling
- Community and professional training programs.