

# **A VICTIM OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CAN FILE A COMPLAINT AT ANY TIME IRRESPECTIVE OF HIS/HER PRESENT AGE: WCD MINISTRY**

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Ministry of Women and Child Development

## **A Victim of Child Sexual Abuse can file a complaint at any time irrespective of his/her present age: WCD Ministry**

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The Ministry of Women and Child Development had recently consulted Ministry of Law in view of the overriding provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act over other criminal laws and provisions of mandatory reporting of such offences. The Ministry of Law after examining the provisions of POCSO Act vis-à-vis provisions of CrPC has advised that there appears no period of limitation mentioned in Section 19 in regard to reporting of the offences under the POCSO Act, 2012. The POCSO Act does not provide for any period of limitation for reporting the child sexual offences. On receipt of the opinion of Ministry of Law, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Minister of WCD stated that "Now any victim, at any age, can complain the sexual abuse faced by him/her as a child". She urged the victims to report the cases through POCSO e-Box.

Often, children are unable to report such crimes as the perpetrator in most cases is either a family member, a relative or closely known person. Studies have also shown that the child continues to carry the trauma of sexual abuse till very late in life. In order to overcome this trauma many grown up people have started coming out to report the abuse faced by them as children.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), Act 2012, came into force on 14.11.2012. It is a gender neutral Act which has been enacted to strengthen the legal provisions for the protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years and provides protection to all children under the age of 18 years from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.

KSP/PS

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**END**

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