

**Shema Koli** - a confidential Helpline for women and men in the community who have experienced or been affected by abuse. Abuse of any kind. To yourself or others, children or young people. Now or in the past.

# GIVING A VOICE TO VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Shema Koli is run by trained, sensitive and experienced professionals.

You do not have to give your name and your call cannot be traced.

You will find a listening ear and you will be treated with respect and dignity.

## Shema Koli Hours

SUNDAY 6pm-8.30pm\*

\*Male helpline operators

MONDAY 3pm-5.30pm

TUESDAY 11am-1.30pm

THURSDAY 11am-1.30pm

**020 3670 1818**  
[www.shemakolihelpline.org](http://www.shemakolihelpline.org)

LISTENING • SUPPORT • ADVICE • REFERRAL

**shemaKOLI**  
Giving a voice to victims of abuse שמת קולי

Initiated and supported by leading Rabbonim.

# Q&A with Shema Koli

## Why is Shema Koli needed?

Shema Koli means "Hear My Voice". The Shema Koli Helpline helps those many silent and silenced victims of abuse in the Jewish Community tell their story - men, women and young adults - often for the first time, possibly years since the abuse took place.

## How do you work?

We offer a sensitive, confidential and professional service validating, helping, supporting and listening to those who have experienced or been affected by any form of abuse, whether now or in the past. Importantly, people can remain anonymous so that their fear of exposure and shame is minimised. Some calls are once-off; but since speaking is often so painful, people are encouraged to call us back as often as necessary.

- **Listening** – our professionally trained operators are skilled in listening to victims of abuse.

- **Support** – we validate their experience sensitively.

- **Advice** – we explore with them, checking on their safety, their talking to others, helping them to consider further steps.

- **Referral** – we signpost our callers to specialist agencies, helplines, Rabbis and counselling.

## What makes Shema Koli unique?

It's the first ever abuse helpline designed for the Orthodox community, while open to all. It is run by trained therapists (not volunteers) from within the frum kehillah. It is supported by a *Vaad Harabbonim* for halachic guidance. We have links to designated contacts with social services, police and the voluntary sector and a

range of therapeutic and NHS services.

Our callers include victims, men and women, their parents, siblings, adult children and spouses; teachers, Rabbis and professionals seeking advice.

Callers ring from London (North & North West), Manchester, Gateshead, and other parts of the UK, Europe and Israel.

## What kind of abuse have they experienced?

All forms of abuse inevitably include **emotional** abuse - cruelty, denigration, blame, harsh criticism - leading to fear and guilt. Our callers have experienced **physical and intimate** abuse, children have suffered **neglect**, and spouses report **domestic** abuse and violence. Others call us with **mental health disorders** and trauma which relate to their abuse.

In almost 100% of calls, we get positive feedback about the callers' sense of relief: *"I am enormously grateful; you have really helped me and I feel so much better; you are what your name is, Shema Koli, you heard my voice."*

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