

SNAP COUNSELLORS

FIRST SNAPCHAT CHANNEL DEDICATED TO DISCUSSING TEEN ABUSE

By Love Doctor and Chayn India

Project URL: <http://snapcounsellors.com/>

Project Twitter: [@lovedoctordotin](https://twitter.com/lovedoctordotin)

Organisation URL: <http://lovedoctor.in/love-doctor-launches-snap-counsellors/>

- Health
- Safety & Security
- Internet
- Mobile
- Social Software

While relationship abuse is common in India, sufferers find it hard to come forward because of the stigma attached. This is especially true if they are young and unmarried – more than 90% of teens in India never report relationship violence for fear of their parents or partners.

Advertising executive Rajshekar Patil knew that the popular teen platform Snapchat provides the kind of immediacy and anonymity that encourages teens to share their lives on it. Partnering with two not-for-profits in India with expertise in counselling and domestic violence – LoveDoctor and Chayn India – Patil created a way for teens in abusive situations to reach out.

Snap Counsellors sends out daily Snapchat stories with information about mental and sexual health, relationships, unhealthy behaviour, and signs of abuse, while encouraging teens to contact them directly for counselling and assistance if needed.

Any advice provided is deleted once opened, which means that sufferers don't have to be afraid that their abusers will later discover records of them seeking help. "We can send out a series of pics and videos – of 10 seconds each – that can be viewed by our followers for a 24-hour period, and then gets deleted," Patil explains.

The project is showing results. Patil believes almost 1,200 people watch the stories Snap Counsellors posts, and as many as 60 people reach out for help every day. The service isn't limited to people in India. "We have non-resident Indians in the US, Canada and South Asia reaching out to us, and we advise everyone equally. We are open to teens around the world, including men," says Patil.

The team has now partnered with Day One, New York to counsel teens in the US, and has a counsellor in Madrid, and is planning to expand the service to Spanish-speaking countries, while also considering Pakistan and the Americas. Add Snap Counsellors by using their snapchat ID 'lovedoctordotin'.

Image courtesy of Dr Case

Last updated: 13th of September, 2016