

# What Can I do If I've Been Abused?

- Acknowledge your experience. The healing process can begin when you accept that the abuse has happened.
- Recognise your courage. It takes a lot of courage to accept that you have been abused.
- Know that you are not alone. There are millions of survivors of abuse around the world.
- Be confident that you can heal successfully and move past the experience of abuse. Despite their own horrific experiences many survivors of abuse are living happy and productive lives. You can too.
- Believe that you are a survivor and not a victim.
- Understand that regardless of the circumstances of the abuse, it is not your fault.
- Know that free, immediate, round the clock help and support is available for you.
- If you are comfortable in doing so, make a report of the abuse to the relevant Government Department. You can contact CAPS on 02 9716 8000 to receive assistance with or support throughout the reporting process.
- Get medical attention, particularly if you have experienced some form of physical or sexual abuse. Take a trusted person with you for support.
- Know your rights and get legal help if you need it. CAPS can help you find and access local legal services.
- Be gentle on yourself as you progress through the process of facing the issues of abuse and healing. It can take time, but you will get there.
- Take time to feel pain. Don't try to block your emotions. Let yourself cry, grieve, feel anger, and any other emotion that comes up.
- Reach out to friends and family, or join a survivors group.
- If you need someone to talk to you can call CAPS and speak to one of our friendly support workers.
- Accept that each survivor heals in his or her own unique way.
- Look after yourself.
- Keep supportive and caring people around you.
- Just know that it's never too late! Never too late to tell someone about your abuse, never too late to get help and never too late to heal.



**child abuse  
prevention service**

**For free, immediate,  
non-judgemental support call  
02 9716 8000**

**[www.childabuseprevention.com.au](http://www.childabuseprevention.com.au)**