

SACHA's Web Chat/Text Support

Terms of Use

- WHAT IS THIS SERVICE?

SACHA is the Sexual Assault Centre for Hamilton and Area. SACHA's Web Chat/Text Support is a free, anonymous, and confidential chat for survivors of sexual violence and the people who support them. You can expect to connect with a trained volunteer.

- WHEN IS THE SERVICE AVAILABLE?

The hours of operation will be listed on our website and social media. We expect them to change over time. If you need immediate support when the service is not available, you can call SACHA's 24-Hour Support Line at 905-525-4162 and speak to a trained volunteer.

- IS THIS SERVICE FOR ME?

We support people age 16 and over who have experienced [sexual violence](#) at any point in their lives. We also assist people who are supporting survivors – family, friends and professional supports.

If you are younger than 16, you can connect with the [Kids Help Phone](#).

- PRANK OR HARASSING CHATS: NO THANKS

We do not tolerate prank or harassing chats. Any threatening and violent chat, including sexually abusive statements, racism, or any kind of discrimination, violates our volunteer's and staff's rights and safety. Chats will be ended immediately.

- PERPETRATORS

We realize that some survivors have also perpetrated sexual violence or intimate partner abuse. Unfortunately, providing service to anyone who has done so as an adult is not within our mandate and training. The volunteer can suggest other resources for you and will then have to end the chat.

- WILL MY INFORMATION BE SHARED?

Your privacy and safety are crucial. During the chat you may use your name, or a different name, or no name at all. You do not have to provide us with your email address. We will ask for your phone number only if you need an accompaniment to the hospital or the police station, or if there is an immediate safety concern, but it is your choice whether to provide it.

We maintain strict confidentiality. However, if there are immediate concerns for your safety, or if you are threatening harm to others, SACHA's volunteers have the duty to contact emergency services. If a child under 16 years of age (and in some cases also age 16 and 17) is at risk of harm, we have a duty to report to one of the Children's Aid Societies. When a member of a regulated occupation (such as a health professional, or social worker/social service worker) has abused a client, we may be required to report them to their regulatory body. You can read our policy [here](#).

- HOW SECURE IS THIS SERVICE?

Please note that while we have taken many measures to keep your communications safe while using our site, no Internet transmission is 100% secure. On our end, the conversation is encrypted (encoded) securely, and is confidential. We do not save the scripts of our conversations, store IP addresses, or use cookies.

Our web-based chat features end-to-end encryption. If your browser or device does not support encryption on your end, a message will pop up asking you if you would like to continue. For some suggestions about safety on an online chat you can check out <https://sacha.ca/erasing-your-tracks> . You can use the Quick Hide tool that appears at the top of every page for an immediate cover-up.

However, using SMS (text by phone) is less secure because every text message is processed by your phone company. It's also important to delete the conversation when it ends.

- PROBLEMS? COMPLAINTS?

For questions about this service, you can contact the Program Coordinator at 905-525-4573 ext. 222, sacha@sacha.ca . Complaints can be referred to the coordinator or to SACHA's Director, tel. 905-525-4573 ext. 223, sacha@sacha.ca .