

# Supporting Families, Empowering Survivors: A National Consortium



## **We believe that:**

1. Children who have a non-abusing parent<sup>1</sup> who believes and supports them have the best chance to lead a happy and healthy life.
2. Blaming and shaming non-abusing parents and carers of sexually abused/harmed children exacerbates the impact of the trauma and causes long-term harm.
3. Non-abusing parents need independent support in their own right following concerns/report of child sexual abuse/harm.
4. Non-abusing parents should always be recognised as victims.
5. Children may hold back from reporting abuse to protect those they love. They need to know that support is available for their families too.
6. Non-abusing parents need to be treated with compassion, respect and dignity and offered support that meets their individual needs.
7. Non-abusing parents are too often harmed by a system that is supposed to be supporting them.
8. Non-abusing parents are key safeguarding partners and should be engaged and supported as such.
9. Non-abusing parents should be offered tailored support to promote their own wellbeing and resilience, which in turn helps ensure that children are not left feeling responsible for family healing
10. Support from their non-abusing parents can enhance children's longer-term recovery/healing.

## **Therefore, we need:**

- The general public and media to understand that the responsibility for child sexual abuse lies solely with the person who sexually abused/harmed the child.
- Decision-makers and commissioners to recognise that support for non-abusing parents is essential as they should be seen as a priority group.
- Non-abusing parents to be recognised as key safeguarding partners in the protection of their children.

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<sup>1</sup> We are specifically referring to parents who are 'non-abusing' or 'safe'. In addition, for the sake of simplicity, we are using the term 'parent' to mean any adult in a parental or principal care-giving role to a child; this may be, for example, the child's biological parent, stepparent, adoptive parent, foster carer or other relative in that role.