



PHOTO Anne-Sophie Poirier

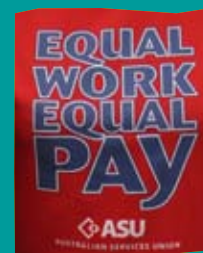


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Proposed 'failure to protect' legislation could mean women who experience family violence face imprisonment for failing to protect their child



DANCE YOUR WAY TO EQUAL PAY
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Women are paid 17.2% less than men so WHW performed a 'flash mob' extravaganza to mark Equal Pay Day!



Have your say in this forum about school, relationships and sexual health and help make our community a safer and more inclusive place to live.

A WORD FROM THE CEO **Dr Robyn Gregory**



Welcome to the third edition of *WHW News* for 2011. This edition focuses on our priority area of sexual and reproductive health, where

we showcase some of the innovative work being undertaken in the western region.

The western region sexual and reproductive health working group, led by Women's Health West, carried out a mapping and needs analysis that you might have read about this year in our first edition. More recently, we have produced a report on the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health, featured on page 18. The report outlines a clear framework for considering the impact of the social, economic and political context of people's lives in our region, and planning actions to respond to that context. This framework will guide the development of a regional action plan to optimise the sexual and reproductive health of our communities – similar to the regional work we are undertaking to prevent violence against women, including our recent WHW-PCP 'Preventing Violence Against Women in Community Health Forum', outlined on page 13.

Each of the sexual and reproductive health reports highlight the particular difficulties facing same-sex attracted and gender questioning people in our region. On page 15,

Sarah Roberts from Isis Primary Care outlines her research involving a confidential online forum in October designed to inform program and service delivery in the west, as well as contributing towards a safer and more inclusive community.

Sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental human right. It is worth noting this at a time when the state government is considering a proposal to weaken Victorian's legal protection of human rights by substantially reducing or eliminating the role of courts in enforcing human rights or providing remedies when they are breached, as well as reducing or eliminating the obligation of government to comply with human rights. This makes our recent funding for a three-year project to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of newly-arrived refugee women to understand and take action on human rights of relevance to their communities all the more important. Kirsten Campbell outlines this terrific project, as well as providing ideas to oppose the undermining of our human rights, on page 3.

It seems that we are having to fight for our rights on a number of fronts at the moment. On pages 6-7 Alison Macdonald, from Domestic Violence Victoria, outlines the reasons for our opposition to proposals for a 'failure to protect' law that could see women who experience family violence facing penalties of up to fourteen years' imprisonment for

Continued p.2

failing to protect their child from violence and abuse perpetrated by their partner. While similar laws in other countries have failed to be effective in reducing levels of child abuse, they have also failed to take into account the complex barriers to women reporting and leaving violent relationships.

On pages 10-11 you can read about our fun and unconventional campaign for pay equity. On equal pay day we decked ourselves in red and headed down to Footscray railway station, where we attracted commuters' interest with a dance choreographed to the tune of Donna Summers 'She Works Hard for the Money'. Fair Work Australia will be announcing their ruling at the time this newsletter goes to print, so please contact your local state and federal members of parliament to encourage them to fully fund the ruling.

We are also working hard to advocate for a funded commitment to prevention of violence against women from the state government. You can read about this on page 12.

On page 14, our Power On program for women who experience mental illness heads to Queensland! Page 16 highlights our Sunrise group for women with a disability and promotes the benefits to women of referral to the group.

On page 9 the new chair of the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee, Jocelyn Bignold, farewells the outgoing chair, Joan Eddy, after five years of committed work. WHW joins Joce in thanking Joan for her unrelenting commitment to the field of family violence. In her work at Djerrirwarrah Health Services, Joan has encouraged peer support groups to assist women's recovery from family violence; you can read about this work on page 8.

Finally, I would like to invite you to help us celebrate another year of fantastic work by our staff and board of directors at our annual general meeting at the Footscray Community Arts Centre on 29 November. We are dishing up a feast of thought-provoking speakers debating the theme, 'It's impossible to prevent violence against women'. I can't wait to hear speakers debate this topic; sometimes we learn the most when we put forward an argument we don't actually agree with!

SEXUAL + REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDITION

Define gender equity

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men by recognising diversity and disadvantage and directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all.

Arbeth Guevara

Sexual and reproductive health is defined as more than the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity, it also includes the ability to have healthy relationships, and experience safe and pleasurable sexual experiences free from coercion and violence.

Women's Health West has developed a sexual and reproductive health framework for the western region (see page 18) that defines the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health as gender norms, poverty and socio economic status, violence and discrimination, public policy and the law, cultural differences, and access to culturally appropriate health services.

Women's sexual and reproductive health is affected by gendered differences in access to power, resources and responsibilities.

For example:

- Women spend almost triple the amount of hours per week caring for children when compared with men
- Women earn 17.2 percent less than men annually or 83 cents in every dollar that men earn

leaving them vulnerable to poverty in their later years

- Intimate partner violence is the leading contributor of death, disability and illness for Victorian women aged 15-44

So how would improving these conditions improve women's sexual and reproductive health?

If women are well informed, well respected, well paid, have access to resources and services, and are free from violence and discrimination, they will have greater control over sexual and reproductive decision-making, which in turn provides greater control over other aspects of their lives.

This sexual and reproductive health edition of whw news outlines a sample of Women's Health West programs, projects and priorities that work toward our ultimate goal of equity and justice for women. Explicitly sexual and reproductive health-related articles are identified with this stamp:



ISSN # 1834-7096

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Editorial Policy: Contributions from readers are welcome. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of Women's Health West (WHW). All contributions are the responsibility of the individual authors. The final decision on inclusion lies with WHW and the editor. Content must be in keeping with WHW's vision and goals. Short items are preferred. Email contributions to info@whwest.org.au and include your name, email address and phone number. WHW reserves the right to edit any contribution.

Read this edition and archives of WHW News online at www.whwest.org.au/pubs/WHWnews.php

Edition 3 published: November 2011
Deadline for edition 1: 7 March 2012

BEHIND THE SCENES

Funding Announced for Our Community, Our Rights



ILLUSTRATION Isis & Pluto

Kirsten Campbell, Health Promotion Worker

On Friday 9 September 2011, Attorney-General Robert McClelland announced fifteen grants for community groups and non-government organisations to help improve human rights education across Australia. Women's Health West is pleased to announce that our project, *Our Community, Our Rights*, was among those chosen to be funded \$60 000 over three years. This will build on an existing grant from the Helen McPherson Smith Trust announced in the last edition of *whw news*.

Our Community, Our Rights seeks to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of South Sudanese women (in the first instance) to understand and take action on their human rights. By developing advocacy skills and capacity for civic engagement during a series of workshops, women will be supported to plan and implement their own projects on human rights topics relevant to their communities.

The funding enables the project to work with three different newly-arrived communities over three years, and to evaluate the process and impact of the project comprehensively. It also enables Women's Health West to develop resources based on the project, for use by communities and professionals.

Mr McClelland said the successful projects are innovative education programs that will raise human rights awareness across broad sections of the community. 'The centrepiece of Australia's human rights framework is human rights education, with a strong focus on community education. We must recognise that there is still more we can do to treat each other with dignity and respect - real and lasting change in attitudes requires community involvement. Better education is critical to protecting and promoting human rights in Australia. A stronger understanding of human rights is fundamental to maintaining a safe and tolerant nation.'

Our Community, Our Rights continues to be cultivated with input from an expert

advisory group comprising female leaders from Horn of African communities as well as representatives from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC), Moonee Valley City Council, the Department of Health and Youthlaw. It will be overseen by a project management group of WHW health promotion staff.

Further information about Australia's human rights framework education grants program, including a list of successful grants, is available at www.ag.gov.au/hrgrants. For further information about *Our Community, Our Rights* please contact Kirsten Campbell on 9689 9588 or kirsten@whwest.org.au

Australia's Human Rights Framework – Education Grants Program 2011-2012

The following examples show the breadth of variety in the fifteen projects allocated grants under Australia's Human Rights Framework – Education Grants Program:

Women's Health West

Human rights and advocacy training to women from newly-arrived communities to strengthen their capacity to exercise leadership and facilitate change.

Information on Disability & Education Awareness Services (IDEAS)

12-week course for Assyrian people with a disability and their associates to develop awareness raising, self-help and advocacy skills.

Wantok Musik Festival

Bringing together high profile Indigenous and non-Indigenous musicians to produce a song and music video to educate the Australian public about responsibilities under the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Victoria's Human Rights Charter Under Threat

These grants are timely given proposals in Victoria to weaken our human rights. As you might remember from our last edition, WHW and the Western Region Health Centre coordinated a region-wide submission into the review of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities earlier this year. Following receipt of submissions, the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee tabled its review of the charter in Victorian Parliament in mid-September. While the committee recommended against repealing the charter, it has also recommended substantially reducing or eliminating the role of courts in enforcing human rights and providing remedies when they are breached, as well as reducing or eliminating the obligation of government departments and the public service to comply with human rights.

If their recommendations are accepted, Victoria will become the first state to substantially weaken the legal protection of human rights. These recommendations do not reflect the evidence of the value and benefits of the charter outlined in our joint submission. While the review could have been used as an opportunity to strengthen the human rights of Victorians, such as by amending the charter to enshrine the rights to adequate housing, health care and freedom from violence, it has chosen the opposite path. The Victorian government has six months to respond to the report, which is available at: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/sarc/article/1446>. WHW's submission is available on our website at www.whwest.org.au. We urge our members to contact their local member of parliament to oppose the undermining of our human rights.

sexual & reproductive health EDITION

SEXUALITY, GENDER, RIGHTS, REPRODUCTION. TWO CITIES – WORLDS APART

Catherine Bateman, WHW Board Director and Community Development Worker, YWCA Victoria

This year I was lucky enough to attend two of the most influential and exciting events of my life. The first was the Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA) at the Sexuality, Gender and Rights Institute held over nine days in June in Istanbul, Turkey. The second was the YWCA World Council, which consists of one day of Young Women's Leadership Dialogue, three days of the International Women's Summit and two days of World Council Business (like a massive four-yearly AGM with conference-style information sharing and discussion, as well as general business associated with amending the constitution and adopting resolutions).

CREA encourages women and girls to articulate, demand and access their human rights by enhancing women's leadership, strengthening civil society organisations, influencing social movements and creating networks for social change. A global feminist organisation based in India, CREA works to make human rights an effective tool for social change and to integrate human rights mechanisms, awareness, and principles into the fabric of the society. The yearly Sexuality, Gender and Rights Institute brings thirty activists, academics, altruists and program coordinators together with a faculty of over ten of the best minds in sexuality theory, human rights, feminism and representation from around the world.

The institute is intense.

Classes are held from 9am to 9pm (sometimes later) with required readings every day. A standard feature of the event involved exhausted participants sprawled all over the restaurant at breakfast, consuming vast quantities of coffee while trying to cram another thirty page article about subaltern sexualities¹ or the African Queer Manifesto into over-stretched and under-slept brains. Another regular feature involved late

¹ 'Subaltern' refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion...[with a] focus on non-elites — subalterns — as agents of political and social change.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subaltern_Studies



Delegates from Iceland, USA and Australia at the Young Women's Leadership Dialogue. Cath Bateman, far right.

nights spent debating the depiction of disability and sexuality in the media and the extent to which the human rights model can facilitate social change in countries with no human rights agenda.

From Istanbul I went almost directly to Zurich for the YWCA World Council. The World YWCA develops women's leadership to find local solutions to the global inequalities women face. Each year, it reaches more than 25 million women and girls through work in 22,000 communities. This grassroots development experience shapes the organisation's global advocacy agenda. YWCA work is inspired by Christian principles and a commitment to women's full and equal participation in society. It

is a volunteer membership movement, inclusive of women from many faiths, backgrounds and cultures. The focus of the 2011 World Council was Women Creating a Safe World primarily through the key priority areas of:

- Sexual and reproductive health, rights, HIV and AIDS
- Violence against women, women's human rights
- Peace with justice
- Economic empowerment and environmental sustainability

In some respects the World YWCA movement is incredibly progressive. It is one of the only large-scale international



Participants at the YWCA Australia breakout session on respectful relationship programming

organisations that routinely and defiantly makes a space at the table for women living with HIV. It is also outspoken on gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights. But there are also many people missing from the process. Women with disabilities were notably absent; people with diverse sexualities were not only absent but occasionally actively excluded for various and complex reasons however there is strong but quiet support from the top to change this and include queer women more actively within the movement.

World Council reminded me yet again that we are incredibly lucky here in Australia where organisations like Women's Health West are leading the way in securing and maintaining our sexual and reproductive health and rights. I see the same focus on securing a voice for minorities here at WHW and the same commitment to concerted and ongoing advocacy and program delivery in this area. But World Council also reminded me that we are not so different around the world. The YWCA of Haiti uses similar techniques to connect and communicate with young women as I do in my own program here in Melbourne. YWCA of Aoteroa New Zealand is working hard to establish strong and meaningful links with Mauri partnerships and YWCA Hong Kong has a strong focus on the provision of quality services to migrant women and families.

I look forward to ongoing partnerships with CREA and the World YWCA Movement and can't wait for World Council 2015 in Thailand!

If you're interested in reading more about CREA, my experiences at the Institute, World YWCA, YWCA Victoria and World Council check out some of the following websites for blogs, information and articles.

- www.creaworld.org
- www.worldywca.org
- www.ywca.net
- www.feminaust.org
- www.ywca.org.au



Cath and World YWCA General Secretary, Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda



Young women preparing for the first plenary. MICHELLE BACHELET!

PHOTO S Cath Bateman

CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PROPOSED FAILURE TO PROTECT LAWS IN VICTORIA

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Alison Macdonald, Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic)

DV Vic, like many other specialist family violence services, has a special interest in ensuring that women and children experiencing family violence are adequately protected in all legal processes. Many women and children accessing services experience disadvantage, including women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disabilities, and women from rural and remote communities. It is our role to ensure they do not experience further disadvantage through the legal system.

Before the 2010 state election the then Victorian opposition announced its intention to introduce 'failure to protect' legislation, based on similar laws in Britain and the United States of America. The coalition government proposes creating two separate offences for adults who fail to take action when:

- They know or believe that a child they have custody or care of, or live in the same household as, is suffering sexual abuse or abuse that may result in serious injury or death, or
- They were living in the same household as a child who dies due to abuse, and the adult was aware of the abuse and its seriousness.

The government is contemplating penalties of up to five years' imprisonment for failing to protect a child from sexual abuse and violence that does not result in death, and up to 14 years' imprisonment for failing to protect a child who dies. Community agencies and peak bodies working in the family violence, child and family welfare, and community legal sectors agree that rates of child abuse are unacceptably high in Victoria and that more needs to be done to protect vulnerable children. However, DV Vic and its Victorian family violence justice reform campaign partners strongly oppose the introduction of 'failure to protect' laws, because:

- The Victorian government has not made a case for why it believes the proposed offences are necessary. Neither their 2010 media release nor their recent discussion paper give any

Victorian examples or statistics where 'failure to protect' legislation might help protect vulnerable children.

- The Victorian government has not produced evidence demonstrating that 'failure to protect' offences are effective in reducing levels of child abuse or numbers of child deaths, nor evidence that introducing such offences is likely to increase reporting of child abuse. We are concerned that 'failure to protect' legislation may actually discourage people living in households in which children are being abused from reporting that abuse. For example women with cognitive disabilities Aboriginal and CALD women regularly experience surveillance of their parenting abilities and can have good reason to be mistrustful of authorities.
- Research clearly demonstrates the co-occurrence of family violence and child abuse. Where there is abuse of children it is very likely that there will also be violence against the mother.¹ Of the 16 child deaths reviewed in the 2010 annual report of inquiries into the deaths of children known to child protection authorities, family violence was a factor in 10 cases (62 per cent). In 65 per cent of family violence incidents recorded by police in 1999-2000 and 2003-2004, at least one child was present.
- 'Failure to protect' laws can be unfairly detrimental to women experiencing family violence, who

have found themselves the target of offences in overseas jurisdictions even when they were not in a position to protect their child.

- The proposed legislation does not reflect the dynamics of households in which family violence is present, and the disproportionate impact of that violence on women. It creates an expectation that the only acceptable action for a woman experiencing violence is to leave the relationship to protect her child, without taking the complex barriers to reporting and leaving violent relationships into account. Violence commonly escalates at separation; a woman may be too frightened to leave the abuser; and she may not have the support, housing or income to do so. Women may also have justified concerns that post-separation child contact orders will grant access to abusive fathers.
- 'Failure to protect' laws have the potential to unintentionally cause more harm to children as they are inconsistent with best practice. 'Best practice' in child protection requires strengthening the mother-child relationship – working with non-abusive parents to support these relationships enhances the safety of vulnerable children and improves the child's wellbeing. Instead, governments should focus on greater investment in the services, systems and networks that support protective parents, including family counselling and encouragement to seek help.

¹ Family violence is a factor in 50-80 per cent of substantiated child protection cases in Victoria.

The proposed legislation does not reflect the dynamics of households in which family violence is present, and the disproportionate impact of that violence on women.

Some additional questions these proposed laws raise include:

- How will 'failure to protect' laws intersect with Federal family law? Women who ignore family court orders because of concerns about their child's risk of abuse find themselves in breach of those orders. Will parents be able to use 'failure to protect' laws as defence for breaches of family law orders?
- If a parent informs the police or child protection services about alleged child abuse and these agencies do not act, or actions they take place children at further risk, will these agencies/workers be charged under 'failure to protect' laws?

This article is based on a joint submission by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, Women's Legal Service Victoria, Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria, No To Violence, Women with Disabilities Victoria, and DV Vic. They are seeking endorsement of the submission as evidence of a groundswell of opposition to the laws across family violence and child and family welfare sectors. Women's Health West has endorsed the paper, as well as submitting our own responses to the Department of Justice consultation on the proposed law.

DV Vic will keep its members informed of progress of the proposed laws as further information becomes available. For further information please contact policy@dvvic.org.au. Copies of submissions can be found at www.whwest.org.au.



BECOMING FREE

Women's groups, peer support and family violence recovery



Colleen Adams, Djerriwarrh Health Services

Djerriwarrh Health Services (DjHS) has an ongoing commitment to providing support to women and children in the western metropolitan and southern Grampians regions of Victoria. We have run family violence prevention programs for over twenty years at locations in Melton and Bacchus Marsh, and since 2008 have also provided group programmes in Brimbank and Wyndham. We have developed specialist knowledge and experience to provide a safe, confidential environment for women and children who have experienced, or are experiencing, family violence. Women's Health West and DjHS have a significant relationship through cross referral and co joint work with women, as well as being partners in the Western Women and Children's Integrated Family Violence Services Partnership.



The weekly groups provide 'recovery' support for women on their journey away from family violence. Eligible participants have already dealt with the initial crisis of family violence and aim to rebuild their sense of self and achieve greater control over their life and future. We support this by offering participants social, emotional, and practical support and information to assist in their recovery.

Peer Educators and Peer Support Workers

All of our family violence prevention programs use a 'peer support' model as we find that peer educators are able to provide a unique role in counselling programs.

Our trained peer educators and volunteer peer support workers are mentors to clients given their shared experience both as clients of DjHS and as victims of family violence. Our men's behaviour change program uses the same model to provide peer support to people who have used violence and abuse against family members in the past. They have direct input into the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of services; they are living examples of hope for the future and possibility of change. Peer educators work in the groups as support facilitators and assist in individual assessments and reviews. Peer support workers provide long-term one-on-one support to women after the crisis is over.

Can I join?

We welcome all women and provide accessible and culturally appropriate services and programs to women from CALD communities and women

with disabilities. Recognising the difficulties that many women face in attending groups, we offer onsite, no cost childcare and, when necessary, provide transport for clients.

The process

After an initial assessment exploring group readiness and potential safety concerns, women are invited into the Becoming Free group.

1 The **Becoming Free** (educational) groups are closed groups that introduce women to family violence prevention principles and provide opportunities to honour the women's experiences.

2 The **Women's Support Groups** (therapeutic) are ongoing groups for women who have completed a Becoming Free group at DjHS or a women's family violence support group with another service. These groups provide a safe environment for women to check in and share their story, opportunities for women to build social networks to reduce the isolation that can result from abusive relationships and to re-build their self-esteem. The sessions are also information and activity based, with particular emphasis on availability and accessibility of local resources.

Groups are currently run at locations in Melton and Caroline Springs.

For further information on Djerriwarrh Health Services Family Violence Prevention Programs phone the duty worker on (03) 8746 1100

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

Western Integrated Family Violence Committee Chair

Jocelyn Bignold, Incoming Chair of the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee and CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women

It's an honour to be voted chair of the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee (WIFVC). On behalf of the committee I would like to thank the previous chair, Joan Eddy.

Elected as chair of the WIFVC at the beginning of the Victorian integrated family violence reforms in June 2006, Joan has worked tirelessly to assist the committee to develop an action plan and terms of reference, conduct reviews and develop reporting processes. The family violence regional integration coordinator supports the WIFVC to implement initiatives and share information at statewide, regional and sub-regional levels. During early vacancies in this position, Joan took on much of this work with the fantastic support of committee members.

The family violence reforms have substantially affected our work across the region by increasing collaboration in the sector through funded partnerships. The WIFVC chair has been an integral member of, first, the north west men's partnership, and now, the western integrated family violence women's and children's partnership. The whole of government response to family violence led to an increase in WIFVC membership to include Victoria Police, justice and local government. This collaborative and integrated approach is proving to be enormously effective. It also involves an enormous workload, which Joan has managed skilfully and diplomatically.

In addition to her tasks as chair, Joan took on a co-supervisory role of the regional integration coordinator in March 2009 to oversee the progress of the WIFVC action plan.

Joan was exceptional at representing and advocating the views of committee members and I will endeavour to do the same.



Joan Eddy

The committee recently developed a four year strategic action plan and we are pleased to see the Victorian government's recent endorsement of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children. As we know, one in three women are affected by family violence in Australia today. We have a great deal of work ahead of us and I look forward to meeting this challenge with the committee.

Joce Bignold



JOCELYN BIGNOLD has over 25 years experience in community development, policy development, management and advocacy. Jocelyn is the CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women, an organisation that provides support, advocacy and accommodation for women and their children who are experiencing homelessness, primarily as a result of family violence or mental illness.

In 2010 McAuley Community Services for Women joined the Western Integrated Family Violence Partnership, formally working with partner agencies led by Women's Health West to respond to violence against women and children. This includes participation in the 24-hour crisis service that responds to police referrals of women experiencing family violence over the weekend.



DANCE YOUR WAY TO EQUAL PAY!

Nicola Harte, Communications Coordinator

Equal Pay Day fell on Thursday 1 September this year because, on average, Victorian women would have to work 63 extra days after the end of financial year to earn the same as men.

Women's Health West alerted morning commuters with a 'flash mob' dance extravaganza at Footscray railway station. Given that women are paid an astonishing 17.2 per cent less than men, red-dressed dancers illustrated how much we are 'in the red'.

On average

The average weekly ordinary time earnings of females working full-time were \$1,139.80 per week or **\$237.50 per week less** than their male counterparts, who earned an average of \$1,377.30 per week in February 2011.

Or, looked at another way, the average 25 year old man will earn \$2.4 million over the next 40 years compared to \$1.5 million earned by the average woman. As a result, women are two and a half times more likely to live in poverty in their old age.

More specifically

Financial and insurance services had the highest gender pay gap (32.8 per

cent), followed by health care and social assistance (28.8 per cent), with the lowest gender pay gap in public administration and safety (8.1 per cent), retail trade (8.6 per cent) and transport, postal and warehousing (9.1 per cent).

What can we do?

We decided to stage a flash mob as a fun and unconventional way to highlight the very serious fact that 'women's work' – particularly in the social and community services sector – has always been undervalued and underpaid, leading to inequality, poor health outcomes, and vulnerability to violence in the home.

What about our sector?

Regular readers of *whw news* will be aware of the landmark pay equity case currently before Fair Work Australia (FWA). For those who've been too busy working to read the papers, FWA found that community sector workers, 87 per cent of them women, do not

receive equal pay and that gender is a significant cause of that pay gap.

At the time of writing Fair Work Australia were trying to reach an agreement on pay increases with the Federal Government, the State Governments of South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, Australian Business Industrial and Jobs Australia.

While the Federal government has committed to provide 'fair and appropriate' support to fund the gap, it is unclear what this will mean in real terms. The Victorian state government has officially committed to a dollar figure that is unlikely to adequately fund equal pay.

We do not want to face losing staff or cutting programs because the government has not committed to equitable funding that reflects job worth.

Neither do we want Fair Work Australia to award negligible rises out of fear that governments' lack of commitment to funding equal pay could lead to these outcomes.

If the government is serious about preventing violence and chronic disease,





here is one of the best investments they could make. Funding equal pay will improve the status and health outcomes of all women, reducing their vulnerability to violence, and the death, disability, depression and chronic disease that results.

We encourage you to contact your local state member of parliament and urge them to commit to funding this vital move toward improving the status and health outcomes of all women. You can also write to Premier Ted Baillieu directly via this link: <http://www.asuvic.asn.au/atlobby.cgi?ID=12>

The upcoming events section of www.payup.org.au/news/ lists details of the equal pay case decision.

Join the ASU if you haven't already, you'll receive regular updates about the case and strengthen the campaign with your voice! www.asuvic.asn.au/sacs_brochure_4pgs_1.pdf

The final full bench hearings are scheduled for 24–26 October 2011, which is while this newsletter is being printed, so check www.asumembers.org.au for the latest details.



PHOTOS Anne-Sophie Poirier

She works hard for... how much money, exactly?

The Federal Government has committed 'to provide fair and appropriate supplementation to help support any phased in pay increase FWA may award'.

The Victorian Government has committed \$200 million over four years to meet the cost of pay increases. It is generally agreed that this would be insufficient however Minister Wooldridge

has stated that 'if FWA determines that the figure should be higher than what this Government has made provision for, we will look at this decision at that time'.

The West Australian Government has provided \$600 million over four year for improvements in wages.

In 2009 the Queensland Government provided \$414 million over four years to meet the cost of equal pay in Queensland and was generally agreed to be insufficient.

The South Australian Government has agreed to supplement or index its grants to meet the cost of any pay increases awarded by FWA.

The only state to have not committed one dollar is NSW.

Taken from <http://www.asumembers.org.au/equalpay/1627-whats-happening-with-our-equal-pay-case-what-fwa-is-doing> (accessed 13 September 2011)



STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Robyn Gregory, CEO

Family violence and women's health services, along with other communities of interest across Victoria, are enthusiastically seeking to engage with the Victorian Government to develop a strategic framework for prevention of violence against women. This framework is likely to replace the previous government's ten year plan for prevention of violence against women, *A Right to Respect*, which complemented *A Right to Safety and Justice* – the state plan for responding to family violence after it occurred.

As part of the prevention plan, \$14 million was allocated to the primary prevention of violence against women in the 2010/2011 budget for the following projects:

- The Respectful Relationships Education in Schools demonstration project being trialled by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in partnership with CASA House.
- Work with a range of sporting codes to develop and implement respectful relationships education for players, particularly in male-dominated codes and sport clubs to build environments that are safe and inclusive for women, such as those developed by the Australian Football League.
- Engage and support local communities by appointing local champions and prevention ambassadors.
- Support workplaces in developing environments that are safe and inclusive of women and that encourage women's participation and leadership.
- Undertake information campaigns and other community awareness programs targeted especially at young people, recognising that attitudes and behaviours are formed at an early age.

As outlined in edition two of *whw news*, the Victorian government recently announced funding for primary prevention of violence against women local government cluster

projects, and Women's Health West are working closely with our local councils to implement this work.

Women's Health West, along with other women's health services, has a long history of contributing to the work of eliminating violence against women, including successfully advocating for and acting to improve the conditions that cause and maintain violence against women and their children. Prevention of violence against women is a health promotion priority for each women's health service and some services have complex prevention programs in place already. Women's Health West are in the unique position of incorporating a health promotion/prevention response with a family violence service response, allowing us to engage in strategies that support direct service delivery, advocacy, research and health promotion. Our experience has shown that this range of strategies is necessary if we are to stop violence against women.

Increased funding and the formation of regional partnerships to provide integrated family violence services over the last few years has led to an expansion and restructuring of service delivery, increasing efforts to improve the quality of care and support to women and children who have suffered as a result of living in violent relationships.

Despite the work that has been done to provide services and change laws, women continue to suffer high rates of violence because there has not been a change to the social, political, cultural and economic factors that play a large

part in causing and maintaining the conditions under which violence against women occurs. A framework for direct service delivery alone can contribute to family violence appearing an individual rather than a public issue, which can be at the expense of strategies to prevent violence against women. Similarly, simply amalgamating response and prevention activities is likely to lead to neither being carried out nor resourced effectively.

Through our work over some years, it has become increasingly clear that the skills required to prevent violence against women are different from those required to respond to family violence. Projects, by their nature, must be long term, build community partnerships, and draw on expertise in building the capacity of other organisations to plan, implement and evaluate effective programs for prevention. Having a separate, yet well-integrated, framework for response and prevention is paramount.

Clearly violence against women and children is a major public health and human services crisis, with significant health, welfare and housing sector resources directed towards responding to family violence. The increasing expertise available in regard to health promotion, supported by Primary Care Partnerships and organisational structures within the health, welfare and local government sectors, means that a clear strategic decision to broaden the response to violence against women is timely. We look forward to being actively involved in the development of a state-wide framework to do just that.



ILLUSTRATION Isis & Pluto

PREVENTING VIOLENCE TOGETHER – THE NEXT STEPS

Erin Richardson, Health Promotion Worker

In December 2010 Women’s Health West launched *Preventing Violence Together: the Western Region Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women*. Since the launch, Women’s Health West and our partner agencies have been busily working toward implementation to ensure that our plan becomes a reality. For example, on 9 August Women’s Health West, HealthWest Partnership and Inner North West Primary Care Partnership presented the Preventing Violence Against Women in Community Health Forum. Over forty community health workers, managers and executive officers attended this specialist forum to develop practical skills for implementing prevention of violence against women projects within their agencies.

The morning session featured an expert panel of speakers, including public health expert Professor Helen Keleher, Douatta Galla CEO Caz Healy, Western Region Health Centre CEO Lyn Morgain, and our very own CEO, Dr Robyn Gregory. Each panellist gave a short presentation on gender equity and work to prevent violence against women in the community and women’s health sector, before taking questions from participants during a lively Q and A session. Participants were keen to hear from panellists about the impact of the changed Victorian political climate, and how to overcome entrenched resistance to focusing on men’s violence against women.

In the afternoon WHW Health Promotion Workers Kirsten Campbell and Erin Richardson facilitated a capacity building session for community health workers. The training was specifically tailored for workers in community health agencies who are responsible for delivering projects to prevent violence against women. The training comprised a range of engaging practical activities designed to up-skill participants, including the fun but noisy ‘balloon popping’ exercise, in which participants literally burst the myths about violence against women, such as ‘If it was really that bad she would leave’.

Participant evaluation forms demonstrated overwhelming satisfaction with the forum. As one participant said, ‘[the training session] was a good opportunity to review my own knowledge and skill on family violence. The presenters in the afternoon were impressive – congratulations!’

Women’s Health West would like to thank our partners, Inner North West PCP and HealthWest Partnership for their generous support of the forum. We will run further events in 2012, so watch this space!

For more information about Preventing Violence Together: the Western Region Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women please contact Erin Richardson: erin@whwest.org.au or 9689 9588

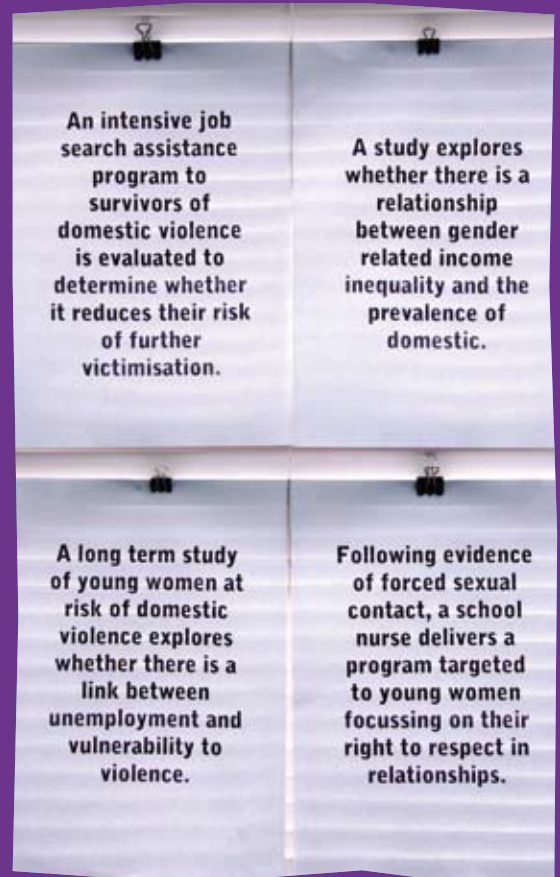
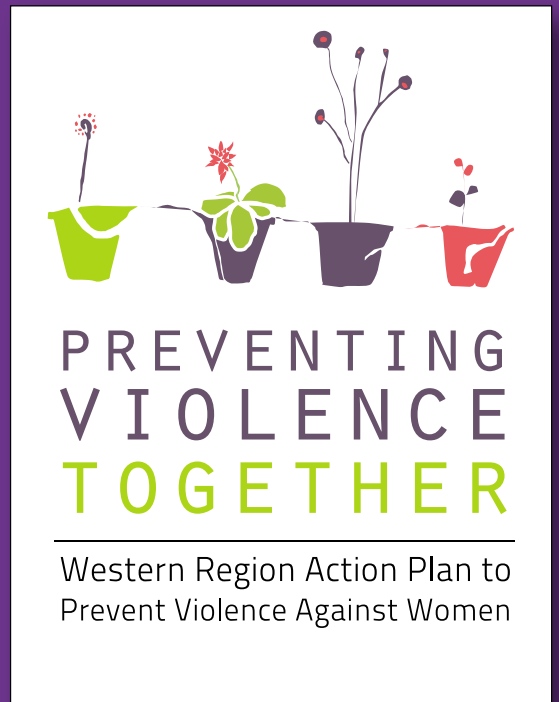


PHOTO Veronica Garcia

POWER ON MAKES ITS WAY TO QUEENSLAND

Sally Camilleri, Health Promotion Co-ordinator



About Power On

This 12 week program works with women who experience mental illness to enhance their wellbeing, to identify and deal with their health needs, and to gain support to do so from loved ones and service providers. We use a workshop style that actively engages women and encourages them to recognise their strengths and resilience.

Power On is underpinned by a feminist framework that uses a social model of health to redress structural inequality and build on women's expertise in their own healthcare. This model acknowledges the value of women sharing their experiences and expertise with one another.

Peer education is a crucial aspect of Power On. A peer educator is a woman who has experienced mental illness who generously shares her life experience and personal abilities with those who have had similar experiences in an effort to develop shared knowledge about enhancing wellbeing.

The Power On manual has fact sheets, session plans and activity plans for the twelve modules and is available to agencies who undertake training.

'I feel honoured to be associated with Power On, to finally have someone believe in me and that my life experiences can help others.'
Peer Facilitator, Brisbane

After eight years of facilitating the Power On program, Women's Health West (WHW) is keen to share our experiences and knowledge with other services. We were delighted when, almost twelve months ago, Queensland services contacted us to do just that.

Since then Footprints in North Brisbane, Family Services Group on the Gold Coast and WHW have planned, sought funding, teleconferenced and conducted interviews to identify appropriate staff. Then in July 2011, health promotion worker Sally Camilleri travelled to Brisbane to deliver five days of workshops with Queensland staff.

The first day nine staff and four women who experience mental illness trained to become facilitators. Participants brainstormed definitions of self esteem and ways to optimise it, observing role plays that demonstrated the difference between being assertive, passive and aggressive.

The peer facilitators were the focus of the next three days. In this smaller group, they explored their unique role and considered ways of taking care of themselves while they work with others facing similar challenges. They also learned facilitation skills and practiced them together.

On the fifth day of this very busy week, everyone came together again and explored the practicalities of implementing the Power On program in North Brisbane and on the Gold Coast.

The training ... brought home the importance of the way the program needs to be delivered rather than just the content. You need to experience the training to really soak in the intention of the program and we did this for a week.
Carolyn Perry, Mental Health Projects Manager, Footprints in Brisbane Inc.

The first Brisbane program is well underway and initial reports are extremely positive.

In Brisbane we are steaming ahead and noticing subtle changes in the women each week – mainly about ... becoming more able to accept themselves and be proud of their achievements.
Carolyn Perry, Mental Health Projects Manager, Footprints in Brisbane Inc.

The first program for the Gold Coast will run from February 2012.

Our service is excited about implementing the program. We are prepared to commit the resources and staff to properly implement the program on a continuing basis as from 2012.
Nikki Jones, Project Manager, enVision Programs, Family Services Group Gold Coast.

WHW have been able to continue the Power On program this year through a generous donation from the estate of Katherine Doyle. We continue to seek funding and partnerships to sustain the program in future years. In the meantime, Norwood Services in the outer west contracted us to work alongside their staff, who have been trained to facilitate Power On, to run a program in Cairnlea from August to October. Here is what our Peer Educator, Roslyn Beer, had to say about this work:

It has been a joy and a privilege to be involved in this program. The staff are putting so much energy into making this program the best it can be and it's paying off – I've just been blown away it's so good – women are making fantastic connections from week to week!



EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF SAME SEX AND GENDER QUESTIONING YOUNG PEOPLE IN MELBOURNE'S WESTERN SUBURBS



PHOTO Cath Bateman

Sarah Roberts, Health Promotion Worker, ISIS Primary Care

The western region sexual and reproductive health working group, led by Women's Health West, carried out a mapping and needs analysis that found that the service needs of same-sex attracted and gender questioning (SSAGQ) people are not being met. A recent WHW report on the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health (see page 18) further highlights how SSAGQ people's social environments impacts on their health.

SSSAGQ young people experience a number of issues that influence their health. This is highlighted in *Writing Themselves In 3*, the most recent national survey on the sexual health and wellbeing of SSAGQ young people. Key findings included:

- SSAGQ young people were sexually active earlier than their heterosexual peers
- 10 per cent of SSAGQ women aged 15-18 had been pregnant, twice the rate of their heterosexual peers
- 61 per cent of young people reported verbal abuse because of homophobia
- 69 per cent reported other forms of homophobia including exclusions and rumours
- Homophobic abuse was associated with feeling unsafe, excessive drug use, self harm and suicide

Although important research has been conducted nationally, there is limited local research about how these findings relate more specifically to SSAGQ young people in the west.

I was provided with many stories of homophobic experiences in Melbourne's west while gathering information to inform this research, including the lack of support and abuse experienced at some schools in the area. This information further highlighted the need for work to be done at a local level.

After consulting with key researchers and workers in the field, I gained ethics approval to conduct research involving an online forum hosted by the Minus18 website (www.minus18.org.au). The forum is open to SSAGQ people aged between 16-25 years who live, work, socialise or go to school in Melbourne's western suburbs. The

forum will be confidential and run for two weeks in mid October. The questions will be broad and relate to things like school, relationships and sexual health. Participants will also be asked what they think is required in the west to improve their life experiences.

The findings from this research will be used to inform programs and services offered in our region, contributing towards making the community a safer and more inclusive place regarding sexual diversity.

I am currently recruiting participants to take part in this forum so for further information please go to: <http://www.isispc.com.au/exploring/>

Or contact Sarah Roberts on:
Phone: 9313 5019
Email: sarah.roberts@isispc.com.au

SUNRISE GROUPS



ILLUSTRATION Sarah Marlowe

FOR WOMEN WITH A DISABILITY

SUNRISE GROUPS FOR WOMEN WITH A DISABILITY

What are they?

This is a social support program for women with a disability who reside in the outer west of Melbourne; two support groups meet monthly to provide fun, friendship and information relevant to women's health needs. Activities are identified by the women who participate in the program and have included self defence, talking about sexuality, jewellery making and picnic lunches. The name of the group, Sunrise, was also developed through discussion of what the group means to participants.

Why is social support important for women with a disability living in the outer west of Melbourne?

- The World Health Organisation states that, 'Being included in the society in which one lives is vital to the material, psychosocial and political empowerment that underpins social wellbeing and equitable health'.
- People who are socially isolated have between two and five times the risk of dying prematurely from all causes compared to those who maintain strong ties with family, friends and community.
- Our region scores lowest on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage and houses a higher than state average of women living with a disability.

- Globally, depression is one of the leading causes of disability, and has been nominated as the most prevalent and important women's health problem.

Where is it?

The Laverton group meets from 10.30am - 12.30pm on the first Friday of each month at the Laverton Community Centre and is designed for isolated women with a disability. The Wyndham group meets at the Iramoo Community Centre in Wyndham Vale on the last Friday of the month 12.30 - 2pm.

Who should I refer?

Anyone can refer a woman to the Sunrise women's groups if they think they can benefit from the program. Women can attend independently and attendant carer support is available if required. The only requirement for attendance at either program is that women need to identify as having any type of disability. All activities are free of charge and women can join at any time.

Sunrise factsheet for service providers

Our fact sheet titled 'working effectively with women with a range of disabilities' is available online and outlines some of the things we've learned over 20 years of running this group. Please check www.whwest.org.au

Lindy Corbett, Sunrise Women with a Disability Project Worker

Are you a service provider who has contact with women with a disability residing in the outer west?

Are you a:

- GP?
- Nurse?
- Community health worker?
- Teacher?

Then you might know someone who could benefit from the Sunrise program.

FUNDS FOR WHW

Women's Health West would like to extend our thanks for the following financial contributions from June to September 2011. We would also like to thank the Williamstown Lions Club for their generous donation of 25 pamper packs for women in crisis accommodation. These much-appreciated donations assist us to enhance our programs and services to women and children in the region.

Donations to WHW are tax deductible. To find out more about making a donation please call 03 9689 9588 or visit www.whwest.org.au/docs/donate.pdf

Debra Wannan, Finance Officer

	Name	Amount
Grants	Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Grant - Our Community Our Rights	\$20,000
	Australian Government Attorney-General's Department - Human Rights Education Fund Grant	\$60,000
Donations	Nicola Harte - Donation	\$50
	Grill'd Pty Ltd - Local Matters Program Donation	\$300
Court Funds	Magistrates' Court of Victoria - Diversion Plan Donation	\$200
	Magistrates' Court of Victoria - Sunshine Court Fund Donation	\$1,200
	Total	\$81,750

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership is free. To apply, fill in this form and mail to
Women's Health West: 317-319 Barkly Street, Footscray VIC 3011

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

Individual Voting Member
(woman who lives, works or studies in the western metro region)

NAME

Organisational Member
(organisation in, or whose client-base includes, the region)

ORGANISATION

CONTACT PERSON

(This person is also eligible to attend and vote at our Annual General Meeting)

POSITION

Associate Non-voting Member
(individual or organisation outside the region)

CONTACT DETAILS

ADDRESS

SUBURB POSTCODE

PHONE (W) PHONE (H)

(Individual members only)

EMAIL ADDRESS

SIGNATURE DATE

You are invited to the
women's **health west**

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 29 November 2011
4pm for 4.30pm start

Footscray Community Arts Centre
45 Moreland Street
FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011

Debate:

'It is impossible to prevent violence against women'

Sure we can work toward equity and justice for women in the west, but why waste our time trying to prevent violence against women - that's impossible! Isn't it?

Find out as four panellists explore the plausibility of prevention at this feisty feminist debate

Car

Melways Ref. 42E5 or 2SK9
Park either onsite or on the street
(bring coins for the meter)

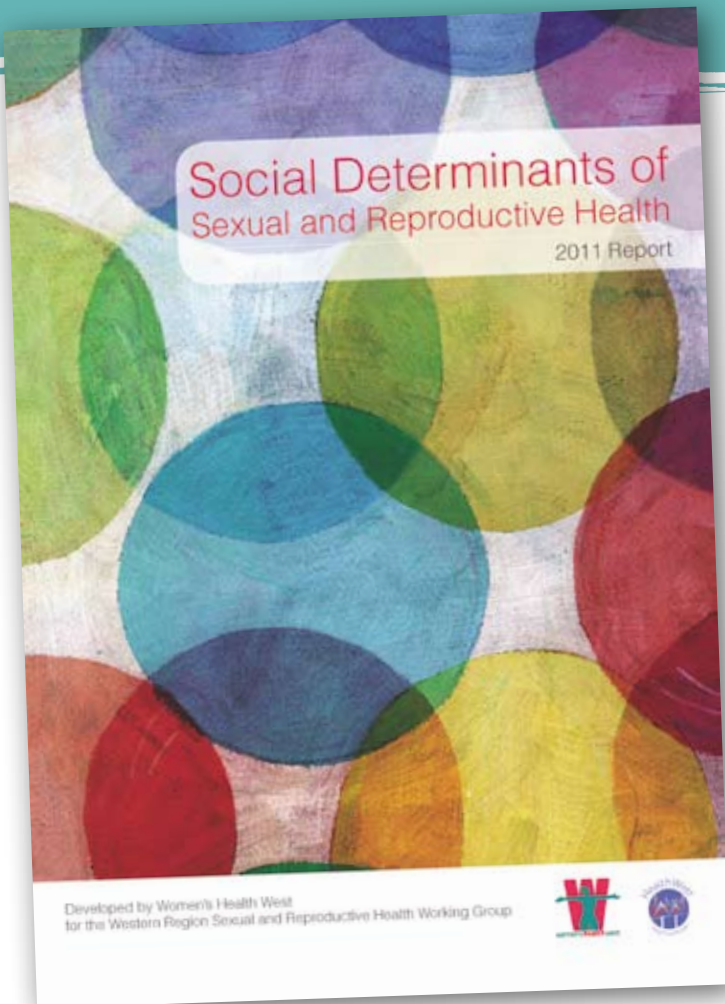
Train

Footscray Station then follow signs down Bunbury St

Bus

216 or 402 to corner Dynon Rd and Moreland St
219 or 220 to corner Footscray Rd and Whitehall St

RSVP: Tuesday 1 November 2011 on 9689 9588
or events@whwest.org.au



FEATURED PUBLICATION

Elly Taylor, Health Promotion Worker

Women's Health West's *Social Determinants of Sexual and Reproductive Health, 2011 Report* examines the social drivers of sexual and reproductive health, and the complex ways in which they influence and exacerbate health inequities. The report outlines the importance of working to redress the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between population groups.

The report includes a sexual and reproductive health promotion framework, which provides an overarching conceptual guide to evidence-based sexual and reproductive health promotion action. The framework will guide the development of a regional action plan that aims to optimise the sexual and reproductive health of communities living in Melbourne's western region.

The report is designed for other health practitioners with an interest in sexual and reproductive health promotion and is available at www.whwest.org.au

For further information please contact Elly Taylor at elly@whwest.org.au

ORDER FORM

Women's Health West Publications

This form may be used as a Tax Invoice for GST purposes

Order Form – Tax Invoice

ABN 24 036 234 159

Lead on Again

\$30.00

Description	Qty
A leadership program for young women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (2006)	
TOTAL	

Order by mail Information Worker
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317 – 319 Barkly Street FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011

Order by fax 03 9689 3861

Order by email veronica@whwest.org.au

Order by phone 03 9689 9588

Payment Please send payment with your order or we can invoice you. Cheques payable to: **Women's Health West**

DELIVERY DETAILS

Name:

Organisation:

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Postcode:

Phone:

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A range of brochures and fact sheets are available from our web site www.whwest.org.au

NEWSLETTER SURVEY

My favourite part of this newsletter was:

The part I liked least was:

You should include more articles about:

Overall, in terms of clear language, reporting of Women's Health West activities and projects, design, feminist analysis of current issues and interest and relevance of articles, I rate this newsletter out of ten.

Warm regards,

Your name

Your email address

EVENTS + NOTICES



EVER WANTED TO RUN AWAY TO THE CIRCUS?

Each January, the Women's Circus has an intake of new members - called 'New Women'. Women of all ages, sizes, and levels of fitness have 'run away to join the circus'.

New Women Program Juggle, stretch, try the trapeze, build a human pyramid!

Participants in the new women's program undertake a tailored program that ensures new members feel welcome and safe, learn to work in a group, build trust with their own body and others, grow in physical confidence and strength, explore responsible risk-taking and understand the philosophy of a community circus.

There are no prerequisites to take part in the program and for the last few years **all women** on the waiting list have joined the training program.

To register for the 2012 New Women's Program, send your name, address and phone number to info@womenscircus.org.au or visit www.womenscircus.org.au



24th Midsumma Festival - Melbourne's gay and lesbian festival

15 January – 5 February 2012

Melbourne's annual festival celebrating queer culture will again bring queer life to the city in 2012, opening with the Midsumma Carnival on the banks of the Yarra at Birrarung Marr on 15 January 2012.

www.midsumma.org.au



17th Annual Pride March Victoria

**Sunday 5 February 2012
Albert Park – Fitzroy Street and Lakeside Drive**

Pride March is a public march down Fitzroy Street, St Kilda to celebrate the courage, solidarity, pride, diversity and strong sense of community of Victoria's gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex and transgender people.

www.pridemarch.com.au

International Women's Day Thursday 8th March 2012

International Women's Day is a major day of global celebration for the political and social achievements of women.

The first IWD was held on 19 March 1911 when over a million European women united, calling for the right of women to vote, work and hold public office. The rally was motivated by a protest held in New York in 1908, organised by the Women's Social and Political Union to rebel against poor working conditions and child labour. The women wore green (hope and new life), violet (dignity and self respect) and white (purity). In 1910 an international conference of women voted to hold an annual International Women's Day.

For events in your area closer to the date see www.women.vic.gov.au

Women Only Swimming Every second Sunday 8pm-10pm

Female-only lifeguards
All women welcome
Boys under 6 welcome

Phone: 9375 3411 Cnr Langs and Epsom Roads, Ascot Vale

www.ascotvale.ymca.org.au



women's health west

WHW Annual General Meeting

**Save this date: Tuesday
29 November 2011**

4pm for 4.30pm start

Footscray Community Arts Centre, 45 Moreland Street, Footscray 3011

Come for an evening feast of thought-provoking speakers debating the theme, **It's impossible to prevent violence against women**. The feminist debate promises to challenge ideas and initiate discussion around violence prevention.

www.whwest.org.au

Our Community Our Rights

Our Community, Our Rights offers practical training for young South Sudanese women on human rights, making change, and Australian democracy. It will be fun, interactive and enable you to make change in your world.

It's run by WHW and will include a series of training workshops based on consultations with South Sudanese women in the west. To find out more, please contact Kirsten Campbell, kirsten@whwest.org.au 96899588.

www.whwest.org.au

WHITE RIBBON DAY EVENTS

Friday 25 November 2011

Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge not to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and children. The White Ribbon Foundation of Australia aims to eliminate violence against women by promoting culture-change.

www.whiteribbonday.org.au



Not 1 More, Remembering Victims of Family Violence Event

Federation Square

60 women and 20 children are killed each year in Australia in incidents of family violence homicide. Nearly every week a woman is killed and many more are physically or emotionally abused. Not 1 More is a public event to

raise awareness about family violence and to remember all those women and children who have been killed.

White Ribbon Lunch 12pm - 2:30pm

Melbourne Town Hall

An official lunch hosted by White Ribbon Chairman Andrew O'Keefe and Melbourne Lord Mayor, Robert Doyle.

For more information contact Wendy.Sturgess@whiteribbon.org.au

Walk Against Family Violence

2:30pm - 3pm

Join support services, sports stars, celebrities and Victoria Police in their annual Walk Against Family Violence from Melbourne Town Hall through the courts district to Federation Square.

For more information email Gaewynne.old@aus.salvationarmy.org



Not1More 3 - 6pm

Federation Square

Features performances from leading Indigenous musicians

For more information email wstracke@asuvictas.com.au

BRAVE 6 - 10pm Transport Bar - Federation Square

Bands Rock Against Violence Events

For more information email tessajetson@yahoo.com



Flash mob dancers for equal pay for women at the Footscray rail station.
Picture: MITCH BEAR N10WT207

Pay gap is just not flash

Equal pay | Sarah Anderson

FOOTSCRAY station was treated to a flash mob dance extravaganza on Equal Pay Day.

Last Thursday morning, about 40 women dressed in red graced the station with a choreographed dance to highlight pay inequality.

The *Dance your way to equal pay* event, to the tune of Donna Summers's *She Works Hard for the Money*, was organised by Women's

Dancers make an equal wage point

Health West. Chief executive Dr Robyn Gregory said it was "a fun and unconventional way to highlight the very serious fact that 'women's work' - particularly in the social and community services sector - has always been undervalued and underpaid, leading to


inequality, poor health outcomes, and vulnerability to violence in the home".

She said women were paid 17.2 per cent less than men though 87 per cent of single parent families with children under 15 were headed by women.

Dr Gregory said family violence was the leading contributor to death, illness and disability for women under 45 but "for women to have options to leave a violent

home, there has to be economic stability".

"If the Government is serious about preventing violence and chronic disease, here is one of the best investments they could make. Funding equal pay will improve the status and health outcomes of all women," Dr Gregory said.

 To see the video go to maribyrnongleader.com.au



Women's Health West
317-319 Barkly Street
Footscray 3011

PHONE 9689 9588

FAX 9689 3861

EMAIL info@whwest.org.au

WEBSITE www.whwest.org.au