

Voices of
Survivors

Hearing Women for Change

VOICES OF SURVIVORS: HEARING WOMEN FOR CHANGE

easy read summary



About this document



Sexual violence is when someone forces you in any way to have sex or do other things related to sex.



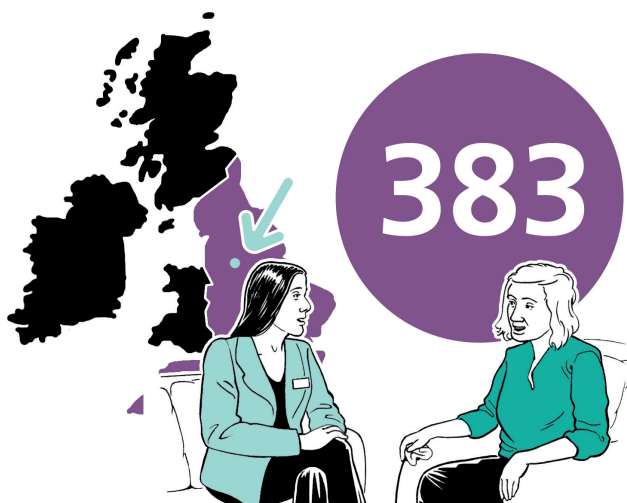
Examples of sexual violence are rape, sexual abuse, forced marriage and sexual exploitation.



This document is a summary of our research on what women in Greater Manchester who survived sexual violence had to say about the support available to them.



This research was done by Manchester Action on Street Health, Manchester Rape Crisis and Trafford Rape Crisis.



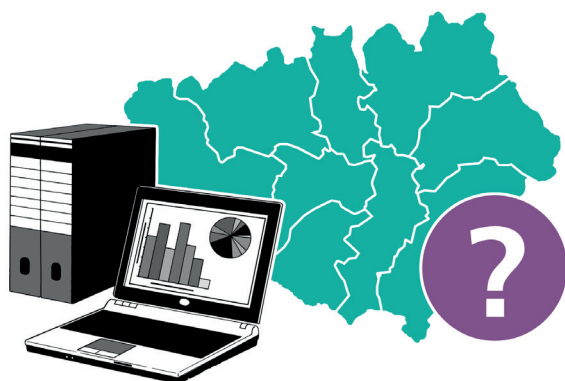
We talked to 383 women who are survivors of sexual violence and live in Greater Manchester.



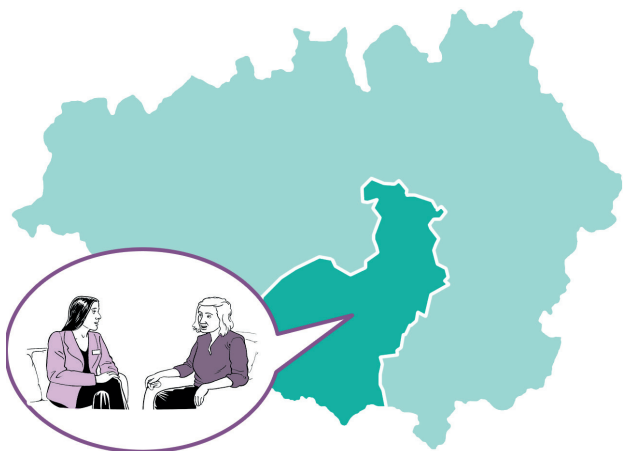
Overall, we found out that more than half of the female survivors of sexual violence in Greater Manchester could not get the right support.

These are the the main things we found.

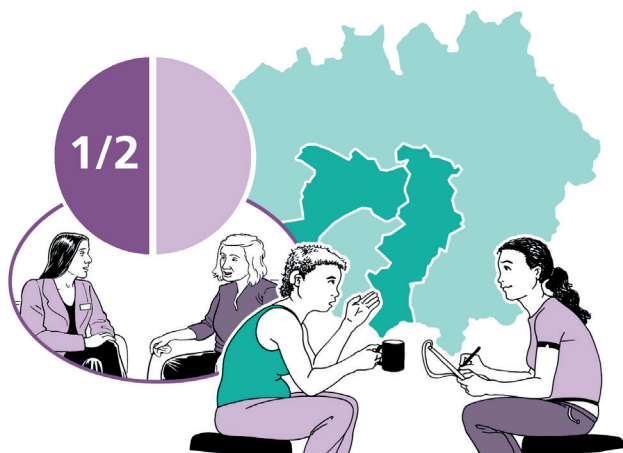
1. Where they lived was very important



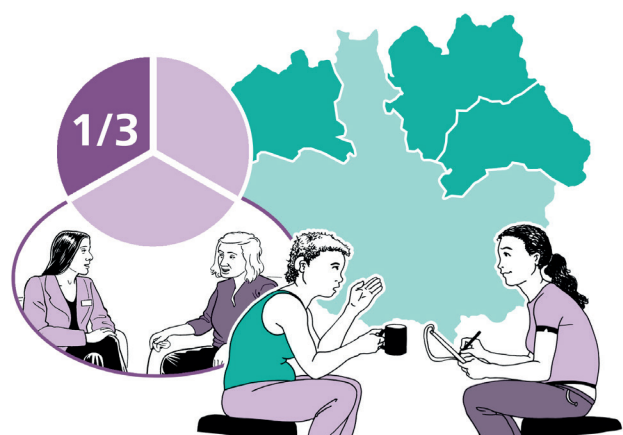
Our research shows that the area where women lived affected the support that was available to them.



Most specialist support services are based in central Manchester and Trafford.

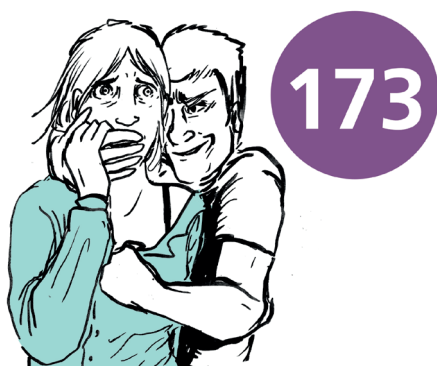


In Manchester and Salford, just over half of the women we spoke to used a support service.

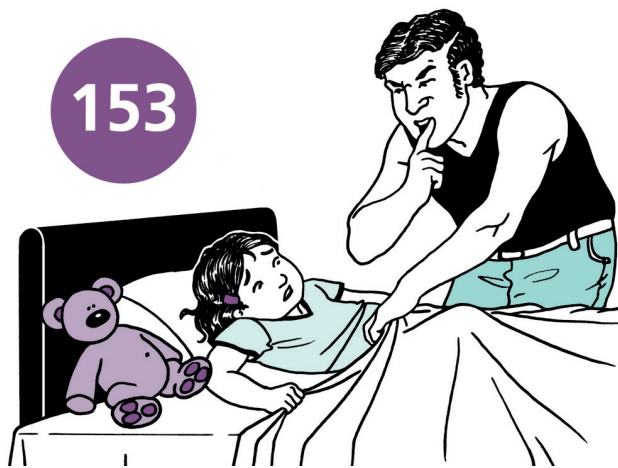


In Bolton, Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside less than a third of the women we spoke to used a support service.

2. What did women think of their experience of sexual violence?



173 women told us they had been raped.



153 women told us they were victims of abuse in their childhood.



84 women told us they had been sexually abused in their home, for example by a husband, partner or boyfriend.



Four women said that this was the first time they told anyone what had happened to them.

3. How was the support that women got?

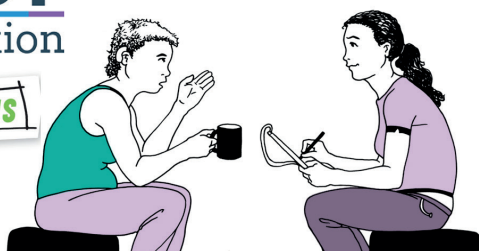
RAPE
CRISIS
England & Wales

MASH
manchester action on street health
empowering women for 25 years

LGBT
foundation

NSPCC

SAMARITANS



Women told us that the most helpful services they got from organisations like Rape Crisis, MASH, the LGBT Foundation, NSPCC and Samaritans.



Most women told us that the most helpful support for them was the support they got from friends.

4. What needs to happen next?



This research is just the beginning.

We want to set up a network across Greater Manchester that will include survivors of sexual violence, third sector organisations and public sector organisations.



People need to become more aware that sexual violence is a problem in our society.

This will help more people to offer support to more survivors when they can.

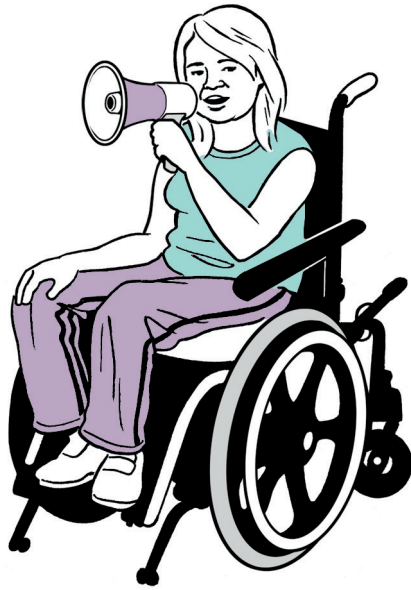


To make this happen, we plan to:

- Work to include Sexual Violence as a separate focus in the Greater Manchester Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy;
- Review how services are selected and assigned at the moment;
- Setting up a wide network across Greater Manchester that focuses on Sexual Violence

This network will:

- Work to make sure that lawmakers and organisations who select, pay for and deliver services think of sexual violence as a very important topic in the work they do.



- Make sure that survivors are given a voice and that this is heard.



- Work to support people at the front of third sector and public services are well trained, share information and are connected.



- Make sure that organisations let others know what they are doing and work together to find ways of linking the work that they do.