



MAYA

MINDFUL | AMBITIOUS | YOUNG AIDE

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN INDIA



BENGALURU, INDIA



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HOW TO USE

THIS GUIDE IS A STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTION MANUAL FOR SURVIVORS, WITNESSES AND UNINFORMED INDIVIDUALS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.

WE, AT MAYA, CREATED THIS RESOURCE FOR PEOPLE OF AGES 12 AND ABOVE, INTENDING TO EDUCATE, INFORM AND TO ASSIST THOSE WHO NEED IT.

For a Survivor:

Use this guide as an aid in your healing process. Make sure to glance through these pages and find something that works for you.

For a Witness:

The signs you may have observed may be a true cause for alarm. Look through this guide to keep yourself vigilant.

For all:

All of us can stand to be better informed about CSA in India. This resource will tell you everything you need to know.

IF YOU, OR ANYONE YOU KNOW, IS IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION, PLEASE REACH OUT TO US AT
INITIATIVE.MAYA@GMAIL.COM

CONTENTS



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WHAT IS CSA?

1.

CSA ONLINE

2.

IMPACTS

3.

HOW TO RECOGNISE CSA

4.

MYTHS

5.

LEGISLATION

6.

AS A VICTIM

7.

AS A BYSTANDER

8.

LEGISLATION & RESOURCES

9.

INTRODUCTION TO CSA

CSA stands for Child Sexual Abuse. It describes a range of **inappropriate or uncomfortable, sexually suggestive behaviours** toward children below the age of 18. This includes both contact acts and non-contact acts.

WHO IS A CHILD?



AS PER THE LAW, ANYONE BELOW THE AGE OF 18 IS STILL A CHILD AND CANNOT GIVE THEIR INFORMED CONSENT.

CONTACT ACTS



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1. SEXUAL ASSAULT
2. RAPE
3. INCEST (SEXUAL ADVANCES FROM SOMEONE WHO IS RELATED TO YOU OR IS A PART OF YOUR FAMILY)
4. FONDLING
5. INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHES IN PRIVATE AREAS
6. ORAL, ANAL OR VAGINAL SEX

NON-CONTACT ACTS

1. SENDING SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MESSAGES
2. PRODUCING, OWNING OR SHARING PORNOGRAPHIC CONTENT INVOLVING CHILDREN
3. FLIRTING
4. HARASSMENT (CAT CALLING, MAKING COMMENTS, WHISTLING ETC.)
5. FLASHING



CSA ONLINE

WHO?

The abuser may disguise themselves as a friendly **mentor**, an older romantic **partner** or even as your **friend**.



VULNERABLE PLACES

1. VIDEO GAME CHATS
2. COMMENTS SECTIONS
3. LIVE STREAMS
4. OTHER MEDIA CATERING TO CHILDREN



SIGNS



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1. ASKS FOR OR SHARES NAKED PICTURES
2. REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTS TO START SEXUAL CONVERSATIONS.
3. SENDS SEXUAL MESSAGES OR 'SEXTS'.
4. ASKS QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR BODY.
5. ENCOURAGE YOU TO SHARE VIDEOS OF MASTURBATION OR OTHER SEXUAL ACTIVITIES.
6. CONVINCES YOU TO MEET IN REAL LIFE.



:SEND ME YOUR NUDE PICTURES, OR I AM GOING TO STOP TALKING TO YOU AND TELL EVERYONE YOU ARE A WH*RE!

THIS IS AN INSTANCE OF SEXUAL EXTORTION. IT IS A CRIME,
PUNISHABLE BY LAW.

IMPACTS

PHYSICALLY

1. ADDICTIONS TO SUBSTANCES
(ALCOHOL, DRUGS ETC.)
2. DAMAGE TO HEALTH
3. DISABILITIES
4. MALNUTRITION, OBESITY
(DISORDERED EATING)
5. CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN
6. PROBLEMS WITH MENSTRUAL
CYCLE, CHILDBIRTH ETC..



EMOTIONALLY

1. RISKY SEXUAL HABITS
2. DEPRESSION
3. PTSD (POST
TRAUMATIC STRESS
DISORDER)
4. ANXIETY
5. TROUBLE WITH
RELATIONSHIPS
6. TRUST ISSUES
7. SELF-BLAME



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HOW TO RECOGNISE CSA

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD SECURING THEIR FUTURE IS TO STAY VIGILANT FOR SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD, A CHILD IN YOUR VICINITY OR EVEN YOUR FRIEND IS BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED.

< 10 YEARS

1. ANXIETY, DEPRESSION
2. DISTANT OR CLINGY BEHAVIOUR
3. REGRESSIVE BEHAVIOURS LIKE WETTING THE BED
4. NIGHTMARES
5. NEW FEARS, DIFFICULTY WITH TOUCH
6. 'ACTING OUT'
7. TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL WORK
8. SELF-HARM
9. VAGUE QUESTIONS ABOUT SECRETS OR ADULT BEHAVIOURS
10. DISCOMFORT BEING AROUND A CERTAIN PERSON OR IN A PARTICULAR PLACE



ONLINE ABUSE



1. ISOLATION, SECRETIVE
2. POSSESSIVE OVER THEIR PHONE/LAPTOP
3. STAY UP LATE INTO THE NIGHT
4. NOTICEABLE CHANGES IN EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS
5. RECEIVING 'GIFTS'
6. OUTBURSTS OF ANGER, ANXIETY OR IRRITATION

TEENS

1. HEADACHES, STOMACH ACHES, INSOMNIA
2. NIGHTMARES
3. LOW SELF ESTEEM
4. WITHDRAWN BEHAVIOUR
5. CONFUSED ABOUT SEXUAL IDENTITY
6. HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR
7. DOING POORLY AT SCHOOL
8. DIFFICULTY WALKING OR SITTING



MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

CHILD SEX OFFENDERS ARE USUALLY STRANGERS.

The perpetrator is someone the child knows in 70-90% of cases.

CHILDREN DON'T NEED TO LEARN ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE. TEACHING THEM ABOUT SEX AT A YOUNG AGE WILL BE HARMFUL.

Child abusers rely on the victim's lack of knowledge and reluctance to talk. By teaching them early on, we make sure that they will report any incidents.

CHILDREN CAN MISINTERPRET AND WRONGFULLY ACCUSE AN ADULT OF ABUSE.

Most children report the crime long after the abuse started. When a child trusts you with their experience it is essential that they know it wasn't their fault. Ensure that you don't victim-blame at any cost.





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CSA OCCURS ONLY IN POOR FAMILIES.

Children from all socio-economic backgrounds are at great risk of being abused.

CHILDREN CAN'T SEXUALLY ABUSE ANOTHER CHILD AND CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.

Abuse is defined by the power dynamic that the relationship involves. Whether the abuser is an adult, a teenager or even someone younger.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE INVOLVES MEN ABUSING GIRLS.

Abusers and their victims can be of any gender, boy or girl or others.

Among the child sexual abuse cases in India, 52.94% were boys and 47.06% were girls.



AS A VICTIM

AS A SURVIVOR OF CSA, YOU MAY BE STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH COMPLICATED EMOTIONS ABOUT THE ABUSE LIKE GUILT OR SHAME.

IT MAY AFFECT YOUR LIFE IN WAYS YOU DID NOT ANTICIPATE.

IF YOUR ABUSER IS SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOUR FAMILY, YOU MAY FEEL THAT YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO BE AROUND THEM.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. IT IS NEVER YOUR FAULT.

Your feelings may be complicated and difficult to navigate. If you felt pleasure when the abuse took place, you may feel disgusted with yourself and think that you brought it upon yourself to be molested. However, the way your body reacts to sexual activity is biological and is not in your control.

REMOVE YOURSELF FROM THE SITUATION.

If the abuse is ongoing, it is of utmost importance that you avoid interactions and being alone with them.

PRESERVE ANY EVIDENCE AND CONSIDER LEGAL OPTIONS.

If it took place via the internet, you can anonymously report the crime through online portals. Make sure to block and report their account.

TALK TO AN ADULT YOU TRUST, IF YOU CAN.

Your voice could stop the predator from finding another victim.

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR PAIN.

The body remembers trauma while the mind tries to forget it. So if you haven't confronted your emotions, it can cause long-lasting health issues.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO HEAL.

You can live a rich life that extends far beyond your experience.

Sexual abuse therapy, group therapy and emotional support groups can help you realise that you are not the only one.

REPORT IT EVEN IF IT HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO.



AS A BYSTANDER

AS A BYSTANDER, IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A CHILD YOU KNOW, A PARTNER OR A FRIEND HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ABUSED, YOU MUST INTERVENE.

ALWAYS BELIEVE THE CHILD.

The likelihood of a child falsely accusing someone of abusing them is low.

BE SUPPORTIVE.

Don't dismiss their claims. Check up on them frequently and don't just leave it at one conversation. Sometimes the child may not know how to bring it up.

STAY CALM. DON'T GET ANGRY OR UPSET.

Make sure the child knows it is not their fault.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CHILD'S PROTECTION.

However, do not make any promises that you can't keep. For example, don't promise not to tell anyone else or that the abuser will be punished.

GET HELP

From a child professional who can guide you towards healing from the experience.

REPORT THE CRIME TO THE AUTHORITIES.

If possible, keep evidence of the crime. Do not force this upon the child.

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN SOMEONE DISCLOSES AN ASSAULT

YOUR REACTION CAN HAVE A DEEP AND IRREVERSIBLE IMPACT ON SOMEONE'S STORY, WHICH IS WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW TO REACT.

USE COMFORTING PHRASES.

'I'M SO SORRY THAT HAPPENED TO YOU'

'YOU ARE NOT ALONE.'

'THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING ME WITH
YOUR EXPERIENCE.'

'THIS WASN'T YOUR FAULT. YOU DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING TO DESERVE THIS.;

ASK THEIR PERMISSION.

OFTEN TIMES, IN CAUSE OF AN ASSAULT, THE
VICTIM FEELS POWERLESS, SO IT'S
IMPORTANT TO RE-ESTABLISH THAT THEY
HAVE CONTROL OVER WHAT HAPPENS.
FOR EXAMPLE, ASK THEM IF THEY WANT TO
BE HUGGED BEFORE DOING SO.

DON'T JUDGE.

REFRAIN FROM ASKING INSENSITIVE
QUESTIONS THAT IMPLY THEY WERE
AT FAULT. FOR EXAMPLE, 'WHAT
WERE YOU WEARING?' OR 'WHY
DIDN'T YOU SAY NO?'

CHECK-IN PERIODICALLY
AND
MAKE SURE THEY ARE AWARE
OF ALL THE LEGAL OPTIONS
AVAILABLE.



LEGISLATION

THE LAW AROUND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN INDIA IS CALLED THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT (OR “POCSO” FOR SHORT) AND WAS ENACTED IN 2012.

HERE’S WHAT IT DOES!

1. Allows for *all* cases of sexual abuse regardless of gender.

2. It has strict provisions for the privacy of the victim.

Your name or other details *cannot* be published without your consent.

3. If you are scared to testify in front of your abuser, POCSO ensures you will never need to face them.

The defence is *not* allowed to ask you questions which target your *character, past sexual experiences, sexual preferences* etc.

4. Cases of Online Sexual Abuse come under the purview of POCSO. If you are a minor, no one is allowed to share or ask for *nude pictures, pornographic content* or make any sexually *suggestive comments*.

5. If you are worried about reporting the crime, the law requires the police to keep you safe. They are mandated to not be in *uniform, not detain you overnight* as well as to *keep you away* from your alleged rapist.

6. If you feel you should not file a case because it may go on for years, POCSO sets up *special courts* for speedy justice. These special courts will try to complete the case in one year.

THE LAW IS ON YOUR SIDE, SO DO NOT BE
AFRAID TO FILE A COMPLAINT!



RESOURCES

HELPLINES

1.1098 : CHILDLINE INDIA

2.100: POLICE

3.9868235077: NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS

FILE A COMPLAINT HERE: [HTTP://NCPCR.GOV.IN](http://ncpcr.gov.in)

EMAIL: POCSOEBOX-NCPCR@GOV.IN

APP: [HTTPS://WWW.NCPCR.GOV.IN/INDEX2.PHP](https://www.ncpcr.gov.in/index2.php) (ANDROID ONLY)

LETTER ADDRESS:

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS (NCPCR)
5TH FLOOR, CHANDRALOK BUILDING 36, JANPATH,
NEW DELHI-110001 INDIA.

ORGANISATIONS THAT YOU CAN REACH OUT TO:

1.MAYA [HTTPS://OURMAYA.IN/](https://ourmaya.in/)

2.ARPAN [HTTPS://WWW.ARPAN.ORG.IN/](https://www.arpn.org.in/)

3.CHILDLINE INDIA [HTTPS://WWW.CHILDLINEINDIA.ORG](https://www.childlineindia.org)



SHARE WITH US

MAYA OFFERS FREE THERAPY CONDUCTED BY QUALIFIED COUNSELORS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND THERAPISTS.

SIGN UP HERE : [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/88X4YMPENDVASVWV9](https://forms.gle/88X4YMPENDVASVWV9)

WE AT MAYA, WANT TO DO OUR VERY BEST TO HELP YOU AND SUPPORT YOU THROUGH YOUR JOURNEY OF HEALING. IF YOU ARE COMFORTABLE DOING SO, SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH US.

HERE: [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/SR78BPNX97D1XHNf8](https://forms.gle/SR78BPNX97D1XHNf8)

INCASE YOU HAVE ANY FEEDBACK TO OFFER, COME CONNECT WITH US ON OUR SOCIALS!

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