



Buttercup

Television Show for BBC iPlayer
Resource Pack

Written & Performed by Dorcas Seb
Based on an Original Idea by Associate Producer Odile Mukete.
Directed by Julia Samuels
20 Stories High and Tigerlily Productions co-production

About the show

“Buttercup” is an honest, insightful and engaging dialogue about a young woman’s life after experiencing abuse as a child. Her story is portrayed through an online live stream performance – a moment for her to release, reflect and process her experience.

The film deals with challenging themes. It uses storytelling and spoken word to explore the long-lasting impacts of sexual abuse in a sensitive and accessible way. The story was written by Dorcas Seb, based on an original idea by Associate Producer Odile Mukete.

“Buttercup” spans both British and Congolese culture – it explores what it feels like to be attached to two different cultures.

Buttercup is a 20 Stories High and Tigerlily Productions co-production for BBC Arts supported by The Space.

Fortune’s Journey Story Synopsis

Fortune is a young woman, born in the Democratic Republic of Congo and migrated to Liverpool when she was eight.

The piece begins with Fortune stood in front of a live stream camera, which her friends are setting up. The live stream is nearly ready to start, but just before it does, she texts her Mum to check she’s going to be watching. Mum replies that she can’t get it to work. Fortune tells her to ask her sister Hope for help.

The live stream starts. She tells the audience she wants to take them on a journey through her personal story. The story starts with her recounting a memory of making a traditional Congolese family dinner. At home, she finds her Mum and sisters have been joined by her gossipy ‘aunty’ (family friend). Everything feels the same here, as it did in DRC. The family dinner is a success, and everyone laughs about how their mum is settling comfortably into Liverpool-life, being a ‘proper Scouser’. After dinner, they are watching the TV. An incident of sexual abuse triggers buried memories in Fortune. She talks about how the sound from the TV morphs into white noise; poetically, she paints the acute, emotional response that she experienced at the time

of her own abuse. She remembers struggling against a man in her bedroom, as a child of seven years old in DRC, Africa. Buttercup is the name her mum used to call her.

The story moves into another memory. Fortune is with her mother in DRC, shopping for a family dinner. Before the ‘uncles’ (male family guests) arrive, Fortune recounts her mother warning her to be alert. The piece moves into spoken-word, Fortune remembers a knock at the door. He is here. He whispers and manipulates and threatens her, telling her to respect her elders. She is struggling.

We jump to Christmas 2006, five years after the family migrated. Fortune is arguing with her oldest sister Esther about values from ‘back home’. Fortune associates ‘back home’ with abusive memories and what happened under the family’s roof. She is angry at her sister, who doesn’t understand and retaliates by telling Fortune to respect her elders. We return to Fortune’s memories through poetry, a predator searching for his prey.

Fortune is now in college and recounts her reaction in the moment that a male friend unexpectedly touches her shoulder. She talks about her unease with people getting over

familiar. Her mates want her to 'let her guard down'. She can't. Fortune talks about the abusive experience following her, the guilt and the memories clouding over her, ready to thunder. She feels guilt for not getting help and talks about, maybe, it being her fault. We jump forwards a few years, Fortune is back in Liverpool from university in Bolton, it is Congolese Independence Day. She is at a party dancing with her younger sister Hope, who was wishing that she was back in DRC. Hope has very different memories, she remembers the calm, the sun and Fortune 'sneaking about with boys'. Fortune is furious and they have a big argument Fortune performs another poem where she discloses there were multiple abusers and her fear that they could also abuse her little sister.

We move to another memory in the family house in Liverpool with Fortune's 'aunties'. One of the aunties talks about how a pastor has abused a woman. She believes it is the woman's fault. Another aunty turns to Fortune and asks her about her single life and dressing style, she says it is time Fortune thinks about getting married. Fortune is infuriated. When the aunties leave, she questions her mother about not standing up for her. Her mother asks about an 'unprogressive life' and her dressing 'for boys'. Her mother warns about sexual abuse and the dark things that happen in the world. We realise that Fortune's mother has also experienced abuse. Fortune connects with her mother. She sees the same pain. She wants to support her, but she can't. Her heart is beating. She can't speak out. We return to Fortune and her thoughts. She feels 'tampered with'.

We return to the first moment in the story when Fortune was sat with her sisters and her mum watching TV when the sound turns into white-noise. Unexpected memories are triggered which 'hit her too hard'. She leaves the room in tears, followed by Hope. The penny drops for Hope who realises what her sister must have been through. She reassures Fortune that she'll go back in and and stop Mum and Esther asking questions, so she can have the space she needs. Fortune gets in the shower and scrubs her skin and wants the shower to drown out the noise. At first she doesn't want to think or talk about it. This is the moment that Fortune starts to relive her memories. She starts to process what happened, she is no longer trying to forget. She writes poetry for months. She keeps writing.

The story moves to Fortune in church with her mum. It is a lively environment. The pastor talks about the futility of coming to church with a huge amount baggage without letting it go and giving it up to Christ. The pastor says, tell your neighbour 'I am greater than my past because Christ has set me free'. Fortune turns to her mum, they look each other in the eyes, they take each other hands and they repeat his words together.

Fortune checks in with us (the audience). She says it's still a process. We return to poetry we have heard through 'Buttercup' about shame and guilt. This time, Fortune talks about letting go of the shame, and not standing alone. She speaks to the camera, and she knows that she does not stand alone. She stands with her mum and with us. We cut to her mum proud and moved, watching the live stream on a tablet. The piece ends with Fortune singing a heartfelt and upbeat verse about healing.

Age Advisory/ Content advisory
Suitable for age 13+

**Content warning: discusses experiences
of child sexual abuse**

Credits

Cast

Fortune
Carla
Evie
Mother

Dorcas Seb
Ade Ajibade
Gabrielle Ellison
Emmanuela Yogolelo

Creative team

Director
Writer
Executive Producers

Julia Samuels
Dorcas Seb
Nikki Parrott,
Natasha Dack Ojumu,
Julia Samuels
Leanne Jones, Jennifer Monks
Odile Mukete
Lucy Graham
Esther Vardy
Polly Ward
Shunaji
Aiwan Obinyan
Miriam Nabarro
Odile Mukete
Jonty Claypole
Dramaturg, Sudha Bhuchar

Producers

Associate Producer
Assistant Producer
Director of Photography
Editor
Composer
Sound Designer
Production Designer
Hair, Makeup & Costume
Executive Producer for the BBC

Original idea by

Odile Mukete



About 20 Stories High

20 Stories High make theatre that is...

gritty, jumping, melodic, rebellious,
contemporary, mashed-up,
authentic, original, visual,
challenging, lyrical, tender, anarchic,
diverse, surprising, booming, political,
funny, collaborative... and heart-felt.

We make theatre with working
class and culturally diverse young
people, emerging artists & world-
class professionals. We bring new
audiences into theatre venues and
also take theatre out into their
communities locally, regionally,
nationally and internationally.

We believe everybody's got a story to
tell... and their own way of telling it...

About Tigerlily

Tigerlily Productions is a BAFTA
nominated production company
with bases in London, Liverpool and
Glasgow. They have a stellar track
record in creating innovative, award
winning films both in factual and
fiction.

Our output ranges across arts,
music, current affairs and history,
including most recently the Imagine
for BBC1 about artist Olafur Eliasson,
WORKING WITH WEINSTEIN the
first film about Harvey Weinstein
for C4, INSIDE PREMIER INN the
most highly rated Dispatches ever,
OPERA MUMS a film with the English
National Opera and performance
artist Bryony Kimmings for BBC,
and MEDITATIONS FROM THE
MONASTERY for BBC4.

Other factual films include several
internationally distributed and
theatrically released feature
documentaries, many for the
prestigious BBC STORYVILLE strand,
ranging from THE LOVERS AND THE
DESPOT in North Korea, ONLY WHEN
I DANCE in Rio's favelas, DOLCE
VITA AFRICANA in photographer
Malick Sidibe's studio in Bamako,
Mali, FOOTPRINTS in Afghanistan
about cluster bombs, AFTER THE
APOCALYPSE about the aftermath
of the Soviet Union's nuclear testing
programme, NAPLES 44 about Italy's
wartime history.

We've also made more intimate
BAFTA nominated documentaries
for CBBC such as MR ALZHEIMERS
AND ME about children who have
grandparents with dementia and
MISSING DAD about the experience
of kids with parents in prison.

We've just delivered two dramas to
BBC for their Culture in Quarantine
season, which we produced in
partnership with Soho Theatre
and 20 Stories High, we executive
produced the feature doc POLY
STYRENE I AM A CLICHE which will
premiere at SXSW and on Sky Arts
in March, and we're in production
on two feature docs, WE ALL WEAR
MASKS about the current artists
protests in Hong Kong, and HAITI
CARNIVAL OF THE ANCESTORS
telling the history of Haiti through
the characters at an annual carnival,
which is being shot by Shabier
Kirchner (SMALL AXE).

Previous fiction feature films include
THE ONES BELOW written and
directed by David Farr (THE NIGHT
MANAGER), REMAINDER written and
directed by Omer Fast, adapted from
Tom McCarthy's cult novel of the
same name, both of which screened
at the Berlinale in 2016 and had
international theatrical releases, and
Xiaolu Guo's Locarno Golden Leopard
winner SHE, A CHINESE. We have
a first look deal with Banijay for TV
drama.



Background to the piece and its development

20 Stories High are passionate about making work with and for young people, that unpicks the complexities and nuances of social topics in an accessible, exciting and honest way. Recent examples of such work include 'BLACK' (interrogating racial tensions in the UK) and 'I told my Mum I was going on an R.E. Trip...' (exploring young women's experiences of abortion).

Having been part of Youth Theatre and Young Actors Company for several years, Odile approached 20 Stories High with an idea for a new show - a live performance piece about a young woman's experience of child sexual abuse. 20 Stories High agreed that the conversation felt important and we began to think about how we would make the piece together.

Through the creative writing process, Odile worked with Dorcas Seb to develop a script that felt authentic to the lived experiences of the survivor's community. Alongside script development, 20 Stories High spoke with The Survivors Trust and RASA to think about how best to support the future audience when watching the film at home.

In the UK, research into child sexual abuse revealed that an estimated 3.1 million adults have experienced some form of abuse before the age of 16'. In many cases, child sexual abuse remains hidden or victim-survivors take several years to disclose what happened. When a child or young person identifies with a duality of cultures, the healing process often requires knowledge of cultural differences and realities. It felt crucial that the piece recognised the similarities of child sexual abuse in a global context while keeping the story local to Liverpool.

Child abuse is never the fault of the victim-survivor and often leaves individuals with feelings of shame, guilt, confusion and anger many years later. Although stories of child abuse are becoming more prevalent in mainstream media, they are often simplified and very rarely explore the complexities that intertwine past experiences with present life.

We believe that "Buttercup" presents a well-known story in a rare way: one that authentically and playfully recognises the individual and their long-term healing in the context of reflection and release.

Questions about the script

What language is spoken by Fortune?

As well as English, Fortune speaks Lingala, which is one of the four national languages of Democratic Republic of Congo². Many parts of West and Central Africa were colonised by French-speaking countries, so the official language is French which is why you might also hear notes of French.

Where is Kinshasa?

Kinshasa is the capital of Democratic Republic of Congo³. It is a major cultural and economic hub in DRC, and across Central Africa.

One of Fortune's aunties says she dresses like a 'jezebel'. What is that?

Acting, or dressing, like a 'jezebel' is a Biblical reference. Jezebel commits several acts in the Bible that have 'no good outcomes'⁴ and is seen as the 'bad girl' in the Bible. Nowadays, the word 'jezebel' is also associated to prostitution and promiscuity.

¹ 'The data behind child abuse' <https://napac.org.uk/key-facts-figures/#~:text=million%20people&text=An%20estimated%203.1%20million%20adults,where%20there%20was%20no%20difference>

² 'What languages are spoken in the DRC?' <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo.html>

³ 'DRC country profile' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13283212>

⁴ 'How bad was Jezebel?' <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/people-in-the-bible/how-bad-was-jezebel/>

Key themes and relevant facts on Child Sexual Abuse

What is child sexual abuse?

A child is defined as any person under the age of 18. Child sexual abuse involves forcing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activity, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. It may involve:

- **Physical contact including rape or oral sex**
- **Non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing**
- **Children looking at, or producing, sexual images**
- **Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).**

Child sexual abuse can be committed by adults or other children. The perpetrator usually engages the child in a gradual process of sexualising a relationship over time, which is called 'grooming', manipulating the child's trust and hiding the abuse. Physical force and violence are very rarely used. As many as 93 percent of victims under the age of 18 know the abuser⁵. This is usually a significant reason why children do not speak out.

What are the signs of abuse in a child?

Children are present in many different community networks including schools, play areas, places of worship and medical centres. These networks often include highly trained individuals who have the best resources to detect and identify signs of abuse in a child. Many health care professionals rely on physical and behavioural indicators to assist in the detection of cases of child sexual abuse, especially in children who are nonverbal. Some of these include⁶:

- **Unexplained genital injury**
- **Regression in behaviour, school performance or attaining developmental milestones**
- **Acute traumatic response such as clingy behaviour and irritability in young children**
- **Inappropriate sexualized behaviours**
- **Sleep disturbances**
- **Self-isolation and social detachment**
- **Pain on urination**

Why do some children stay silent about sexual abuse?

An NSPCC report (2013) ⁷ found that on average, it takes 7 years for children to disclose sexual abuse, and that the majority of children do try to speak out but the disclosure is often not recognised, not understood, played down, or ignored. In 'Buttercup', Fortune feels like she might have been the cause of the abuse and blamed herself for what was happening. For many children, this is often the case. Other reasons for staying silent include:

- **Feeling guilt or shame**
- **Fearing the consequences**
- **Thinking that the abuse is normal**
- **Gender differences - reporting is substantially lower in males than females, which is linked to gender norms in society**
- **Not having the ability to communicate what is happening, especially for young children**

The abuser often manipulates the child (e.g. telling them no-one will believe them, as with Fortune) to remain in control of the situation. Even when children speak out about abuse, it is sometimes hidden by families because of the financial or societal status of the abuser. This does not make it acceptable.

⁵'Child Sexual Abuse': RAINN <https://www.rainn.org/articles/child-sexual-abuse>

⁶'Child Sexual Abuse': https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/resources/publications/en/guidelines_chap7.pdf

⁷Allnock, D. and Miller, P. (2013) 'No one noticed, no one heard': <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2013/no-one-noticed-no-one-heard>

What are the signs of a child trying to disclose abuse?

It takes extraordinary courage for children and young people to speak out about abuse. It is vital that whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they've been told. This can be whole or partial statements that can be direct (e.g. verbal statement), indirect (ambiguous statements suggesting something is wrong), behaviourally and non-verbally (drawing pictures, writing letters).⁸

Can a child be sexually abused without knowing?

Sexual abuse of children is very complicated, and the dynamics are often very different to that of adult sexual abuse. In one third of all child sexual abuse cases, the abuser is a family member or very close family friend⁹. Sometimes young children cannot identify abuse or believe that abuse is part of a normal caregiver relationship. This means that children may not always be aware when they are disclosing abuse, or show behavioural changes later in life when awareness of abuse becomes clearer.

What are the effects of child abuse?

In 'Buttercup', as an adult Fortune talks about feeling shame and guilt, wanting to scrub her skin, feeling tampered with, having paralyzed muscles, being physically distant with her mum and reactive towards her friend Michael when he touches her shoulder. Some people may feel like this in adult life, but not have experienced abuse. However, for survivors of abuse, the effects will vary and can impact the person's mind, body, behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. The most common feelings can include¹⁰:

- **Guilt, shame, self-blame, embarrassment**
- **Fear, distrust, denial**
- **Sadness, anger**
- **Vulnerability, isolation, loneliness**
- **Lack of control**
- **Numbness**
- **Confusion, shock, disbelief**

However, every experience and the effects of abuse are unique to that individual. Support groups and speaking to other people who are experiencing similar effects can help.

What can trigger memories of child sexual abuse?

Like with Fortune, memories can be triggered by many different things including smells (e.g. cologne), stories (e.g. the scene on the TV), sense (e.g. a person touching your shoulder) and topics related to the events and time when the abuse happened. Memories can be shocking and happen quickly. People who have experienced very stressful events can have Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and relive the traumatic event through nightmares and flashbacks. Healthcare professionals can support victim-survivors of child sexual abuse to manage physical and emotional responses by recognising triggers and trying to build different responses to these triggers.

Fortune mentions that it is still a process. What support do people receive for child sexual abuse?

There are specialist organisations supporting both women, men, trans and non-binary survivor-victims of child sexual abuse to heal (see 'Signposting'). The process is different for everyone. Fortune draws on writing to start her healing process, as well as her religion. These are the support structures already in Fortune's life. Organisations that provide therapeutic services to survivors and their wider family work alongside these support structures to strengthen the healing process. Organisations also support children and young people through court proceedings, reporting abuse to the police, increasing public awareness of sexual abuse, highlighting stories of hope, and shaping child protection policy and practise in the UK and globally.

⁸ 'Recognising and responding to abuse': <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse#article-top>

⁹ 'Child Sexual Abuse': https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/resources/publications/en/guidelines_chap7.pdf

¹⁰ 'The Effects of Sexual Violence': <https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/the-effects-of-sexual-violence-how-to-support-a-survivor>

Child abuse in DRC and Africa

In an African context, what does 'respecting your elders' mean, and does it influence Fortune's experience?

Fortune mentions that her abuser tells her to 'respect her elders'. Fortune's sister and her aunty also tell her to do this. Across the world, children are taught to respect their elders. In Africa, this is typically reflected by a strong societal hierarchy: young children are taught to respect older members of society. As well as the reasons outlined in 'why do children stay silent about abuse?', cultural and social norms can sometimes contribute towards children not disclosing cases of abuse. This does not mean that child abuse is socially or culturally acceptable. African societies are very protective of their children and it is important to remember that Africa is a very diverse continent, with very diverse social norms.

Fortune's aunties say 'singleness is dangerous' and that men can't be blamed for Fortune tempting them with her dress code. What does this mean?

Globally, men still hold a lot of power. This is also true for countries in Africa, where some societies are very conservative and Patriarchal, including norms such as women and girls covering up their skin. This does not mean that women and girls do not have power or a voice in African society. It does mean that dressing in a way that reveals skin is sometimes assumed to be 'promiscuous', which is especially true in more rural areas or more conservative countries - in the same way that the older generation in the UK may view it.

Is child sexual abuse treated differently in different countries e.g. UK and DR Congo?

Laws against child abuse vary country by country. They are based on how a child is defined, the age of consent and what constitutes child sexual abuse. In all African countries, child sexual abuse is stigmatised and illegal. In a very small minority of African countries, traditional values of masculinity and harmful cultural practises, like virginity testing and sexual cleansing¹², can influence how child abuse is understood. The systems that support children (e.g. schools, play areas and the justice system) are also under-developed which has resulted in a slower response. However, governments are rapidly working on strengthening this. Informal systems will be used by communities to protect their children in place of under-developed formal systems, which are often very effective (see next question).

What mechanisms are in place to protect children from abuse in Africa, including DRC?

There are formal and informal protection structures in place to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. Formal structures include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, child protection policies, the justice system, police protection units and social services. There are also large organisations such as UNICEF and World Health Organisation that support governments to strengthen these systems. Informal protection structures are usually community-based, for example, through local leaders, religious leaders, and involve changing attitudes towards harmful cultural practises. Formal and informal mechanisms need to work together to complement each other for children to be fully protected.

¹¹ 'UNICEF West and Central Africa': <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/child-protection>

¹² 'Hyena man' BBC World News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36892963>

How do children who've experienced sexual abuse in a different country get justice?

Children who have moved from different parts of the world will sometimes experience challenges with their identity and culture. This means that children might isolate an abusive incident to a culture, place or experience¹³. Depending on the circumstances on which the child has moved, either as a refugee, asylum seeker or economic migrant, there may be many other barriers to disclosing abuse including¹⁴:

- Language
- Lack of knowledge of services available
- Transient housing
- Uncertainty over immigration status
- Separation from family
- Exposure to other violence or trauma

If the abuse has been recorded in the home country, for example in medical files, there might be a delay or disruption in receiving those files. These barriers make it more difficult for children to get justice. Immigration, refugee and asylum seeker support networks and organisations are now recognising the importance of addressing child sexual abuse and seeking justice for children¹⁵.



Supporting Survivors

How can I support someone who has experienced child sexual abuse?

Fortune believes that her mum has also experienced sexual abuse and wants to support her. If you want to support someone who has told you that they have been sexually assaulted or abused, it can be a lot to handle. Especially, if you have similar experiences. A supportive reaction is essential to diminish any shame or blame the survivor usually takes on after abuse. Encouraging words and phrases can avoid judgement and show support, consider the following phrases:

- “I’m sorry this happened”
- “It’s not your fault”
- “I believe you”
- “You are not alone”
- “This doesn’t change how I think of you”
- “I am here for you, but I am not a professional”
- “How do you want me to help you?”

There is a more in-depth list of support mechanisms here and more information available in the signposting section of this pack.

Supporting Survivors in watching Buttercup

If you are a victim-survivor of sexual violence, no matter when this occurred or the circumstances that it occurred under, it was not your fault. You are not responsible for the actions of anyone else and you did not ask for this to happen to you. Please click [here](#) for self-care pack which will support you through watching ‘Buttercup’ and afterwards.

Every childhood experience and story of abuse is individual to that child and their context. While stories can be vastly different, the principles of advice are similar. Sometimes, watching something that resonates with your story can be supportive, and in other circumstances it’s not.



¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jun/28/it-never-stops-shaping-you-the-legacy-of-child-sexual-abuse-and-how-to-survive-it>

¹⁴ ‘First generation immigrants’: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1337/learning-from-case-reviews_first-generation-immigrants-asylum-seekers-and-refugees.pdf

¹⁵ ‘An untold story’: <https://ksr.hkspublications.org/2019/10/22/an-untold-story-the-need-to-address-sexual-abuse-and-exploitation-of-refugee-boys/>

Exploring the subject matter

Teachers, youth workers or facilitators

The resources in this pack are intended to broaden young people's understanding and perspectives of some of the difficult themes in "Buttercup". Challenging subject matter may cause prejudice and stereotype to surface. It is important to spend time before going into activities ensuring that all participants and facilitators feel safe and comfortable. The best way to do this is by setting ground rules or drawing up a working contract.

Here are some example ground rules we use during workshops:

- **Respect others:** You may hear opinions that are different to your own. Allow people to express these and explain why they feel that way.
- **Try not to talk over each other.**
- **Share the air:** Foster an atmosphere where everyone gets a chance to speak. Encourage everyone to get involved but respect someone's right to not do so if they find it uncomfortable or distressing.
- **Own your own values:** Speak from the standpoint of 'I' – 'I think that'/'In my opinion'. Avoid 'you' – 'you should'/'you all think that'. If you wish to challenge, challenge the opinion or the behaviour, not the person.
- **Be open and honest:** There is no such thing as a silly question! You could allow young people to write down things they don't wish to ask out loud and then deal with the questions anonymously later on.
- **Uphold the mantra:** what is said in the room stays in the room!
- **No personal revelations required:** There is no expectation that anyone will reveal information about their personal life or experiences. We definitely shouldn't disclose personal information we know about others whether they are in or out of the room. Conversations of this nature may well result in disclosures, in which case usual company safeguarding procedures should be followed.





Parents & carers

How can I give my child a supportive environment to discuss abuse and feel safe?

A big part of protecting children from sexual abuse is about creating conversation, showing interest in child's day-to-day life, talking about sexual abuse when it comes up in the media (e.g. 'have you ever heard of this happening before?'), teaching your child about boundaries (including online), how to talk about their bodies, showing them you are available to talk and encouraging them to speak up. Barnardo's offer 5 Top Tips on how to talk to your child about their worries, here.

Opportunities to engage and raising awareness in your community

- **Raise awareness:** The first week of February is Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week with the hashtag #itsnotokay [Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week](#)
- **Volunteer:** There are many organisations that need support to fundraise, organise events and run support lines. You can find local volunteer opportunities online (see signposting)
- **Donate:** Many organisations run on grants and donations. If you find an organisation local to you, you could donate or do a fundraising event for that organisation.
- **Keep up to date:** Organisations, networks and activists are always lobbying the government to update policies or fund new programmes to support children. Sign up to newsletters in our signposted organisations to keep updated.

Signposting

The Survivors Trust

www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Free helpline: 08088 010 818

Provide a range of specialist services to survivors including counselling, support, helplines and advocacy services for women, men, non-binary people and children. They provide free and confidential support and information to survivors of all types of sexual violence.

National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

www.napac.org.uk

0808 801 0331

Supporting people of all ages in their recovery from childhood abuse. If you think someone may be in immediate danger because of abuse, contact the emergency services: 999

NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk

Free helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC can provide advice & support for the protection of children (aged under 18).

Childline

Free helpline: 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Supporting children under the age of 18.

Rape Crisis

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Providing information, support and help after rape, sexual assault or abuse. Find a local support centre: www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/find-a-rape-crisis-centre/

Safeline's National Male Survivor Helpline

0808 800 5005

Or chat online: www.safeline.org.uk/contact-us

Helping males of all ages through their healing journey after experience sexual abuse or rape through advice, counselling or therapy.

Mankind

www.mkcharity.org

Provides one-to-one counselling, therapeutic groups and couple counselling to men (age 18+) who have experienced sexual abuse at any time in their lives.

End Violence Against Children

www.end-violence.org

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children works on multiple levels to achieve a world in which every child grows up safe and secure. They work with governments, international organisations and children to prevent and respond to violence against children.

The Truth Project

<https://www.truthproject.org.uk/i-will-be-heard>

The Truth Project offers victims and survivors of child sexual abuse the chance to share their experiences and be heard with respect. It is part of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Experiences and suggestions will help The Truth Project recommend changes to protect children from abuse. The Truth Project concludes in 2021.

Keep in touch. Get involved

At 20 Stories High, we are keen to connect digitally with our audiences, partners and participants.

There are a whole host of ways venues and individual audience members can connect with us artistically and also engage in conversations about the show.



www.20storieshigh.org.uk
info@20storieshigh.org.uk
0151 708 9728

Credits

Resource Pack created by
Sarah Meath and Kasonde Mulenga
Images c. Wes Rashid
Design by allthatsgood.co

About the Authors

Kasonde Mulenga is a community development professional, with specialist knowledge and experience working on Sexual Reproductive Health programmes for young people in Zambia and Tanzania. He is Zambian born, and has most recently spent some time in the UK, studying online for a degree in Economics and Development. Kasonde is also a freelance producer and has completed voiceover and editing work for a First Aid Africa, as well as artistically collaborating with several Zambian artists.

Sarah Meath is an international development professional, with 10 years of experience working in the charity sector both in the UK and internationally. Most recently, she has spent four years living and working in Tanzania and Zambia managing education and empowerment projects for women and young people. She has just completed a Masters in Development Studies, and is a freelance research consultant for several organisations in the UK, Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya.

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