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### OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of disclosure of Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) on the long term psychosocial adjustment of the adult survivor.

### METHODS

This study used qualitative design with a phenomenological approach and was based on participant's retroactive account of interviews with nine female adult survivors of CSA to investigate the impact of childhood disclosure of sexual abuse on the adult survivor.

### RESULTS

Results indicated that there were two main groups that respondents disclosed to : adults and peers. Significantly, none of the respondents initially disclosed to parents. They were afraid it would negatively affect their relationship with parent(s) and perpetrator who was described as close. The findings revealed also that silence often lead to further sexual abuse, disruptive intimate relations, severe emotional and psychological impact in adulthood.

*I reach so far I reach in the station and when I reach in the station right in Tunapuna we were living in the station in Tunapuna and this policeman pull up "what you doing here?" I am a child I done get frighten now if I had met a woman you find I would have talk with her so I just make up a story and I leave. (Angel)*

*I don't believe in the system I think that no matter how much you talk to children there will always be a fear in them to to come out and say so and so is the case whatever this one interfering with meh they will always have a fear because you never know what they reaction will be. (Susan)*

### CONCLUSION

There is a need for an effective CSA prevention strategy, child-friendly support for those that are abused and the need for a national psych-educational policy on the issues surrounding CSA. It is important that more research is conducted on this issue as it is felt that CSA is under reported and much is yet to be learned. It is crucial that understanding be gained especially from the child's perspective so that social policy, preventative programs and counselling services for those abused are relevant in meeting the needs of those who these initiatives target.