

Government doubles funding for child sexual abuse charities to £2.4 million

The government has doubled the financial support it provides to national organisations that support victims and survivors of child sexual abuse to £2.4 million.

The Home Office and the Ministry of Justice are awarding a two-year grant for the first time, in order to provide much needed stability for voluntary sector organisations, several of which are facing increased demand for their services as a result of Covid-19.

The Support for Victims and Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse Fund aims to assist national organisations in supporting both adult and child victims and survivors of child sexual abuse across England and Wales, with several organisations also providing support to parents, carers and family members.

Services the money will go towards include support lines, specialist telephone and digital counselling, support groups for survivors, training for professionals, support for victims with learning difficulties and their families, and development of online resources for victims and survivors.

The funding builds on an unprecedented £76 million package of support to ensure the most vulnerable in society get the support they need during the coronavirus pandemic – which included £10 million to help victims of sexual violence access advice and support.

Safeguarding Minister Victoria Atkins said:

Victims and survivors of child sexual abuse demonstrate enormous courage in coming forward to seek help and we want to make sure help is available when they need it.

This funding is delivering on the promises the government made at the Hidden Harms Summit to protect vulnerable children from abuse and help survivors rebuild their lives.

Victims Minister Alex Chalk said:

The horrific effects of child sexual abuse are often endured by survivors long into adult life.

This new investment will ensure victims can access the specialist emotional and practical support they need – helping them to cope with and where possible recover from these appalling crimes.

The eight charities receiving the funding in 2020-22 are: Safeline Warwick, National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC), Mosac, Mankind, Rape Crisis England and Wales, The Survivors Trust, Victim Support and Barnardo's.

The Safeguarding Minister will today visit Mosac, one of the recipients of the fund and a charity which provides support to sexually abused children and their non-abusing family members.

The Minister will see how the charity's helpline, therapy, counselling and advocacy services operate, as well as watching a video recorded by a child abuse survivor who became a support worker.

Becky Booth, CEO of Mosac, said:

Mosac welcomes this timely increase in support from the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice

The increased demand for our services during the pandemic has highlighted the widespread impact of the virus throughout society.

This funding will enable Mosac to expand our advocacy and advice services to non-abusing family members, a key element of our holistic support for families.

Calls to the charity's child sexual abuse helpline have more than doubled during lockdown, from around 40 on a normal July/August to 105 in July and 93 in August this year.

Improving support for victims and survivors will be a key element of the forthcoming cross-government strategy on child sexual abuse, which will drive collaboration between government, law enforcement, safeguarding partners and industry to take a more joined up approach to tackling all forms of child abuse.