

The Advocate

Office Shaken, But Service Continues

As we went to press the whole of Canterbury was still struggling to recover from the worst natural disaster it has experienced. Aftershocks seemed to keep coming and nerves everywhere were stretched – Christchurch Women's Refuge was no exception. But just as family violence doesn't stop in a disaster (in fact, it increases), we kept continuing offering our crisis services and any other support we can.

In the days following the earthquake our central community office was off limits, so we made camp in the Safe House, which had been certified as fully safe and operational. Our Crisis Line (0800 1 REFUGE) remained busy with calls, our Safe House admitted new clients each day and we rearranged group education sessions and client interviews to take place in our temporary premises. In short, we continued with business as usual, as best we could.

Amongst the earthquake headlines you may have read that police reports of family violence were up 53% on this time last year, due to the earthquake. It is sad but true that disasters such as this actually exacerbate family violence as cabin fever hits, tempers fray, people feel that they have lost control over the basic elements of their lives and seek to exert it where they can – over their families. We also heard from women that estranged partners were pressuring them to come back home or give them access to children, using the fear engendered by the earthquake as an emotional bargaining chip. We expect the number

of incidents to keep rising over the next few months as the realities of loss sink in.

What was heartening was to see Cantabrians pull together through this disaster, and we certainly felt that support. We had calls and emails of support along with offers of clothing, food and people's time. In fact, we have even been lucky enough to receive assistance from as far away as New Plymouth, where local woman Bridget Sullivan convinced the council to set up a Mayor's Emergency Fund account for us at the TSB Banks – an amazingly kind gesture from Bridget, Mayor Peter Tennent and the New Plymouth Council. Their generosity has been echoed by the New Plymouth community, who arranged other fundraising events, including a huge Zumba party, for us. We are so grateful for the supportive spirit of other Kiwis, a spirit I am sure many of you yourself have been both spreading and receiving.

We are working closely with our associated agencies to support them where we can and I am aware that many people and groups throughout Canterbury need such assistance at present. If you would like to support us and our clients as we work through this stressful time together, we would be very grateful. You can contact us directly to talk over options, or see our donation panel on the back of the newsletter.

In the meantime, we here at Christchurch Women's Refuge hope that you and your families are safe, secure and supporting each other. Go safely.

Annette Gillespie

Annette Gillespie
Chief Executive Officer

Individual Programme Gets Ministry Stamp of Approval

Christchurch Women's Refuge has recently received Ministry of Justice approval for its individual women's Protected Persons programme. Christchurch Women's Refuge is now approved by the Ministry for its group programmes for children and women, as well as this individual programme.

The process of gaining approval is rigorous, requiring extensive documentation of all the agency procedures that might in any way impact on clients or service, as well as the full programme content and

supporting resources.

This approval means that the Ministry acknowledges that the education programme is effective in combating family violence and that they endorse its structure, content, delivery and outcomes as being consistent with government strategy regarding family violence.

In practice, it also means that women and children who are named on Protection Orders can undertake an approved programme and the Ministry will cover the fundamental costs of their attendance. While Christchurch Women's Refuge offers its programmes to all women and children, funding to cover access by those not named on a Protection Order must be secured from other sources.

Annual Appeal Exceeds Goal

The Christchurch Women's Refuge Annual Appeal in late July was a great success. First up was Frocktails, a fun night which involved wine, canapés, a silent auction and fashion. The event sold out and raised almost \$3,500.

The Street Appeal took place on 23–24 July and exceeded its goal, generating just under \$21,000, the most ever raised (so far!) Approximately 170 collectors, ranging from retired people through to school students and many people in between, braved chilly weather to collect at sites throughout Christchurch, Rangiora and Rolleston. Not only was the event a successful fundraiser, but the response from the public for the work Refuge does was tremendous. The Cashel Mall display of 260 pairs of shoes, representing the death toll from family violence 2000 – 2009, literally stopped people in their tracks.

A big thank you to everyone who helped out and of course we thank all the people who so generously made a donation.



Is Easy to Leave ...Isn't It?

Victims of family violence must pay for their own Protection Orders, unless their income is low enough to qualify for Legal Aid. Legal Aid is based upon yearly income, not on their current financial position.

Schooling Up on Family Violence

Christchurch Women's Refuge has developed strong relationships with many of the schools throughout the Canterbury region through our services to child victims, by providing education to classes or from being the fortunate recipients of school fundraising support. Both Shirley Boys High School and Christchurch Boys High School supplied students as collectors for Christchurch Women's Refuge's recent Street Appeal.

Amongst the schools we work with, this year we received special support from Middleton Grange and Rangī Ruru. Middleton Grange supported



Christchurch Women's Refuge with a wonderful fundraising effort. In 2009, Class 8En were given \$1 each as seed money, to generate as much money as possible for charity. With some genuine business ingenuity they made almost \$1500, which they generously donated to Christchurch Women's Refuge (see photo below). The students further supported Christchurch Women's Refuge by collecting almost 70 pairs of shoes for the Street Appeal shoe display (see earlier article in this newsletter).

Rangī Ruru incorporated a family violence theme into their Peace Week activities in August this year. In doing so they highlighted the incongruity of our society promoting worldwide peace when so many local women and children live with violence, and even die from it, right here in New Zealand.

Students of both schools made the decision to involve Christchurch Women's Refuge in their activities, which is a wonderful indication of how much the message that family violence is everywhere and It's Not OK is being heard.

Children and young people are the biggest victims of family violence – 75,000 children are known to witness family violence each year and, as a result, they have higher chances of becoming victims and of delinquency and criminality. It is encouraging to know that other children and young people acknowledge the damage that family violence is doing to their peers and their families and are taking action to change attitudes and understanding amongst their own communities.

If you would like your school to learn more about family violence or how to support our work, please contact Lyn Boyd on 353 7503 or lyn@womensrefuge.co.nz

Right Service Right Time

For some families life can be fraught with a complex myriad of social challenges. There are many social service agencies willing to help, but knowing where to go for support can be a daunting process in itself.

A relatively new Canterbury collaboration is Right Service Right Time (RSRT), spearheaded by the Canterbury Social Service Providers' Association, of which Christchurch Women's Refuge is a partner.

Christchurch Women's Refuge has long been a champion and leader of partnering to achieve better client outcomes and Right Service Right Time, as an interagency partnership, is proving very effective at doing precisely that.

Families are referred from a single point of entry (a partner agency) which feels that their complexity of need requires a multi-agency approach, or they can self refer. Once their case is referred to RSRT they will be offered a broad continuum of services which will address their needs appropriately and comprehensively and without the need for the family to approach a variety of different agencies. The forum can also fast track those cases of urgent need.

Client Services Manager Carol Brown has been representing Christchurch Women's Refuge on the panel and is impressed with how it works to advance the best interests of families. "Being part of this service is both insightful and rewarding" says Carol. "It's very heartening to see so many people – a panel of 16 at times – from a range of services, all devoted to ensuring the best outcomes for families in need or crisis.

"The panel has welcomed and supported case workers and advocates who have come along to present their cases and made them feel very comfortable talking of their concerns. I believe they have left feeling that they were heard and that the appropriate plan was in place for the family they were concerned about.

"What has become strikingly evident is that a large percentage of cases have experienced or are currently experiencing family violence, along with other issues we know to come out of families living with this issue. It is good to be able to say with confidence that Refuge has the ability to offer the specialist knowledge and education to pick up these families and provide support, advocacy and education programmes."

To find out more about Right Service Right Time visit www.rightservicerrighttime.com

White Ribbon Ride 20 Nov

Attention all you Easy Riders – this is your chance to be a White Ribbon motor bike rider in support of violence against women. On Saturday 20 November Christchurch Women's Refuge and Rolling Thunder Harley Davidson shop will stage a White Ribbon ride into Cathedral Square. Riders will meet at Rolling Thunder at 11am and then at 11:30am will make their way en masse into the Square. Once there the impressive bikes will be available for viewing and some riders will be offering rides around the square until 2pm for a gold coin donation to Christchurch Women's Refuge. White Ribbons will be handed out and Christchurch Women's Refuge will be on hand with information. Any motorbike rider is welcome to participate, just bring a can or bag of non-perishable food for Christchurch Women's Refuge's Safe House as entry. Pencil it in and keep checking womensrefuge.co.nz for more details – there may even be some special guests!

Is Easy to Leave ...Isn't It?

If a non-resident leaves an abusive partner who sponsored their visa application, the sponsorship is likely to be withdrawn, leaving the victim without recourse to any financial support from the New Zealand social welfare system until their visa is granted.

New Police Safety Orders from 1 July

From 1 July Police began issuing Police Safety Orders (PSOs). These are interim removal orders whereby police officers can order a person to leave a property for up to five days when they believe – but cannot prove – that they are a threat to others living there.

While the PSO is in place the person at risk can apply for a Protection Order (issued by the court), which imposes rules and restrictions regarding access to another person or property for a much longer period. Not all women choose to take out a Protection Order, even though they give some protection to victims of family violence. Cost is one reason, as the applicant must pay to apply unless they fall below a low income threshold, and no provision is made in the Orders for child support. Women may also fear that the abuse will become worse if they apply for a Protection Order, as research shows that a woman is at increased danger when her partner is notified that an Order has been taken against them.

In 2009 Canterbury police dealt with approximately 10,000 family violence incidents and PSOs seek to offer immediate safety to some of those victims. Police have already found them useful to help prevent potentially violent situations from escalating. In their first month of availability, 24 PSOs were issued in Canterbury and almost 290 nationwide. At almost nine a day, this is further evidence of just how prevalent family violence is throughout New Zealand.



Items we are always looking for include:

- Disposable nappies – variety of ages
- Toilet paper and sanitary items
- Non-perishable foods and long-life milk
- Women and children's new underwear – variety of sizes

Jigsaw Conference, 28-29 October 2010

Christchurch Women's Refuge is one of the five Christchurch Jigsaw partners that will host the annual Jigsaw conference on 28-29 October at the Hotel Grand Chancellor.

Jigsaw is a community based network of independent agencies whose main focus is the prevention of child abuse, neglect and family violence. They also have a strong commitment to helping families provide the safe and nurturing environment that children need to reach their full potential.

The Jigsaw National Conference will be an exciting opportunity for all agencies, organisations and individuals who are concerned with children, families and positive parenting to be inspired and share their experience and expertise.

There will be four plenary sessions and up to 20 workshops (themed Kaupapa Māori, Practitioners; Community; Business and Partner Agency) that will add real value to families, organisations and businesses. Sessions and workshops will be led by expert local and international speakers and there will also be many informal opportunities to network with community and industry experts, including Jigsaw partners from throughout the country.

This year the Jigsaw conference is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Find out more and register online at www.regonline.co.nz/jigsaw



Clean Heat for Charity

If your heat pump is over 12 months old it is time to have it professionally cleaned. Aircon Cleaners specialise in cleaning heat pumps and will donate \$12 off the price of each heat pump cleaning if you mention Christchurch Women's Refuge when you book.



Without thorough cleaning heat pumps lose efficiency, costing you more to run, and do not keep your air clean. Cleaning the filters is only quarter of the job, so don't risk your health, and that of your family. To ensure that your unit runs smoother, cleaner and more efficiently call 0800 480 482 and mention Christchurch Women's Refuge.

Women's Expo

Christchurch Women's Refuge will be taking part in the Christchurch Women's Expo at the CBS Canterbury Arena on the weekend of 25-26 September. Christchurch Women's Refuge will be there to raise awareness of the issue of family violence and the things we can all do to confront it. We'll also have a raffle and be accepting donations. Entry is free so be sure to come along and find out more about what we all can do to end family violence.

Is Easy to Leave ...Isn't It?

An eight-week stand-down applies to anyone seeking Child Support from an estranged partner - leaving because of personal safety concerns makes no difference.

To find out more about the barriers family violence 'survivors' face read the discussion document 'It's Still Not OK' at roundtablevaw.org.nz

Receive *The Advocate* by Email

If you would prefer to receive your copy of *The Advocate* by email please contact us by emailing Julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or calling (03) 353 7501.

Christchurch Women's Refuge would like to acknowledge The Southern Trust, who generously funded this edition of *The Advocate*.



CUT ALONG THE LINE

Join the journey to a violence free society

Charities Commission Number CC 30026

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please post to:

Christchurch Women's Refuge Inc., PO Box 32 034, Christchurch 8147

Here is my donation of \$25 \$75 \$150 \$200

Other amount (please enter) \$ _____

Cheque payable to Christchurch Women's Refuge

Or charge my Visa MasterCard Expiry date ____ / ____

Card No.

Name on Card _____

Please send me information about making a gift to Christchurch Women's Refuge in my will.

If you wish to discuss a donation or make automatic payments please contact Julie on (03) 353 7501, at Julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or visit www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Thank you! We will send you a receipt