

Pastoral care

We are committed to helping and supporting you through this process. Here are some of the ways we might be able to support you:

- **Pastoral Support from the Diocese**

Your Head of Safeguarding can offer you time and space in which to speak and tell your story. Full confidentiality cannot be promised, particularly if there are ongoing risks to you. If information needs to be shared with others, we will explain to you who it will be shared with, why it will be shared and how it will be kept secure.

- **Support during the investigation of your case:**

You will be given the contact details of a person whose role it is to keep you updated.

We welcome feedback from those who have been impacted by abuse and have used the Diocese of Westminster Safeguarding Service. We will use the information to find out what we are doing right and what we could do better from our very first point of contact.

Scan the QR code to access the survey:



Sources of support

- **Safe in Faith** Domestic abuse support and counselling that is tailored to their faith. www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/safe-in-faith/get-support.
- **Minster and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors (MACAS)** Supports women and men who have been sexually abused, as children or adults, by ministers, clergy or others under the guise of the Church. W: macsas.org.uk E: helpline@macsas.org.uk
- **Grief to Grace UK; Healing the wounds of abuse** Specialised 5-day programme of healing E: info@griegtograceuk.org T: 020 8154 2719 W: griegtograceuk.org/about
- **The Survivors Trust** Support, advice and information 0808 801 0818
- **One in Four** Supporting people who have experienced child sexual abuse and trauma. W: oneinfour.org.uk T: 0208 697 2112 E: northlondon@oneinfour.org.uk
- **National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)** 0808 801 0331 10am-9pm Mondays to Thursdays & 10am-6pm on Fridays. Calls will not show on your bill
- **ICAP** offers counselling and psychotherapy for the Irish community in Britain. W: icap.org.uk T: 020 7272 7906
- **Safe Spaces** Support, advice and Information. Tel: 0300 303 1056 (answerphone available outside of opening times) Email: safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk

This leaflet was developed by survivors for survivors.

Revised: April 2025
Review: April 2027

HURT BY ABUSE?

Break the silence.

Disclose the secret.

A guide for victims and survivors



Diocese of Westminster

SAFEGUARDING SERVICE



Speaking out about abuse, perhaps after years of silence, can be frightening but also liberating.

Speaking out

Speaking out about abuse is a key step towards healing and recovery.

You are not to blame for what happened to you.

You are the victim.

We want to offer you the opportunity to be listened to and to have your concerns taken seriously.

Break the silence

Whilst growing up victims learned: “Don’t talk. Don’t trust. Don’t feel.”

There may be many reasons why you have not spoken before, including feeling ashamed and fear that:

- You would not be believed;
- You would be blamed;
- You would not be taken seriously;
- You or your family may experience problems as a result;
- Your relationships with your Church community might be damaged.

For someone who has been abused the prospect of breaking the silence perhaps after many years of secrecy is very frightening. We want to help and support you.



Deciding how and why to speak out is a personal matter, whatever your reasons we want you to be heard, taken seriously and be supported.

Disclose the secret

Quotes from “I’ll be a Survivor for the Rest of My Life”
[University of Suffolk report](#)

It just happens everywhere

We think about it all the time, we live it every day. It’s just me alone

I just needed help

To report a concern, past or present:

Telephone: 020 7798 9352, Option 1
Email: safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

To contact the Safeguarding Service:

Telephone: 020 7798 9352, Option 4
Email: safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk
Website: rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding