

Newsletter

Edition March 2019

free for **SURVIVORS**
who are **Members**
of **CIS'ters**

£12 p.a. subscription for non-members
or organisations



www.cisters.org.uk

CIS'ters IS NOT a therapy group: it is an organisation run by survivors, for survivors:
"We might be CSA victim/survivors, but this is not all that we are, or can be"

Saying Hi from our Membership Secretary Helen (221)

My number one priority and greatest joy in life are my family, my partner Dave, my Son and Daughter and my two awesome Grandchildren, along with my close friends and my beloved two dogs, all of whom enrich my life even on the few dark days that still arrive from time to time.

I am Proud to have been a member of CIS'ters for nearly 21 years now. Firstly only as a member, then quickly followed by being a volunteer at various events like the London rally's and Awareness events both in Hampshire and further afield, twice going to southern Ireland.

For a few years I had the honour to help facilitate the Core Group and Workshops held for our members, including for nine years running, the Residential Weekend workshop.

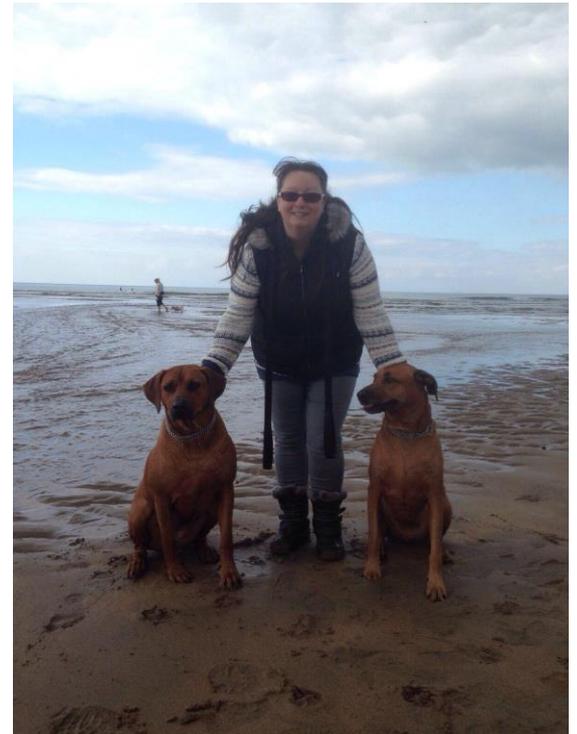
I used to be one of the regular faces at the many conferences we held for both professionals and our members and I also used to assist Gillian (00) so she could deliver our training for professionals.

I have been in a part time, term time paid position since 2002, firstly as a general administrator in the office and then later, and to date, as the Membership Secretary for CIS'ters.

Although I have not had the pleasure of meeting all of our members, I have over the years in my various roles had the honour to meet many fabulous ladies who make up our CIS'ters family. For those I haven't physically had the pleasure of meeting, most I have written to or spoken to via the telephone or email.

My family is the most important thing to me, be that a family by blood or by my choosing, and I thank you all for enriching my life.

All the very best to you all Helen (221)



IMPORTANT CONSULTATION – MIDWIFERY STANDARDS – SEE PAGE 4

CIS'ters CONTACT DETAILS:

HELPLINE 023 80 338080 (which is an answerphone). Please leave clear contact details. Messages are monitored daily during normal office hours and we will seek to call back as quickly as we can, and will take care when returning calls. Please note that our number is shown as 'withheld' when we returning calls. Or you can **Email:** helpme@cisters.org.uk

www.cisters.org.uk Registered Charity: 1123125 Twitter: CIS'ters_Standup

Can YOU Help Me ?

I never imagined that I would ever run a marathon let alone the Virgin London Marathon - but here I am about to embark on my biggest ever challenge. The furthest I have run to date is the Southampton half marathon (13.2miles or 21kilometres) in April 2018 and during that, I remember questioning why on earth am I even contemplating to run double that distance?! But something deep inside me seems to give me hope that I can actually do it and I can do it once.... and they do say everyone has got at least 1 marathon in them don't they???

The charity I am running for is a very small Southampton based charity and I am their sole runner in the London Marathon - which is both daunting (as I won't have any of those big charity stands cheering for me) and a privilege as my fundraising will have such a positive contribution to the work they do and support they give. CIS'ters is a charity for women survivors who have endured sexual abuse/violence as a child within the family setting and have to live their lives with the various impacts it now has on their adult life on a day-to-day basis. I have a very dear friend who has gone through such a big journey over the past couple of years when she decided to report to the police what had happened to her as a child- despite it happening over 25 years ago. CIS'ters provided support to her during the turbulent process which no "non-survivor" could understand. My dear friend has come through the process with a positive outcome this year where her abuser was sentenced in court, and she believes that she could not have gone through the process if it was not for CIS'ters being there for her whenever she needed them. I am so very proud of my special friend, and I feel determined to show her my support and really praise her courage and bravery by running this marathon for her and CIS'ters. It is small charities such as CIS'ters who are the unsung heroines who are often in the background and not supported enough to continue their work to support other surviving woman of this unimaginable crime which impacts so many lives.

Please support me on my journey of achieving my marathon challenge and hopefully reaching my minimum target of £2,000 for CIS'ters whilst doing this, and also by showing praise to my dear friend and other women like her that they are not alone and they can survive and move on from their harrowing experiences.

Don't worry, I will be keeping you updated with my progress in the lead up to the big day and share with you my milestone accomplishments and no doubt some aches and pains along the way :-)

Thank you for reading. Rachal xx

As at today, Rachal has raised 71% towards her target. **Any donation will help**....If you wish to donate online >> <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/RachalWillett1>

Hi CIS'ters. I had a most marvellous thought today... I feel like I am finally living the life I deserve.

I am currently on a week off before starting my new job on Monday. My old work had become a toxic place over the last two years, and I didn't realise just how much until now. It had become something of a necessary evil and a huge burden. But no more...I am relaxed and walk around with my head held high, proud of who I am and what I have overcome. From Judy (1342)

During the financial year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, CIS'ters received £8,853 in donations. This included 22 individuals paying a regular amount each month. Most of them donating £5 per month via the bank. CIS'ters REALLY do appreciate all this help and support – because it shows us, and our other funders, that people care about the issues that we care about too. We also know that many individuals are unable to make such donations, so don't worry if that's you. We know you are fighting other battles at the moment, and that you give in other ways (of heart, of time, by campaigning, **by staying alive**).

Why don't you leave - Things that can hold us back ?

The nature of the legacy from CSA is that many survivors can find themselves in a dysfunctional relationship as an adult. This is what is typically viewed as 're victimisation' as an adult. We know that society in general struggle to understand the complex reasons why this might happen, and why someone doesn't 'just leave' a dysfunctional and/or abusive adult relationship.

Our experience within CIS'ters is that as a survivor begins to grow emotionally and let go of their past and some/all of any prior coping strategies that were negative, that as an individual they get to a point where they begin to challenge the power dynamics within an abusive or dysfunctional adult relationship. Challenges have always been thought of as towards the family-of-origin within which the sexual abuse occurred as a child; but there is this 2nd emerging, as someone with their own rights and feelings – within adult relationships (if this power equality didn't previously exist). So it can be a bumpy and often stormy ride. Some relationships strengthen over this period, becoming more of a partnership whilst others crash at various angles to the ground, and a breakdown can feel inevitable.

What is important is, if this is happening to you, that you seek help and support. This might help resolve the issues within your relationship; or help you manage the split from your partner in a less painful way. There are various organisations that can help with this, such as Relate Counsellors (small fee for sessions) or somewhere like the Freedom Programme <https://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/> which is free to attend. The latter can be helpful as you will meet others going through similar relationship issues.

There are all sorts of reasons why a victim domestic abuse might find it difficult to walk away; but not many people appreciate that this can include concerns about pets. Leaving an abusive home can feel impossible, especially if it means having to give up your pet, or worse, leave them behind. Often we don't realise that pets are often affected by domestic abuse. Like children caught up in the same scenario, it is easier to think they don't see or feel.

SO – it is wonderful to find out that there is a specific organisation that was set up in 2004, that helps dog owners fleeing domestic abuse by providing a safe, temporary foster home for their dogs. The Freedom Project is part of The Dogs Trust and it places dogs at risk into the home of a volunteer foster carer who will care for them until they can be safely reunited with their families. This is important as many refuge centres for domestic abuse victims are unable to accept pets, so the pet fostering service gives owners peace of mind that their dog will be well cared for until they are rehoused and it is safe enough to have the pet back.

*When I fled I lost everything other than my children and a few possessions but
I am really grateful that I got to keep my dog.*

The Freedom Project are seeking additional volunteers/foster homes – and if you want to know more please email freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk .



Listen to anything
your children wants to
tell you.

If you do not LISTEN
to the small stuff now,
they might not feel
able to tell you about
the big stuff as they
grow older.



How CIS'ters have helped me

Initially I found it hard to take a leap of faith and reach out for help on a subject that's so personal to me. A breakdown in relationships with my children which I never thought would happen resurfaced my childhood experiences,

I was increasingly struggling emotionally due to being retriggered, I started to make plans to end my life and had the mind-set that I had no sense of belonging therefore people who were important to me were better off without me in their lives. I recognised these feelings as I had felt the same way in my teens where I did take an overdose and ended up in hospital. I knew my childhood experiences had not gone away so after 31 years I researched how to get help.

At first, I would say that I was actually scared to get help, I had so many barriers, I felt worthless and the abuse that I had endured was my fault for various reasons and because I had internalised things over the years, I found it hard to talk about after repeatedly been let down by family members and professionals.

Becoming a member of CIS'ters meant that I had opportunities to go to the Drop-In Sessions, attend Core Group, and Workshops.

Being part of Core Group has helped me in many ways, it has given me:

- A sense of belonging
- Being able to talk about difficult topics with no pressure or judgement
- Being able to say "I'm not ok" cry etc.
- Support on practical advice when feeling overwhelmed such as going to the doctors for medication when needed, also because I went to the doctor to ask for help, I was also offered an active lifestyle Gym membership which by having the two combined has helped to balance me out and keep unhealthy thoughts at bay.

Attending workshops has helped to educate myself and breaking down big barriers such as by helping to believe that carrying guilt and shame is normal for survivors, so for instance I felt the abuse was something I had done or encouraged because I had felt stimulated, for not saying "No", not being aware that it is wrong and being more than one perpetrator. I now believe that I am NOT at fault because I've explored into why it's not my fault, understand what grooming is and why I may have been selected.

Some of the workshops I have attended have been:

- Sex and Intimacy
- Dissociation
- Guilt and shame
- Mums and Mothers

Having the combination of all the above is helping me to become a much calmer and more measured person,

CIS'ters has helped me to have:

- Self-belief / Feel valued
- Has given me the confidence to express my feelings outside of my comfort zone without pressure or judgement, this has helped me to feel like a normal person and has helped me to understand why I find some topics hard and why I may react under certain circumstances which would be normal due to past experiences, things such as examinations like smears, the dentist, opticians etc., to letting my own children going to a sleep over for the first time. Cisters would help with practical advice on strategies to best cope with a situation in a way that feels more comfortable to the individual.

CIS'ters referred me to Yellow Door, a Southampton based rape and sexual abuse centre, for counselling plus CIS'ters also provided information on additional helplines I could contact when I was suffering.

I had been curious about something called 'The Truth Project' which is part of the national inquiry into child sexual abuse (where victims were let down by institutions). With support from CIS'ters I felt empowered sufficiently to take part and this provided me with the first real opportunity to talk in detail about the things that had happened to me, and where I had been let down and to finally have my voice heard. Following this CIS'ters then referred me to an ISVA (again part of Yellow Door) who has provided some additional support through the ongoing police investigation that followed The Truth session.

In addition I know that I am able to leave a message on CIS'ters helpline, or email the office. These are always answered promptly. There was an occasion last summer, where I was very emotionally distressed about the court case and I contacted the office. Even though it was outside normal working hours someone contacted me back and spoke to me until I had regained some calm and perspective. As a survivor I need to know that I am heard, and cared about. With CIS'ters I have learnt to trust and know that they will do all that they can to help me, and others if and when the need arises.

CIS'ters are always encouraging and supportive in self-care from appearance to mixing in social groups, reigniting the things an individual might have enjoyed doing before like an old hobby, to having the courage to go for health examinations. Advice on which *books* might be helpful to read, such as "breaking free from sexual abuse workbook" has helped me to explore my feelings around sexual abuse and other factors such as the family environment I grew up in. *Journaling* was great advice too as this has helped me to get my feelings out on paper.

I feel that having the support from CIS'ters who I have been with for 17 months has given me the ability to feel empowered and more in charge of my own life. I feel I have grown as a person. *Sarah (1411) written on 1st February 2019*

Note: from CIS' ters Office:

You might not know that the ages of our members range from 18 to over 80

“May I take this opportunity of thanking you all for your kindness and support in putting me on the right path and hopefully get some closure on the past 60 years.
Shelagh (1480)”

Survivors

By Rosemary (1484)

Abuse can kill – don't let it kill you,
Going through any Abuse is hell this is true,
The days and nights seem there never going to end,
When you feel like you can't tell anyone not even your best friend,
When you're going through Hell it's now you have to be strong,
The pain burns inside of you and you feel like you don't belong,
You too can be a Survivor and fight for every single day,
Go for it as you have nothing to lose but enjoy life your way,
I know now that you might feel all alone,
But one day you'll have your own home,
You can laugh, love and look forward to your future ahead,
One day the Abuse will end and your only have memories of it in your head,
To one Survivor to another,
Let's stay strong forever.



Are consulting on the standards for what midwives need to know and be able to do in order to register with the NMC and practice as a midwife in the UK.

NMC would like to hear whether you think their new draft standards capture what a midwife should know and be able to do as well as the support they should be able to provide. Your views will help shape the new standards and enable midwives to give better and safer care to all women, their babies, partners and families.

The consultation closes **9 May 2019**. For access to the draft use the following link:
<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/midwifery/future-midwife-consultation/>

A MESSAGE TO CIS'ters FROM
THE INDEPENDENT PRESS STANDARDS ORGANISATION (IPSO)

During 2018 a representative from CIS'ters, alongside representatives from other survivor groups, attended a meeting at the Independent Press Standards Organisation to talk about how the press reports sexual offences and how to support survivors who come into contact with a journalist. IPSO is the voluntary regulator of newspapers and magazines in the UK, regulating over 2,500 titles in print and online. IPSO's role includes to raise standards of journalism, whilst also helping members of the public to understand the rules that journalists must follow.

Two themes came through those conversations with survivors very strongly, first that survivors are not aware of the rules that journalists should follow and that many survivors do not feel confident when speaking to journalists. In response to those concerns, IPSO has produced information for survivors which explains what survivors can expect from journalists, empowering them to speak to the media should they wish to, and to know where to go for help if they do not.

Here are a few important things survivors should think about before speaking to the media:

- Survivors of sexual offences have lifelong anonymity in relation to those offences. This means that in most circumstances survivors cannot be identified.
- Speaking to the media can be very powerful, but it can also be upsetting. You can choose whether or not you speak to a journalist
- If you are approached by a journalist, you don't have to speak to them. A journalist should leave you alone if you tell them you don't want to speak to them.
- If you decide you do want to speak to a journalist, you can choose where the interview takes place and bring someone along to support you, if you want to.
- If you decide to speak to the journalist about your experiences, you can decide to waive your right to anonymity, or you can decide that you will remain anonymous in any articles published about your experience

If you have any concerns about press coverage of this issue, or are worried about press intrusion you can contact IPSO for advice on 0300 123 2220. You can find more information in the leaflet IPSO has produced here: <https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1587/contact-with-the-media-for-survivors.pdf>.

Dear CIS'ters

I was a child, like so many others, a child that needed love, support and guidance to feel safe.... Instead sadly my childhood was full of terror, confusion and pain.

Even though I lived within a family, I had that awful feeling of loneliness and isolation at having no voice.

These feelings have been with me all my life and I have carried that isolation feeling with me into adult life, as I feel a lot of us in this situation have.

My first step to decreasing that isolation was the day that I did contact CIS'ters.

It takes strength to reach out and contact someone for help and understanding. And fellow CIS'ters, it shows in the fact we are still here working our way through things that we do have the strength somewhere in us....and that strength surely has to be the little part of us they didn't destroy.

I am doing what I can to be less isolated...it is hard though. The Newsletter really does help

From Hild (1383)



On JANUARY 22nd 2019 Rachal 875, Maggie 1260 (accompanied by Helen 221) headed off to London to meet with MPs.

Some of you might not yet know that in 2018, an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) was set up on the topic of CSA. On the 20th January 2019 they held a meeting at Portcullis House (where most MPs have their offices).

Following an invitation from the CSA APPG (which is currently chaired by Sarah Champion MP), two of our members travelled to London to give presentations on the topic of court cases and how well they were supported, before and after.

Helen accompanied Maggie and Rachal to the session and provided any necessary emotional support. There were 6 other survivors who made presentations, a total of 8 in all (2 from CIS'ters)

Feedback from Helen, Maggie and Rachal was that they felt inspired and that it was also a cathartic moment. They felt heard by APPG members and that there was a willingness to not only listen but to influence change in the areas highlighted.

Feedback tweeted from Sarah Champion MP after the event:

"Extraordinary afternoon hearing adult survivors of child abuse experiences with the justice system. It's not good; poor communication, lack of support, disbelief.....All of this evidence will be used to really campaign for change. Thank you. X"



For info Re APPGs –<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmllparty/190213/register-190213.pdf>

We often hear members and others say *"I am stuck, overwhelmed, lost in a tsunami of pain. What can I do?"* It is a difficult question, because we are all unique individuals. Although experiencing the same type of crime as children, we lived in different homes, as we do today as well. So – there is no easy answer. There is no one fit, or cure all.

But perhaps the only shared answer can be that, we, as unique individuals need to be 'who we needed when we were younger'. That person who cared, who reached out, who listened, and nurtured. All too often we didn't have that person in our lives. But, with help and support, we can try and become that person, for ourselves. To practice self-care, to self-nurture. To be that person that we are often able to offer to *others* (caring and nurturing) but rarely for ourselves. So let us become the person we needed, and still need. Become who we longed for as children.

Visit from the High Sheriff of Hampshire to CIS'ters Office on 22nd February 2019

Feedback from Gillian (00), Founder/Manager, CIS'ters

I received an email from Samantha, our Chair of trustees saying that Mark Thistlethwayte, the current High Sheriff of Hampshire, had asked to visit CIS'ters at very short notice and meet some of the team. Although Samantha would be at the visit I have to admit that I did my best to delay the visit because it wasn't a great time to receive a visit, not least because we were working out our budget for 2019/20 and the impact of not receiving a large grant we had hoped for. I wasn't in the best mood for an official visit (which this would be) – Mark being the High Sheriff and all that jazz. Other than knowing he was visiting us, we weren't clear on 'why'.

In addition to the office team, we invited two members to take part (being representatives for others who access CIS'ters).

I, personally, found it difficult to fully understand why he wanted to come and visit us. Not being clear meant we (the survivors present) decided that we would give him a more detailed insight into the impact of familial sexual abuse. No gap to recover – it was 'this, this, this'. He was visibly very impacted by the comments from survivors. But, even so, I still kept on asking myself "Why is he here?"

My first words after he left, to Samantha and others, was "why was he here?" We reassured ourselves with a 'well, we made an impact and he left more informed on the topic than when he walked through the door at the start. I returned to the most important topic – fundraising!

I was completely shocked when, on the following Monday, to receive an email asking if I could attend a Ceremony at The Great Hall in Winchester on March 20th to receive a personal Award from the High Sheriff. Gosh – that was unexpected!

Samantha also turned up unexpectedly at the office full of glee because what I had not known was that the purpose of the visit the week before was so that Mark could give a final clearance to the award i.e. to check me out - following a recommendation made some months earlier by Samantha.

I couldn't quite take it in and felt undeserving of an award which recognised my 24+ years of volunteering. It felt wrong to accept an award for doing something that gives me an emotional return. The team were telling me I deserved it – but I struggled.

Eventually I made the decision to accept it (in name) but (internally) on behalf of two other people. I pledged the award to my husband of 48 years, George, and my very special nephew Christopher. Over the past 25 years their help and support made it possible for me to (a) set up CIS'ters and (b) to continue to be a volunteer within it. The certificate will soon be on display in the office, alongside the one CIS'ters were given in March 2016, again by the High Sheriff of Hampshire. When you see it, please think of George & Chris.



Inquiry publishes key information for mandatory reporting seminar in April 2019

The Inquiry has published key information and advice for a further seminar on mandatory reporting, taking place on April 29-30 2019.

The seminar will consider arguments for and against the introduction of legislation which would make reporting child sexual abuse a legal requirement in England and Wales.

Taking place at the Inquiry's hearing centre in Southwark, the seminar will also examine the practical considerations involved in introducing such a law.

The seminar will be streamed on the Inquiry website (www.iicsa.org.uk/live) and the event is also open to members of the public who wish to attend in person.

An earlier seminar on mandatory reporting took place on 27 September 2018 and considered existing obligations to report child sexual abuse in England and Wales, as well as international models of mandatory reporting.

A report of that seminar is available on their website www.iicsa.org.uk and the 11 presentations are also available to read on the mandatory reporting seminar page.

NHSEngland Advert for new members to join Sexual Assault and Abuse Services SPV Advisory Group



Here is an opportunity to become a Survivor / Public Voice (SPV) member of the Health and Justice Sexual Assault and Abuse Services (SAAS) Stakeholder and Lived Experience Advisory Group

Engagement Opportunity: NHSE are seeking 4 additional people with lived experience or relevant professional experience of sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) or other sexual violence services to join our established Stakeholder and Lived Experience Advisory Group. Closing date for applications: **26th April 2019**

This is an exciting time to get involved in the advisory group. It is an established group which is helping to further develop and drive survivor and public participation in NHS England's commissioning of SARCs and around the wider aims of the national Sexual Abuse and Assault Strategy:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/strategic-direction-sexual-assault-and-abuse-services.pdf>

What is "commissioning"?

Commissioning describes how NHS England works with others to design services, develop contracts and fund health services. This advisory group will focus on how we can improve service user involvement in health and justice commissioning specifically relating to sexual abuse and assault services.

As a member of the group you will be part of an advisory group of health professionals and people with lived experience of sexual abuse and assault services who will work together to improve the involvement of service users in our work. We want all SARC services to embed service user involvement and as a group member you will have access to training and support and have the opportunity to engage with commissioners who make decisions around the commissioning of SARC services and wider sexual assault and abuse pathways.

A key role for the group will also be to identify and share innovation and good participation practice across SAAS commissioning. The group will draw on a range of service users with lived experience, stakeholder organisations and commissioners from the regional and national teams. This group will link with the SAAS Strategic Clinical Forum (SCF), which gives clinical advice and reports into the Health and Justice Clinical Reference Group (CRG).

NHSEngland are seeking to recruit 4 further members who have specific interest in SAAS services

You will have:

- **Previous experience of formally representing people with relevant lived experience;** plus
- Experience of working in partnership with healthcare or other relevant organisations or programmes.
- Experience of working with health professionals and other service users to improve health services
- Lived experience or relevant stakeholder interest.
- Experience of receiving health services in a relevant setting.
- Ability to gain feedback from a wider network of survivors/service users.
- Ability to understand and evaluate a range of information and evidence.
- Ability to display sound judgement and **objectivity**.
- Have an awareness of, and commitment to, equality and diversity.
- An understanding of the need for confidentiality.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- An openness toward change.

This position also offers an involvement payment of £150 per day and reimbursement of out of pocket expenses incurred in line with [NHS England's Patient and Public Participation Expenses Policy](#).

Further information and how to apply please see the information pack and application form attached

If you require an alternative format such as large print or audio please contact:

Emma.griffin3@nhs.net 01138248359 / 07730381114

NHS England values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all.

Discriminatory 'same roof rule' to be abolished

Source: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk> 28 Feb 2019



A ban on awarding Criminal Injuries Compensation to crime victims who lived within the same home as the person who sexually abused them is finally set to be scrapped, more than half a century after it was introduced.

On Thursday 28th February, Ministers will take steps to abolish the 55-year-old so-called 'same roof' rule, following long-term campaigning by Rape Crisis and its partners on behalf of victims and survivors whose valid claims are being denied.

Under the rule, victims of violent and/or sexual crimes that took place before 1st October 1979 have been blocked from receiving compensation if the perpetrator was someone they were living with at the time of the incident.

This has disproportionately affected victims and survivors of sexual offences, particularly those sexually abused as children, because child sexual abusers are often someone known to the child, including family members and primary carers.

The announcement to abolish the 'same roof' rule was welcomed by Rape Crisis England & Wales (RCEW), as well as other organisations with which it has been campaigning in recent years over the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme, which is discriminatory and unfit for purpose.

In a joint statement with Victim Support and Barnardo's, RCEW Co-Chairs Dawn Thomas and Dianne Whitfield said:

"As a coalition, we have long campaigned to get justice for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse who have lost out due to illogical rules governing this Scheme.

"We are glad the Ministry of Justice listened to our concerns and that victims who were living under the same roof as their abuser pre-1979 will at long last be able to seek the compensation they so rightly deserve."

Rape Crisis added:

"While this is an extremely positive step in the right direction, there remain a number of other ways in which the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS) disadvantages, discriminates against and often even re-traumatises victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and all forms of sexual violence, which must also be addressed as a matter of urgency."

The 'same roof rule' was introduced in 1964 to ensure offenders did not benefit from financial awards made to victims they shared a home with. Difficulties with evidence in such cases also formed part of the rationale behind the rule, which applies to people who suffer physical or sexual abuse inflicted by a family member living under the same roof.

The arrangements were changed in October 1979, so victims could claim compensation if they no longer lived with their attacker and were unlikely to do so again.

But this was not applied retrospectively, meaning many victims and survivors of sexual violence and abuse have missed out on compensation because their experiences took place prior to the change.

Following a court judgment last year that the rule is incompatible with human rights laws, the Government announced it would be abolished. Today (28th February 2019), a statutory instrument will be laid in Parliament to remove the pre-1979 rule completely.

The Ministry of Justice said the move will amend the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme so that all victims abused by someone they lived with can reapply for compensation - regardless of when the attack took place.

Victims Minister Edward Argar said:

"We are abolishing the out-dated 'same-roof' rule so no victim is unfairly denied access to compensation after the trauma they suffered many years ago, simply because they lived with their attacker."

Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales Baroness Newlove welcomed the step.

She said:

"I have always felt that the rule was unfair. It has caused unnecessary distress to many victims and survivors, especially within families, where some siblings have been eligible for criminal injuries compensation and yet others have not, solely on the grounds of the date on which the abuse took place."

New and past applicants refused an award under the pre-1979 rule will still need to meet all the remaining eligibility criteria within the existing compensation scheme.

If you wish to apply or are thinking of re-applying (if you were turned down previously because of 'same roof ruling' – you can find criteria and information at the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-criminal-injury/eligibility> - in some areas of the country you can ask Victim Support to help you complete the paperwork, or do it yourself online, or ask a solicitor to help you (they will charge a fee).

BTMYDonate is closing – and we are switching to Virgin Money Giving !

We will shortly be updating our website (it will take time to make all of the changes we want) with the most immediate being the need to change our link from BTMYDonate, as this service is closing at the end of June 2019 to our newly opened Virgin Money Giving. Contact us if you need more information.

Supported by

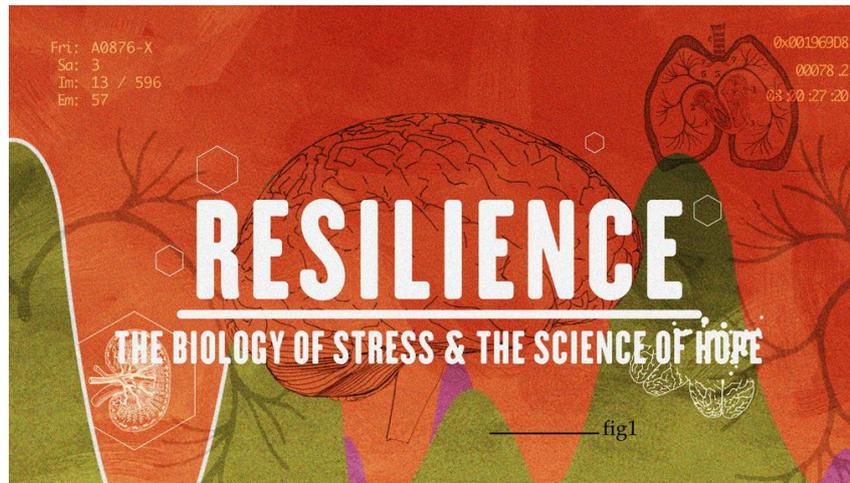


Serving
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Portsmouth
Southampton

HiWCF
And LOCAL GIVING FOR LOCAL NEEDS
Tampon Tax Community
Fund.

CIS'ters bringing ACEs to Hampshire, IoW,
Portsmouth and Southampton

CIS'ters is hosting a number of events across Hampshire and the IoW. These are screenings of an award winning documentary on the topic of Resilience and ACEs and targeted at professionals. The events provide them with a better appreciation that CSA rarely happens in a vacuum, and collectively ACEs have a larger emotional and physical impact.



FOR MEMBERS ? We held a special screening of the documentary for our Members in March 2019. Those who attended felt it a worthwhile event and they gained some understanding of not only of their individual experiences of ACEs but also (for some) the impact of ACEs now on their own children. All felt it was thought provoking. Contact us if you live within travelling distance of Hampshire and would like to attend a future screening – for members only.

FUNDING - The High and the Low Points !

Although we have been successful in prior years, this year we crashed out of the funding stream from our local Police and Crime Commissioner. Mixture of reasons, poor application (though prior years succeeded) and changing and more stringent criteria. We will shortly be meeting with their grant manager to find out exactly what the failure points were as this will be a useful learning opportunity. In the meantime we have been encouraged by Lloyds Foundation to apply to them for funding – which we will do as soon as we can lift our heads up from the burden of closing down the financial accounts for 2018/19 and sending off monitoring reports to our current funders.

We continue to be thankful to the funding and support we receive from Esmee Fairbairn for their grant for our Volunteer CoOrdinator and to recent grant received from Tampon Tax fund administered locally by Hampshire and IoW Community Fund.

The National Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Multiple Disadvantage, established by **Agenda** and **AVA** (Against Violence and Abuse), has published its final report ***Breaking Down the Barriers***, which finds that survivors of abuse are being failed by the system meant to help them - with devastating consequences for them and their families.

The report found that time and again the signs of abuse are not picked up by professionals, and too often women are bounced around or even turned away from services.

Mothers are particularly let down, with the fear of losing their children preventing them from accessing help. Chaired by Baroness Hilary Armstrong, the Commission brings together experts from sectors including health, law and violence against women and girls, and is funded by **Lloyds Bank Foundation**.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from <https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Breaking-down-the-Barriers-full-report-FINAL.pdf>

MOTHERS DAY – love it or hate it, or both ?

Member A “I will not celebrate my mother as she ignored the plight of her children”.

Member B “I will celebrate my mother because she has always been there for me, and supported me fully since my disclosure”.

Member C “I will celebrate the amazing mothers I meet within CIS'ters, they inspire us all with their love and commitment for their children”.

Member D “I will mourn with the members within CIS'ters who, because of (emotional/physical) impact of their childhood experiences are unable to have children, or who have lost children”.

Member E “I will try and ignore the pain I feel on this day, as I mourn the mother I never had. I will not mourn the mother I did have”.

Gillian “I will celebrate the nurturing I have received from individuals, who helped mother the child within me – and help me grow as a person in self-esteem and self-belief”.

WORKSHOP FLYERS enclosed:

Within this newsletter you will receive the flyer for our annual weekend workshop, being held weekend of 12th/13th October 2019. If you have never been before, or need to chat about a reduction in the fee – please contact the office and ask to speak to either Helen or Gillian. We hope you can make it !

We have also included information about forthcoming half and one day workshops. As explained in the prior newsletter we are only sending out details for a few at a time. This is because last year when we sent out the information in January for the whole year, they were quickly filled up – and then some members didn't attend but failed to give us advance notice. Also if they are filled up that quickly it doesn't give new members a chance to apply. Hopefully you will understand and also remember that if you do apply and then can't make it, to let us know so we can reallocate the place. These events are free to attend.

OTHER WORKSHOPS – ideas ? Again, let us know if you have any ideas for our themed workshops. They will always be considered and scheduled if we can make them happen and confident we will get sufficient interest.

FEEDBACK FROM BETH (1292)

Just wanted to say that after joining Cisters many years ago I finally attended my first workshop (ACEs) recently and it is such a relief to have made contact with the organisation in person. I am hoping to attend more meetings now that I have had the courage to walk into my first. Wishing I had done this earlier.



Editorial Statement: We welcome letters from Survivors and from those who support them such as friends/allies/counsellors/social workers etc. While every effort will be made to keep contributions complete and unedited we reserve the right to make amendments when necessary, and will note it as 'edited'. Decisions about the inclusion & amendment of contributions are the responsibility of the Editorial Team, and are final. Contributions do not necessarily reflect the views & opinions of CIS'ters, members of the Trust Board, or the Editorial Team. Inclusion of any reference to an individual, book list, or organisation resource is not a recommendation.

The contents of this newsletter are for information and support purposes only. The newsletter is not a substitute for individual therapy or professional supervision. It is an addition to, not a replacement for, other networks of support.

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CIS'ters: an experience in learning, sharing, growing – individually and together
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