

## Is everything I say to the counsellor confidential?

Yes it is. However, if the counsellor believes that you or someone else is in serious danger they must share this information with the Gardai and HSE.

## Can I call Connect from outside Ireland?

You can call us from the **UK on 00800 477 477 77**.

Calls are free from landlines, but there may be an operator charge for calls from a mobile phone.

You can call us from elsewhere in **Europe on 00 353 1 865 7495**. However calls are not free and callers are advised to check costs with their service provider.

## Where can I get more information?

You can get more information on all aspects of the service on our website, [www.connectcounselling.ie](http://www.connectcounselling.ie).

Wednesday to Sunday, 6pm – 10pm  
[www.connectcounselling.ie](http://www.connectcounselling.ie)

- Professional telephone counselling and support service for any adult who has experienced abuse, trauma or neglect in childhood.
- The service is also available to partners or relatives of people with these experiences.

Connect is funded by the HSE.



**connect**  
Professional Telephone Counselling & Support

Professional telephone counselling and support for adults abused in childhood

**Free and Confidential**

**Freephone 1800 477 477**  
UK and Northern Ireland  
00800 477 477 77

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## Introduction

Connect is a free telephone counselling and support service funded by the HSE for any adult who has experienced abuse, trauma or neglect in childhood. The service is also available to partners or relatives of people with these experiences.

With Connect you can talk in confidence to a trained counsellor who can listen or help with questions you have.

The service may be particularly helpful for adults who had traumatic or abusive experiences in former industrial schools, childcare institutions, the family or the community.

## What is child abuse?

### There are three main types of child abuse:

- **Emotional abuse** is when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It can include persistent criticism, being harshly punished or exposed to verbal violence.
- **Physical abuse** is when a child suffers because they are physically harmed by someone else, are roughly handled or are harshly physically punished.
- **Sexual abuse** is when a child is used by another person for their own sexual needs.

## What is trauma?

Trauma is a response to an event that involves actual or threatened death, serious injury or emotional distress, such as physical or sexual abuse. When a person is suffering trauma, they may feel intense fear, helplessness or horror.

## What is child neglect?

Child neglect is when a child suffers significant harm through being deprived of food, shelter, warmth, clothing, medical care, safety or affection from adults.

## What is phone counselling?

Phone counselling involves speaking to a qualified and experienced counsellor over the phone at a time and place that suits you, no matter where you live. You can choose:

- to call whenever you feel the need to talk, with no appointment or arrangement in advance, or
- to receive regular one-to-one telephone counselling which involves a call for a fixed time with the same counsellor. This option is similar to face-to-face counselling.

## I'm not sure if what happened to me was really abuse. Can I still use Connect?

Yes you can – the term 'abuse' covers a wide range of experiences, some of which might be very subtle. If you feel that experiences from your childhood are causing difficulties in your adult life, you can call the counselling line and discuss whether the service is right for you.

## How might counselling help me?

Counselling might help by providing the time and space for you to explore your thoughts and feelings about what has occurred – and to discuss any difficulties in your life at the moment. You might find great relief in being able to share these experiences with a caring, non-judgmental professional who will support and encourage you.

Connect is an out-of-hours service available **Wednesday to Sunday, 6pm – 10pm.**

### To speak to a counsellor call:

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