

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 last quarterly newsletter for 2014. 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?**

Much has been happening!

The last quarter we have had a steady increase in demand for services - this past financial year we have had an increase in services, 31% - which for a small centre like ours, is significant. While the general community response to this increased demand is often sober and sad - we are encouraged by the number of people who are willing to seek help and begin or continue their recovery journey.

The arrival of two new staff persons has helped considerably - and the centre has been keeping up with the demand. There has been some considerable reshuffling within the physical space of the centre, and we have experienced some challenging times with finding space to meet people - especially those who drop-in. In the New Year we hope to expand our physical space with the assistance of our Governance Board.

We have welcomed a new board member, and are actively recruiting additional members to assist with the strategic direction and oversight for the centre. As such, we send a warm invitation to community members to attend our upcoming AGM (see below for details).

We are currently preparing for the implementation of a new client management system, made possible through the MSD Capability Investment Resource. Penelope is an exciting software programme that has the staff excited. Designed by practitioners for practitioners, we are looking forward to the software enabling more streamlined recording and reporting system for casework and service delivery, that will increase the amount of contact work, as opposed to paper work, we can achieve. We believe that it will also be a great reflective tool that will show us where energy is being directed, in what kind of work, and with what kind of outcomes. RAASC is aligning itself with Results Based Accountability measures, that focus on client outcomes, and will assist with service evaluation and development.

There has been a great deal of work over the last quarter working with ACC and the new Integrated Services Sensitive Claims. While we wait for the roll out, its business as usual for our ACC counsellors, who continue to operate out of 26 Nelson Street.

And finally, with Christmas looming, we will be looking forward to have a well deserved rest for a couple of weeks. We will send out a notice nearer the time - but we are likely to be resting between Christmas and New Year. In the meantime, take care, and we will see you with a new look rebrand in the New Year! **Susana**



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 BA, PGDipSocS,
MANZASW

Counselling Services



Rianda Gunter - Counsellor/Supervisor

BA (SW), Mth Narrative Therapy (UNISA), MANZASW

My name is Rianda Gunter and I have joined the RAASC team on 1st September 2014 in the role of Supervisor and Counsellor. My husband, our two children and I came to Invercargill, just over six years ago and we love New Zealand. We enjoy the natural bush, bird life and spectacular views. The friendly people and Southland hospitality are a true blessing to us. My career as a social worker and counsellor started in South Africa where I worked in a Non-Government Organisational setting for 10 years and another 10 years in private practice. In New Zealand I worked for Child Youth and Family for 4 and 6 months as a care and protection social worker and for 22 months as a team leader at Family Works. I value and appreciate these experiences. Returning to counselling at RAASC is a huge privilege as it has always been my first passion. Metaphorically speaking I enjoy walking alongside individuals or families for a while on their journeys of healing. These journeys require lots of courage and never fail to humble and amaze. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work as part of the RAASC team. **Rianda**



Penny Bray - Counsellor ACC

MNZAC, DAPAANZ

The past few months have been very busy. We at RAASC, alongside clients, were glad to feel that Spring has sprung. The seasons affect us all. October was Mental Health Awareness month and we continued to encourage all to 'KEEP LEARNING' which was the theme for the year. November will bring the WHITE RIBBON RIDE to town, that's the men's movement that make themselves known for being 'against violence towards women'. With the arrival of Spring the Evening Coffee Group began a beautification project of the new balcony. Big plastic barrels were donated from a workplace and extended whanau members of the house managed to cut them lengthways to create planter troughs. These were then planet full of spring flowers which are all about to bloom. ☺ Pam (accompanying on her banjo- ukulele) and others formed a singing group and have gone around the corner to the old folk's home to sing for them. All involved enjoyed this and they will return on a monthly basis to connect and have a sing-along. Preparing for the Christmas season, this will bring some social time on the new balcony. Warm regards, Penny

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. **03 4731157 - 027433137 / stcounsellor@gmail.com**

Social Work and Support Services

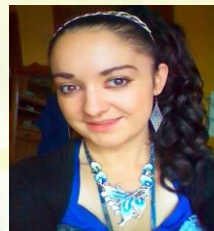
We offer a free, confidential support service for children, young people, women and men who have experienced sexual violence. We recognise that Sexual violence can have a devastating impact on the whole family - and have been contracted by Family and Community Services to provide direct services that restores safety and wellbeing/Mauri ora where sexual violence has occurred. This work is often complex and comprehensive, and we have recruited new social worker to deliver these services.



Dr. Haley Clark - Social Worker

BA(Hons), MAppSW(Hons), PhD (Melbourne), MANZASW

I started as a social worker with RAASC in October this year. Prior to taking up this position, I was a social worker at Family Works. I have worked in the area of sexual violence for nearly fifteen years, primarily as a researcher and in policy, and I hold a PhD on this issue. I have recently completed my Masters of Applied Social Work and am pleased to connect my research knowledge with my practice skills in this position. I feel most privileged to be working alongside individuals and families through their healing journeys. I look forward to connecting with the various workers and services throughout Southland who play a key role in supporting and empowering those who have experienced sexual violence. **Haley**



Anna-Leah Cody - Volunteer Support Worker

In November 2013 I began volunteering at RAASC after engaging with the service as part of a project for an Organisations paper I was undertaking through the University of Otago. I enjoyed it so much that I have been here ever since. This includes both as a volunteer and a student Social Worker having recently undertaken a fieldwork placement at RAASC as part of my University of Otago Bachelor of Social and Community Work studies. **Anna**

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

Crisis Response Services

The establishment of a new role delivering Crisis Response Services has been made possible through recent funding from the Ministry of Social Development. This was following a review of the specialist sexual violence service sector and an inquiry by the Social Services Select Committee in August 2013. Immediate findings were the need to stabilize the sector to ensure that providers were able to continue operations in the short term, until government was able to respond to recommendations of the select committee. This resulted in a two year injection of funding for crisis response services that enabled the centre to fund two fulltime positions - Crisis Counselling, undertaken by Rianda Gunter, and Survivor Advocacy, undertaken by Sharleen Carran.

Sharleen has been providing crisis support and court advocacy, prior to this new funding - but it was supported by non-contractual funding that made the role insecure and difficult to develop. We are pleased to finally be in a position to develop this service more fully.



Sharleen Carran-Survivor Advocate

Diploma CPS, Diploma BStheo

I have started a new role as Survivor Advocate within the last month. I am looking forward to building new networks with the court staff, lawyers and the police, to provide survivor advocacy services.

I will continue to organise our Coffee Morning Support Group and co-facilitate education programmes, including the IMAGINE Women programme coming up later this month. I am currently developing a Crisis Response Information Pack which will assist survivors in navigating the legal system, and support their recovery. I have also been given an opportunity to walk alongside some of our more entrepreneurial clients who are readying themselves to sell their art and crafts in the community. RAASC remains an exciting place to work with many changes and new staff members! **Sharleen**

We are hopeful that this funding will continue long-term. MSD reported that in 2012 sexual violence was estimated to be most costly of all crime in New Zealand, at \$1.8 billion per annum. Contrast this figure with \$29.07 million in 2012/2013 from government agencies to community-based sexual violence organisations for services to victim and perpetrators, including: medical and forensic assistance, crisis response, counselling, social work support, enabling access to the criminal justice system, treatment for those with harmful sexual behaviour and services to prevent sexual violence from occurring in the first place - we believe that more long term and increased funding in crisis response delivering wrap around services will result in reduced costs for sexual violence services as a whole.

Education Services

IMAGINE Women Course

We are running another IMAGINE Womens' course which covers topics such as: Self Care, Personal and cultural values, Self Image and the media, Self image and Healthy Relationships, Boundaries and Conflict and Communication. Details are as follows:

WHEN: Saturday 22 - Sunday 23 November 2014

VENUE: 26 Nelson Street, Invercargill

TIME: 10am - 4pm

COST: Free. Lunch provided

CONTACT: Sharleen Carran on 032162079 or sharleen.raasc@xtra.co.nz to register or for further information

Self Defence Course

We are also running another Self Defence course for women who have experience sexual trauma, which cover topics such as: *Using your body language and voice Positive self esteem and confidence, Positive assertive attitude Victim/ attacker mentality, Self safety when out and about Situational awareness, Domestic violence Healthy and Unhealthy relationships, Physical Self Defence techniques Ground defence, strangulation defence.*

Delivered by **Ana Pereira** - Qualified Self Defence Tutor and Member of Women's Self Defence Network - Wahine Toa. www.wsdn.org.nz

WHEN: 6th December 2014

VENUE: YMCA, 2 Leven Street, Training Station

TIME: 10am - 3pm

COST: Free. Lunch provided

CONTACT: Haley Clark on 032162079 or haley.raasc@xtra.co.nz to register or for further information

We have received positive feedback from women who have completed this course - and find that the timing of this course in preparation for the Christmas holiday break, has been very empowering.



We are extremely excited about being involved with the Rotary Club of Invercargill Fundraiser - The Wild Food Festival again in the New Year. We have been approved as a stall holder, and will be holding a Colostrum Smoothie Stall, as well as being one of the benefactors for the event. We are very grateful for the generous support from Rotary Club of Invercargill, and look forward to seeing you there on **Saturday 28th February 2015** at Stadium Southland. For more information about the festival please check out their website on: www.southernwildfoodfestival.co.nz

Annual General Meeting

At Southern Wings, 76 Airport Avenue, Invercargill

Tuesday 25th November at 6pm

Refreshments provided. All Welcome

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: Ian Ridley, Fala Lepoamo, and some of our members of the coffee group volunteering food, and support and materials for art and crafts, and Rotary Club of Invercargill. 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 or raasc@xtra.co.nz

