



Press Release

23rd June 2008

The Survivors Trust confirms lack of support for victims of childhood sexual abuse

The Survivors Trust notes two areas of concern about the comments made by a Home Office spokesperson in an article published on 19th June in The Sun newspaper (“Sick betrayal of support group”).

The article highlighted the urgent need for increased support services for survivors of childhood sexual abuse, and outlined how the Ministry of Justice has provided funding for Circles UK, a support group for Sexual Offenders, while support groups for victims are experiencing closure due to a lack of funds.

First, The Survivors Trust believes that not all of the £10 million Home Office funding mentioned has reached specialist support services for victims of childhood sexual abuse such as Phoenix Survivors, but has been spread thinly across a wide range of projects such as Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCS), Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and the Victims Fund. The result of these funds being stretched so far is that there are simply not enough financial resources available to specialist services to be able to provide adequate support to all victims of childhood sexual abuse.

Second, the work of The Survivors Trust was misrepresented by the Home Office spokesperson who said “we are providing £75,000 core funding to the Survivors Trust, who support survivors of childhood sexual abuse”. As a National umbrella agency, The Survivors Trust does not provide any direct support to survivors of childhood sexual abuse, but instead assists specialist services similar to Phoenix Survivors to provide high quality and ongoing support to victims.

Fay Maxted, the Chief Executive of The Survivors Trust comments “We believe that childhood sexual abuse is preventable, and that everybody in society needs to take responsibility for protecting children from becoming victims. However,

we also need to make sure that victims are able to get the right support to move on with their lives.”

She continued to say “The lack of support services available for victims of childhood sexual abuse is a tragedy and a national disgrace. Groups like Phoenix Survivors will continue to close if they do not have enough money. Support needs to be provided by specially trained people – this is only possible if these groups have enough money to keep their service afloat”.

*NSPCC figures

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The Survivors Trust is a national umbrella agency for over 120 specialist voluntary sector agencies providing a range of counselling, therapeutic and support services working with women, men and children who are victims/survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

More information about The Survivors trust can be found on our website:

www.thesurvivorstrust.org