

Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway

West Midlands Safeguarding Partnership Briefing for voluntary and Community sector partners

March 2025

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About the CSA Centre

The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre) works to protect children from the threat and harm of sexual abuse. Our aim is to reduce its impact through better prevention and response. We are a multi-disciplinary team collaborating with partners across academia, government, health, education, police, and the voluntary sector. We support those working with children with evidence-based resources, training, and guidance to improve identification and response efforts.

The Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway

"This is great work and will be invaluable for professionals. I really like and welcome the fact you have included behaviours/indicators of those who are sexually abusive"

Chief Executive Officer, voluntary sector organisation

The CSA Centre's [Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway](#) is an interactive online resource to support those working with children to understand the steps they can take to protect and support children and their families when there are concerns of all forms of child sexual abuse. It sets out how to respond to concerns of child sexual abuse at key points keeping central the needs of children and their families.

The Response Pathway is designed to empower those working with children to understand the role they, and their colleagues, can play to best protect and support children and their families. It builds on current legislation and statutory guidance and existing national policies and procedures to provide specific advice on child sexual abuse – it is not a new process, rather it is designed to enhance the systems and services in which practitioners work.

The national [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - I wanted them all to notice](#) review of child sexual abuse in the family environment, recommends *a pathway approach to promote greater consistency and quality in multi-agency practice in identification and response to child sexual abuse*, alongside the use of guidance about signs and indicators of sexual abuse and reviewing threshold documents about assessment of need and risk.

To date, the Response Pathway has been piloted by three local authorities and their voluntary sector colleagues across England and **for the first time is being rolled out regionally in the West Midlands.**

Partnership with the West Midlands Safeguarding Partnership

The CSA Centre and the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Partnership have partnered initially for one year to enhance the knowledge, skills, and confidence of the multi-agency workforce on child sexual abuse through the implementation of the Response Pathway. This system-wide approach will support individual practice by providing evidence-based resources, guidance, and tools.

The Response Pathway is designed to be flexible: there is no 'one size fits all' approach to implementation so your local partnership can work out how this will work for your area. The Response Pathway instead focuses on helping people identify child sexual abuse and make child-focused decisions, without adding extra work, but instead guiding the right actions.

Through our partnership, we want to fully support the engagement of our voluntary and community sector colleagues as we recognise the sector is made up of a wide range of dedicated and committed services already providing support to victims/survivors and their families.

CSA Centre offer

To help you roll out the Response Pathway in the West Midlands, the CSA Centre will:

- ✓ Facilitate the creation of a **theory of change for the regional partnership**, helping to identify shared strategic goals, desired outcomes and the necessary actions. February 2025
- ✓ Offer guidance in the writing of local strategy.
- ✓ Provide support to the regional safeguarding partnership in including the response pathway within the **Tri X procedures**.
- ✓ Participate in the bimonthly regional Response Pathway **implementation working group** to provide expert support and guidance at key stages of the process.
- ✓ Deliver a series of **free webinars and multi-agency training** sessions to support the rollout and dissemination of related practice resources. March – July 2025

All partners across the West Midlands are expected to demonstrate leadership and a strong commitment to embedding the Response Pathway. This includes actively participating in meetings and contributing to impact and evaluation activities, such as data collection.

Find local data on child sexual abuse

You can learn more about the prevalence and identification of child sexual abuse in your local area using the CSA Centre's [Data Insights Hub](#) – our interactive dashboard offering instant access to local and national data on child sexual abuse in England and Wales. Using the Data Insights Hub, you can find data from West Midlands local authorities and police, and the number of local support services available for children and families who have been impacted by sexual abuse.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Response Pathway offers a framework for those working with children across the West Midlands, ensuring that they are well-equipped to identify, respond to, and support children affected by sexual abuse. The partnership between the CSA Centre and the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Partnership marks a significant step toward improving safeguarding practices across the region for children and their families.

To view the Response Pathway and implementation guide please visit:

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/child-sexual-abuse-response-pathway/>

To book West Midlands CSA Centre webinars please click [here](#)

Please contact your Safeguarding Children Partnership for any further information of how to be involved.