



# UNDERSTANDING CSA

## Scope and impact of CSA in Australia

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is any act that exposes a child or young person to sexual activities that they do not understand, consent to, and are unlawful.

**11% of women and 3.6% of men** report experiencing childhood sexual abuse (CSA) before the age of 15 in Australia. Nearly half (49%) of these incidents occur between the **ages of 5 and 9**.

**84% HAVE NEVER REPORTED THE ABUSE TO POLICE**

**CSA is characterised by a gross power imbalance and the process of grooming.**

In **88%** of cases, the perpetrator was someone the victim knew.

For 47% of women, the abuser was a family member

25%  
by a non-immediate adult male relative

16%  
by father or stepfather

5.6%  
by brother or stepbrother

**CSA has profound and enduring impact on survivors' mental health, depending on the type, severity and duration of abuse.**

**CHILD ABUSE LEADS TO A DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS IN 48% OF VICTIMS AS ADULTS**

Chronic complex PTSD

Depression

Generalised anxiety disorder

Dissociative identity disorder

Substance use disorders

**SURVIVORS ARE 4.5 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO HAVE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE PAST YEAR.**

**Survivors are more likely to face long-term struggles with relationships, economic stability, and wellbeing.**

- Social isolation and loneliness
- Reduced educational and employment prospects leading to socioeconomic disadvantage
- Attachment disorders which affect all relationships, particularly intimate partners and parenting, leading to intergenerational trauma
- Issues with authority and involvement in the criminal justice system

