



Adults abused as children

If your childhood experiences in the care of Action for Children were painful, traumatic or unhappy, we have services available to help you.

Since 1869 many tens of thousands of children have spent part of all of their childhood being cared for at one or more of the Homes run by Action for Children (known as NCH or the National Children's Home). Thousands more have been involved with or adopted through other Action for Children projects throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Most children had happy experiences but we are aware that for some this was not the case.

What do we mean by adults abused as children?

By 'adult' we mean anyone over the age of 18. By 'abuse' we mean emotional, sexual and physical abuse. In this context, abuse does not include care and punishment of a standard which was acceptable at the time but would not be accepted today, such as the use of a cane.

Who can I contact about the abuse I suffered as a child?

Action for Children takes all allegations of abuse very seriously and we are committed to helping and supporting anyone who has experienced abuse while in our care. Our experienced child protection adviser deals specifically with investigations of historic abuse. You can contact him in writing, by phone or by email:

Head of Safeguarding
Action for Children
85 Highbury Park
London N5 1UD
Phone: 020 7704 7082
Fax: 020 7704 2537
Email: shaun.kelly@actionforchildren.org.uk

What will happen if I disclose abuse I suffered as a child?

We are aware that it is not easy to discuss sensitive and personal experiences of abuse that may have happened many years ago. We are also aware that abuse suffered as a child may have a lifelong negative effect unless it is dealt with. For this reason you will be able to talk to an experienced social worker who will also advise you about other sources of help if you need ongoing counselling.

If you disclose abuse, Action for Children will commit to a full investigation. We have a responsibility to report all offences of a criminal nature involving any current or former member of staff to the police. This includes all allegations of adults abused as children.

If you tell us about abuse that occurred while you were in our care, we will pass the information you give us on to the police and/or social services. We cannot keep information of this nature confidential, as we cannot condone an offence. However, we will handle all the information you give us with extreme sensitivity.

You will be given support by one of our experienced workers, or an independent worker if you prefer.

Please be aware that when there is a police investigation or a claim for compensation your records may be made available to the court.

Can I claim compensation?

If you were abused while in our care you have the right to consult a solicitor about making a civil claim for compensation from Action for Children. You can get information about solicitors specialising in this work from:

The Law Society
113 Chancery Lane
London WC2A 1PL
Phone: 020 7242 1222
Website: www.lawsociety.org.uk

Can I make a claim for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority?

You can request information detailing whether you are eligible for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority by contacting the Child Protection Adviser (Safer Care).

Other organisations offering support and advice

There are several organisations offering support, advice and counselling at little or no cost to people on limited or low incomes. Action for Children may be able to meet the cost of referral to an independent agency such as the following.

NAPAC (The National Association for People Abused in Childhood)
42 Curtain Road
London EC2A 3NH
Website: www.napac.org.uk

The NSPCC has details of several survivor groups:

NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)
Phone: 020 7852 2500
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Professional counselling and psychotherapy is available from:

WPF Therapy
23 Magdalen Street
London SE1 2EN
Phone: 020 7378 2000
Website: www.wpf.org.uk

The Guild of Psychotherapists
47 Nelson Square
Blackfriars Road
London SE1 0QA
Phone: 020 7401 3260
Website: www.guildofpsychotherapists.org.uk