

SYNERGY

Providing rape and sexual abuse support
services across Essex

Self Care Booklet

Start to feel better



**easy
read**

Contents

SYNERGY
Providing rape and sexual abuse support
services across Essex

3 Introduction



5 Rape and sexual abuse



7 How you might be affected



14 Talking about what happened



15 Looking after yourself



16 Contact us

Introduction



This booklet is by Synergy Essex.

We are three organisations that work together:



- SERICC - Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service



- Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA)



- SOS Rape Crisis



We all support people in Essex who have been raped or sexually abused.



This booklet is to help you understand the way you might be feeling if you've been sexually abused.



It will give you ideas about how to feel better.

Rape and sexual abuse



Rape is being forced to have sex when you don't want to.

You have the right say yes or no to sex.



Consent

If you say yes, it is called giving your consent.

Consent means you agree to something.



If you haven't given your consent to have sex, it is rape.

Sexual abuse

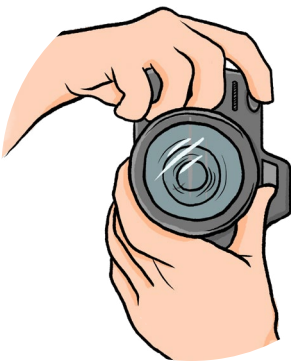


Sexual abuse is when someone:

- touches you sexually when you don't want them to



- forces you to touch them



- takes sexy pictures of you when you don't agree



- makes you look at sexy pictures when you don't want to

How you might be affected



Being raped or sexually abused is difficult to understand and deal with.

It can affect the way you:



● feel



● think



● behave



● trust other people



Feelings

You might feel:



● angry



● sad



● tired



● confused



You might feel like you just want to stay in bed.



It is OK to have these feelings and any other unusual feelings.

You will start to feel better with time.



Thoughts

You might keep thinking about what has happened to you.



It can be hard to make the thoughts go away.

You might think about wanting to hurt yourself.



Certain things might remind you about what happened. These are called triggers.



A trigger might be something you:

- hear



- see



- feel



- smell



Triggers can make you have bad dreams or flashbacks.



Flashbacks

Flashbacks are like having a nightmare when you are awake.



It might help you to stop remembering scary things by:

- taking some slow breaths



- thinking of something nice



- thinking about someone you care about



- thinking of somewhere that makes you feel safe



Trusting other people

If you have been raped or sexually abused it can affect your relationships with other people.



You might find it hard to trust people.



You might get scared:

- in busy places



- of being touched



- even when you are safe



You might not want to have sex or do any touching with your boyfriend or girlfriend.



That's OK. It is normal to feel like this.



Only have sex or do touching if you want to.

Talking about what happened

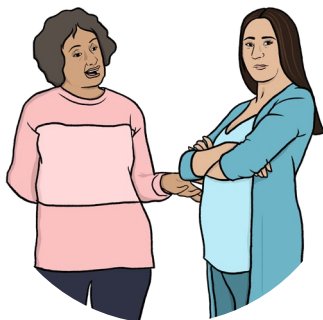


It can help to talk to someone about how you are feeling.

You shouldn't keep it to yourself.



You can talk to someone when you are ready.



You should talk to someone you trust.

You won't get in trouble for talking to someone.

Looking after yourself



It is important to look after yourself so that you can start to feel better.

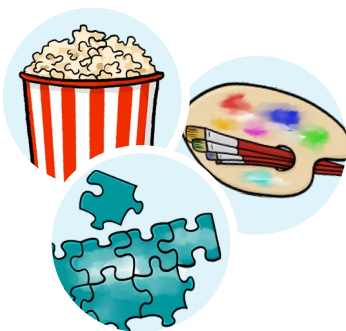


Remind yourself to:

- be nice to yourself



- talk to a friend



- do something you enjoy



You are important.

Contact us



Synergy Essex

Phone: [0300 003 7777](tel:03000037777)

Web: www.synergyessex.org



SERICC - Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service

Phone: [01375 380609](tel:01375380609)

Web: www.sericc.org.uk



CARA - Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse

Phone: [01206 769795](tel:01206769795)

Web: www.caraessex.org.uk



SOS Rape Crisis

Phone: [01702 303232](tel:01702303232)

Web: www.sosrc.org.uk



Easy Read by easy-read-online.co.uk