



Oxfordshire Sexual
Abuse & Rape
Crisis Centre

Information for New Volunteers

Who are we?

We are a feminist organisation comprised of women of all ages and backgrounds who are committed to supporting women survivors of all forms of sexual violence, including rape, sexual abuse, and harassment. We were formed in 1979, and have been providing support across the county for over 37 years.

We have won several awards for our work including: Best Volunteer Team (Oxfordshire Charity and Volunteer Awards, 2013); Lifetime Achievement Award (Oxfordshire Charity and Volunteer Awards, 2015); Finalist, Oxford Times' Charity & Community Award (Oxfordshire Business Awards, 2015); and Valuing Volunteers, South East Winners (Lloyds Bank Foundation Charity Achievement Awards, 2015).

What we do

We offer a free and confidential service to women and girls who are dealing with the effects of recent and/or historic rape and sexual violence.

We run several different support services:

- a telephone listening service open 3 evenings a week and on Fridays from 11:30am-2pm
- an email support service open two evenings a week
- currently developing a new text support service
- an advocacy service (ISVA), providing practical support and advice to survivors, particularly those within the criminal justice system
- a specialist counselling service
- support groups

Our phone and email services are open not only to survivors, but also to those supporting survivors such as partners, families, and friends.

We also work within our local community, and as part a larger movement committed to ending sexual violence:

- providing consent workshop and other preventative work in local schools
- acting as a signposting service for other agencies, counsellors, medical practitioners, legal services etc.
- providing information and training on sexual violence to interested parties, other professionals and other organisations
- sitting on local working groups concerned with sexual violence, including the Thames Valley Sexual Violence Prevention Group
- attending conferences and ongoing training
- campaigning against violence towards women and girls

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recruitment@osarcc.org.uk



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Who can volunteer?

No previous experience is required to volunteer with OSARCC as full training is provided. We are looking for women who are empathetic, open-minded, self-aware, and committed to our work. Although we are registered as a charity and have trustees, we promote collective working as much as possible and therefore require volunteers who enjoy working as part of a team.

OSARCC operates a policy of equal opportunities and welcomes applications to volunteer from women from all walks of life. We can currently only accept applications from people who self-define as women due to the sensitive nature of our work and the fact that the overwhelming majority of our callers are women who only want to speak to other women. We require volunteers to be aged over 18.

We are particularly keen to hear from women who belong to underrepresented groups, for example women from Black, Asian, and other ethnic minority backgrounds; lesbian, bisexual and trans* women; and women who are disabled.

How do I become involved?

Supporting women in distress can understandably be quite challenging at times. We appreciate that joining an organisation like OSARCC can be a big step. We therefore have a two-part application process to allow people time to reflect on whether or not we are an organisation with whom they wish to become involved before committing themselves.

Firstly, we ask that you complete an application form, subject to which we invite you to a selection day which involves a mixture of group activities and an interview. This is an opportunity for us to get to know you and for you to ask more questions about the organisation.

After the selection day, as long as both you and OSARCC feel it is suitable, we will invite you onto one of our training programmes. The number of programmes we hold each year is dependent on our needs.

The training

There are 14 core training sessions in total held on evenings and weekends.

We cover techniques for working on the helpline:

- Taking crisis calls
- Listening skills

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- Taking care of ourselves

We learn about:

- Feminism
- Rape, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual violence
- The law and reporting process
- Child abuse
- Ritual abuse
- Self-harm & coping strategies
- Mental health
- Body image and eating disorders

We discuss:

- Assumptions and discrimination
- Anger and boundaries

After training

Completion of the training programme is the first step towards becoming a helpline volunteer. At the end of training trainees attend a short informal evaluation in which they are asked to demonstrate their understanding of OSARCC's key principles and policies, and where any additional support or training which may be needed is agreed upon.

There is a probation period of six months following training. If OSARCC has any concerns at any point during the training programme or probationary period we may ask you to cease volunteering with us. This may be for the volunteer's own benefit or to ensure that the standards and principles OSARCC adheres to are maintained.

We will do our utmost to ensure that volunteers are supported through this process and we will appoint a mentor for each new volunteer who will be on hand to provide guidance right from the first training session.

What can we offer you?

- Comprehensive training
- A supportive environment in which to develop new and transferable skills
- Challenging but rewarding experiences
- Access to a professional supervisor as part of our volunteer care provision

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What we ask of you

We ask for a minimum commitment of approximately 12 hours per month.

For the majority of volunteers this equates to two line sessions per month (3 hours each), attendance at the monthly group supervision (2 hours) and participation in ongoing training sessions. **Supervision is a compulsory part of volunteering with OSARCC** and takes place monthly on alternating Tuesday or Wednesday evenings. Volunteers must also attend 1:1 supervision sessions every three months.

In addition to this all volunteers are asked to attend the twice yearly general meetings in which policy issues are discussed and aims set for the forthcoming year.

There are also options to get involved in many other aspects of OSARCC's work and we are keen to help volunteers expand their skills by offering other opportunities on an ad hoc basis. These may include activities such as outreach work, fundraising activities and admin work.

We are looking for volunteers who can offer at least 18 months commitment.

Developing OSARCC

OSARCC is always striving to develop and grow. We are currently developing our services and are looking for people who are willing to work on the telephone and email, and text services. We also have a face-to-face support group and there may be opportunities to volunteer with this service after volunteering with OSARCC for 12 months.

Contact us

For an informal discussion about volunteering, or to ask any questions, please call Ellie (Volunteer & Outreach Co-ordinator) on 01865 725311 or email us at recruitment@osarcc.org.uk

You may also find more information on our website. www.osarcc.org.uk

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