

Transform!

R.A.A.S.C. Rape and Abuse Support Centre Southland Inc. Newsletter

Kia ora, Talofa, and Greetings from the Staff and Volunteers of RAASC! We are pleased to welcome you to the summer edition of Transform - RAASC's quarterly newsletter for 2013. In this edition we will let you know what we're up to, including: **What's happening in the sector? What's happening in the community? What's happening in-house?**

Update, Thank you to all who attended the public meeting and workshops about the SOCIAL SERVICE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY reviewing the state of specialist services and determining integrated service delivery demands and funding to support best practice. It is now looking as though the review will continue into the New Years - and we are waiting to hear the outcome of the request to have face to face meetings with the committee.

Certainly, the public ROAR with the Roast Busters, which saw over 110,000 people sign petitions, and numerous protests about the lack of police action for this group - has highlighted the need for more robust services in sexual violence prevention and intervention. The Roast Buster group purportedly would plan and boast about their group sex exploits online. Allegedly, the young men sought to intoxicate underage girls in order to gang rape them, later using social media such as [Facebook](#), [Ask.fm](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#) to name and shame their victims and brag about their group sex exploits. The timing of this outcry, alongside the current Select Committee Enquiry, might indeed see some long awaited movement in this specialist support sector.

The **Annual General Meeting** was held on the 26th November 2013 due to auditing delays. The Board Chair, Roger Ngahooro submitted his resignation after a two year tenure. It was a sad moment, but we are very grateful for the leadership and support that has been provided by the Board Chair over the last two years, in helping to move RAASC through significant restructure, development and growth to gain more stability within the sector. Roger gave 3 months notice, and this will come into effect in March 2014. Therefore, the Board have set about to recruit members, and extend the numbers of those overseeing governance in the New Year. If you are interested in being involved - please contact the centre, and ask to speak with the Manager who can forward more information.

Lastly, it is with sadness that we farewell Aroha Mitchell, who is moving on to a new role at Nga Kete Matauranga Pounamu Charitable Trust in a new role as Tai Tamariki Social Worker. Two years ago Aroha came to us fresh out of study with Southern Institute of Technology, taking on the challenge of Whanau Support Worker. Aroha then moved onto the Intake Support Worker role and has just completed her first social work placement with us. Our team is came together as a fresh new team, and has worked hard to provide a more integrated specialist service for the Southland community. We thank Aroha for her contributions to the service growth and delivery over the last two years, and the wish her well for the next part of her journey. Arohanui, la manuia tele le lumana'!.



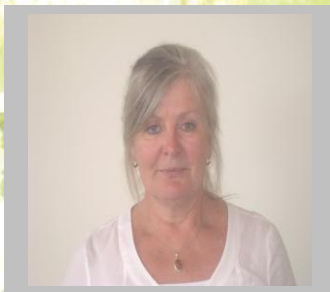
RAASC (Rape and Abuse Support Centre Southland Inc) is a non discriminatory, non judgemental, confidential and free service, offering support, counselling, information, advice and education to survivors of rape and sexual violence.

Vision: The elimination of all forms of rape and sexual violence against children, young people, women and men, and society.

Mission: To promote the sexual safety and well being of children, young people, women and men, through advocacy, education, counselling, information, advice and support



Susana Lepoamo, Centre Manager



Penny Bray, Counsellor ACC, MNZAC, DAPAANZ

The counselling service saw twice as many people accessing the service in the last quarter as last year. The inclusion of ACC counsellors working collaboratively at the centre has been one of the reasons for the increase, along with a growing awareness of support and services available at RAASC.

The staff do incredibly well to continue to meet the increased demand, and as yet, the wait listing has been manageable. Due to the need for more space, due in part to the busyness of the centre, Stephen Thompson has relocated to another office space in Gala Street. We are hopefully that we will be able to extend our space in the New Year, and host all 3 counsellors in the same space.

Counselling service is available 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday. Stephen works every second week, but will be increasing his days to 7/10 per fortnight in the New Year.

Stephen Thompson, BA, Med (Couns), PGDip (Couns) MNZPsS. Stephen is working with ACC clients at RAASC but is also available for Family and Couple counselling.

You are able to contact him on

03 4731157 - 027433137 / stcounsellor@gmail.com

Rochelle Nebbs, Registered Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist, **working** with children and young people up to the age of 17 years.

Farewell to Sonia Pera, In-house Maori

Counsellor RAASC was sad to see the departure of Sonia Pera on board as a part-time in-house counsellor for 6 months. Sonia has moved onto work as a Functional Family Therapist in Southland, for Youth Horizons Trust. It is a great opportunity to do some integrated family/whanau work with rangatahi who face challenges within their family and community. We wish Sonia well in her future endeavour.

COUNSELLING SERVICE

As the end of the year draws near I would like to take this opportunity to wish all clients of RAASC a safe and peaceful holiday season.

The year has been a very busy one for all staff at RAASC and this has helped make it feel as if it has been short; even though we all know a year is twelve months and that is a sure thing. Other than twelve months equal a year; a lot of other things about life are uncertain and unpredictable.

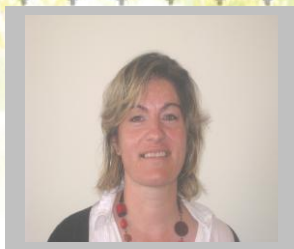
My work is as varied as the clients accessing the service. Each person brings their own unique story and much of the work is very humbling. I am often held in awe of the strength of the individual when given the right support to move on with life; after sexual violation has occurred.

When asked in a social arena what my job is some people respond with the statement, "that must be a difficult job". Yes we are in the job of having difficult conversations, however those conversations enable a person to speak, to break what can be a very long silence and regain power over their life and not remain influenced by the power of a perpetrator; even when that perpetrator is deceased.

Speaking out in a public arena is also part of the role. I have had the opportunity to deliver some public education sessions throughout the year. Sharleen Carran and I spoke with the Sexual Health Team, an arm of Public Health South. Members of the Mental Health and Addictions Team (DAAS) visited RAASC as part of our inter-agency networking practice. Most recently Stephen Thompson and I spoke to group of family members and professionals from Supporting Families, about what we do and the services we provide. Stephen and I have ACC Accreditation and work in collaboration with RAASC to provide a wrap-around-service which includes information and assistance with the ACC Sensitive Claims Pathway.

The New Year will see changes to the ACC pathway and provision of service. As yet the new model of care and those contracted to provide the service are to be decided via a tendering for contract process. It appears that individual practitioners will still be able to continue in the role as an independent person in private practice; however ACC is making a move toward the one-stop-shop model of service that are common place and a sign of the times.

That may be the new look for the New Year for RAASC. Nothing certain, the only other thing I know for certain today is Christmas is the 25th of December and we are nearly there. My wish for all, peace, good eats and share the day with those you love. Penny



Whanau and Crisis Support Work

Sharleen Carran, Support Worker, DipBSTheol

I am currently providing crisis support work services at the centre alongside advocacy and emotional support for those who have experienced recent sexual violence/trauma. There has been a reduction in Victim Support funding which has seen long-time Victim Support Invercargill Coordinator, Rachel Kooman's role become even more demanding without the extra hours. Victim Support and the Police are continuing to send through referrals for crisis support - which RAASC continues to provide, even though we are not funded to provide this service. It is all part of empowering victim/survivors to access justice services while keeping as safe as possible from further victimization. I have had the privilege to work alongside families/whanau, and see them make positive changes and achieve goals with favorable outcomes.

Advocacy Service

I have been working alongside Nicola Hillis - Sexual Abuse Victim Advisor at the Department of Courts. Together we have been supporting and educating some of my crisis clients who are about to move through the court process. Because this is a very difficult and emotional process for anyone to go through, it has been of great benefit to my clients and their families to receive this support and information.

The feedback that I have received from clients has been positive, so if you have a client that is about to go through the court process for sexual abuse and you feel that this may be of benefit to them, please referral them in. I continue to support clients while giving their statement to the police. We have had a high demand on our services which has kept all the staff at RAASC working long hours, with the increase in our client intake.

Self Defence

Ana Pereira of Proactive Safety and member of Womens' Self Defence Network - Wahine Toa is running a Self Defence course for our women on **Saturday 15th December**. This is a great refresher in preparation of Christmas and keeping oneself safe over the holiday break. Call Anna Cody on (03)2161079 if you are interested in participating.

Support Services

We offer a free, confidential support service for children, young people, women and men who have experienced sexual violence. Support includes advocacy, emotional support, information and advice, referrals to other services, and a Drop-in service open from **10am-4pm Monday to Friday**.

Both support workers have been working steadily in providing a professional and responsive service. Over the last quarter we had 62 referrals for services - we had 31 this time last year for the same quarter. This increased workload has been managed by Sharleen and Aroha - but with the departure of Aroha within the last month - Susana has taken on some of this work.

We have also had a few volunteers join the team, and help with coffee mornings - thank you to the support and generous time of **Rhondra McDowell and Anna Cody**

Coffee Mornings: Reflections

Coffee morning has accomplished many things over this year with the steady growth in members of this group. Friendships have been formed, and socializing outside of the house has occurred, enabling women who struggled with social isolation to make significant relationships and connect more within the community. Coffee morning is ending this year with -

**Christmas Feast
Wednesday 18th December 2013.**



Coffee morning will resume again on
Wednesday 27th January 2014.

We wish everyone a safe and peaceful Christmas.



Accessing Our Services

RAASC receives self referrals via phone, email, website, or by dropping in to the centre at 26 Nelson Street, Invercargill. Organisations are able to complete an Interagency Referral form, with the persons consent. Referral forms are available on request from RAASC (03)2162079 or emailing raasc@xtra.co.nz. All initial enquiries will be treated with confidentiality and referrers will be advised of the outcome by the intake support worker

Christmas Holiday Break

RAASC drop-in centre will be closed from
4pm 20th December 2013.

We will re-open again on
Monday 13th January 2013, at 9am.

Office contact: 21620179 or raasc@xtra.co.nz

Acknowledgements

We would also like to acknowledge the following people who contribute to the ongoing operation of our service, by volunteering or donating goods and services: **Mark Bain, Rick and Nicky Hambrook, Ian Ridley, Fala Lepoamo, Bonita-Lyn Parker**

- We acknowledge the volunteer services of **Anna Cody** - a fourth year social work student, who has taken up voluntary work at the centre over the next few months to gain experience in the social service sector. Anna is the friendly voice answering phones over From Wed-Fri and
- Also, thanks to **Rhondda McDowell** for her support of maintenance at the centre and helping with Christmas celebrations. It is great when community members can support the work of the centre - if you are interested in volunteering - please contact Susana on (03)2162079.
- **Alice Pottinger** - who is the Southern Wild Food Festival Coordinator, and has been helping RAASC prepare for a stall at the event: **22nd February 2013 - Southern Stadium**. Thanks Alice for your patience and expertise - we are looking forward to this amazing event.
- **Stephen O'Connor** - who has kindly provided mentoring services to supporting the managerial role. Thank you for sharing your wisdom and expertise.

