

Shema Koli Helpline UK



Type of intervention



Phone

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:

(Potential)
Offenders

Secondary prevention

Adults (21 Years +) | Male & Female | Phone | English, Yiddish

(Potential)
Offenders

Tertiary prevention

Adults (21 Years +) | Male & Female | Phone | English, Yiddish

**Communities
/ Families**

Secondary prevention

Adults (21 Years +) | Male & Female | Phone | English, Yiddish

**Communities
/ Families**

Tertiary prevention

Adults (21 Years +) | Male & Female | Phone | English, Yiddish

Target population

The Shema Koli Helpline (“Hear My Voice” is the meaning in Hebrew) was set up to help women and men in the Orthodox Jewish community who have experienced or been affected by abuse. This can be abuse of any kind including sexual, physical or emotional. It can relate to abuse suffered by the caller, by someone the caller knows including children, young people or adults and it can relate to abuse happening currently or in the past.

Delivery organisation

The Shema Koli Helpline was initiated by and is endorsed by leading UK Rabbis from the Orthodox Jewish community. The Helpline serves the entire UK Jewish community.

Mode and context of delivery

The confidential helpline is available during the following times:

- Sundays: 6.00pm-8.30pm (male helpline operators)
- Monday: 3.00pm-5.30pm
- Tuesday: 11.00am-1.30pm
- Thursday: 11.00am-1.30pm

Callers are encouraged to remain anonymous and calls cannot be traced.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

The Shema Koli Helpline is run by experienced professionals drawn from the Jewish community. All telephone operators are either trained counsellors or psychotherapists and have experience of working within abuse services or other helplines. Operators are supervised weekly by a team of professional supervisors and attend regular training and supervision groups.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The Orthodox Jewish community has taken time to access this service as the subject of abuse in the community has not been spoken about openly in the past. The number of calls has gradually increased over the past year and the calls have all been relevant. Some callers call once, others call multiple times. Referrals are made to other agencies for on-going counselling or therapy and to other organisations for specialist support.

Description of intervention

The Shema Koli Helpline is a confidential telephone helpline service for both men and women in the Orthodox Jewish community who have experienced or been affected by abuse including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Callers find a 'listening ear' and are treated with respect and dignity without the need to identify themselves. Calls entail a combination of listening and validation, provision of advice or guidance and therapeutic intervention to help callers move on or review the choices they may have available to them.

Callers may be referred to other agencies within the Jewish community for therapy or counselling, to specialist services for support in areas such as domestic violence or mental health and to Rabbis from the Rabbinic Panel who can offer guidance and signposting to further action.

Evaluation

Shema Koli was launched in April 2013 and since that time has received nearly 200 calls. The calls come mainly from North London, but a significant number are received from Manchester and other parts of the UK and mainland Europe. Calls are about domestic, violent, physical, emotional and current and historical sexual abuse. Callers have been helped with referrals to therapy and to other support organisations. A number of callers have taken up offers to meet with the Panel of Rabbis to address their concerns. As a result of calls to Shema Koli the community has been protected from harm in several significant cases. In the short time since its inception, Shema Koli has succeeded in its mission of "giving a voice to victims of abuse."

References

<http://www.shemakolihelpline.org/>

Contact details

Helpline number: 020 3670 1818

Email: info@shemakolihelpline.org