

Safe Link was set up in February 2009 to provide the Independent Sexual Violence Service across the Avon and Somerset Area. Since then the service has grown from one Independent Sexual Violence Advocate to six including 2 specialising in working with child victims.

Over the 6 years the service has developed an excellent reputation for providing support to victims to help them cope and recover, and for working with police and the criminal justice system to successfully prosecute perpetrators.



QUOTESFROM THE POLICE:

I have **nothing but praise** for the way they have not only helped my victims in getting through what will probably be the worst experience of their lives but also in the way they have helped me do my job. The fact that the worker is Independent and not a police officer was impactive on the Judge and he was happy for her to sit in the live link room while the victim gave evidence. This was of **great support and comfort** to the victim.



REPORTED TO THE POLICE **GUILTY VERDICT**



ADVICE AND SUPPORT

I'd like to highlight **yet** The worker put a lot of time and energy into another great result at court ensuring that the victim's wider needs were met, and that this week. Without the help she was fully prepared for the court process. It was also of the workers this would clear to see the solid working relationship that she had never have been achieved. built up with the victim, that I believe gave an excellent I don't even think we would quality of service, and the support that she needed to have got the victims to court. stay engaged with the court process until the end.

Sexual Assault Follow up and Empowerment

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FACT: AT LEAST 47,000 WOMEN ARE RAPED EVERY YEAR IN THE UK - THIS IS AS MANY WOMEN AS LIVE IN BATH



"At first
I didn't want to
go on but the help
I have received
I think I want
to be alive"

"My time with the worker is coming to an end, and although it is sad, I hold on to the fact that there are so many other victims affected by sexual violence who need the support I have had. I know these people will receive the best, to help them recover from awful crimes, and to hopefully be able to move forward with their lives, in time, like I am trying to do"

"Drinking isn't a crime rape is"

"Being
supported to go
to court and get
justice was comforting
because I knew he
couldn't hurt me
or anyone else
again"

"I have gone
through a crown court trial
in the past few months, which
resulted in my abuser, my stepdad,
being sentenced to 22 years. From the
process leading up to court, during the court
trial itself and afterwards, I have experienced
that the worker has been very supportive,
understanding, comforting and calming.
She is very professional and without her
input my whole journey would have
been much more horrifying
for sure".

"Rapists
are rage-full and
consumed with hate
when they are raping.
It is not a loving or
lustful thing"

"My worker has been supporting me since July 2012.

I was in a vulnerable state of mind which included a major breakdown. She has always taken the time to go through things with me even when I was in my most paranoid state of mind and I thank her so much for putting up with me during this very difficult time in my life. She has been a tremendous help to me and my family and we will always be grateful for her dedicated support"

"Without your help
it's very difficult for me to
know who to turn to, who
would understand my situation
regarding the trial, to offer
support and understanding
regarding the case and
attending court"

"They don't understand that rape is like being murdered but still being alive"