

My organisation works specifically with people affected by the experience of childhood sexual abuse and rape, and some of them use alcohol as a way of trying to reduce the subsequent emotional (and sometimes physical) pain they may have.

My attention has been drawn to the Strategy consultation document and I would like to make the following points.

1. There is a strong link between all forms of abuse perpetrated on vulnerable children and adults and the use of alcohol as a coping strategy, to help numb and block out the effects, which may include intrusive memories like flashbacks.

2. Although the brief interventions mentioned in the document can be helpful, very often the root cause of misuse of alcohol or drugs can require much more lengthy and in-depth therapeutic work, and I would suggest a range of options should be available to suit the individual's need.

I hope these comments are helpful.

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