

RASAC Training

If you are interested in finding out more or to book a place on any of the following free training please call us. Spaces are limited!

FREE Training

Suicide & Self Harm

Thursday 10th September, 12noon -3pm
St Martins House, Perth

Suicide and self-harm can be a difficult subject. This training will enable you to better understand and better support someone who is struggling with suicidal thoughts or who is self-harming.

Dealing with Disclosure

Tuesday 6th October, 12noon-3pm
St Martins House, Perth

It can be very daunting to deal with disclosure. This training session will enable you to be better equipped to deal with disclosure thus providing a supportive and appropriate experience for the survivor.

Myths and Facts

Wednesday 7th October, 12noon-2pm
St Martins House, Perth

This training session looks at the common myths surrounding sexual violence held by society. This interesting and interactive training session will enable you to see how these myths can severely affect survivors of sexual violence and society.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Wednesday 28th October – 12noon-3pm
St Martins House, Perth

CSE is not limited to the big cities of Scotland. It happens everywhere including in Perth and Kinross. This session will look at what is CSE, what types are there nationally and locally and who does it affect.

Volunteer Training Programme

We are looking for Volunteers!
In the Support Team
In the Prevention Youth Team
In Befriending **NEW**

Without volunteers we could not do the work that we do. Our new Volunteer Training programme will be starting in October 2015. If you are interested or would like to find out more please contact Gwendoline.

The free volunteer training programme is worth over £1000 and will include;

- Gender Based Violence
- Rape and Sexual Abuse
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Suicide and Self harm
- Honour Based Violence
- Support Skills, Confidentiality and Boundaries
- LGBTI

There must be a minimum commitment to volunteering with RASAC for at least 6 months.

Myth Busting

'Women lie about being raped'

Every year we undertake a survey recording people's attitudes to different aspects of sexual violence. This year's survey looked at attitudes towards rape. 228 individuals – 81 males and 147 females completed our survey last year.

One of the statistics from this survey;
43% of respondents believe more men are being falsely accused of rape than ever before.

Unfortunately the belief that women lie about rape is more and more common. National evidence shows that false allegations of rape are on average only 3% of reported cases. This is not any higher than false allegations in any other area of crime in Scotland.

3% of allegations may be false but 97% are not



RASAC P&K
18 King Street, Perth PH2 8JA

Business Line: 01738 626290
Helpline: 01738 630965

Email: info@rasacpk.org.uk
Website: www.rasacpk.org.uk

Women working together towards freedom from rape and sexual abuse

Charity Reg No; SC037982
Reg Co No; SC389959



July 2015

Newsletter

Working with women since 2007

RASAC AGM

September 23rd 2015

5:15pm till 6:30pm
AK Bell Library Theatre

Our Annual General Meeting will take place after the launch of our DVD (more information inside this newsletter). Tea & coffee and light refreshments will be provided. All welcome. Please call us if you would like to attend on 01738626290.

What's in this Issue...

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RASAC Spotlight Commercial Sexual Exploitation Working Group

Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) includes sexual activities which objectify and harm others (usually women) such as prostitution, stripping, internet sex chat rooms, pole dancing, lap dancing, pornography, trafficking, and sex tourism/mail order brides, often for the financial gain of others. The Scottish Government acknowledges that CSE is part of the violence against women spectrum.

RASAC P&K recognises that many of those affected by CSE will be accessing a range of services in order to address their needs. However, we also recognise that CSE is often not disclosed. Therefore, no estimated statistics about the prevalence or context of CSE within Perth and Kinross currently exist. Even in areas of Scotland that have designated services established to engage with women involved in CSE, the total numbers of those identified are considered to be 'the tip of the iceberg'. In February this year we brought together a range of key services to form a CSE Working Group to improve ways of working together to identify and respond to the needs of women involved in CSE in a safe, consistent and robust way within Perth and Kinross. The short (and some of the longer) term aims of the group will be:

- To identify the services on offer and the approaches taken when working with those involved in CSE in P&K
- To get an idea of the 'bigger Picture' of CSE in P&K by sharing information sensitively and confidentially
- Looking at methods of harm reduction, and how hard to reach and 'hidden' women could be informed
- Identification of the barriers to disclosure, support or reporting for those involved
- Identification of the gaps in service delivery and exploration of ways to address these
- Awareness raising of issues surrounding CSE
- Sharing best practice and methods of engagement
- Planning and partnership working and the development and delivery of training
- Producing a small, discreet, information leaflet focusing on safety advice and where women involved in CSE can find support in P&K and nationally.

The group consists of Police Scotland, WEB Project/Cair Scotland, NHS -Sexual Health, P&K Council Adult Protection and CATH. If you are interested in knowing more or joining the group please contact Michelle at RASAC P&K.

A Day in the life of a RASAC Support Worker!

Michelle



I arrive at the centre, as usual, at 9am. I make myself a much needed cup of coffee and settle down to 20 minutes of emails and going over my diary and to-do-list for today. At 9:30 I get the down stairs Support Room ready for a survivor who has mobility needs.



I have only started supporting this survivor and she arrives very anxious about support. The session is very emotional and she needs lots of reassurance regarding how support sessions will be led by her at her own pace and will only include what she wants to discuss. She leaves after the hour session seeming happier with the process after making an appointment for next week. I update the database and look up some activities for next week's session.

At 11am I meet with a RASAC Director on the Board who is interested in knowing more about my role, responsibilities and the work I do surrounding Commercial Sexual Exploitation. Once our meeting is over I have 20 mins to ready myself for my next support session at 12noon.

The survivor arrives for her support session and after making her a cup of tea we settle down focusing on the subject of flashbacks, identifying triggers and discussing coping strategies for her frequent flashbacks which restricts her daily life. I have supported her for over 8 months and she has come a long way in that time but she still has issues she would like to work on related to the abuse she endured as a child. At 1pm she leaves with worksheets for the week ahead. I update the database and have 30 mins for a quick lunch.

At 1:40 I get the papers and meeting room ready for the bi-monthly Commercial Sexual Exploitation Working Group meeting at 2pm. The group meeting was successful with everyone attending bringing information and ideas on how we move forward in engaging with and supporting women involved in off street prostitution. Everyone leaves the meeting by 4:15 with individual tasks which we will work on over the next 2 months before our next meeting.

I finish up some paperwork, wash some cups, tidy the meeting room, feed our fish, check my emails for the last time today and by 5pm, look forward to my walk home in the sunshine.

RASAC Youth Initiative DVD Launch

September 23rd

4:30pm-5:45

AK Bell Library Theatre

FREE
EVENT

RASAC Youth Initiative, in partnership with Ad-Lib Theatre Arts and the Media Department at Perth College, has produced a RASAC promotional and learning 'bites' DVD. The DVD raises awareness of issues relating to violence against girls and women and outlines the support and services RASAC provides, including the prevention programme delivered in schools and community groups.



Ad-Lib Theatre Arts were involved in the planning and performing of scenarios highlighting issues around violence against women and girls and in particular the links between gender expectations, sexualisation and sexual violence. The DVD includes a scene focusing on the impact of sexting on young people, an activity an increasing number of young people are becoming involved in.

RASAC Youth Initiative's 'Youth Ambassadors' also feature in the DVD and explain why they have taken on the Ambassador role. They also discuss the nature of the activities they have been involved in to assist the Prevention Workers to raise awareness in their schools and local communities.

The DVD will be distributed to Schools, Youth and Community groups and other external agencies. A resource pack will accompany the DVD providing additional information on the themes depicted in the AD-Lib scenarios and guidance on how these scenarios can be used as a basis for exploring these issues further in workshops with young people.

We hope this resource will be utilised by the community to engage with issues surrounding violence against women and girls, as well as the sexualisation of children and young people. If you would like to know more or if you would like to come to the launch and receive your own DVD pack please call Catriona at RASAC.

Self Help Section - Flashbacks

What is a flashback?

Anyone who has experienced sexual abuse, rape, or any other traumatic event can experience flashbacks. Flashbacks are a memory of a frightening or painful experience, which occurred either in childhood or adult life. This is not like an ordinary memory, but more a sudden and unexpected intrusion where it feels as if the trauma is taking place in the current moment. During a flashback it is possible to feel as if the experience of sexual violence is happening all over again and as such a survivor might find it difficult to connect with reality. It may even feel like the perpetrator is physically present.

Flashbacks may seem random at first, because they can be triggered by fairly ordinary experiences. For instance, TV programmes, films, pictures, a particular tone of voice, songs, certain smells or tastes, places, the time of year or day, a particular feeling such as fear or anxiety, having sex or being intimate with your partner, or seeing someone who reminds you in some way of your abuser. It's a normal response to trauma and there are steps you can take to help manage the stress of a flashback.

If you have regular flashbacks consider the following tips. Because of the extreme emotions you feel during a flashback it might be a good idea to put some practice into using them before you have a flashback.

Breathe

Several things can happen during a flashback one of which is panic. When you panic, you will automatically start to take short, shallow breaths, which will decrease your oxygen intake and can make you feel more panicked. Deep breathing is important because it increases the oxygen in your system and can help you move out of the anxious state faster. Place your hand on your stomach and take slow, deep breaths. Concentrate on the hand that is placed on your belly, see it move out with each inhalation and watch it fall with each exhalation.

What you tell yourself matters

Due to the nature of flashbacks people experiencing them become convinced that the trauma is actually happening again. Tell yourself that you are having a flashback. Remind yourself that the actual event is over and that you already survived the abuse, which means you can survive what you are remembering now.

Using All Five Senses to Return to the Present

- **Sight: What do you see?** Look around you. Make a list of the items in the room; count the colours or pieces of furniture around you.
- **Smell: What do you smell?** Find out how different scents affect you. Breathe in a scent that you associate with good things in your life. Once you have identified this scent keep it with you so you can smell it when you need something soothing to counter the flashback. Alternatively, focus on the smells around you.
- **Hearing: What do you hear?** Turn on soothing music or listen to the noises around you.
- **Taste: What do you taste?** Eat or drink something you enjoy and focus on the flavours.
- **Touch: What does it feel like?** Ground yourself in the present, by feeling the solidity of the floor beneath your feet. Hold something warm, like a mug of tea, or something cold, like a piece of ice.

Take Care of Yourself

Recognise what makes you feel safer and more secure. Maybe being alone in a room or wrapping yourself in a blanket is what makes you feel safe. Flashbacks are powerful experiences which can drain your energy, so take some time to look after yourself when you have had a flashback. Have a warm, relaxing bath or a sleep, play some soothing music, or have a warm drink or take some quiet time for yourself.

How do I prevent flashbacks?

You may be able to take steps to prevent future flashbacks by identifying warning signs and triggers. Even if you cannot prevent a flashback you can anticipate it and prepare yourself in order to manage the flashback. Although it sometimes feels as if flashbacks come out of nowhere, you may experience early physical or emotional warning signs. These signs could include sudden sweating, feeling pressure in your chest, or a change in mood. Becoming aware of the early signs of flashbacks may help you manage or prevent them.



For Support in Coping with Flashbacks Contact:

- RASAC P&K Helpline at 01738 630 965
- Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30 – 13:30
- Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Fridays 12:30 – 16:30

Rape Crisis Scotland helpline between 18:00 and midnight at 08088 01 03 02