

The Advocate

Welcome

It's now been over a year since the February 2011 earthquake which took many people's lives and changed the lives of everyone else in Canterbury, to one degree or another. Although a whole year has passed, the memories and fear are still very real and raw for many of us, such is the nature of a deeply personal trauma. As a specialist family violence agency, and one which hosts two earthquake support co-ordinators for the city, we are all too aware of how people and communities are faring, and many are not doing so well.

The communities we work with have changed irrevocably and it's time for some new thinking about how we can also change in order to genuinely

and effectively benefit people. This is partly why Christchurch Women's Refuge's new strategy - announced last November - supports a number of new initiatives. We've already started work on turning these ideas into reality through projects such as Specialist Peer Support and community outreach services for men - we'll tell you more inside. We also remain busy responding to the dramatic increase in demand for many of our core services, so 2012 will be a very busy year for us at Christchurch Women's Refuge.

Sometimes it seems a bit daunting, but with our committed team and the wonderful, growing support we are experiencing from the community, we're confident that, with a combined effort, we will continue to make a difference for families affected by violence. We're enormously grateful that you have chosen to be part of this journey with us.



Nicola Woodward
CEO

Specialist Peer Support Becoming a Reality

Phase One of Christchurch Women's Refuge's new Specialist Peer Support service - generously funded by Pub Charity - is now complete and has received a great deal of support from everyone involved. Specialist Peer Support will be a service offered by men and women who have overcome family violence to those needing support to begin or continue their own journey away from violence.

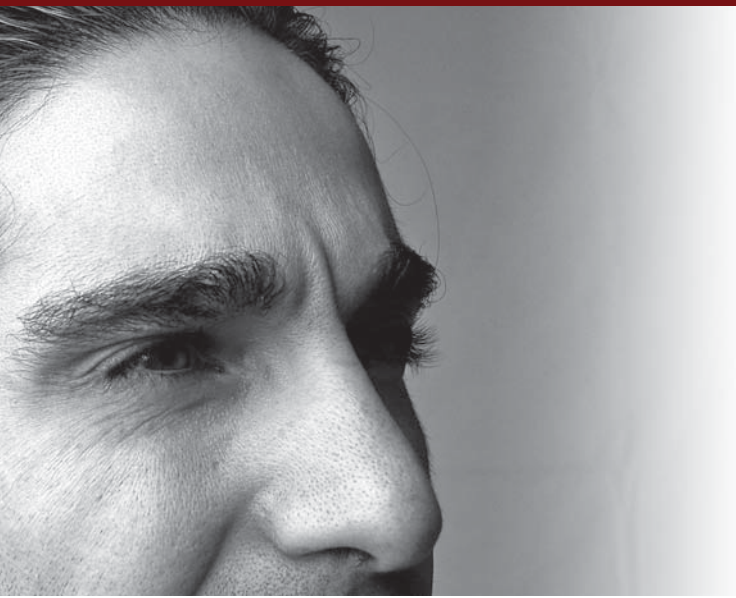
In the last six months an extensive literature review has been completed, in-depth interviews with professionals in the family violence sector undertaken, and focus groups with women and men who have overcome family violence completed. These conversations have been invaluable in bringing to life all the findings that the research had highlighted, and will actively inform the development of the service.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, especially from those who have already overcome family violence. The men and women

who participated in focus groups noted the project benefits would include providing Peer Support Specialists an opportunity to give back the support they themselves had received; breaking down the often significant barriers of shame and fear; honouring people's individual decisions while still giving them support (e.g. if a woman isn't ready to leave a violent relationship); creating a new way to reflect and respect diversity within the community; and offering an opportunity for a co-gendered approach to family violence prevention (something both men and women strongly supported).



The final report of this phase of the project will become available in April. Work now begins on the next phase - developing the model of service for both women and for men and recruiting and training the first Peer Support Specialists.



“I don’t want to be where I am. I want to go to a better place. I don’t want others to follow me.”

A man with lived experience of family violence.

Exotic Indulgence – Available in Addington!

Join us for an exotic fashion and travel fundraiser on 28 March at the Westpac Hub.



World-champion triathlete Erin Baker will introduce an exclusive evening that offers a wonderful opportunity to treat yourself, friends or host corporate clients. Fashion will be forefront, with Jane Daniels previewing her winter collection, inspired by her travels in India.

There will be a charity auction with indulgent items including a \$2,500 holiday in India from Innovative Travel; a Wearable Arts Awards package from Westpac; premium accommodation at The George Hotel; a signed copy of MasterChef’s Jax Hamilton’s new

cook book; aged whisky from Whisky Galore and a signed Canterbury Rugby jersey!

Tickets are available from mike_button@westpac.co.nz at \$75 each and you can secure a table of 10 for clients/colleagues/friends for \$750. Wine, canapés, gift bags and live entertainment by Mandy Pickering are all included! More details online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

North Canterbury to Pilot New Men’s Community Outreach Service

Christchurch Women’s Refuge has secured funding to undertake an innovative, new community outreach service for men who have committed, or are considered likely to commit, family violence. The 12-month pilot project, developed in conjunction with North Canterbury Police; Relationship Services; He Waka Tapu; Battered Women’s Trust and Waimakariri District Council, will establish new Family Support Worker roles to contact men named on Police reports of family violence. These workers will proactively engage with men who perpetrate family violence to initiate a process that aims to reduce risk for women and children while offering men the opportunity and support to begin their own journey of recovery.

This initiative has the strong support of North Canterbury Police because their own experience is that, almost without exception, men involved in family violence incidents express a need for support and advice. The Family Support Workers will provide men accused of violence with an opportunity to talk through their own concerns; help them to understand the process that might unfold (such as the implications of being named on a Protection Order); encourage and support them to reflect on and address their behaviour; and offer options for on-going guidance and assistance to overcome family violence and develop healthier relationships.

The potential benefits of the project are huge – reduction of repeat instances of family violence; women and children becoming safer, with less need to seek increasingly scarce alternative accommodation in order to move away from violence; men initiating a process of self-examination and/or change that benefits themselves and those living with their violence; increased whole of family wellbeing; a reduction in the social impact of family violence outside the home; and easing the use of Police resources to deal with repeat incidents of family violence.

The pilot service is the first of its kind in New Zealand and evaluation of its success will be used to inform the possible development of similar services across the region.

Did you know ...

that you can donate online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Check out our ‘Support the Refuge’ section to see how!

Homelessness or Violence – A New Choice for the ‘New Normal’

It's now a year on from the devastating earthquake of February 2011. On the surface life may appear to be recovering, especially in the least physically affected suburbs, but the effects of the earthquakes are long-term and devastating for those who have been worst affected. Jobs have been lost, schools closed, homes ruined and financial burdens cause sometimes unbearable strain. **‘Your house is your castle’ no longer applies in Canterbury, where a housing crisis with major long-term social implications is rapidly growing.**

One of the biggest challenges is affordable rental housing, which is in desperately short supply in Canterbury. For those with limited means, there is little chance of affording alternative accommodation and that certainly applies to many women living with family violence. The practicality of moving out of your house is very complicated and isn't lessened just because you are concerned for your safety, or that of your children.

Consider what you would do if you had to leave home long-term, perhaps with little preparation. Where would you go to find a new home? Could you afford to rent a house on your own? What if you still had to pay part of a mortgage or were liable for rent for the previous property? How would you furnish a new property? And what if you had to do all that on one income, or even a benefit, while also trying to leave an abusive relationship behind?



This overwhelming reality is why more and more women living with family violence are reluctant to come into a Safe House – they know there is nowhere to go but home after they leave. Motels are solidly booked, rents have dramatically increased, landlords have become more discriminating about allowing pets – and even children – into their properties, and even those with some financial means are struggling to find rental accommodation.

Women and children living with family violence have an added level of vulnerability in this most daunting of times in Canterbury. Christchurch Women's Refuge has highlighted the issue with the Canterbury Earthquake Temporary Accommodation Service, who are looking into ways to make short-term accommodation available for families affected by family violence. Meanwhile, we at Christchurch Women's Refuge are pursuing options to fund a Home Refuge project, which will make existing homes of women and children living with family violence safer from re-entry by perpetrators of violence. This means that women and children can remain in their current family home, safely. If you want to join us in making women and children safer please support the Home Refuge project by donating online, or using the donation slip in this newsletter.

Thanks to our Supporters

A special thank you to everyone who generously donated Christmas gifts and food parcels to brighten up Christmas for the families who use our services. We were inundated with food and presents and it was an absolute joy for us to pass them on, on your behalf.

Support from the local community means a great deal to vulnerable families and we sincerely thank all of the individuals, schools and preschools, community and church groups and businesses who made last Christmas all about giving.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Canterbury Social Support Fund – for supporting the rural men's outreach project

The Todd Foundation – for supporting the rural men's outreach project

Air Rescue Services – for supporting crisis services

Mainland Foundation – for covering essential office overheads

Southern Trust – for contributing to wages for clinical staff

Christchurch Casinos Charitable Trust – for supporting crisis services

Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Trust – for supporting increased post-earthquake demand

First Direct – for sponsorship of some recurring Safe House expenses
‘The Eastern’ band – for donating proceeds from their CD sale
Urbis magazine – for running a special fundraising fashion auction
The Jones Foundation, Aotea Electrical and Inner Wheel Club of Riccarton – for generous Christmas donations.

Like us on Facebook



Christchurch Women's Refuge has a Facebook presence! Check us out and 'Like' us to keep up to date on what we are doing and to share your thoughts with us.

Tax Time – a Great Time to Give!

The end of the financial year will soon be upon us and it brings good news for those who have made – and companies who still want to make – charitable donations. For companies, charitable donations can be claimed as a deduction. This reduces the amount of the company's taxable income and thus its income tax.

If your business would like to make a donation to Christchurch Women's Refuge you can use the donation slip in this newsletter, or donate online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz. You can make a general donation, or donate to a certain project such as the Home Refuge Project; Peer Support; or Men's Outreach Project.

For those of you who support us with automatic payments throughout the year, a tax receipt will be posted to you by mid-April. You can use to claim a 33.3% tax refund for yourself, or gift this back to charity.



Annual Appeal Week 16 – 22 July

Like Groundhog Day, the annual appeal comes around yet again! You, our wonderful supporters, helped our 2011 appeal surpass our previous best result and in 2012 we want your help to do even better!

You might like to think about undertaking your own fundraising activity for Christchurch Women's Refuge and, of course, we need collectors for our street appeal on Friday 20 and Saturday 21 July.

This year we hope to collect in Christchurch, Kaiapoi, Rolleston, Rangiora and Amberley. If you, your staff, colleagues, friends or families can spare just two hours on one of those days, we'd love to have you join us.

It costs over \$1,000,000 each year to sustain our current core services for women and children in Canterbury, so every bit of support helps. You can find appeal collector applications on our website (www.womensrefuge.co.nz). Remember, it may be cold outside in July, but by collecting change that creates change, you'll get a nice, warm feeling inside!

“You can't turn to anyone, even yourself, because you've lost yourself.”

A survivor, on how it feels to live with family violence.

Receive *The Advocate* by Email

Please help us reduce costs by choosing to receive *The Advocate* by email. Contact julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or call (03) 353 7400



Join the journey to a violence free society

Charities Commission Number CC 30026

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please add me to the email distribution list.

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 7400 or at julie@womensrefuge.co.nz. You can donate online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Thank you! We will send you a receipt