



The National Association for People Abused in Childhood

Registered charity no. 1069802

Spring 2004

Messages from the Founder

Fundraising

If you are keen to get more involved in NAPAC, how about doing some fundraising? Your efforts would be very welcome. You can try anything you like – sponsored events, boot sales, whatever takes your fancy.

At the extreme end of the spectrum are two brave women from Weston Super Mare, Alison Beresford and Amanda Bird, who raised £500 for NAPAC doing a "sky dive".

On a gentler note, NAPAC would like to thank Sue Cantello for her continuing fundraising efforts; Sue recently sent us the proceeds of yet another highly successful Avon meeting.

Forthcoming events

NAPAC has a fundraising day at The Glades Shopping Centre in Bromley (Kent) on Saturday 24th April. If anyone wants to come and say hi, or even join in the fray, you'd be most welcome!

Peter Saunders

Powerful new drama

The Jerwood Theatre, upstairs at the Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square, has recently put on two plays by a new Brazilian writer. One, "At The Table", is about the sexual abuse of boys at an adventure camp, its long-term consequences, and one victim's confrontation with the man who molested him. I advised the cast about the issues and they were very grateful!

Peter Saunders

The NAPAC InfoLine: the advisors' views

The NAPAC InfoLine provides free information and resources for survivors and anyone else concerned about abuse-related issues. The line has now been running for more than a year, and has dealt with thousands of calls. NAPAC is lucky to have a highly dedicated team of advisors to answer these calls. Here, some of the advisors give their accounts of working on the line. For the sake of confidentiality, they prefer to remain anonymous.

Personal views

Working as an advisor on the NAPAC helpline over the past 14 months has been a learning experience for me. I have gained so much in terms of being alongside a person who is a survivor of abuse, learning how they live day to day, the hardships and the start of their healing process.

Sometimes, we can be affected by what our callers may share with us; we are human and it is understandable that we

will be affected from time to time. In these instances, it is important for me to access support from my colleagues. This is readily and willingly given, and is vital for us all.

The focus of the line as a source of support and empowerment for callers is evident in the calls we receive. The thanks from callers, and their realisation that there is a dedicated line "just for people like me", are inspiring to hear. Callers are given the support and space, when calling NAPAC, to make informed choices in their own route to healing.

Publicity for the line

NAPAC have had some publicity over the past week or so, which has resulted in some extra calls. The number has been printed in The Sun newspaper in the "Dear Deidre" column, and also in Chat Magazine.

The BBC, as part of their season on Care issues, has broadcast a 2-part serial called "The Leaving of Liverpool", which has generated quite a few calls.

The callers

Our main source contact, of course, is survivors, but we also get calls from partners and family members, looking for support of their own. In addition, we hear from professionals in the medical and counselling fields, and have some contact from the Police and Armed Forces support groups. We get referrals via the NSPCC, ChildLine, and Victim Support as examples, so our number is becoming known far and wide!

Note from the Chair

It is clear, from the callers' and call advisors' views, that the NAPAC InfoLine is a huge success. We have had 13,000 calls from adult survivors of abuse in our first 15 months of operation. Such a response shows a real need for a service of this kind and NAPAC is doing everything possible to ensure that the line continues to be available for all those who need it.

For details on the InfoLine's number and opening hours, see the back page.

Appeal for funds

From May 2004 NAPAC will be without accommodation from which to administer the charity. We have been supported by the NSPCC for the last seven years, and they have generously let us have office space for the past 12 months; however, due to their own reorganisation they cannot continue to accommodate us. We have alternative premises in mind,

but please contact us if you know of any other suitable accommodation in London.

Unfortunately, we are also in desperate need of funds to continue operating the InfoLine. We were funded for a one-year pilot scheme which has now run out, although it has been successful beyond our wildest hopes. Without further funding, despite its huge success, the

line is in danger of closure.

We are looking into as many alternative sources of funding as possible, but if anyone has any ideas please contact us at the address on the back of the newsletter. Your help would be greatly appreciated!

Gill Thomas, Chair

For an editorial comment on this issue, please see the back page.

New child sexual abuse support group for members of police

I am a serving member of the Metropolitan Police Service and a survivor of childhood rape. I am in the process of setting up a support organisation for police officers who are survivors of child sexual abuse. The organisation will be designed for people working in the Police Service throughout the UK.

In order to progress further, I would like to hear from officers or police civilian staff who are dealing with or who have already dealt with their past issues, and who are interested in becoming active members of such a support organisation for colleagues.

As survivors of abuse we all know through our own experiences the difficulty and concerns in coming forward and the impli-

cations of doing so, such as confidentiality, mental health issues, flashbacks, depression, feeling alone and having no-one to talk to. There is no need to be alone with it any more.

It will be the aim of this support organisation to support police officers and civilian staff who have suffered from any form of childhood sexual abuse. The organisation will seek to promote the existence of such victims within the Police Service in a bid to sustain a better quality of life, and through our experiences to voice the needs of such victims/survivors both inside and outside the police service.

If you are interested, please e-mail Ian in strictest confidence at supportgroup1011@aol.com .

Picnic in the Park

The Survivors' Trust, a group of abuse survivors' organisations, is planning to hold a "Party in the Park" in Leicestershire this summer. The event is for survivors of child sexual abuse, together with their partners and supporters.

Last year's Party, which was held in Abbey Park, Leicester, was a lot of fun. The entertainment included singing and drumming workshops and art displays. People enjoyed themselves mingling, meeting new faces or just lazing in the sun. Various survivors' organisations were represented, including NAPAC, who made a banner featuring the handprints of people at the party.

The date, the time, the place

The 2004 Party in the Park is being planned for Saturday 31

July. The organisers are aiming to hold the event in Glenmore Park, Shepshed, near Loughborough. For further details, contact Tony Magee on TonyMagee14@aol.com ; he says he will be happy to answer any queries.

Come and join in!

Tony says, "If anyone would like to present something at the party, such as a performance, a reading, or showing some art, please contact me. We cannot pay any expenses, however, so I will be begging for participants to do things for the sheer pleasure of meeting some wonderful people."

Tony is also likely to need volunteers to assist him in setting up and running the event, so would probably be delighted to hear from any willing helpers!

Message from Sandra Lester

In the previous newsletter, Sandra Lester asked for abuse survivors to contribute towards a play that she is currently writing. She would like to thank everyone who has contacted her so far. She has not been able to get back in touch with you because of various family commitments, but will call you soon.

Sandra's play

The play will be about survivors of child sexual abuse and rape. It will show how these issues affect survivors' lives, illustrate the difficulties that abused people face, and look at strategies that help people to cope, such as religious or other beliefs and various methods of therapy. The play will include survivors' writings and poetry, as well as music and dance. As she says, "Let's get survivors noticed!"

Sandra has been working on her play for about six months. She is putting together a cast and company to perform it, and has recently received sponsorship from Felix Dennis, who was one of the producers of the taboo-busting magazine *Oz* in the 1970s.

More contributors needed

Sandra would very much like to hear from more abuse survivors of both genders, and particularly from people of different faiths and ethnic groups.

Please contact Sandra at:

Mail box 22
136A London Road
Southend-on-Sea
Essex SS1 1PQ



CELEBRATING SURVIVORS' SUCCESS

An invitation to survivors to contribute to a new planned feature

As a survivor myself, I know many of the problems that we have to overcome in order to achieve our aims in life, not only in our chosen careers, motherhood, fatherhood, relationships, etc, but on a simple day-to-day basis.

Many of us have devised coping strategies that have kept us going, and could be helpful to other survivors.

It is with this idea in mind that we at the NAPAC Newsletter invite readers to contribute to our new feature, "Celebrating Survivors' Success". Tell us how you have overcome difficult hurdles, either in your job, at home or in your personal life.

You could provide the answer that another survivor is looking for. "Celebrating Survivors' Success" will be written by survivors for survivors, the aim being to encourage each of us to reach our full potential as human beings by helping one another.

Jayne Larnie

For contact details, see the back page



Jayne's "recovery" recipe

When I am feeling stressed or emotionally drained, I retire to the sanctuary of my bathroom. There I create a beautiful and gentle world for myself.

I start by running a luxurious bubble bath (Radox original) to which I add a couple of handfuls of sea salt and about eight drops of Lavender (essential oil). Then I add eight drops of Ylang Ylang (essential oil) to my burner (fabulous smell!) and relax with a good book and my favourite drink. I have found this guaranteed to regain my equilibrium and lift my spirits!

Survivors' voices

I Am No-Body

To anybody: Man! Woman! Child! If you are suffering any kind of abuse please don't take it or accept it, but do something. There are people, professional people who can and will help. It isn't your fault.

My abuse started at the age of four, and was carried out by my brother. I was taken into care and the abuse continued. Children's homes and foster parents saw to that.

And if you, like me, attract the wrong kind of people, end up in violent relationships, do not believe this is your fault; these people find you, because you are vulnerable, because you want to be loved. Don't leave it too late.

I owe my life to the police and women's aid. Now my one wish is to let other people know they are not alone. You can survive. You can live again without

fear, pain and humiliation.

My poems, collected in my book *I Am No-Body*, are part of my life – my story. My reasons not to give in. Fight back and say NO to abuse.

Janet Kelly

I Am No-Body £1.00
0-9542100-3-4
Nine Hearts Publishing
196 Balby Road, Balby,
Doncaster DN4 0NE

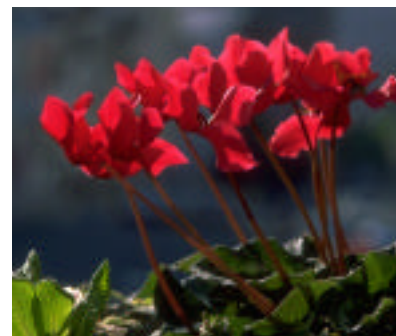
Me and Her

Sometimes, when I'm mad, there's a part of me that's sad.
Sometimes, when I scream, there's a different me that's seen.
Sometimes, I'm round the bend; there's no light at the end.

Sometimes, I'm torn; inside I'm two, outside I'm one.
Sometimes I'm like sun and rainy weather,
Sometimes we're a hit together.

Sometimes, I'm glum; it's me – when I want to have fun, it's her.
Sometimes I feel weak; who'd want me?
Sometimes I'm strong, but it's her that you see.

Ellie McGhee



Work Experience

We've all had to explain at some time why we aren't going home for Christmas or sending a Father's Day card; but the only discriminatory situation I've encountered was when I graduated and applied for a job in a health food store.

The company was opening up a new shop in my locale and needed part time sales assistants. I wanted to become a writer but knew that I'd need a reliable income for the first few years. I'd worked in a post office and as a dental nurse before going to university so was used to dealing with the public, and, though shy, was friendly and eager to help. More importantly for this job (or so I thought) was my interest in wholefoods, common health problems and nutrition.

I sent off my CV and was soon given an interview. The interviewer asked why someone educated to postgraduate level would want to work in a health food store and I explained that I'd sold short stories and articles and now wanted to start writing novels – but I'd read that most "first" novels are the author's third or fourth attempt so knew that it could be years before I made any real money from my

craft. More pertinently, I'd been a consumer of health foods for many years and had sold a few articles to health magazines.

"Tell me about your family," she said so I told her about my husband. "And how often do you go back to your home town?" I admitted that I never went back there. "So do your family come through here to visit you?" I explained in a very low-key way that my childhood had been violent and desperately unhappy and that now, as an adult with choices, I had no contact with my parents at all.

Reader, you would have thought I'd just admitted to selling young women into slavery. She looked horrified and muttered "Oh, we see our staff's family ties as being very important. A happy family is the basis of a happy adult." Stunned, I said something feeble like "But it wasn't my fault." She asked a couple more questions but it was clear that she was just going through the motions and the interview soon came to an end. A fortnight later I received a standard letter telling me I hadn't been given the job.

I vowed I'd never enter their poxy store; but ironically had a reader's article in a health mag-

azine later that year, for which the prize was vouchers to be spent in that same health store chain. So I went there and have rarely encountered such glum faces, inarticulacy and indifference. Their happy family backgrounds clearly hadn't made them happy little employees and a few weeks later the store closed down.

Meanwhile I got a job in another health food store and used some of the background for my second novel, *Safe As Houses*. My other novels, *Shrouded* and *Noise Abatement* (all published by the Do Not Press), similarly have an autobiographical element. My true crime books *Women Who Kill: Profiles Of Female Serial Killers* and *Children Who Kill* (both published by Allison & Busby) also graphically illustrate the full horror of child abuse.

I still don't earn very much – but if I'm ever rich enough to employ a part-time researcher or accountant I'll choose them on the basis of their current talents rather than their unhappy pasts.

Carol Anne Davis's website can be found at www.carolannedavis.co.uk

Reasons to support NAPAC

In modern society, the British "stiff upper lip" has disappeared to a great extent. Some people may complain about this, but I think it is vital that people who have been abused or tortured should be able to speak out about their experiences and seek support if they need it.

There is still, however, some resistance to acknowledging the pain that victims of oppression go through. For example, asylum-seekers fleeing persecution in other countries may be stigmatised as "bogus", while for adult survivors of child abuse the spectre of "false memory" may be raised when we speak out.

In contrast, despite tabloid papers' terror campaigns against paedophiles, child molesters sometimes get an easy ride from society. They are especially likely to enjoy protection if they are middle-class, "respectable" men with powerful friends. The government has provided £350,000 to one organisation that supports people who are at risk of abusing; what about

those of us who are still living with the horror of abuse?

One of the best ways to tackle the effects of child abuse is for people in power to support NAPAC. We know how abuse affects not just the victims but wider society. We supply the resources and contacts that survivors need to help them heal their lives. NAPAC has already had some support, for which we are very grateful, but it is a drop in the ocean compared to the amounts we need to help all those suffering in silence.

If people want to know what abuse is, or what it is not, they need to talk to us. If they want to stop society from being scarred by mental breakdown, substance abuse, crime and suicide, they need to help us. It's that simple.

If the NAPAC InfoLine were to close for lack of funding, it would be a sad reflection on a government who are concerned about social problems but do not confront one of the most potent causes.

Katie John

CONTACT DETAILS

Any feedback and articles will be gratefully received. Write to:

Newsletter, NAPAC, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH
mail@napac.fsnet.co.uk
Tel: 020 7825 2811
Fax: 020 7825 2790

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of NAPAC or its committee.

Any correspondence is treated with strict confidentiality, but if we are given information which is considered to disclose current incidences of abuse we will inform the appropriate authorities.

The NAPAC name must not be used without our prior specific consent.

NAPAC is a registered charity (Nº 1069802) and a company limited by guarantee 03565696.

NAPAC INFOLINE

0800 085 3330
Monday-Friday
9.00 am – 5.00 pm.