

Truth Project Private sessions

About your private session

Private sessions are a way for you to share your experience with us in safe and comfortable surroundings. They are an important way for us to hear directly from victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

The information you share with us will help us to understand the impact of childhood sexual abuse, help highlight failures by institutions to protect children, and help us make recommendations to protect children from abuse in the future.

Where are the sessions taking place?

Truth Project private sessions will take place at a number of locations. You will be able to choose where you would like to attend. Once you have booked into a session we will send you an email confirming the time of your session and the address. We will cover the costs for your journey to and from the venue.

When are the sessions?

Private sessions will take place Tuesday-Friday between 9am and 7pm. You can choose a time that is suitable for you. The session will last for up to three hours including support before and after, however you can take as much or as little time as you need.

At the time of making the booking, we will let you know what sessions are available on which day.

What can I expect on the day?

On the day, you will come to the session and will share your experience with a Truth Project Facilitator, in whatever way you want to.

When you arrive at the venue, you will be greeted in reception by a member of the Inquiry who will show you to the waiting area where you can meet with a support worker. They will also check your identification documents, as the Inquiry needs to be sure that you are the person they are expecting.

The support worker will explain the process to you, answer any questions you may have and help you to prepare for your session. You will also have the opportunity to speak to a counsellor before your session if you would like to.

When you are ready to begin, the support worker will show you to the room where your session will take place and introduce you to the Facilitator and Assistant Facilitator.

The session will last for up to 90 minutes, and you can tell us as much or as little as you want. The Facilitator may ask you some questions to help you to share your experience, or ask you to clarify certain points to ensure that we fully understand what happened to you. You will be able to take as many breaks as you need to, and can stop at any time. You will also be able to bring someone with you if you choose.

The session will be digitally recorded. Recording the session will allow the Inquiry to have a complete record of what you say so that we can use what you tell us about your experience to assist us in making recommendations to protect children, to improve laws, policies and practices, and prevent and respond to institutional failures.

The Assistant Facilitator will make a written note of what you share with us. You will be able to tell us which parts of what you share are most important to you.

When you have finished sharing your experience, you will be able to speak to the support worker again who will explain to you what will happen next. You will have another opportunity to speak to a counsellor at this point if you want to.

A few days after your session, your support worker will call you to make sure you're okay and can help you find further support if you would like them to.

You can contact the Inquiry at any time before or after your session if you have any further questions.

Will the Inquiry provide me with support?

Before you come to a session you will be able to speak with the Inquiry's support service who will provide you with information about what you can expect on the day, and can provide practical and emotional support. They will also be able to help you access support in your local area if you wish.

On the day, the Inquiry will provide access to a support worker and counsellor who will talk to you before the session, they can attend the session with you if you would like them to, and they will be able to spend some time with you afterwards to make sure you are okay. You do not need to speak to them if you don't want to and you can bring your own support to the session if you would prefer.

Following the session you can again speak to someone from the Inquiry's support service if you need to.

You do not have to use the support service if you do not want to.

What information do you need me to share at my session?

You can tell us much or as little as you want to about your experiences. It is okay if you cannot remember everything or if there is information that you do not want to share. You won't be asked to prove anything that you tell us. It is important to us that you are in control of what you tell us.

We understand that you may want to prepare what you are going to say before you come to the private session. You may want to consider the following questions to help you organise your thoughts. These questions are only a guide and you do not have to answer any of them.

- Where did the abuse happen?
- When did it happen?
- Did you speak to anyone about it or report it to an institution? This could include a different institution.
- What was their response?
- Did you receive any help or support?
- Do you have any suggestions for how institutions can make changes to make their responses to child sexual abuse better in the future?

Can I bring documents with me?

Nothing that you tell us will be contradicted or challenged and you will not be asked to prove anything that you say. You therefore do not need to bring documents with you.

However, If you would like to share any documents you have with us, we ask that you send these to us a few days before you come to your private session. Sending documents before the private session will help the Facilitator and Assistant Facilitator as they will be able to read these before you meet them. You can send these to contact@iicsa.org.uk or by post to [Freeport Head Office](#).

How will my information be used?

Unless you do not want us to, we will use the information about your experiences that you have provided to help us better understand child sexual abuse issues. This means that we may use your information to conduct research whilst the Inquiry is ongoing and to make recommendations to help protect children in the future. We would also like to turn the information you tell us into an anonymised summary.

Your personal details will not be published and we will make sure no-one is able to identify you from the research, or the summary. The information that we collect will be kept private, and will be securely destroyed when the Inquiry is complete. The Inquiry is required to pass on all information about child sexual abuse to the police, however we will only pass on your contact details if you consent to it or where it is necessary to protect a child from continuing harm.

Some of our research reports will be published in written and online articles. The anonymised summaries may also be published alongside our reports. We will not include details about you or the institution(s) that you have told us about. You can change your mind about how we use your information at any time before the reports are published.

If you **would not** like us to use your information in this way you can let us know in the following ways:

- You can email us at contact@iicsa.org.uk
- You can call our information line on 0800 917 1000
- You can tell someone on the day of your session.

If anything about our use of your information for research is not clear and you would like to talk it through, please call our information line on [0800 917 1000](tel:08009171000).

Will you have to pass my information to the police?

When the Inquiry receives any information about child abuse, we have a duty to pass it to Operation Hydrant which is a national policing team set up to coordinate the investigation of non-recent child sexual abuse.

When Operation Hydrant receive information from the Inquiry, it is assessed and shared with the relevant local police force, as one of its roles is to act as the gateway between us and local forces across England and Wales. Operation Hydrant is independent of the Inquiry and does not have any direct access to Inquiry data or information.

In cases where the Inquiry has received information that a child may be at current risk of harm, we must pass this information to Operation Hydrant and the local police force immediately along with the contact details of the person who provided the information. It is important that the police are able to understand if a perpetrator remains a risk to children and take action if this is the case. The information may also be shared with your local social services, this is a legal requirement and allows for informed decisions to be made about what should happen next, with the primary aim of preventing further sexual abuse. In addition, where the Inquiry has a legal duty to disclose, we will do so. For example, where there is a risk of serious harm to an individual.

In cases where the Inquiry receives information about child abuse that does not suggest a child is at current risk of harm, the information you provide will be sent to Operation Hydrant. If you have decided to consent to sharing your personal details, Operation Hydrant will pass your information and contact details to the local police force who have responsibility for where the abuse has taken place. The local police force will then make contact with you. This could take a few days or weeks, depending on the force.

If you specify how you would prefer the police to contact you we can pass this on. Your request will be respected although there may be occasions where the police force may need to contact you in an alternative way. This could be because they are unable to make contact through your preferred method or that they may need to speak to you more urgently due to a safeguarding issue.

If you have decided not to consent to share your personal details with the police, then an edited copy of the information you tell us will be shared with Operation Hydrant, with your name and contact details removed. This enables the police and local social services to still consider whether any children may be at current risk of harm.

Will my information stay private?

Yes, the confidentiality of your information is very important to us. The Inquiry's Terms of Reference require us to ensure that all personal and sensitive information is kept appropriately protected and made available only to those who need to see it. At the close of the Inquiry, all your information will be securely destroyed.

The Inquiry will keep your information confidential at all times and we have a legal ruling in force (called a Restriction Order) to enable us to do this. The only exception to this would be if the Inquiry needs to pass any information to the police, or where otherwise required by law.

The Inquiry might receive a request to disclose the information we hold if you are involved in criminal proceedings relating to what you share with us. For example, information might be requested by either prosecution or defence teams where an individual is being prosecuted for child sexual abuse. We will only pass this information on if we are ordered by a Court to do so.

This also means that you have some responsibilities to help us protect the confidentiality of the Truth Project for you and for other victims and survivors who chose to share their experience. We ask that you do not tell other people about the private session process, including where it takes place, and that you do not repeat the discussion that you have at a private session.

If you have further questions or wish to speak to someone from the Inquiry you can contact us in the following ways

Telephone:
0800 917 1000

Email:
contact@iicsa.org.uk

Address:
Freepost Head Office

Website:
www.iicsa.org.uk

