

“If you want to stop the community from being hurt, the best way is to try and help stop young people from engaging in harmful sexual behaviour”

Volunteer



**circles
south west**

delivering circles of support
and accountability

Circles South West is an independent charity established in 2010. We work in close partnership with social care, health, police, probation and youth offending services to deliver Circles of Support and Accountability across South West England.

We offer a youth service for those aged between 10 and 17 and a young adult service for those aged between 18 and 20.

How it works

A Circle consists of a young person (called a Core Member) and up to four specially trained community volunteers who have been told about the individual's harmful sexual behaviour and will help them avoid behaving in harmful ways in the future.

The Circle is there to support the core member and help with practical things like job interviews, completing schoolwork or filling out application forms as well engaging the young person in community activities and helping with life skills. The Circle is also there to "hold them to account", which means that from time to time the individual will be encouraged to talk about their sexual thoughts and feelings.

The meetings

The Circle meets for around an hour once a week for up to 12 months. The first meeting will probably take place at a council building and after that the Circle will meet in a cafe or do activities such as bowling, playing pool and trampolining.

The meetings will give the young person a safe place to talk about worries, get practical support, build confidence and develop social skills. Volunteers will also monitor the individual's risky thoughts and behaviours and report any concerns back to the coordinator, who in turn will liaise with the partner agencies – for example, social care, Be Safe, youth offending team and/or police, where applicable.

Research suggests that having a Circle is likely to reduce the risk of a young person engaging in future harmful sexual behaviour – the key objective of Circles South West is “no more victims”.

The commitment

A young person doesn't have to join a Circle. A Circle is voluntary and cannot be a condition of a Youth Community Order or Licence. The individual must want to stop behaving in ways that are harmful sexually and must be prepared to share details of their harmful sexual behaviour with their Circle.

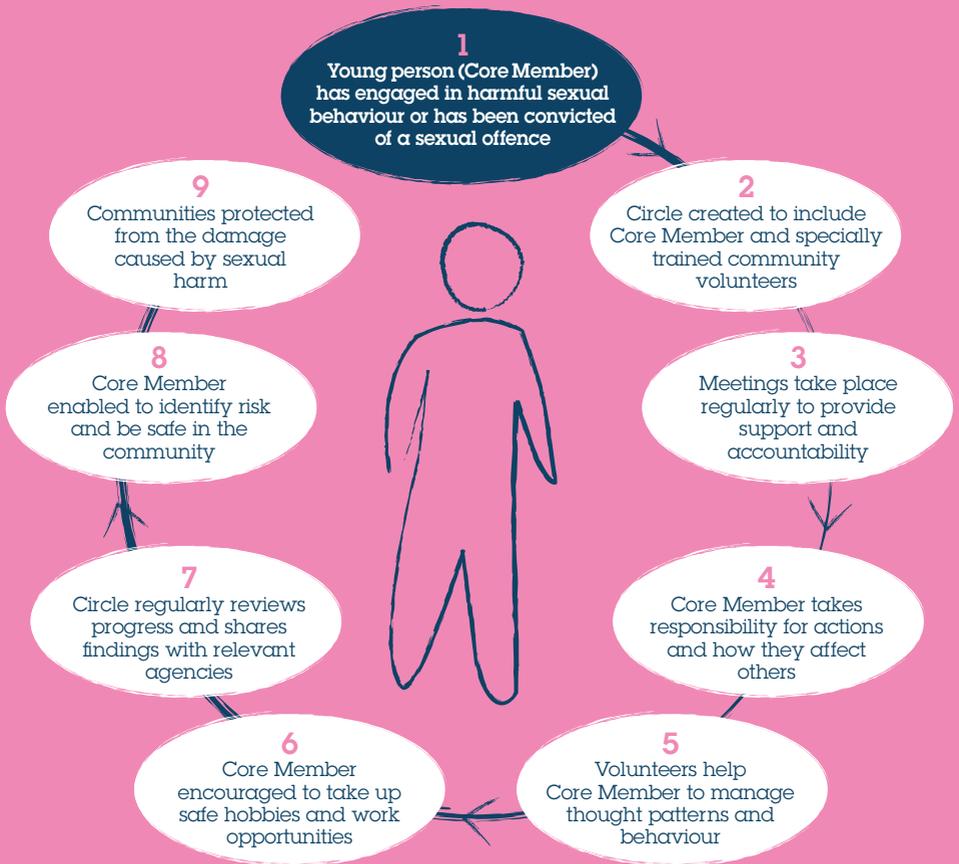
Your involvement

As a parent/carer you are expected to attend the first meeting with your young person and review meetings held every three months. We are happy to answer any questions you may have and encourage you to keep in contact with our coordinator, who will provide support and advice.

How to join

If you would like your young person to be considered for a Circle, please speak with his or her social worker, probation, Be Safe worker or YOT worker. They will fill out a referral form and send it on to us. The coordinator will then arrange a meeting with you, your young person and the referrer to complete an assessment. If your young person is suitable, we will begin the process of setting up a Circle as soon as possible.

How Circles work



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www.circles-southwest.org.uk

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