

## The Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board is a partnership between:

Staffordshire County Council – Children and Lifelong Learning

Adult Social Care

District Councils

The Police

Probation

Youth Offending Services

Health

Connexions

CAFCASS

Young Offenders Institutes

The Voluntary Sector



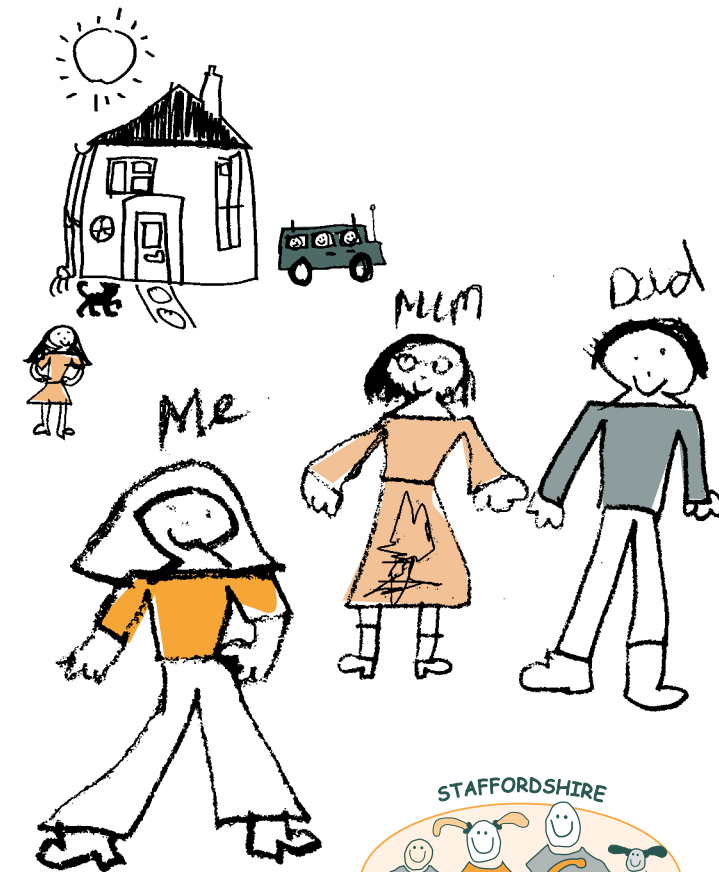
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# Therapy before a trial

## Information for children, young people and their parents or carers



## What do we mean by therapy before a trial?

If you have recently talked to the police or social workers about abuse that has happened to you, you may be left with upsetting feelings or fears. Therapists are people who are trained to talk to you about your feelings and help you deal with them.

## Who decides if you need to talk to someone?

You do! It's up to you if you want to see a therapist. If you decide to see someone then change your mind you don't have to go again. If you change your mind again and want to try again, you can.

## Why is therapy before a trial different to normal therapy?

It is important that the therapist knows that you may have to go to court to give evidence about what has happened to you and that they follow certain guidelines. This is so that, in court, no one can say that you have changed your story after talking to a therapist.

## What guidelines will the therapist have to follow?

Your therapist has to tell your police officer that you are having therapy. The police officer will give the therapist some information about what has happened to you. This helps the therapist decide how best to help you. Your therapist has to keep a record of when and where your meetings took place, how long they lasted and whether anyone else was there. They must give a copy of this record to your police officer for the court.

## Will your therapist have to tell anyone what you said to them?

In most cases, what you say is confidential. However, the court can call the therapist to give evidence and ask to see their records. If at any time you tell the therapist that things did not happen the way you originally told the police, they have to pass this information on.

## How do you get to see a therapist?

- In most cases you will have a social worker. You can ask them to ask a therapist to help you.
- Or you can ask your family doctor to refer you.
- Or there may be local services you can phone or where you can just walk in and ask for this type of help.

If you do choose to see a therapist, it is important that you remember to tell them that you may have to go to court. Also check that they know the guidelines they have to follow.

If you need more information or you are still not sure what to do, speak to your social worker or police officer – they are there to help you.

Remember – you don't have to get through this on your own.

## Further helpful information is available from:

- A Solicitor who is a member of the Law Society's Children's Panel.
- Your local Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Family Rights Group (advice line)  
Tel: 0800 7311 696
- Children's Legal Centre (advice line for young people) – Tel: 0800 783 21873