

# Supporting

## Pastoral Care

Let the person know that the Church is committed to helping and supporting them through the process. Here are some of the ways that you can help the person find help:

- **Pastoral Support from the religious order or the diocese and parish:** let the person know that the safeguarding coordinator can offer time and space in which to speak and they can tell their story. Explain that if information needs to be shared with others, explain who it will be shared with, why and how it will be kept secure
- **Support during the investigation of their case:** let the person know that they will be given the contact details of a person whose role it will be to keep them updated.
- **Signposting to support organisations:** Let the person know what other organisations and services can be contacted for support.

## National Contacts

- **RCDOW - Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster**  
Safeguarding Team  
[safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk)
- **Safe Spaces**  
Support, Advice and Info  
Tel: 0300 303 1056 (answerphone available outside of opening times)  
Email: [safespaces@victimssupport.org.uk](mailto:safespaces@victimssupport.org.uk)
- **RASAC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre)**  
National Helpline: 0808 802 9999  
(12-2.30 & 7-9.30)
- **Survivors UK**  
**Male Rape and Sexual Abuse Support**  
[survivorsuk.org](http://survivorsuk.org)
- **The Survivors Trust Support, Advice and Info - 0808 801 0818**
- **SAMARITANS**  
08457 909090 or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- **National Rape Crisis Support**  
[rapecrisis.org.uk](http://rapecrisis.org.uk)
- **ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families)**  
For general enquiries about ACA UK, please send an email to [info@acoa.uk](mailto:info@acoa.uk) or call us on 01590610936

This leaflet has been produced by survivors, for survivors, on behalf of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission

# HURT BY ABUSE.

How to:

Respond

Listen

Support

Victims

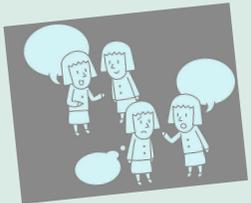
and

Survivors of Abuse

# Responding

## Prioritising Safeguarding and Survivors

Victims and survivors of abuse need to know that safeguarding is the priority in the religious order and the parish.



Speaking out about abuse, perhaps after years of silence, can be frightening

**Listen carefully** - Listening to someone disclose their abuse, often can be difficult and overwhelming.

The keys to listening well are:

- silence your mobile phone.
- do not interrupt
- look at the person
- be compassionate
- do not question the disclosure
- acknowledge the feelings the person is having
- don't offer solutions
- avoid looking at your watch.

# Listening

## Making Space

- Ensure you find a place where the person who wants to talk feels safe.
- If a person wishes to discuss a sensitive matter, always suggest speaking somewhere you will not be interrupted.
- If you have a time limit inform the person gently, early in the conversation.

Let the person know that the abuse is not their fault or responsibility. The blame belongs to the perpetrator.

Reassure the person that speaking out is the right thing to do.

Victims of abuse fear that they will not be believed. They have chosen to speak to you because they trust you. It is important to remember that trauma and memory can affect the way victims remember events; do not expect a perfect account.

Ensure the person knows that confidentiality can never be promised. Explain clearly who you will be passing the information to and that it will be kept secure.

Tell the person that you will be making notes to record an accurate account of what is being said. Explain that you will show these notes to the person at the end, as they will be a written record of the disclosure.

Let the person know that you will follow nationally agreed guidance; keeping them up to date with what is happening.

It is really important that you do not delay in reporting the disclosure.

Do not make promises that cannot be kept.

Do not contact the alleged perpetrator

Listening to someone telling you about their abuse can be very upsetting. Therefore it is really important to ask for support for yourself.

It is important that you acknowledge your own feelings and emotions about what you have heard, suppressing them is not healthy.

