



A.N.B.U. | அன்பு
**GROUP
THERAPY**
Pilot Project

From Silence to Strength: Child Sexual Abuse in the Tamil Community

This information guide intends to build awareness about child sexual abuse (CSA), reduce stigma, and share resources for adult survivors of CSA and their families in the Tamil community.



A.N.B.U. envisions a future where Tamil people who have been impacted by childhood sexual abuse can find their voice. @ : [@abuseneverbecomesus](https://www.instagram.com/abuseneverbecomesus) 🌐 : www.anbu.ca

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The Centre for
Sexual Violence Response,
Support & Education

What is CSA?

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is defined as any inappropriate exposure of a child to sexual material, touch or behaviour.

Learn more about various types of CSA at www.littlewarriors.ca or www.protectchildren.ca

Whom can it happen to?

Anyone.

CSA affects children and young people from all backgrounds, including those in the Tamil diaspora, regardless of gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, educational background or other identities.

Who can hurt a child?

90% of sexually abused children know the person that hurts them i.e. the perpetrator.

A perpetrator can be a trusted individual such as a family member, family friend, teacher, neighbour, community leader etc.

Why are we talking about CSA in the Tamil community?



Intergenerational trauma: The past and ongoing trauma of genocide against Eelam Tamils affects how we connect with our children and members of our family. Studies show that childhood trauma, like physical or sexual abuse, can make it harder to build healthy relationships which leads to continuing the cycle of violence across generations.

The taboo: CSA is one of the most underreported forms of abuse. Cultural and societal barriers within the Tamil community such as ideas of family honour, reputation, and lack of words to disclose experiences of abuse, make it even more difficult for survivors to come forward and seek help. This leads to normalizing and minimizing abuse.

Long term impact on body and minds: As per CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, experiencing CSA increases chances of heart disease, cancer, or obesity; feelings of sadness, fear, depression, PTSD; using substances or risky behaviors to cope and feeling unsafe in relationships.

CULTURAL NORMS

that make it difficult for survivors to talk

Limited Tamil vocabulary relating to trauma

Harmful messages in movies and songs

Sex is taboo and Sexual shaming

Lack of awareness about CSA and abuse, Weak boundaries in families

Fear of judgement

Different rules for boys and girls
Respecting elders, no matter what

Talking about CSA with awareness and understanding can help Tamil survivors feel heard and supported.

Myth

CSA only happens to girls.



Strangers are the biggest threat.



If a child stays silent, they were not abused.



No physical evidence means no abuse occurred.



Talking about CSA encourages sexual behavior.



Fact

1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys experience CSA.

90% of abusers are known to the child.

Many children stay silent due to fear, shame, or lack of words.

CSA often leaves deep psychological wounds rather than visible ones.

Teaching body safety, boundaries and consent helps prevent abuse.

Responding to Disclosures

A disclosure is when someone shares their experience of CSA with another person.

For Survivors: You are not alone. Share with a trusted person – teacher, counselor, or elder who you know can support your healing. Your story is yours to tell, in your own way and time.

For the Person Receiving the Disclosure: Listen with empathy. It is important to respect disclosures and honour stories that are shared. Do not share what you think they need but rather ask them for what they need from you as a support.

If a child discloses to you or you believe that a child is in danger, it is your duty to make a report to the Children’s Aid Society (CAS). You may keep your identity anonymous or consult with CAS to determine next appropriate steps.

Adults seeking legal advice can call Legal Aid for a free consultation.

Justice is an individual journey and can take many forms. Stay informed on your options and connect with supports that align with what you feel is right for you and your family.

Get Support for Healing:

For adult survivors seeking healing/mental health support:

- Crisis Support: Find hotlines and resources for abuse, grief, and loss at anbu.ca/resources.
- Finding a Therapist: Look for culturally-informed therapists on psychologytoday.com. Meet with them to see if they are the right fit.
- Peer Support & Therapy Groups: Join trauma-informed peer support or therapy groups for survivors.



How childhood trauma can impact the body

