

RASASC

Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre



June 2015 Newsletter

Who we are: RASASC is a Guildford-based charity, working with the Surrey community since 1992. We provide support to male and female survivors of rape and sexual abuse, recent and non-recent.

We provide a confidential helpline, counselling, self-support groups, Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, family support, pre-trial support, survivor cycling, coffee mornings, presentations and awareness raising.

All services are available by self-referral.

Welcome

Since our last Newsletter RASASC has led a number of exciting projects, including a series of events that brought together survivors and professionals from a wide range of fields to discuss and learn more about the issues surrounding rape and sexual abuse. We were thrilled with the turnout and feedback we received, and on behalf of everyone at RASASC I'd like to extend a special thank you to all the speakers, participants and to Maria White, who organized the events.

One of the greatest pleasures about working at RASASC is being surrounded by so many committed, passionate and knowledgeable people. RASASC is now supporting more survivors than ever, and it would not be possible without the tireless work of our staff, volunteers and supporters. I look forward to celebrating RASASC's achievements at our upcoming AGM on Tuesday 9th June and hope to see many of you there.

Barbara Stevenson, Head of Services

Helpline Training in Action



RASASC's Helpline volunteers receive on average 50 calls every week. They are specially trained to listen carefully, supportively and without judgement to anyone affected by rape and sexual abuse.

Congratulations to Charlie, Clare, Jenny, Joey, June, Leah, Rebecca, Rosemarie and Sophie, pictured above with trainers Di and Maria, who have completed the 'classroom' section of their Helpline training course. They are currently undertaking three months of supervised 'Training in Action'. Welcome to the Helpline!

RASASC events lead dialogue on supporting survivors

Held at Guildford YMCA, a series of three events hosted by RASASC welcomed a wide range of participants to share their experience and expertise in working with survivors. More than 70 participants attended each of the sessions, including counsellors, psychotherapists, police officers, social workers, NHS staff, midwives, drug and alcohol abuse support, domestic violence support and survivors.

The Event Series:

21st February: Sexual Abuse – What every professional should know
14th March: Male survivors – are we offering the support they need?
28th March: Experiences of women survivors: What have we learnt?

Through initiating dialogue we can widen our perspective about sexual abuse and understand more about what helps and hinders survivors in disclosing their experiences and getting the help they need. The events provided participants with the opportunity to network, share their experiences and engage with the speakers.

Each of the three events featured presentations by the RASASC ISVA team, who explained more about their role and how they provide practical and emotional support to survivors aged 13 and over, whether or not they decide to report to the police. They described how no two days are the same in the life of an ISVA, and how they help survivors to make informed decisions, which may be about reporting or accessing counselling. Barbara Stevenson, RASASC Head of Services, explained how the ISVA service fits together with RASASC's counselling and Helpline services, particularly as demand for RASASC services continues to rise.

As well as providing a detailed overview of RASASC services, these events covered a variety of topics and a number of external speakers were invited to offer their perspectives.

Chris Tuck is the author of 'Through the Eyes of A Child', an autobiography which tells her story of abuse growing up and how she overcame her internal battles, including how health, nutrition and exercise played an important role. Also the author of 'Parenting Without Tears', Chris explained how women who have suffered abuse in childhood may require extra support in providing their children with the upbringing they need and deserve.

Dino Nocivelli, a solicitor specializing in Child Abuse cases at Bolt Burdon Kemp. He spoke about the key issues facing survivors of abuse, including disclosing the abuse they suffered for the first time; the impact of abuse on survivors' lives, and the process of going through a civil claim.

Thank you to all our speakers:

Cathie Smith – RASASC Chair
Barbara Stevenson – RASASC Head of Services
Sally, Susan, Roxy and Jacki – RASASC ISVA team
Chris Tuck – Health Coach and Author
Dino Nocivelli – Solicitor, Bolt Burdon Kemp
Ian Cole – Development Worker for Gay Men, Virgin Care
Martyn Sullivan – CEO, Mankind UK
Wendy Capewell – Counsellor, Cope Well Therapies
Zoe Lodrick – Sexual Trauma Specialist



▲ *Martyn Sullivan leads an interactive session that explores the issues and assumptions around men and sexual violence*

Ian Cole explored the implications of gender expectations, and particularly the impact this can have on how we access support services. Through his experience as a Development Worker at Virgin Care, he explained how the societal pressure on men to be strong and able to defend themselves makes it especially difficult for them to come forward and disclose abuse they have suffered.

Martyn Sullivan from Mankind UK consolidated these ideas in an interactive session that challenged assumptions about gender and men and sexual violence. These are important issues to be aware of, as we strive to create an environment where men and boys feel confident they can disclose abuse without judgement.

Zoe Lodrick presented the complex processes that result in a victim becoming ensnared in abuse dynamics. Explaining the neurobiology behind our reactions to traumatic experiences, participants left with a greater understanding of the Friend, Fight, Flight, Freeze, Flop responses. She also provided an interesting insight into the psychology of the offender.

Wendy Capewell, who has volunteered with RASASC in the past, offered a counsellor's perspective on work with survivors of sexualized trauma. The importance of developing trust and taking the necessary time was highlighted.

The effects of rape and sexual abuse are far reaching and unique to each individual. Events such as these provide a valuable opportunity to enhance learning and strengthen networks. By increasing knowledge among a wide range of professionals, the wider community and survivors, we will be better placed to meet the needs of survivors. Thank you again to everyone who attended.

Vacancies

Trustees to join the Management Committee of RASASC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre) Guildford.

Term: Minimum of one year from election

We are seeking new, enthusiastic and committed trustees. We would be particularly interested in hearing from you if you have expertise in any of: HR, Finance, governance of clinical services in counselling/helpline based organisations and if you have aspirations to become Vice Chair or Chair in the future.

If you have time and energy to spare, are a good communicator, and enthusiastic about working with an organisation supporting people affected by rape and sexual abuse, we are interested in hearing from you.

These challenging but rewarding roles are unpaid, although expenses will be reimbursed.

Helpline Trainer

If you have proven experience in adult teaching/training, are familiar with Helpline services and providing emotional support, then a Helpline Trainer position with RASASC could be for you.

This is a part-time, freelance position that involves interviewing, selecting and training women for the RASASC Helpline. We aim to provide 1 or 2 training courses per year.

Applicants must have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, group facilitation experience and be able to tailor this to meet RASASC's standards and requirements. Experience working with rape and sexual abuse client base, or RASASC experience, desirable.

To apply or find out further information about these vacancies, please email Barbara Stevenson on barbara@rasasc-guildford.org or call 01483 568000

Friends of RASASC

If you are going to donate, deciding on who to give your money to can be tough. At RASASC, we're used to seeing tough decisions; we see courage on an incredible scale every time someone calls us to ask for help. If you can become a Friend of RASASC and make a regular donation it would make a genuine difference. To become a Friend of RASASC, or to find out more, please contact Rebecca French on 01483 568000 or rebecca@rasasc-guildford.org.

RASASC Annual General Meeting 2015

Tuesday 9th June 2015

We're looking forward to seeing RASASC volunteers, staff and supporters at the upcoming Annual General Meeting. It provides an opportunity to discuss and celebrate RASASC's activities and achievements. Plus, Lisa Herrington from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey will be our special guest speaker.

For further information on attending the AGM, please contact Vivien Sale on 01483 568000 or vivien@rasasc-guildford.org.

Fundraising Events

Bridge Masterclass with Andrew Robson

Monday 9 November 2015 at Guildford Golf Club. £200 per table.

Tables for this event have now sold out, but there are places available on the waiting list.

For further information about this and future Bridge events please contact Vivien Sale on 01483 568000 or vivien@rasasc-guildford.org.

RASASC Awareness Talks & Displays

Talks and exhibition displays are part of our ongoing work to raise public awareness of rape and sexual abuse. You can invite us to speak at your place of work, study or social group. Our talks can cover:

- Our history
- The need
- Types of survivors
- Myths
- The services we offer
- A survivor's journey
- Why different survivors and their partner or family may need different types of support at different times as they recover
- The side effects and healing journey
- What to say and what not to say, to reduce re-trauma
- Why do people wait so long to report

Talks can be 10-30 minutes plus Q&A, depending on audience needs. They are free of charge, although a donation would be lovely.

Costs applicable for full/half-day workshops and training days.

For further information please contact Rebecca at rebecca@rasasc-guildford.org or 01483 568000.