Your story. Our journey

Hurstpierpoint Parish Council

Village Centre, Trinity Road

Hurstpierpoint

BN6 9UY

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to you from *Lifecentre* a Sussex based charity helping survivors of rape or sexual abuse to recover and rebuild their lives. I have chosen to write to you due to our shared charitable values and to ask for your kind support of a donation of £200 towards our lifesaving trauma counselling service. The need for *Lifecentre* services continues to increase; from January - November we have seen a 28% increase in referrals for our face-to-face counselling, compared to the same time frame in 2020. We currently have 440 survivors waiting to receive lifesaving trauma counselling, of which 150 are under the age of 18. It costs £1,530 for each person to receive a full course of treatment consisting of 18 sessions of counselling.

In 2020, we continued to see an increased demand for our services, receiving 710 referrals for our free, specialist trauma counselling. In Hurstpierpoint alone, we received 3 referrals from survivors living in your area. This trend has continued into 2021 as from January-November we have seen a 28% increase in referrals compared to the same period in 2020. There are currently 3 survivors on our waiting list from your local area. While we are deeply saddened that the demand for our service is ever-growing, we are encouraged to know that survivors are still reaching out for the help they need during these difficult times as for survivors, each counselling session is a step towards a new lease on life. Where previously even the smallest of tasks would have been impossible, survivors feel able to tackle everyday life overcoming the effects of their abuse such as anxiety, eating disorders, depression, and suicidal ideation. Many find that counselling allows them to reconnect with family, re-enter the workplace and have so much more confidence in their abilities. A survivor who recently finished counselling with us told us:

*"Life centre has helped turn my life around, very appreciative of all the help and support!" -Client*

Understandably the covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issues that people were already facing. Since the outbreak of covid-19 our clients have faced new levels of anxiety and isolation, increasing their vulnerability, mental health symptoms and use of life-threatening coping behaviour patterns. Of those we saw in 2020:

- 33% had attempted suicide
- 48% were enduring suicidal thoughts
- 47% self-harmed
- 28% had substance misuse issues
- 27% had eating disorders
- 73% suffered depression and anxiety

Please see enclosed a case study of a young female survivor who greatly benefited from our services.

*"Family betrayal is something I know will always be there but through counselling I have learnt to deal with it better and overcome the initial anger I had."*

*Lifecentre* client

As a charity we are totally reliant on donations to be able to deliver our services and developing partnerships with funders such as Hurstpierpoint Parish Council are a real lifeline to us. It takes a lot of courage for a survivor to take that first step of reaching out and ask for support. We would be most grateful if you could join with us to help them on their journey to recovery, together we can provide our survivors with the gift of healing, the gift of a brighter, safer future.

We would love to stay in touch with you in the future, if you would like to receive our newsletter and email updates, please visit mailchi.mp/516dbc921296/lifecentre-mailing-list to sign up. I would also be delighted to send you any copies of our poster, our brochures and stickers for you to pop up around your local community venues, just email me at mollie@lifecentre.uk.com and I'll be happy to help. To find out more about our services and to see our new website and resources visit www.lifecentre.uk.com or please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mollie-Ann Nisbet
*Communications Assistant*
*Lifecentre*

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LIFECENTRE CHARITY NUMBER 1127779, COMPANY NUMBER 6766164

# Lifecentre Case Studies

Age Range: 17-18 Gender: F

Date: 27/11/20

Brief summary of case *(If appropriate please include referrer and service used)*:

YP was referred by school following disclosure of two incidents of sexual assault and rape one, by family friend/neighbour and the second by teen friend in the woods.

Please describe the case in as much detail as appropriate *(bullet points or narrative form)*:

During therapy, the YP went on to disclose that her father had been sexually abusing and raping her since the age of 9. The YP was removed from her mother's care and now lives in foster care. The YP presented with and suffered from:

- 5 suicide attempts
- Self-harm
- Extreme fear
- Flashbacks, dissociation
- Inability to make and keep friends
- Panic attacks and anxiety
- Low mood and depression
- Sleep difficulties
- Low self-confidence and self esteem
- Grief and loss
- Attachment difficulties

Within the therapeutic context the YP was able to develop, trust and rely on a reparative healthy relationship with a safe person. Interventions used:

- Stabilisation (this took a substantial time as in the beginning the full extent of the abuse was not disclosed and the YP was having contact with her father)
- Safety plan, keeping safe, boundaries
- Self-regulation
- Grounding techniques for flashbacks
- Guided visualisation for containment and feeling of self-control
- Guided breathing and other physical self-regulation tools
- Trauma work, processing pain, secrets, shame, fear, and hopelessness within reparative relationship
- Integration

This YP has made incredible progress and repeatedly says to me you are the first person that believed me. She has carried on wither Education and is planning on going to University in September. She has gained trust in herself, self-awareness, and a wide range of tools and strategies that enable her to function in her everyday life. She has friends and physically looks healthy and looks after herself. She is looking forward to her future.