

---

## WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

**Child sexual abuse** is when a child under the age of 16 is exploited sexually by another person. Sexual abuse of children and youth often involves manipulation, coercion into a sexual situation, bribery, and secrecy.

The abuser is often someone the child trusts, like a parent or family member, coach, clergy member, or other adult in a position of authority or trust.

## SEXUAL ABUSE/ ASSAULT & MEMORY

Memories can emerge years after the event took place, often so intensely that it feels as if it is happening in the present.

Sometimes these memories are triggered by a sensory experience – a touch, smell, sight, taste, or sound.

A common worry for survivors is whether or not they can trust their memories – that maybe they are imagining it, or pulling together pieces from TV shows or news stories.

It is not uncommon for people to forget or bury traumatic events. It is possible for someone to have no or few memories of sexual abuse.

Trust yourself – your knowledge, your gut instinct, your feelings. Even if you can't remember the exact details, healing is still possible.

You have control over your life and what happens next.

---

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Visit us in person:**  
506 25th Street East, Suite 201  
Saskatoon, SK S7K 4A7

*The SSAIC office is located on the 2nd floor of the Saskatoon Community Service Village (Attached to the YWCA)*

**Monday – Friday**  
9am to 5pm  
(Closed for lunch from 12pm to 1pm)

Call our office: (306) 244-2294

Send us an email: [info@ssaic.ca](mailto:info@ssaic.ca)

Visit us on the web: [ssaic.ca](http://ssaic.ca)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/SSAICI](https://www.facebook.com/SSAICI)

Remember: As with any other crime, a survivor of sexual violence is not to blame. It is never OK, acceptable, or justifiable to force or threaten someone into any sexual act, regardless of the circumstances.

---

SSAIC acknowledges that we operate on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place, and recognize the harm done to Indigenous peoples through colonization, Residential Schools, and the Sixties Scoop. This legacy of intergenerational trauma is one of the reasons why our agency was created. We commit to working towards reconciliation, and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

# SSAIC

Saskatoon Sexual Assault  
& Information Centre



RECOVERING FROM  
CHILDHOOD  
SEXUAL ABUSE

[WWW.SSAIC.CA](http://WWW.SSAIC.CA)

## THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

**If you're an adult who experienced sexual abuse as a child, know that you are not alone.** In Canada, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before they turn 18 years old. (Stats Canada, 2013)

Sexual abuse of children and youth often involves manipulation, coercion into sexual situations, bribery, and forced secrecy. As an adult survivor, you have been living with these memories for a long time.

As a child you may have tried to tell an adult and were met with disbelief or felt that there was no one you could trust. For these reasons and many others, **the effects of sexual abuse can appear many years after the abuse has ended.**

Remember that there is no "normal" timeline for dealing with and recovering from this experience.

It is not uncommon to want to forget what happened and try to move on, but **research shows that the sooner you can speak about your experience in a supportive environment** (with family, friends, and/or a professional counsellor), **the faster and more complete your healing process will be.**

**Call SSAIC to make your appointment or visit SSAIC.ca for more resources.**

## COUNSELLING & SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED BY SSAIC

SSAIC does not charge clients a fee for counselling services or for participation in groups, or for survivor assistance services.

People of all genders are encouraged to access our services.



## 24-HOUR CRISIS LINE

**PHONE: 306-244-2224**

This service is intended for emergencies only. We provide support, information, and referrals to anyone dealing with issues related to sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and memories of childhood sexual abuse.

Saskatoon Mobile Crisis is our trained partner, and will answer the line evenings, weekends, and holidays.

## INDIVIDUAL & GROUP COUNSELLING

**PHONE: 306-244-2294**

We offer **crisis and short-term counselling to survivors** of past or recent sexual abuse/assault, and to those who have been impacted by the abuse of others. Group counselling is also available.

Our office has access to a smudging room as an option before or after counselling services.

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE – EFFECTS

Adult survivors of child sexual abuse may have some of the following concerns that are specific to their experience:

**Guilt, shame, blame, and anger.** You may feel angry and direct that at people you love and trust, but not really know why. You might feel guilty about not having been able to stop the abuse, or blame yourself if you experienced physical pleasure. It's the person who manipulated and hurt you that should be held accountable – not you.

**Self-esteem.** You may struggle with low self-esteem, which can be a result of negative messages you received from your abuser(s) and from having your personal safety violated or ignored. Self-sabotage is also common; the moment things start to go right you may unconsciously do something to set back or damage your progress because you believe you don't deserve happiness or success.

**Physical and emotional effects.** You may experience headaches, digestive issues, or other pain, develop sleeping difficulties, or become anxious or depressed. Some may choose to numb their pain with alcohol, drugs, or other coping behaviours like disordered eating or cutting.

**Intimacy and relationships.** It's possible that your first experiences with sex came as a result of sexual abuse. As an adult, intimacy might be a struggle. Survivors may also struggle to set boundaries that help them feel safe in relationships. Trusting others may be difficult. Adult survivors may find challenges when they begin parenting as certain situations uncover buried memories.