

INTERVENTION

When to get help

When symptoms such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic reactions, including avoidance, hyper-arousal, or re-experiencing, persist without getting better or become worse, psychological treatment can help. Another way to know when treatment is needed is when symptoms interfere with functioning at home, work, school, or in the community. It is best to seek treatment from a mental health professional trained in evidence-based trauma treatment. Pediatricians, primary care physicians, school counselors, service providers, and other helping professionals in the community can provide referrals to mental health professionals.

Finding the right type of help



There is no “one size fits all” treatment for individuals who have experienced abuse or assault. A therapist may use a range of strategies to help the victim, and different strategies may be more or less helpful for different people. It is important that the therapist be familiar with the research evidence for treatments that have been shown to best help individuals who have experienced trauma. What is most important to keep in mind is that treatment can help and recovery is possible. With good quality treatment, many fully recover from psychological disorders that emerge following abuse and assault.

Among individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), the benefit of psychological treatment had been previously questioned. However, today it is widely acknowledged that individuals diagnosed with ASD can benefit from psychological treatment adapted to their unique needs, even if they do not communicate verbally. Locating a qualified person to provide treatment for an individual diagnosed with ASD who has experienced trauma requires locating a treatment provider trained in both trauma treatment and ASD/developmental disabilities. It is important to ask questions such as:

- Do you feel comfortable working with individuals diagnosed with ASD?
- What is your training in ASD?
- Do you feel comfortable treating people who have experienced sexual abuse and assault?
- What evidence-based treatment options do you provide for persons who have experienced sexual abuse/assault?

A good therapist will feel comfortable answering these questions honestly

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HELPING CENTERS

Many communities have Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) that offer coordinated support and services for victims of child abuse. For a state-by-state listing of accredited CACs, visit the National Children's Alliance website, <http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/>, or call 202-548-0090.

You can contact the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) at 1-800-656-HOPE or www.rainn.org for help finding support in your area. RAINN operates in partnership with more than 1,000 local sexual assault service providers across the country and carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

LOCAL RESOURCES

FOR ADULTS:

Pennsylvania Adult Protective Services
1-800-490-8505 to report suspected abuse

For additional resources from the PA Department of Human Services:

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/reportabuse/dhsadultprotectiveservices/>

FOR CHILDREN:

Pennsylvania Childline 1-800-932-0313 to report suspected abuse

For a Directory of Services for the Office of Children, Youth and Families:

http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_260653.pdf

FOR EVERYONE:

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape:

<http://www.pcar.org/help-pa/locations>

www.pautism.org/BeSafe