

## What we believe at Quetzal

We believe that people who use our services should have control over the sort of help and support they want. We do not insist on any particular course of action for women to take—they are in control. We also believe that children should be protected from all sorts of abuse.

## What does confidentiality mean at Quetzal?

Quetzal offers a confidential service to women who were sexually abused in childhood. All information given by individuals contacting Quetzal is confidential within the organisation and is not shared without the express permission of the individual concerned, subject to the exceptions overleaf.

## About the Quetzal name

The Quetzal Project was the brainchild of Jenifer Anthony Black. Quetzal began in 1989 as a self help group and then developed into a more formalised range of professional support services. Sadly, Jenifer passed away in March 2009, but her vision remains.

A quetzal is a South American bird which, legend has it, dies when caged. The Quetzal Project offers counselling, a helpline and information, to break the bars of psychological cages for women who are recovering from the trauma of childhood sexual abuse.

Quetzal has worked with hundreds of women aged 16 and over in Leicester City, County and Rutland.

*Production of this leaflet is supported by the Home Office (Office for Criminal Justice Reform) through the Victims Fund.*



CONFIDENTIALITY

**Helpline 0116 253 3383**

*Quetzal Helpline is open:*

*Monday, Wednesday & Friday 7-9 pm*

*Answer phone at other times.*

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**Helpline 0116 253 3383**

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*Supporting women  
recovering from the trauma of  
childhood sexual abuse*

*Patron: Sue Townsend*

# CONFIDENTIALITY

## Confidentiality at Quetzal means:

- Counselling is confidential
- If you phone the Helpline you do not have to give your name
- We do not use BT 1471 to trace your call
- We will not involve other agencies unless you want us to do so (subject to the exceptions below).

## Are there times when the counsellor will breach confidentiality?

Yes, there are, but only in very specific circumstances. These are the eventualities in which confidentiality would have to be broken:

- When there is convincing evidence of serious physical, psychological, emotional harm or abuse to a child under the age of 16

- When there is convincing evidence of self harm or possible suicidal behaviour by the client
- Where there is risk of physical harm to third parties
- Where the organisation is required by law to divulge information, for example, when subpoenaed by the court

## In these last two cases, there is no duty of confidentiality and Social Services will be contacted to act on the information.

We will always encourage the individual to report this information herself to the appropriate authority, but if she is unwilling, the counsellor will do so after informing the woman and discussing it with her supervisor. Individuals will be kept informed of any action.

Quetzal works within Leicester City Council's Social Services Policy on 'Guidelines about working with vulnerable adults'. If an adult with learning difficulties discloses abuse then the counsellor will contact Social Services.

If it is clear that action must be taken under this policy, paid staff and volunteers should contact their clinical supervisor beforehand for guidance and authorisation. If the clinical supervisor is not immediately available, contact should be made as soon as possible after action has been taken.

Quetzal team members following these guidelines will be supported in any action taken.

## In all other cases, a woman's autonomy will be respected and information will remain confidential.

The principle of confidentiality must be upheld by paid staff and volunteers, in whatever capacity, both during the period of working with Quetzal and afterwards. Volunteers and paid staff will be asked to sign a written statement to the effect that they agree to abide by the policy. Any breach of the policy by existing staff and volunteers will result in action under the disciplinary procedures of the organisation.

All counsellors receive regular clinical supervision. to ensure they are supported in their work and are offering a quality service. They talk about the work they do with their clinical supervisor, but will not use full names of women they work with. Supervision notes are kept, but women are not identified and nobody other than the counsellor or clinical supervisor sees these notes.

## Services for individuals include:

- *Helpline*
- *Face-to-face crisis counselling*
- *Long term face-to-face counselling*
- *Information*
- *Web site*

## Referrals can be made in many ways, including:

- *Self referral*
- *From health care and psychiatric teams*
- *Through social services*

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