

Sexual Health Quarters

Working with young people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault



Course overview

Young people with disabilities may face increased vulnerability, barriers to disclosure, and challenges accessing safe, accessible support. This course helps practitioners recognise the intersection of trauma and disability, adapt interventions to each young person's needs, and work collaboratively with families, carers, schools, and services to promote healing, safety, and empowerment.

Who is it for?

This specialised training course is designed for counsellors, psychologists, disability practitioners, social workers, youth workers, and other professionals who support young people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault. The program provides a trauma-informed, disability-affirming framework for understanding the unique impacts of sexual assault on young people with diverse communication styles, sensory needs, cognitive profiles, and support environments.

Learning Outcomes

This course provides practitioners with the knowledge and skills needed to support young people (18 - 24) with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault. Using trauma informed, disability affirming and developmentally appropriate frameworks, the course prepares professionals to respond safely, ethically, and effectively.



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Course outline

1. Assault and Sexual Violence: Definitions and the Law

Participants explore clear, non graphic definitions of assault and sexual violence, with an emphasis on how these terms apply to children and young people. The module covers key legal concepts, rights, consent, and mandatory reporting responsibilities. Consideration is given to how disability, communication needs, and reliance on support networks can influence both vulnerability and the reporting process.

2. Statistics and Prevalence

This section outlines what current data tells us about the prevalence of sexual assault, including the significantly higher rates experienced by young people with disabilities. Participants gain a realistic understanding of trends, risk patterns, and gaps in the evidence base.

3. Context for Assault and Sexual Violence

Participants learn about the environmental, relational, and systemic contexts that can shape risk. This includes the role of dependency on caregivers, communication barriers, limited access to safe relationships education, and systemic inequities.

4. Trauma: Definition and Presentation Across the Lifespan

This module explores what trauma is, how it affects children and adolescents, and how trauma can present differently in young people with disabilities.

5. Counselling Methods and Frameworks

Participants are introduced to accessible, trauma informed therapeutic approaches tailored to disability. Topics include strengths based and developmentally appropriate methods, supporting emotional regulation, and engaging family or care teams.

6. Limitations and Scope of Practice

The course concludes with a focus on practitioner boundaries and ethical decision making. Participants learn to recognise the limits of individual therapeutic work, when to involve specialist trauma or disability services, and how to navigate interagency collaboration. Supervision, practitioner wellbeing, and maintaining safe practice are highlighted throughout.