



Barwon CASA
Counselling Services



Barwon

Centre Against Sexual Assault Inc.



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**24 Hour Sexual
Assault Crisis Line**

1800 806 292

**24 Hour Women's Domestic
Violence Crisis Line**

1800 015 188



Children's
Program



Barwon CASA acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government

What is child sexual assault?

Child sexual assault is any sexual behaviour towards a child by a person who is older, bigger, stronger or who uses tricks or force. It includes any sexual behaviour towards a child by an adult, young person or another child that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable or is developmentally inappropriate. Child sexual assault can be an indictable crime.

What is family violence?

Family violence can affect the whole community and occurs in all areas of society regardless of location socio-economic and health status, age, culture, gender, sexual identity, ability, ethnicity or religion.

Family violence can encompass any behaviour that causes children or young people to live in fear or feel demeaned. Children that live in a violent atmosphere may fear for their own or their mothers safety.

Family violence includes emotional, financial, physical, social, sexual abuse or the witnessing of violence.

What is the aim of the program?

The Children's Program aims to address the short and long term effects of sexual assault and family violence by providing:

- Counselling and advocacy to children and their non-offending family members.
- Information and resources to individuals, professionals and the community.
- Professional education.

What services are provided?

- Specialist assessment therapeutic counselling
- Advocacy
- Information, referral and resources
- Child focussed parent counselling

Who can access the program?

- Children who have experienced sexual assault and family violence and non-offending parents, carers, family members and friends.
- Community organisations that require support, information or consultation.

A referral is not required.



*Counselling may mitigate
the long term impact of trauma*

Why provide a specialist children's program?

Children are vulnerable to sexual assault and family violence because they:

- Often can't express themselves in words.
- Depend on adults for their survival and protection.
- Child sexual assault is less likely to be reported and substantiated than other age groups.
- Family violence can have a significant impact on a child's wellbeing and long term development.
- Children undergo rapid development in the early years of life, therefore counselling needs to be age and developmentally appropriate.

What to expect when you contact our service

An intake appointment will be made for the child's parent or carer to meet with a counsellor advocate. The child usually does not attend the intake appointment or initial assessment sessions.

The assessment process will determine the current needs of the child and family, and how these needs can be best addressed by therapeutic support.

The Children's Program provides support to the child's non-offending parents, carers and family members. Counselling may include sessions with the child and parents or carers and family sessions, where appropriate.



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