

The truth about rape

enough.

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The numbers

407,568 rapes per year
0.2% convicted

In our sample of survivors

80% didn't report to the police
of the **20%** that did
75% regretted it
~2x likelihood of friends denying your truth, not accepting it
90% suffered PTSD and over the ~4 years following
50% got therapy
70% of those had negative experience
80% asked for a community of survivors

The narrative

Rape is pervasive, yet invisible. It is undermined to such an extent that survivors often deny their own rape to themselves.

Survivors are routinely blamed for doing 'nothing', but their silence is unsurprising. Even when they identify what happened as rape, they are made to feel ashamed and undeserving of justice or support.

Survivors have given up on the police: CJS turns rape into a living nightmare and puts them in perpetual limbo. All they want to do is get on with their lives.

The most painful of all is the reaction from their close friends who, out of fear of social ostracisation, side with the perpetrator over the survivor. It is the survivor who is punished for this heinous crime. No wonder they don't speak up.

The support available to survivors is bleak: therapy is ineffective, and there are very limited alternatives. The lack of recognition and support results in profound PTSD for almost all survivors.

What survivors need and want couldn't be further from what exists today.

Rape is pervasive

407,568

survivors of rape in
the UK last year

5 in 6

don't report

0.2%

are prosecuted

99.8%

free to hurt others

yet invisible

81%

of survivors denied their own rape,
because of:

No external signals of importance

'It's very hard to rationalise emotions when you receive no signal of
rape being wrong or worthy of distress.'

Damaging rape myths

'I didn't feel like what happened to me matched how
dramatic the word rape is.'

Visible power of perpetrators

'It's overwhelming: all the stories of sexual assault and a constant
gaslighting of women.'

As a survivor, your options are report to the police, or do nothing

The police is the only real option...

‘It’s really upsetting to think of the police being the only option.’

‘At the moment you are limited to going into the station and having it done there.’

‘Sadly the only way that people will believe you is through reporting. They’ll say: why didn’t you report it?’

...which almost no one considers or chooses

80%
didn’t even consider the police

‘People our age are so disillusioned by the police.’

‘Going to the police is a major decision. It can be so easily missed/too late, and it is impossible to fully think through if it's the right thing to do in the time that you need to make the decision.’

‘I needed a bit of space to think about, then decide whether to report it’

The only ones who did were initiated by bystanders

‘Boyfriend of a survivor: ‘I felt ashamed that I trusted in the CJS because no one has been punished. I wish I had taken justice into my own hands.’

‘My dad did a 180, confronted him and family and the police were called’

‘Someone saw me and to went to security who asked me if I want to call the police. I didn't know. I remember the dread of waking up, knowing I needed to talk to someone from the police. It would have been something I wouldn't have really shared otherwise.’

CJS turns rape into a living nightmare for survivors

Defines you

‘Reporting to the police puts a target on your back and associates you with it.’

Brings no outcome

‘The police is not going to do anything about these cases – they will just make you feel shame.’

Takes control

‘I didn’t want to because then it would be public – I wanted to be in control of who I was telling. I didn’t want to tell my parents; I think it would break their hearts.’

Questions you

‘You’re fighting for your right to be believed if you go to the police.’

Is overwhelming

‘I couldn’t have done it, knowing what I know about CJS, the whole process would have killed me.’

Makes you feel criminal

‘A few of my family were interviewed and the questions they were asked were awful. They put my character on trial.’

Puts your life on pause

‘They took so much and gave me nothing. It was incredibly confusing, and they didn’t ever take the time to explain why.’

Is in conflict with recovery

‘I couldn’t speak to a therapist. It would work against me in court’

Holds you in the past

‘I didn’t trust the police, but even if I had, I may not have reported because I just wanted to just get on with my life.’

Never ends

‘It’s not something that you can easily report as a crime and that be the end of it.’

20%

reported to
the police

75%

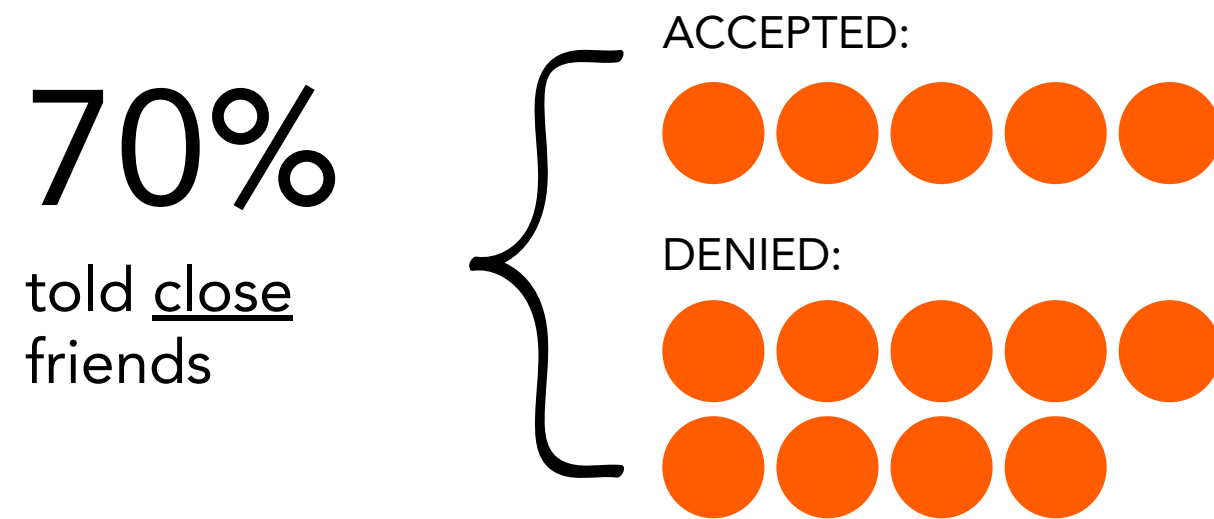
of those
regretted it

The only survivor who didn’t regret reporting:

‘I wish I hadn’t reported because nothing came from it and it ended up making me feel worse. But at the same time, they connected me to a charity, and I felt that I had to tell my mum. They have both helped me.’

But the final blow comes from your very own friends

The fear of being socially ostracised leads close friends to deny your truth



‘What he did broke my heart, what she (best friend) did obliterated it. My best friend turned her back on me and that created the blue print for expecting others to do the same.

My best friend with our whole lives intertwined, if she won't accept my truth, no one ever will.'

Wider groups take the socially convenient option and side with perpetrators

‘People didn't even like him, he wasn't a nice guy, but it's still easier to say she's a whore than him being the problem. They would say I'm so sorry the way he treated you, but sorry is empty if there are no actions.'

‘There was a lot of: you're so easy, that's disgusting why would you do that? There was an anonymous snapchat poll where boys could ask questions and he was answering really awful things about me. I don't even like to say them out loud.'

'The worst stuff really was the social stuff. You really believe the things people say. I haven't really overcome the social trauma.'

The profound PTSD survivors suffer is horrifying, but unsurprising

90%
suffered PTSD

Toxic coping mechanisms

‘I had a who gives a shit mentality with various bouts of self-harm and eating problems.’

‘It’s 7 years on and it’s just got to the point where I can maintain friendships and relationships, drink without blacking out, not self-harm or starve myself.’

‘I was ruined by it – bouts of drug abuse, anorexia, self harm.’

Scarred relationships

‘I had to relearn how to have sex twice with boyfriends.’

‘Sex itself is triggering, especially in certain positions.’

‘It’s not water under the bridge. I get anxious sleeping next to new people.’

‘Everyone says ‘go get yourself a nice boyfriend’ but I’m still so affected by it.’

‘Any type of touch prompts me to think about people taking advantage.’

A different life

‘I dropped out of uni, not sure what I wanted to do after.’

‘I’m definitely more cautious in what I might do and how I might travel around.’

‘I’m now scared to walk alone at night.’

‘Whenever she (Mum) told me anything re the case I would have to take a week off college.’

‘The whole of last year, every time I saw him I had panic attacks and I wanted to die.’

‘It’s crazy how much it fucks you up.’

Reporting and justice are broken, so is support

Therapy is rarely an immediate response, and gets blended in among other topics.

Of the survivors who had therapy, 50% didn't until at least 4 years after, and of the ones who received therapy in the first year 50% of them had to have it again later (after a period of at least 4 years.)

And it's not guaranteed to work

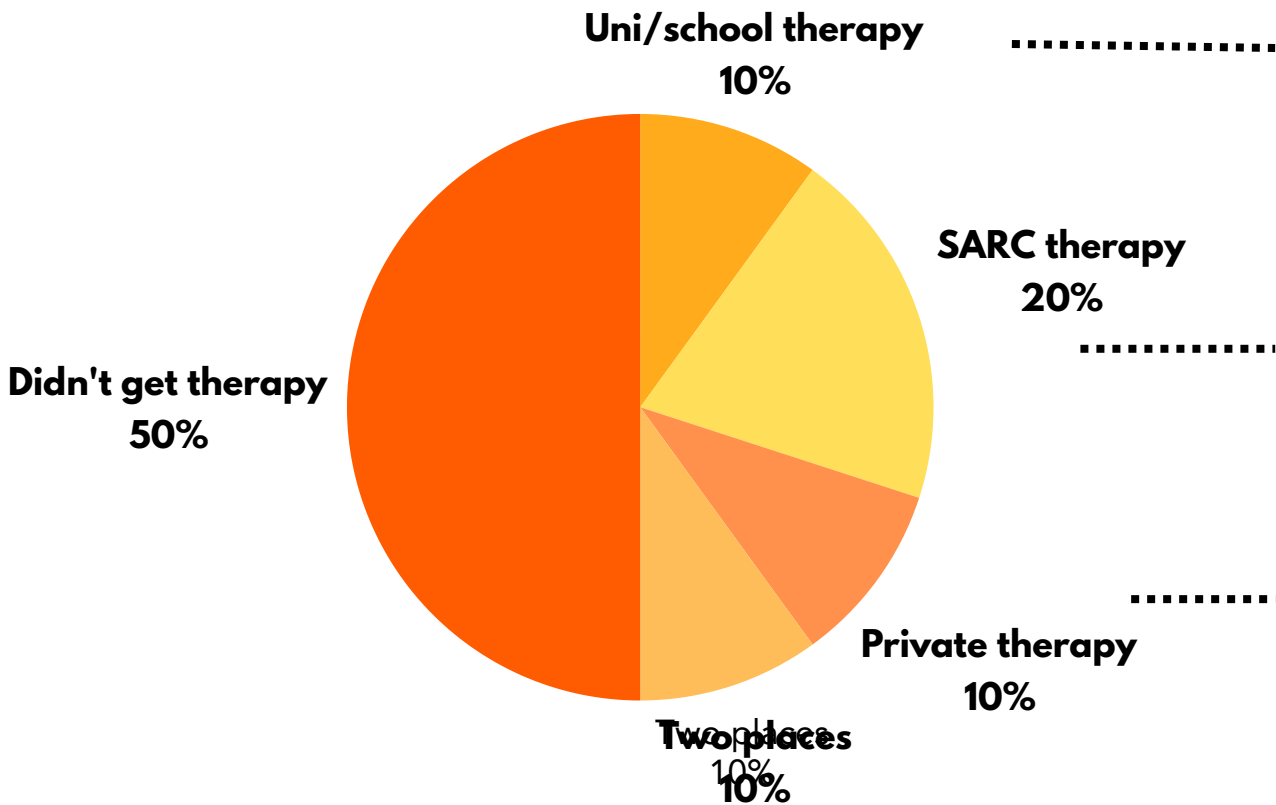
70% Had a negative experience

'I gave up on therapy – it's not that I don't believe in it, I just don't think it can work for me.'

'I think it is very surface level. At the core you are the only one who can deal with it.'

'I didn't feel like it was dramatic enough to speak to someone purely for that.'

'Therapy may have been helpful – if I get a good enough job, I'd like to be able to get therapy.'



'I had a grant from school to go to a Specialist Clinic and never went again. She made sympathetic noises, which just pissed me off. Don't speak to me with pity.'

'2.5 years ago I signed up to a SARC hotline – they were supposed to call once every 2 months, I've had 3 calls in last 3 years'

I was working extra to pay for my therapy because part of me thought it was my fault. I said I'd go back to his. The guilt was so deep.

The options beyond therapy are bleak

It's a lonely recovery

‘All friends who have been abused have had to engage in that process by themselves.’

‘Resources were so few and far between, I felt like everything was marketed to adults.’

‘The uni had some resources, but you have to go searching yourself.’

‘I only had friends and time.’

‘When I eventually told me friend she said she was concerned I had been raped, but didn't say because didn't know what to say’

Social media helps, but is insufficient

‘A lot of my education on this topic has come from social media – the majority of what I look at is on my explore page on Instagram.’

Talking it through with someone you trust can make all the difference

‘I spoke to Mum and that was cathartic. I wasn't trying to ruin his reputation (she liked him), but I told her that he wasn't the perfect boyfriend she thought he was. It was helpful to speak out even if it's just to my mum.’

‘Most of my friends have similar stories. Talking through your feelings and hearing that someone else is feeling that too is helpful.’

‘It's useful to talk to friends. I wish I had started talking about it before, not locked it in that deep side of me.’

But raising it with them is half the battle

‘I wanted my mum to know without having the conversation with her myself’

Together, survivors' individual struggle can become collective strength

Like rape, other survivors are seemingly invisible

‘As girls, we all know that rape has happened to a crazy percentage of us, but finding the actual specific people to relate to is hard.’

‘As a survivor you feel like you've slipped through the cracks, unnoticed.’

They are the only ones who can truly empathise, believe and validate, because sadly they've been there too.

80%

want some form of community

‘I feel like I used all the options available, but I didn't have the option of a community. I would have found it useful to speak to others straight after.’

‘I'd want to speak to people who understand me and my circumstances. When I was given that leaflet, I didn't feel seen or listened to. If you've not been through it, you can't tell others how to feel’

‘I'd love information about where I can find similar people. I don't know anyone with the same experience with their boyfriend.’

A community would bring together all these other people who've been through what I've been through. As a young person, it's very helpful to hear other women saying it happened, it's ok and we can talk about it.’

What survivors actually want

1.

Expect to be believed

‘I wish I knew something wrong had happened, that I didn't need to fight for feeling this way.’

2.

Have evidence to acknowledge that something bad happened

‘Not having evidence became a corruption of our stories. We were battling for our own narrative’

3.

Have a straightforward way of taking care of it

‘I would have liked to know that someone knows and something is done about it.’

4.

Stop it happening to other people

‘He is continuing his life, doing it to other people. I didn’t do anything – I feel that I have failed as a woman.’

‘Helping someone else is like helping your past self.’

5.

Get the support they deserve

‘I’d want some level of support services. If it’s rape there’s not an obvious support system

6.

Be supported socially

‘I had a choice: deny your truth and keep your friends, or just keep those who are loyal.’

Thank you for reading and recognising the
importance of this issue

Any questions?

hello@myenough.com

Methodology

Over the course of 6 months (Sep 23 – March 24), we spoke at length to 20 survivors to understand their feelings and decisions in the aftermath of their rape.

Our questions were unbiased and not leading – we know this would undermine the quality of this research effort.

Conversation structure

We started with the survivor's story: what happened, how they felt, what they did, who they spoke to, who they didn't speak to, what they didn't do, whether they had support, whether they considered the police, how people reacted.

Then we asked them to imagine what their ideal solution would have involved: what would have happened, who would have been involved, how it might have made them feel.

Only at the end of the conversation would we explain ideas for our platform. We didn't share too many of the benefits, instead asking survivors to explain how they would describe it to a friend, and hearing what they believed the key benefits to be.

What is enough?

We are organisers of a social movement

Our ambition is to create a reporting system that benefits survivors (validating and supporting them) and for society (deterring rape).

This piece of research is the first step in understanding the depth of the problem that we are setting out to solve.