



**“Project Goldcrest, this is your opportunity to anonymously tell somebody what has happened to you without involving the police until YOU are ready to do so. Your information, your safety, your choice.”**

You have been chosen to participate in Project Goldcrest as we have concerns about your safety and welfare.

If something happens to you and you do not want to speak to the police or go to the SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) as a self-referral then this project is another choice for you.

This project allows you to tell someone what has happened to you and removes the stress of providing an evidential account and the perpetrator knowing you have told the police what has happened.

You have been provided a SAFE (Self-Administered Forensic Evidence) box which has its own unique SAFE number and this is the number that is provided to the police.

Inside the box are 9 items these are:

Elimination DNA (this is only used to eliminate your DNA from the perpetrators),

Mouth rinse module – oral sex - for semen

Body Wipes – To wipe bodily fluids or if someone has touched/grabbed you

Sanitary/tampon collector – this soaks up bodily fluids after sex (does not work as contraception)

Urine collection – toxicology for drugs and alcohol

Vaginal swab – for DNA and semen

Anal swab – for DNA and semen

Condom collector – for DNA and semen

Underwear collector – for DNA and semen

Please don't worry we do not expect you to use all these modules every time. Only use the ones that relate to what has happened to you.

As there is time limits on taking forensic samples then please look on the top of the box to see if you are in time to take that sample.

If you do open the box and complete one of the modules then you must give your elimination DNA. Don't worry this will not be uploaded onto the national database or checked against any crime scenes. This will only be used to eliminate your DNA from the sample. Your DNA sample will be destroyed after 6 months from the date it was taken. If at any point in the future you want a police prosecution then another elimination DNA swab can be taken from you because your DNA doesn't change.

If you are not in forensic time, you can still fill out the information sheet to say what has happened to you.

Please do watch the videos on the Goldcrest web page as there is a step by step guide on how to take each sample.

You can speak with a forensic nurse day or night for advice on taking these samples.

**Tel: 01277 240620 or out of hours 0330 223 0099**

You may want to know why the box has to be supervised by an adult. As the samples are not taken by a forensic nurse, the box has to be overseen by an appropriate adult/parent/foster carer as in the future you may wish to support a police investigation and a court process. This will assist in supporting your disclosures and protect the integrity of your samples that you have provided.

The adult supervising will have to complete the evidence bags once you have sealed them. They will also have to list the items that you have taken onto the exhibit list. All the forensic swabs/modules that have been taken will then need to be placed in the bag provided and put into the freezer ready for collection.

The adult supervising will then call the SARC and arrange collection.

When this is collected you will be provided another SAFE box and another pack. The new SAFE box will have a different SAFE number.

Please do ensure that you complete the information sheet as this is your opportunity to write down what has happened to you whilst it is fresh in your memory.



### Role of the SARC

The SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) is based in Brentwood and covers the whole of Essex. The SARC offers free support and practical help to anyone in Essex who has experienced sexual violence and/or sexual abuse. Our aim is to provide a high-quality, inclusive, and holistic service for survivors of sexual violence and sexual abuse, which empowers men and women to make their own choices about both their immediate healthcare options and aftercare support. Trained nurses and support staff work at the SARC and nurses are on call throughout the day and night so if you wish to speak with a nurse at any time you can do so by calling **Tel: 01277 240620 or out of hours 0330 223 0099**.

You do not have to speak with us but we would like to speak with you to discuss your health and welfare needs such as the morning after pill, STI screening and also offer you support. Please do sign the consent form so we can contact you as we are here to listen and help.

Please do consider self-referral and there is a leaflet on this in your pack as this is a better option of obtaining your samples and evidence without involving the police. However we do understand if you do not want to do this.

### Role of the Police

Many young people have a mistrust in the police and we understand this. If you participate with Project Goldcrest the police **will not** contact you unless you want them to.

When you complete your information sheet, the police will record all the crimes that have been made against you. Your personal details such as your name or address will **not** be recorded and the only details to identify you will be your SAFE number. Your samples will be kept in a freezer held by the police and tested with your permission only to identify the person or persons responsible. The samples will be kept up to 25 years so when you are ready to support a police investigation the samples are there for you.

The police will not arrest the perpetrators for the offences against you unless you consent to this.

The focus on this project is to identify perpetrators and disrupt their behaviour without involving YOU.

## **WE ARE PUTTING YOU BACK IN CONTROL**

### Role of Social Care

Thurrock Children's Social Care is based in Grays, and covers the whole of Thurrock. We work with children and their families who are in need of support or protection, for all sorts of reasons.

You have been chosen to be part of Project Goldcrest as we have worries about your safety and welfare. A SAFE Box has been delivered to your parent or carer; this is available for you to use when you think the time is right. If there are different adults you feel comfortable talking to about what is happening with you, we can arrange a SAFE Box to be delivered to them also. If you would like to talk through services to help and support you, we will be happy to do this with you.

We understand that you don't want police involved with you right now; this project allows this to happen. Equally, if you change your mind and decide you want talk to the police, we will support you through this. Project Goldcrest gives you the opportunity to tell us what has happen, without having to tell police - until you are ready to do so.

## **This is Your Information, Your Safety, and Your Choice.**