



# What is a Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse and What Should We Do About it?

## Survivors of child Sexual abuse told us:

Disclosure is not always a clear statement such as “I am being abused.” Children may communicate abuse in many ways, including indirect comments, changes in behaviour, or testing a professional’s response. Professionals should recognise that disclosure can include verbal and/or non-verbal communication. A child may share information gradually over time or in small fragments.

**1** **A child’s decision to tell someone is best understood as a process** influenced by their relationships and interactions with others: children need help to communicate, and you are as integral to the process as the child themselves.

[Communicating with children | CSA Centre](#)

**2** **Plan purposeful conversations & interactions with children and families,** ensuring that they feel safe in the space you are meeting with them

Some children may not recognise their experiences as abuse, have the language to communicate what is happening to them, or be able to communicate verbally with others due to disability or their age.

It is the professional’s responsibility to notice the signs of abuse and support children to tell.

**3** **Children have identified that their experience of talking to someone about sexual abuse** was positive when, they were believed, action was taken to protect them and they received emotional support.

See the CSA Support [pathway](#) to support you at each stage and the [CSA strategy discussion guidance](#) to support effective safeguarding practice