

NEWSLETTER

Winter Edition 2021



Victim Support West Yorkshire ISVA Service

In this issue:

- What is an ISVA?
- What services do we provide?
- VAWG 16 Days of Action
- Volunteer Vacancies
- My Support Space
- Partner agencies
- And Finally....

What is an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)?

An ISVA is a trained specialist who provides advice and support to anyone who has been the victim of sexual assault or rape at any time in their life. Our ISVA service can offer practical support to deal with their circumstances, make referrals to other agencies for support around additional issues as well as offering emotional support.

Our aim is to help give victims the confidence; support and information they need to take control of their situation and move forward. Our service is available to all genders and ages. We can also offer emotional support through other victim support services. ISVAs are specially trained to respond sensitively to the needs of people who have experienced sexual violence, and will support victims to make choices about their life and empower them to take control over the decisions that are being made about their life.

What an ISVA can do

The ISVA can give face-to-face, telephone, text or email support. This includes:

- information and advice to help think through options
- working with other agencies to make sure that they are safe
- signposting to external agencies depending on their needs
- supporting with sexual health or attending genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinic specialists in sexual health
- provide support to victims through the criminal justice process if they decide they want to report
- liaise with police for regular case updates, if they choose to report the sexual assault
- access to male and female ISVAs
- providing support under the victims right to review
- attending court and supporting through the trial

What services do we provide?

As well as supporting all adults, we also provide the following specialist services:

Children and Young Persons ISVA

We have specially trained children and young persons ISVAs in our team. They can help to:

- Signpost the young person to appropriate services
- Try to address any particular anxieties and concerns
- Make sure that support is available in school or college
- Liaise with social care or other relevant services to ensure support is in place where possible
- Support parents/carers in order to support their child
- Support if the victim has to attend court. This will include before, during and after a trial

Disability ISVA

We have recently received additional Home Office funding for a Disability ISVA. The role has a focus on supporting those with diagnosed learning and physical disabilities.

The Disability ISVA role is to provide ongoing continuity, advocacy and impartial advice and information about all of their options, such as reporting to the police, accessing Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services, and specialist support such as pre-trial therapy and sexual violence counselling.

CSE Lead ISVA

Due to the increase and ongoing investigations in to both recent and non-recent CSE, we now have a CSE Lead ISVA. They work closely with the five different policing districts across West Yorkshire who are currently investigating reports of CSE, which form a part of larger operations.

The CSE Lead is liaising with officers involved in these enquiries, advising them on victim welfare and how best to support them throughout the investigation.

VAWG Awareness

November 25 marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls and the beginning of the 16 Days of Action. The campaign is to raise awareness of violence against women and girls and create a safe world where they can live free from fear and abuse. Violence against women and girls takes many forms including: FGM, domestic violence, rape and gang rapes, war crimes, terrorist attacks and hate crimes against women including acid attacks. Religiously motivated assaults, child abuse, exploitation and trafficking. We continue to advocate for women and girls on a local and national level.



PROMISE HERE

— NEVER —
COMMIT, EXCUSE OR
REMAIN SILENT ABOUT
MALE VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN

 **1 WOMEN A WEEK**
are killed by current
or former partner¹

 **10% OF WOMEN**
have experienced
sexual assault²

 **10,000 WOMEN**
sexually abused
every week³

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

 **6 OUT OF 7 VICTIMS ARE WOMEN⁴**

 **8 OUT OF 10 DEFENDANTS ARE MEN⁵**

1. World 2012 Crime Survey for England and Wales; 2. World 2012 Crime Survey for England and Wales; 3. 2011 Crime Survey for Great Britain; 4. Home Office; 5. Home Office

For more information visit <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk>

Volunteering Vacancies

Would you like to become an integral part of the work that Victim Support does by directly supporting victims, empowering them to move beyond crime by giving emotional and practical support? The recruitment process includes completing an application form, successfully passing an interview, undertaking a DBS check and Police Vetting form and finally completing online E-learning and workbooks lasting approximately 10 weeks.

If you think you are suitable for this role, would like to apply or would simply like some more information please follow the link:

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer>

A quote from one of our Wakefield volunteers, Peter:

"Volunteering for VS during the last covid limited year has been rewarding, enjoyable and given me a focus and purpose, which has helped me to get through the year. It has been frustrating having to work just on the phone, but I know that all the people we support have appreciated our efforts."
[#volunteers](#)

I'm so sorry I cannot be here today to express my gratitude to all the team at victim support. I first engaged their services in July of this year, from the very first telephone conversation right through all of our meetings. They have supported myself and my family through one of the most traumatic episodes of my life, all the team have been very professional and compassionate throughout this period. I don't know how or even if I could have got to where I am today without all their hard work, while all the team have been exceptional I would like to mention two people who are guiding me to a way of getting back my life and some closure on what I've been through, Dennis and Lorna. I thank you both from the bottom of my heart, you are both beautiful and compassionate people. I know we have a long way ahead of us, but I am confident with the continued help and support from victim support we'll get there.

Yours sincerely

(Service User)

*Quote from a service user supported by one our volunteers.



What is My Support Space?

My Support Space is an online resource designed to help you manage the impact that crime has had on you.

It is a **free, safe, secure and confidential** space where you can choose how you want to be supported after crime.

It's easy to create an account

Registering for an account with My Support Space is quick and easy. We don't need many details from you. Sign up at mysupportspace.org.uk/Moj

You can access My Support Space from any computer, tablet or smartphone with internet access.



How can it help me?

Once you've created your account you can access a range of tools to help you cope and move forward after crime.

You can work through a series of interactive guides which address your specific needs. The guides feature videos, techniques, activities and tips, and can be completed at your own pace. You can save your progress and revisit where you left off at any time.

You can also create an online diary, find useful resources and request direct support.

Who is it suitable for?

My Support Space is for people aged 16 and over who have been affected by crime and traumatic events and feel able to cope, but who may need help to move forward.

Create your account at mysupportspace.org.uk/Moj



Are you a victim of Male Domestic Violence?

Gasped are a Charity supporting male victims of Domestic Violence.

Are you a male experiencing domestic violence or have you been affected by it?

Would you like to speak to someone confidentially?

Our independent service offers 1-1 support, advice, information, signposting, liaising on your behalf, if required and counselling.

Please call us for support on **01924 787501** or email us at **resoucecentre@gasped.co.uk**

To find out more information, scan here to visit our website or search

www.gasped.org.uk/maledomesticviolence/



Giving Advice and Support
to People in Emotional
Distress.



5-5a Cheapside,
Wakefield, WF1 2SD





TCD was set up to support socially isolated individuals and groups and offer dance, fitness and wellbeing sessions in the local community.

Projects include Luke's Lads and Butterflies (as well as junior sessions), which are single sex workout sessions that include a mental health and wellbeing chat, dance classes for the elderly including ballet and ballroom, dance classes for physical and learning disabilities and projects for those at risk of CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation).

In order to keep our sessions sustainable and free at the point of access, supporters and committee members take part in fundraising events throughout the year such as bag packing, family fun days and completing challenges such as the three peaks, Total Warrior, marathons and other sporting events.

Luke's Lads



Luke's Lads, Lukes Lads Interim and Luke's Lads Juniors encourages and supports men to talk about their feelings in an alternative environment.

Luke's Lads was set up as male suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK, with many men suffering in silence when they experience feelings of sadness, loneliness or anxiety.

Studies have shown that exercise can release endorphins to energise your spirits and lift your mood. Talking isn't a sign of weakness, it's a way to take care of your wellbeing and help cope with problems.

Come and join our **FREE** male only circuit training and support session offering you a safe place to speak.

11-15 EVERY Wednesday from 4:00pm

16-19 EVERY Tuesday 6:45pm

20+ EVERY Tuesday from 7:30pm

Visit www.tcd-charity.co.uk for more information

Looking after our mental health and wellbeing during the festive season

As the fairy lights start to appear on our streets and the shops start filling with stocking fillers it is important to remember that the festive season can be a time that adds extra pressure on us.

Whether it is planning the meal you are cooking for everyone or socialising more than you have been used to over the past year, it's important to factor in some time over this period to look after ourselves and prioritise our own wellbeing.

Be gentle and kind to yourself

It is ok to prioritise your own needs and to put in place the things that will help you through. Take time to consider what will help you and talk to those around you so they know what you need and expectations can be more easily managed. Don't feel pressured to have the Christmas other people think you should have; think about what you want and how you can do this.

Plan ahead

Think about what you need to do before Christmas and make a list, schedule in time to get things done. If you can't get something done think about whether or not it actually needs to be done and if not take it off the list. Plan something nice to look forward to after the Christmas period; it can really boost our mood to have something to look forward to.

Look after yourself

Take time for yourself, don't get lost in the myriad of things you are doing for everyone else. Allow yourself to feel different to those around you, it is ok if you are not as thrilled and excited as others, your feelings are equally as valid as anyone else's. Have boundaries and remember it is ok to say no to things. Set in your mind when the festive period begins and ends for you, this is a good way of reminding yourself it won't last forever!

Keep talking

Remember to talk to those around you and let them know what you need from them. Ask what they expect from you and talk this through so you are on the same page. You will likely find others are feeling the pressure too and it can really help to have someone to talk to that gets how you are feeling.



**It's OK not to be OK
this Christmas**



Thank you for choosing to subscribe to our brand new seasonal newsletter. We hope to fill these sheets with information about our service, how we can help the people you might be working with and how to contact us.

There will be different features inside each edition so please make sure you keep up to date with all the latest news and events from the West Yorkshire ISVA team.

As this is a new venture for us, we would warmly welcome any feedback you wish to contribute to our future editions.

Thank You

West Yorkshire ISVA Team

Want to feature in our next edition? Please send details through to:
WestYorkshire.IsvaAdmin@victimsupport.org.uk for consideration.

If you want to subscribe to our seasonal newsletter, please email
WestYorkshire.IsvaAdmin@victimsupport.org.uk to be placed on our mailing list.

Our ISVA Team are available Monday-Friday 9-5pm, and our office number is 01274 535432.

You can also find extra information on West Yorkshire Victim Support via our social media accounts:

Facebook - VS West Yorkshire

Twitter - @VS_WestYorks

Instagram - vs_westyorks

