

Child Sexual Abuse and its Treatment

Sexual abuse is defined as any contact or action initiated by an adult towards a child, which is intended to stimulate the child sexually, or to stimulate the offending adult through the use of the child. Sexual abuse may also be committed by a person under the age of 18, when that person is older than the victim and/or in a position of power or control over the child.

Family Service Moncton's *Sexual Abuse Treatment Program* is a confidential service designed to enable families to understand the complex and confusing emotions surrounding the disclosure of sexual abuse of a child and its consequences on the family members. With the help of qualified therapists, families are guided through a process that will assist them in understanding why the abuse happened, and learn ways to avoid the long term negative effects that may occur when abuse is denied or not taken seriously. More importantly, families learn to make the needed changes to protect the child from future abuse.

The service has been designed in collaboration with the New Brunswick Department of Family and Community Services as a comprehensive and effective approach for the treatment of the complex family traumas associated with sexual abuse.

Upon referral, the Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Coordinator will meet with the non-offending parent(s) or partner(s) and the victim(s) to describe the services and provide an opportunity to talk about family needs, experiences, and feelings.

In order to give families opportunities to heal, research and experience indicates that participation in programs such as the "**Crisis Disclosure**" and the "**Non-Offending Parent's Group**" enhances progress and speeds recovery. As a result, both groups are considered central components to help the family in the healing process.

Crisis Disclosure Group

The Crisis Disclosure Group is designed to provide support during the immediate crisis following disclosure of abuse. It helps family members deal with the trauma and consequences associated with sexual abuse and empower them to regain control over their lives.

While this group takes time and energy, participants do gain a renewed sense of hope and belief in their healing. They also have the satisfaction of being part of the child's recovery, and learn ways to best support and protect their children. Questions regarding the legal and child protection systems are also addressed.

Non-Offending Parent's Group

The Non-Offending Partners Group is a service designed to address the special needs of the parent(s) or partner(s) who have not abused their child(ren). This program decreases the sense of isolation often experienced by the non-offending partner and assists participants to;

- Work through their feelings and challenges in a safe, confidential and supportive atmosphere;
- Help their child to heal by demonstrating commitment and support to the therapeutic process;
- Help caretakers work through their feelings towards the perpetrator(s);
- Protect their children through the development of healthy communication styles and better understanding of the dynamics surrounding sexual abuse.

Individual, Couple and Family Counselling

Individuals, couples and families will be seen by therapists for individual counselling after having participated in group therapy sessions. Family therapists are available to families to provide counselling sessions to the victim(s), siblings, mother, father and the offender.

The goal of counselling is the positive reconstruction of the family or, in cases of intra-familial abuse, the reintegration of the family if deemed desirable. Offenders are only considered for family therapy when the court process has been completed and they are prepared to participate fully in the process as defined by the involved therapist(s).

Counselling is important for sexual abuse victims to avoid long-term consequences. Denying abuse or pretending it does not matter keeps victims and caring family members from growing and healing, while increasing the risk of sexual abuse re-occurring. Please act as soon as possible after finding out about abuse and "Give Your Family a Chance to Heal".

What others Have Said about the Therapeutic Groups

"It has made me realize that I'm not the only person in the world that this happened to. I'm more open to talk about sexual abuse to my mother and father." (CDG)

"At first I didn't think anything would come out of this group, but it happened. It helped me understand and listen more openly to my kids, (and myself). Today I see that everything was helpful. Not only helping me deal with the abuse but to be able to talk to a group of people (express my feelings)." (NOP group)

"I am grateful that there are programs such as this to help heal the hurt inside that I felt." (NOP group)

"I learned how to express my feelings, be more understanding to the children's needs and be more at ease with myself"
(NOP group)

"My turning point at one meeting has made a world of difference in me, way beyond my expectations, thank you!" (NOP group)

"We are leaving very different people from who we met in the beginning and it has been wonderful to watch it happen. It makes you realize that you have grown too."
(NOP group)

For further information, or to make an appointment, call

Family Service Moncton Inc.
120 High Street, Moncton, NB E1C 6B5

Telephone: (506) 857-3258
Fax: (506) 858-8315

Web Site: www.fsmoncton.com

You may ask to speak with the "Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Coordinator" at extension 37.

You may also contact the
**NB Department of Family and
Community Services at:**

(506) 856-2400



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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

TREATMENT PROGRAM

*Giving Families
A Chance To Heal*

**Sponsored by the New Brunswick
Department of Family and
Community Services**