



Asking the Question about sexual harm

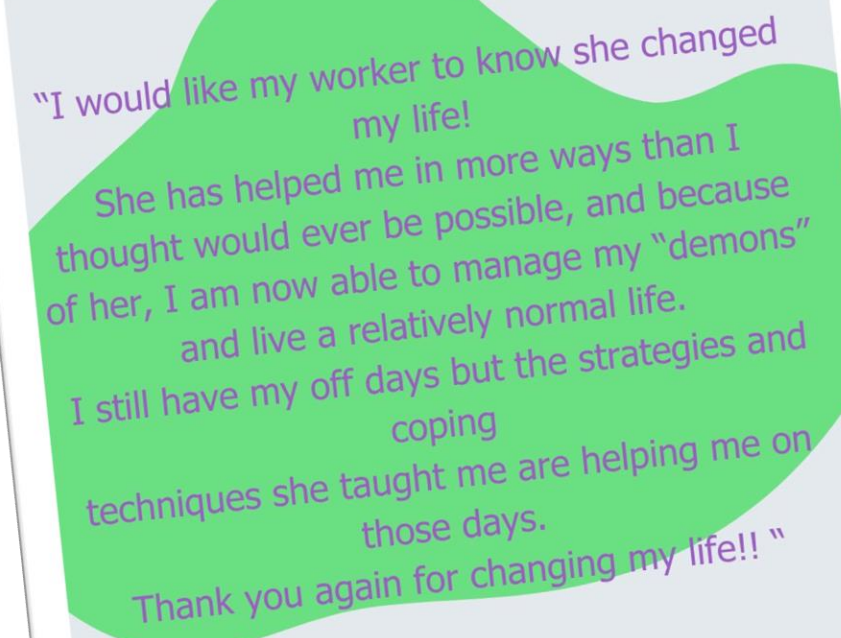
Our work

We provide specialist support and therapy directly to adults and children who have been affected by sexual violence or abuse.

We recognise that every experience of sexual harm is unique and it's impact on the individual varies.

Every year our business team speaks to hundreds of people who want further information about the services that we offer or who wish to refer themselves or someone else.

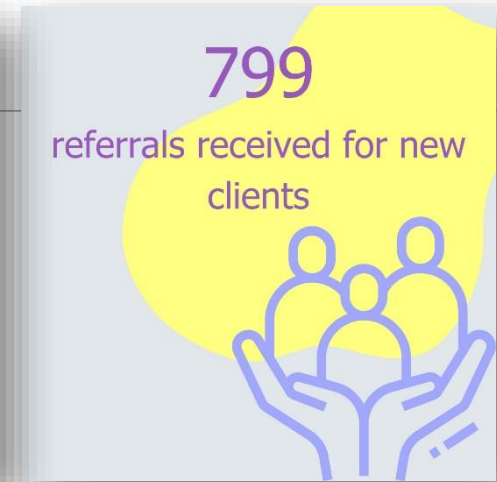
When a victim-survivor first approaches BSARCS, they will be given the opportunity to discuss their support needs and to explore the range of services we offer, ensuring that we are directing them to the most appropriate support.



"I would like my worker to know she changed my life!
She has helped me in more ways than I thought would ever be possible, and because of her, I am now able to manage my "demons" and live a relatively normal life.
I still have my off days but the strategies and coping techniques she taught me are helping me on those days.
Thank you again for changing my life!! "

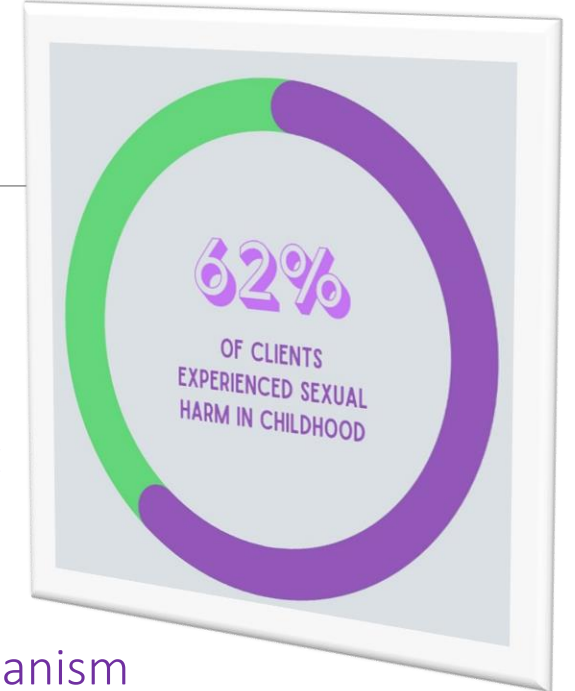
What we offer

- Specialist counselling for adults, including EMDR
- Specialist Therapies for children & young people
- Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy
- Wellbeing Support to adults & children
- Psychoeducation and peer support groups
- Specialist sexual abuse training, working with adults and children incl. Ask the question
- Professional advice line
- Support for caregivers, partners and wider family
- Social Media campaigns and awareness raising
- Fundraising and volunteer opportunities <https://www.bsarcs.org.uk/>



Current landscape

- 84% of our clients are women
- 26% of our clients are children
- 57% of those who had experienced childhood sexual harm never reported it
- 34% reported re-victimisation and or domestic violence being a factor
- 17% reported supported substance misuse as being a factor or coping mechanism
- 79% reported current or historical mental health needs
- 20% reported thoughts of self injury or suicide



Scenario

Sue is 45 years old and comes to her G.P appointment complaining of poor sleep, low mood, and pain all over her body.

Sue lives with a partner and they have 3 children. 12, 10 and 7 Sue says she is worried about her 12 year old daughter who is becoming more independent. Sue says part of her difficulty is poor sleep and amongst other ruminating thoughts she worries about her daughter.

Sue says her partner tells her she worries to much, dwells on the past and catastrophizes about the future.

Sue says she is trying to live day to day and go with the flow but feels really stuck and doesn't understand why she can't shake off her low mood and negative thinking.

At each stage what questions might you ask to find out more...?

What might be the underlying issues leading to Sue's seeking support today ?

What clients are saying

"I went into this feeling pretty lost and as if I did not have any control in my life or relationship.

Over the last few months, I have developed a more positive outlook that I hope I am able keep moving forward.

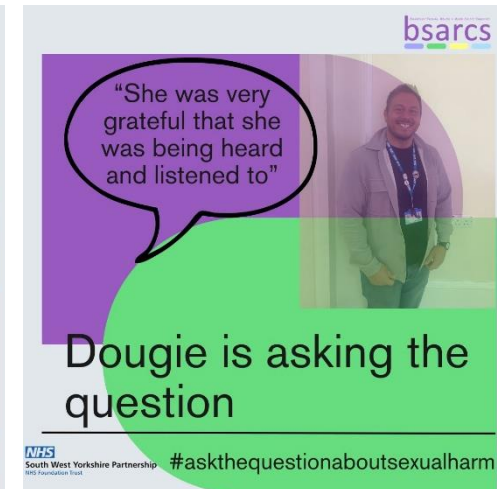
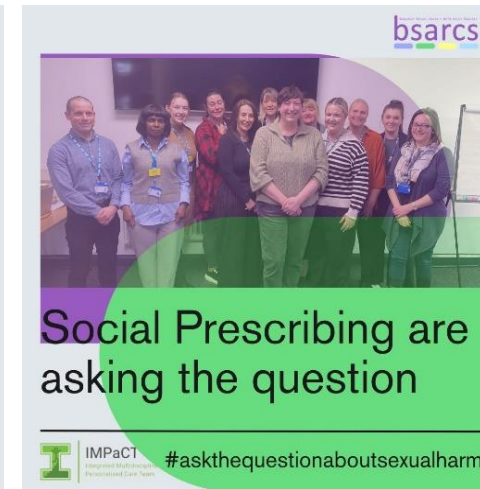
It isn't only me that has noticed a change, but the people around me have picked up on me generally being a happier person."

"It has been absolutely life changing. I feel able to cope a lot better with the general levels of anxiety from life. I feel more positive about my future."

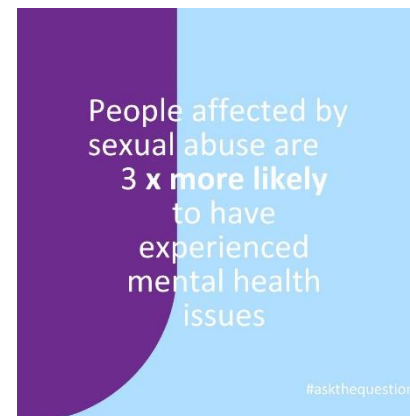
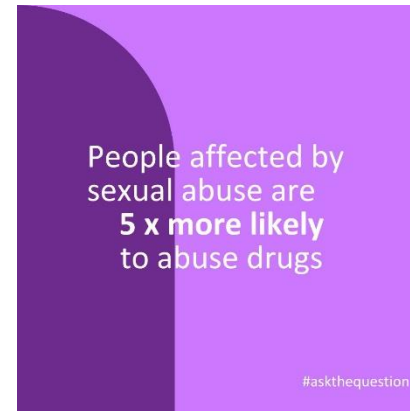
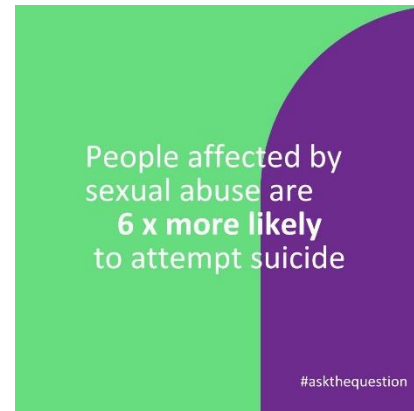
"The support of having someone who understands the emotions and issues of what you are going through during a traumatic time in your life. Who shows care and has the knowledge to support you. Someone you can talk to honestly without being judged. Someone who has knowledge of the process and judicial process."

Ask the question

- We are actively working with 25 organisations
- 13 organisations have completed our training and have embedded asking the question about sexual harm into their service.
- 23 frontline professionals have completed our sexual harm practice lead programme and are already implementing change within their practice that compliments ask the question.



Why we are asking the question



In support of routine enquiry

From 2003 mental health professionals have been tasked to ask about experiences of violence and abuse.

2015-Dept of Health Reva project (Responding effectively to violence and abuse)
Guidance for asking about experiences of abuse.

Nice guidelines for work with Domestic Abuse 2016 relate to those aged 16+

Trauma informed approach is supportive of routine enquiry- “What happened to you.”

Following a disclosure

Signposting-services-information- National Helplines

Referrals - BSARCS, The SARC, Spectrum (sexual health)

Police/Social care-safeguarding issues

Your own role and support

Sometimes it can feel very lonely.

Help someone feel less alone

#askthequestion



Thank you



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