



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

Promoting empowerment
and well-being for all women

**ANNUAL REPORT
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
2006 – 2007**

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COMMITMENTS

Mission Statement

Auckland Women's Centre promotes empowerment and well-being for all women.

Philosophy

Auckland Women's Centre is committed to working for change for women from feminist perspectives.

Constitutional Objects

Auckland Women's Centre offers to:

- a) Recognise Maori as Tangata Whenua o Aotearoa. To wholeheartedly embrace and uphold the principles and spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- b) Create an environment for Auckland women to meet for support, discussion, information, referral, learning and sharing skills.
- c) Provide information on women's rights, healthcare and issues affecting their lives from a feminist perspective.
- d) Support and assist the development of women's self help initiatives.
- e) Advocate at local and national levels on women issues.
- f) Network and campaign with other women's and community groups to promote women in society.
- g) Do all such acts or things as are incidental to or which will directly or indirectly further or be conducive to the attainment of the foregoing objects of the organisation or any of them.

Strategic Goals

In addition, the society has committed to the following strategic goals. To:

- 1) Maintain a Centre that is relevant to women, and which is open and responsive to new challenges and initiatives.
- 2) Provide a safe environment that is comfortable, warm and welcoming to women.
- 3) Be non-discriminatory in regards to ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, income, ability or relationship status.
- 4) Provide affordable, accessible, quality services that reflect women's needs and respect their personal integrity.
- 5) Maintain a facility and resources that enable education, health and welfare or other social initiatives that respect and empower women.
- 6) Ensure effective, accountable, and transparent agency management structures.
- 7) Seek resources and opportunities that enable the on-going provision of the Centre's goals, activities and services.
- 8) Be a fair and equitable employer that provides effective support, supervision and management processes for all workers.

REPORT FROM THE COLLECTIVE

The Management Collective is pleased to report on another year of growth and development of the Auckland Women's Centre. The Centre's work in the teen parent sector continues to go from strength to strength. In 2006 AWC successfully obtained funding for a Teen Parent Service Co-ordinator which led to the appointment of **Margaret Stewart** who is doing a wonderful job. Due to the success of past projects AWC continues to be involved in the delivery of SKIP (Strategies for Kids and Information for Parents) projects and the Young Mother's Support Programme.

AWC has grown considerably over the last two years. The collective is looking at ways of further supporting the important work of AWC staff. This has led to a concerted focus on strategic planning in 2007; exploring ways AWC services, facilities and projects can be improved and supported to meet the needs of women in the Auckland area.

The membership of the collective has been stable over the last year and we welcome the addition of three new members: **Emily Trent, Donna Nuttall and Gaby Ulgade**. **Emily** is originally from the United States and had a student placement at AWC for 3 months in 2004. **Donna** is the Mentee Co-ordinator of the YWCA Future Leaders Programme and has extensive experience in youth development. **Gaby** is from Mexico and is a researcher and educator at Rape Prevention Education. Both **Gaby and Emily** also provided valuable input into the Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children.

The Collective wishes to thank its very able and hardworking staff members.

Amelia Rothwell joined the Centre in January 2007 as our Frontline and Community Education Coordinator. Amelia staffs our Information, Referral and Advice service and organises our support groups and community education programme.

Anna Witten-Sage, our Young Women's Advocate, co-facilitated the Young Mothers Support Programme, assisted with the Young Mothers Parenting Positively Project and provided individual advocacy for young women, especially young mothers. Anna finished her position at the Centre at the end of the year, but continues to teach self-defence to a wide variety of participants throughout Auckland on behalf of the Centre.

Annalise Myers leads our SKIP Young Mothers Parenting Positively Project. Annalise designed and executed a programme with parenting strategies and learning opportunities for young mothers and children built into every aspect of the project.

Elizabeth Morey keeps the accounts accurate, submits countless funding applications, ensures funding reports are accurate and timely, and maintains our in-house manuals and communications systems – amongst other things.

Leonie Morris is our Centre Coordinator with responsibility for the Agency as a whole. Leonie's tasks involve supporting the staff, ensuring the Centre has enough funds, that the funds are spent wisely, promoting the Centre and maintaining good relationships with key people in the women's and community sectors.

Margaret Stewart started in June as our first Teen Parent Service Coordinator. Margaret provides experienced, intensive social work to the most vulnerable teen parents in Auckland City.

Shelley Fraser started at the Centre at the beginning of the year as our Young women's Advocate. Shelley manages the Young Mothers Support programme, assisting with the SKIP project and provides support, advocacy and opportunities for young women.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The Auckland Women's Centre's range of activities falls broadly into the categories of health and welfare services for women, opportunities for personal growth and development, developing resources for the women's community, and advocacy on women's rights.

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Information, Referral and Advice

The Information, Referral and Advice service is the first point of contact with AWC for many women. The Centre has a great deal of information about women's health services, educational courses and workshops, maternity and mothering services, domestic violence support services, migrant resource services, women's activities and adventures and much more. We have contact details for woman-friendly doctors, lawyers, natural health practitioners and counsellors. Lesbian activities, events and services are advertised. In the 2006–07 financial year over 12,000 women sought information, referral or advice from the Centre.

Support for women

Centre workers provide face-to-face or telephone support to women experiencing distress and seeking assistance with immediate needs. Most frequently, this involves locating emergency housing, supporting women initiating separation, supporting women asserting lesbian identities, and dealing with disclosures of violence or sexual assault. Listening, support and validation are provided, information is given, and referral to appropriate ongoing support agencies is made. This financial year 530 women received this type of support from the Centre.

Personal counselling

Our professional counsellors continue to provide high quality, low cost one-to-one therapy sessions at the Centre. Women clients have a choice of counsellors and therapeutic modalities. In June 2007 **Anthea Randell**, an experienced sexual abuse counsellor, joined our existing team - **Robyn Lawrence**, **Joan Prairie** and **Anna Cowan**. Our counselling service continues to experience high demand with over 760 appointments catered for in the 2006–07 period.

Women's nursing services

We continue to provide cervical smear tests and breast examinations to women who would not normally access primary healthcare institutions or service providers. A large proportion of clients using this service are lesbian or new migrant women. Thanks to **Well Women's Nursing Services** for working with us to provide this service.

Therapeutic massage

Affordable massage for beneficiaries and other women on low incomes was also available at the Centre this year. Thanks to **Sara Dix** and **Yolande Carrell** for the excellent service they provided.

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year we continued to meet the needs of women in the community by running our most popular courses: Walking Back to Happiness, yoga, the Art of Happiness, Creative Writing and self-defence for girls aged 7 to 12 years. We also continued to provide invaluable support groups such as: women and anger, mothering alone, young mothers support programme, post separation workshops and support groups relating to lesbian identity issues. All these support groups have a preventing violence aspect to them. We pride ourselves on offering courses which raise self-esteem, confidence and aspirations, in a safe and empowering environment. We hold firm in our commitment to provide an all-female environment in which women of all ages can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of belonging to their community.

This year as well as our personal growth courses we endeavoured to meet the needs and support the passions of women seeking to learn practical skills and express themselves creatively. **Margaret Lewis**, a contemporary knitwear designer, tutored a one and a half day knitting workshop which was so popular that we are hoping to run it again next year.

As well as our Hatha yoga classes delivered by **Simone Bonny**, we are now providing a weekly, lunch-time yoga/pilates/stretch class. The teacher, **Marilyn Gravette** tailors this class to the health and needs of all participants.

Our women's book club is still going strong. It is an excellent forum for discussion of women's issues in relation to a wide range of fiction by women authors. The monthly meetings attracted several new women readers as well as the dedicated long term members.

We were particularly proud of another new addition to our courses this year, Midlife, Menopause and Reawakening. **Wende Jowsey** developed a fabulous 6-week course that gives women the tools to enhance the potential for the second half of their lives. It addresses topics such as menopause, relationships, and life purpose in a well researched and experientially approached way, while being delivered with humour! We feel that this course really filled a gap in services for older women and we have had extremely positive feedback from all of the women who participated in the course.

GETTING CRAFTY

In April, **Shelley Fraser**, our Young Women's Advocate and **Jessica George**, an alternative artist from America established *Craft Grannies* inspired by the contemporary Stitch 'n' Bitch revolution. This movement was instigated by Debbie Stoller, co-founder of the third wave feminist popular culture magazine *Bust*, when she began reclaiming the art form of knitting and encouraged others to turn it into an empowering and positive exercise for all women. *Craft Grannies* provided a forum for young women to explore a wider range of art media, including fabric stencilling, patch making, sketching, zine making, painting, jewellery and bead making, stencil art and screen printing, as well as traditional crafts.



RESOURCES FOR THE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY

The Women's Library

The library is well-resourced and much used by women wanting reading matter for pleasure or study. With a grant from ASB Charitable Trust we have been able to purchase many new books to keep both the fiction and non-fiction sections of the library as current as possible. **Stacey Arnold** has volunteered in the library regularly during the week sourcing and buying inexpensive second hand books via the internet and cataloguing our many additions to the library. We gratefully acknowledge the help of **Shubha Iyer, Reshma Pujari, Geraldine Whiteford, Stacey Arnold, Wendy Rowe** and **Rosemary Barnett** for staffing the library on Saturdays.

www.awc.org.nz

Our new website is proving to be an invaluable tool. Women from all over the world find out about us, our programmes and services via our site, and email us from our site. Visitor numbers continued to increase over the 2006-2007 financial year. The content management system enables us to update the site at any time. Check out the Hot Topics section which has articles on: women and child poverty, sexual violence as a gendered issue, the nature of contemporary sexualisation in advertising and an evaluation of AWC's Young Mothers Support Programme. All our recent newsletters are also available on our website.

GOSSIP – our quarterly newsletter

GOSSIP is mailed to over 1,600 individuals and organisations each quarter and continues to be our primary vehicle for keeping in contact with the community. We let women know about the services and activities of the Centre, and provide a space for others to promote woman-centred events. Each GOSSIP features an article on a topical women's issue. These have included: the gendered nature of intimate partner violence, an article on White Ribbon Day the international day



for the elimination of violence against women, a review by Alison Greenaway, from our Management Collective of *A Postcapitalist Politics* by JK Gibson-Graham, and the urgent need for an overhaul of our criminal justice system to ensure that rapists are held accountable. Volunteers help us with the labour of mailing out GOSSIP and the course brochure. **UDC Finance Limited** generously encourage staff to spend part of their working hours on volunteer work and several women have joined the AWC team to assist with the mailing this year. Thank you to all those women who gave their time and energy to the women's community in this way.

ADOVCATING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Centre continues to be involved in the **campaign for rape justice** sparked by Louise Nicholas's courageous allegations against assistant Police Commissioner Clint Rickards and former policemen Bob Schollum and Brad Shipton. On International Women's Day, Centre Coordinator, Leonie Morris, spoke to a demonstration called after the same three men were acquitted for a second time. Fortunately the Bazley Committee of Inquiry into

police culture found 141 incidents where there was enough evidence for police to be disciplined or face charges for disgraceful conduct. In response to the Bazley Report the Government announced a two-year research project into sexual violence against adults in New Zealand. If all rapists are going to be held accountable in the future, the findings of this research will need to promote a radical change to our criminal justice system.

The Centre joined the **Coalition for Quality Flexible Work** this year. This Coalition of more than 50 professional, business and community groups and trade unions came together in support of Sue Kedgley's members' bill. The bill provides employees with a statutory right to request flexible working arrangements, and creates a statutory duty for employers to consider such requests seriously. It is based on UK legislation, which has been extremely successful in helping change the working culture. AWC lobbied John Key, leader of the National Party and wrote a submission to Parliament in support of the bill.

Our participation emphasised that many women who utilise our Centre find juggling full-time work and parenting young children exhausting. They feel a huge strain on the health of their families and their own well-being. There is now in New Zealand a financial and social coercion for mothers to return to the workforce soon after their children are born. The Auckland Women's Centre believes that this is wrong. We believe that while mothers should have the right to return to work, the Government needs to introduce measures that allow women to have a real choice to do what is best for them and their families. This legislation would at least allow mothers the right to work flexible working hours, instead of 8.30am to 5.00pm five days per week, should they wish to.

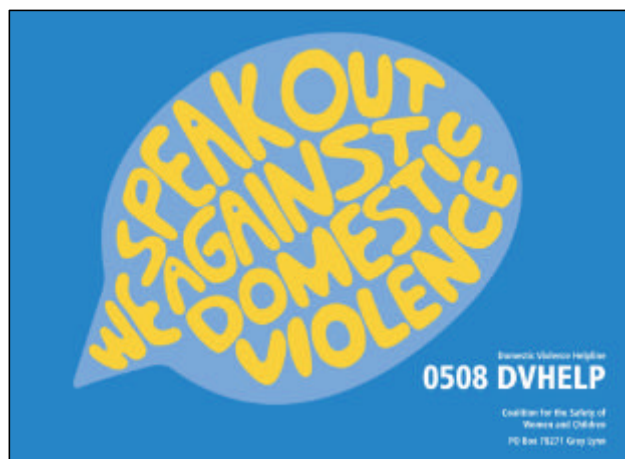
While currently in New Zealand the work of child-raising falls very heavily on mothers we hope that this legislation, which is open to all parents, will encourage more fathers of young children to reduce their time in the workforce in order to spend more time parenting.

The Auckland Women's Centre, with several other women's and preventing violence agencies, make up the Auckland **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children**. Our main project this year was the production of two pieces of artwork with the message "we speak out against domestic violence".

The project aims to mainstream this message by inviting businesses to display a piece of anti-domestic violence artwork in a prominent place. We also supply employers with information on how they can support their staff and clients who might be victims of domestic violence.

The project is funded by the Government's Campaign for Action on Family Violence. It utilises television, a website—www.areyouok.org.nz, an 0800 Family Violence Information Line, a Community Action Toolkit and print media, urging New Zealanders to recognise "Family violence - it's not ok".

We were thrilled with the quality of the artwork and are now looking forward to distributing it throughout businesses in Auckland City.



TEEN PARENT PROJECT

Established in 2002 with the endorsement of the Ministry of Social Development, Strengthening Families our Teen Parent Project has expanded and strengthened over the year. This project carries out innovative, participatory work with teen parents and is making a significant contribution to the welfare and support resources available to young parents and their children in Auckland. Fundamental to the entire project is the belief that young people need high quality empowerment-focused relationships and information to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for themselves and their family/whanau. All aspects of the Teen Parent Project utilise the key tenets of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (Ministry of Youth Development).

Our work with young mothers is informed by the research of Barbara Collins, Principle Analyst, Ministry of Social Development. Barbara's study of how young women view and experience teenage motherhood found that, contrary to public views, and while recognising the challenges, they see themselves as good mothers. Some regret early pregnancy, but they do not regret having their babies. Most feel their lives are very much better than before they were pregnant, and motherhood becomes the motivation to abandon damaging lifestyles. Many have a new sense of purpose, and see hitherto unimagined possibilities for themselves and their children.



TEEN PARENT SERVICES COORDINATOR

Together with the Bethany Centre, AWC successfully tendered for a contract to employ a Teen Parent Service Coordinator. The Government created eight of these contracts throughout the country to improve outcomes for teen parents and their children. In June we employed **Margaret Stewart**, an experienced social worker, in this position. Margaret's role is to work collaboratively with young parents, empowering them to help themselves. This includes providing practical support, guidance, goal setting and linking them in with other service providers. Margaret is also actively identifying gaps in services to teen parents. Having a social worker undertaking case management work with teen parents has helped inform and further complement our current community development work with these women.

ADVOCACY FOR TEEN PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

The Centre has continued to raise the profile of the needs of teen parents and has offered strength-based solutions for the community and Government to provide positive outcomes for teen mothers and their children. This year AWC has involved in a number of exciting opportunities including; presenting two papers at the Involve 06 NZAAHD youth conference in Christchurch about engaging teen parents through SKIP, and reporting on the findings from our Young Mother Support Programme evaluation. We also wrote a joint submission with NZAAHD to the Ministry Of Education regarding the parental and educational needs of teen parents. This work influenced MOE to reinstate the possibility for new Teen Parent Units to be established where needed.

MOTHERS PARENTING POSITIVELY SKIP PROJECT

Engaging young parents, their children and our community

The Centre is part of a significant social movement within the community and Government sector which is committed to changing the cultural attitudes associated with raising young children in New Zealand. We continue to provide a substantial response through our SKIP project providing support for young parents to build their confidence to manage their children's behaviour in a positive way as part of a loving nurturing relationship.

We were thrilled to have a third SKIP project begin in November 2006, allowing us to build momentum from our two previous successful SKIP projects. Firstly by engaging large numbers of teen parents and their children in fun, creative, youth friendly activities and leadership opportunities, and secondly by developing collaborative partnerships within our local community strengthening our collective response to meeting the needs of teen parents and their children.

SKIP outcomes and achievements:

- ☞☞ We provided fourteen free positive parenting workshops offering 150 young parents aged 13 - 23 an opportunity to explore positive parenting principles, strategies and to introduce SKIP resources.
- ☞☞ We offered ten young mothers an opportunity to hold leadership roles within our SKIP project. This allowed young mothers to view themselves and their peers as a resource to support positive attitudes to parenting.
- ☞☞ By hosting three open community events we brought together 68 young parents, 70+ children and many family members enabling them to celebrate parenting and child development by normalising support through socialising with other young parents.
- ☞☞ Our project has allowed children of teen parents to explore new surroundings and feel comfortable in different settings. Many of these children had never been left with others or played with sand or paint before. These activities helped them to develop their confidence through play and increase their socialisation.



This year our three aims for SKIP collaboration were to celebrate positive parenting and community outcomes, to share community knowledge and to inspire community action. We achieved these in a number of ways through three Teen Parent Agency Network gatherings, by creating strong community partnerships and in providing community leadership.

Enacting the SKIP strength-based principles through our work in the SKIP project has enabled our practice with teen parents to develop its full potential. As a team we have continued to learn more about ourselves, teen parenting and our community. Our relationship with the SKIP team has assisted us to increase the development of the AWC Teen Parent Project through demonstrating the Centre's capacity to be part of forward-thinking Government and community initiatives.



YOUNG MOTHER'S SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Young Mother's Support Programme is an eight-week programme run from the Centre twice yearly. The programme design and implementation emphasises peer support, education, positive parenting, relationship building and social inclusion for young mums in the wider Auckland area. Based strongly on the six principles which underpin the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, the Young Mother's Support Programme offers teenage mothers the opportunity to participate in a community programme that values their age, parenting role and gender. The 2006–07 programme covered the following key areas: conscious parenting, positive parenting, local community resources, financial entitlements, healthy relationships and boundaries, legal rights, keeping you and your children safe, goal setting and planning for the future. This programme has a strong violence prevention aspect to it.

The programme was jointly facilitated by **Anna Witten-Sage**, **Shelley Fraser** and **Annalise Myers**. Feedback from the young women who participated in the group was very positive and encouraging. The young mothers reported that prior to attending they thought the programme would be a bit more formal, more didactic and less participatory than it was. They liked the relaxed and friendly approach to the sessions, and said they felt comfortable and confident about being in the group. The young mothers had strong praise for the facilitators, saying that it was good that one of the facilitators was also a mother, because she was able to speak from personal experience and they were pleasantly surprised to find that the other facilitator was not much older than them! They described the facilitation as *"very supportive and understanding"*, and that the facilitators *"make a great team"*. Feedback from one young mother was *"I could talk to them about anything"*, that they had *"good skills and knowledge"* and *"were not judgmental"*. Several group participants were grateful that the programme not only addressed the impacts of negative stereotyping towards young mothers, but also valued and gave positive personal feedback about their roles as mothers and young women.

YOUNG PARENT RESOURCE BOOK

Our Young Parent Resource Book continues to receive strong praise from throughout the country. We are currently distributing the second edition free to young parents and people who work with young parents throughout greater Auckland. The Ministry of Social Development—SKIP also distributes the book, throughout the rest of New Zealand. It is also available on the internet at www.youngparent.org.nz

SELF-DEFENCE WORKSHOPS

Our former Young Women's Advocate, **Anna Witten-Sage**, is a trained self-defence teacher for intermediate and secondary school aged girls and women. Anna provided age appropriate workshops in a number of settings this year: at secondary schools, Falelalaga, at our Centre, on a marae, at youth services, and other community centres. She received very high praise from the participants for her work.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Auckland Women's Centre's work is made possible through the generous support and assistance of many individuals and organisations.

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE THE FOLLOWING WOMEN:

Members of the **Management Collective** provide AWC with guidance, governance and support within a collective framework. Members are involved in all aspects of the Centre and provide invaluable knowledge, skills and ideas. Our heartfelt thanks to **Abigael Vogt, Alison Greenaway, Anna Witten-Sage, Donna Nuttall, Emily Trent, Gaby Ugalde, Paulette Benton-Greig, Sarah Greenaway** and **Shelley Fraser**.

Marilynn Johnson continues to provide the Centre with considerable voluntary support. Her presence staffing our, Information, Referral and Advice service is warm and welcoming for Centre users and immeasurably helpful for staff. The Centre benefits considerably from her generosity and compassion. We also thank **Nina Coker** for her dedication to regular volunteer work at the Centre.

Kate Paulin continued to maintain our information technology systems. Centre workers particularly appreciate having such a patient and clever woman to look after their precious workhorses. Kate gives generously of her personal time in order to do so, and we do not know where we would be without her assistance.

Marietta Chapman, a social work student placement from Massey University, worked at the Centre from the beginning of August to the end of October. Marietta staffed our Information, Referral and Advice service, supported our Young Mothers Support Programme and provided case management work and referrals for young mothers. We are very grateful for her intelligent informed analysis and her empathetic, composed and compassionate personality.

Special thanks to **Lorraine Gin**, who, week in week out keeps our Centre spotlessly clean.



Many other women have generously contributed their time and efforts to our crèche, mail-outs and promotions, course facilitation and library. AWC wishes to thank **Bella Burgess, Brooke Walker, Cushla Comer, Eliza Prestige-Oldfield, Gaby Ugalde, Hannah Ellison, Mihi Eruera, Poi Eruera, Renee Hanley, Rosiena White** and **Sappho Banks** and all the wonderful women from **UDC Finance Limited**. We also wish to make a special thanks to **Bronwyn Banks**, our talented and compassionate crèche supervisor.

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE ALL OUR TUTORS AND FACILITATORS:

We sincerely thank the **tutors** and **facilitators** (listed on the following page) of our courses, activities and workshops. Their willingness to share their diverse skills and experiences with other women allows us to offer a wide variety of support groups and learning opportunities to our community.

**AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO
THANK THE FOLLOWING WOMEN AND
ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORTED OUR WORK
THIS YEAR:**

FUNDERS

ASB Community Trust

ANZ Staff Foundation

Auckland City

CLANZ

COGS

Creative New Zealand

Child, Youth and Family
Services, MSD

GABA Charitable Trust

John Ilott Charitable Trust

John Logan Campbell Estate

J.R. McKenzie Trust

SKIP, Family and Community
Services, MSD

New Zealand Community Trust

New Zealand Lottery Grants Board

New Zealand Post

Pacific Sports and Community Trust

Scottwood Trust

South Auckland Charitable Trust

Southern Trust

Telecom New Zealand Limited

Trillian Trust

Western Bays Community Board

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

UDC Finance Ltd



TUTORS

Simone Bonny

Susy Carryer

Emma Farry

Karenza Fullerton

Jessica George

Roz Goodliffe

Marilyn Gravette

Lesley-Ann Guild

Fiona Holding

Veronica Jespersen

Wende Jowsey

Morgan Libeau

Ellie Lim

Veronica Marwitz

Kathi McCulloch

Robyn Meyer

Margot Pakenham

Joan Prairie

Julie Sargisson

Belinda Trewern

Barb Wallis

Anna Witten-Sage

SCHOOLS

Auckland Community Learning
Centre

Central Auckland Schools
Community Education

Lynfield College

Mt Albert Grammar

West Auckland Schools
Community Education

Western Springs College

COMMUNITY AGENCIES

Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP

Anglican Trust for Women and
Children

Auckland Women's Refuge

Bethany Centre

Cherry Bomb Comix

Community Alcohol and Drug

Family Planning Association

Inner City Women's Group

Lesbian Education and Support

Preventing Violence in the Home

Raeburn House

Rape Prevention Education

Rainbow Youth

SAFTINET

Well Women's Nursing Service

Women's Health Action



Auckland
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CONTENTS:

Auditor's Report

Directory

Statement of Financial Performance

Statement of Accumulated Funds

Statement of Financial Position

Notes to the Financial Statements