

## Support line

Anyone is welcome to contact our support line. We receive calls from survivors as well as relatives and professionals in health care and social services. All our support persons have experienced sexual abuse in their childhood. If you want to, you can remain completely anonymous.

**Telephone: 08-696 00 95**  
**E-mail: [stod@rise-sverige.se](mailto:stod@rise-sverige.se)**  
**Chat: [www.rise-sverige.se](http://www.rise-sverige.se)**

**Rise – Riksföreningen mot incest och andra sexuella övergrepp i barndomen** ("National association against incest and other childhood sexual abuse") is a non-profit association established in 1981. We offer support to adults who have experienced sexual abuse as children. We also have an important role in raising public awareness of the topic of child sexual abuse, its consequences, and the possibilities for healing and growth.

**[www.rise-sverige.se](http://www.rise-sverige.se)**

# Were you sexually abused as a child?



## Childhood sexual abuse

Did you experience sexual abuse as a child? Most people will answer that question with a no. But by rephrasing the question as: Has anyone ever persuaded you to do something sexual? Forced you to watch porn? Touched you in a way you did not like? Talked about your body in a sexualized way? Then the answer might be another.

Sexual abuse doesn't have to include threats or violence to be traumatizing. Children in all kinds of families, regardless of social class and culture, are subjected to incest and other sexual abuse far more often than most people want to believe. In Sweden, around three in ten adult women and one in ten adult men have been sexually abused as children, i.e. before the age of 18. Half of them on more than one occasion.

The abuser can be for example a parent, sibling, relative, friend, an adult close to the child or someone completely unknown to the child. Both men and women, as well as other children, subject children to sexual abuse. Sometimes the abuser acts on their own and sometimes along with other perpetrators.

In most cases childhood sexual abuse leads to negative consequences for the victim as an adult. Strong feelings of shame and guilt, difficulties regulating emotions like anger and grief, different kinds of addiction or relationship problems are all common. It's also common to feel lonely or like a failure, and as if there is no hope of ever feeling better.

By meeting others, thus breaking the isolation, many experience that their feelings of shame and guilt become less of a burden. The realization that some feelings and behaviours are a result of the sexual abuse, rather than personal flaws, can change a person's self-image. This often leads to improved self-confidence and a sense of empowerment. It is entirely possible to feel better and gain the ability to really live – not just survive.

## What we do

All our support persons have themselves been sexually abused as children. Knowing that our support persons, as well as all fellow participants, have similar experiences can make it easier to take the first step towards breaking the silence and receiving support.

We offer various kinds of support for the purpose of helping you to improve your current life situation. We offer activities suitable for you, whether you are in a more acute phase of your process or if you have come a bit further along your journey towards healing.

We offer support groups, all held under safe and structured conditions, where you get to meet others with similar experiences. It can be of great value to be listened to as well as hearing the stories of others. In our support groups, the allotted time is equally shared among the participants, and cutting in or commenting is not allowed. We also arrange social gatherings, camps, courses, and other activities to support you in your process. On our web-based support portal you will find helpful facts, inspiration, and tools that you can use on your own in your work towards healing.

One of our additional goals is that everyone who meets someone who was exposed to child sexual abuse should understand and have knowledge about that person's situation. That's why we also work with providing information and education and raising public awareness.

## We are here for you!

Anyone over the age of 18 who has experienced childhood sexual abuse can participate in our support groups and other activities.

Visit our website at [www.rise-sverige.se](http://www.rise-sverige.se) to find out more about becoming a member.