

Autumn 2008



Auckland  
**Women's  
Centre**

Auckland Women's Centre

**Gossip**

#### Contact us

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#### Centre hours

Monday to Friday  
9am - 4pm

#### Library hours

Saturday 11am - 1.30pm

#### Thanks

To the South Auckland  
Charitable Trust for funding  
Gossip and  
our community education  
brochure.

# Getting strategic

Members of the Collective and staff have been doing a lot of reflection since we started updating our strategic plan last November. We now have a solid framework on which to base all those tricky decisions that daily face community agencies.

We remain *committed to working for change for women from feminist perspectives*. We are now *facilitating* (instead of promoting) *empowerment and well-being for women*. Facilitating conveys our philosophy of working with women, rather than on their behalf.

Our new vision is of a world where *women can make choices that enable them to lead fulfilling lives, and are actively part of communities that are*

*committed to voice and equality*. We want to be living in communities where diversity is respected and the views of all community members are heard.

Our four strategic directions are to:

1. Build and foster organisational capability and capacity.
2. Be an effective advocate for women's issues.
3. Develop and deliver a sustainable Teen Parent Programme that aims to reduce barriers and increase engagement in the community.
4. Provide affordable, accessible quality services, programmes and resources responding to women's needs.

Thanks to the Vodafone NZ Foundation for funding our strategic planning workshop.

## Courses and Groups

We have recently had numerous requests to run our women's self defence workshop again. So, back by popular demand, Barb Wallis is going to deliver an afternoon workshop for us in June. Please book early as places are likely to go fast.

We have two 6 week courses this term – 'Get knitting' with Margaret Lewis and an 'Introduction to Hatha Yoga' with Simone Bonny.

Also available this term are weekly yoga/pilates/stretch classes, monthly book club meetings, our twice monthly contemporary craft group, 'Craft Grannies', and more.

For details check out our community education brochure or our website.



## Lesbian Museum

The **Charlotte Museum** aims to preserve lesbian culture by classifying and collecting lesbian cultural material with a special emphasis on objects.

On Friday 9 May, singer Jodi Pringle, from Dunedin will sing her own songs and a few old favourites.

The **Bronwen Dean Oral Herstory Listening Post** will be launched on 24 May.

The Charlotte Museum is open Thursday to Saturday, 12am to 4pm, at Unit 6 Level 2, 58 Surrey Crescent, Grey Lynn.  
www.charlottesmuseum.lesbian.net.nz

**Staff:** **Teen Parent Service Coordinator:** Margaret Stewart, teenparent@womens.org.nz  
**Young Women's Advocate:** Tauafu Fonua Moala, youngwomen@womens.org.nz **SKIP Project Coordinator:** Shelley Fraser, skip@womens.org.nz **Team Leader, Teen Parent Project:** Annalise Myers, youngparent@womens.org.nz **Administrator:** Elizabeth Morey, admin@womens.org.nz **Centre Manager:** Leonie Morris, akcentre@womens.org.nz **Frontline and Programmes Coordinator:** Amelia Rothwell, programmes@womens.org.nz

# Changing Sexual Violence Prevention

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A report on sexual violence prevention programmes in Aotearoa and internationally has identified a radical shift in the way education to prevent sexual violence prevention is being done. The report was written for the Wellington Sexual Abuse Network (WSAN) about the prevention of sexual violence between peers.

The core of prevention education has included definitions of rape and sexual abuse, information about how common this is, the effects on survivors, how to support them and where to get help.

## Current approaches

Current approaches also include correcting rape myths and attempting to change attitudes, teaching consent and assertiveness skills for women, how to keep safe in high-risk situations, as well as legal aspects of rape.

However, much of this is secondary prevention (aimed at higher risk populations), or tertiary prevention (for those affected by sexual violence), rather than primary prevention (initiatives that set cultural norms before sexual violence has occurred).

## Challenging gendered stereotypes

Some prevention programmes can also inadvertently reinforce patterns of female passivity and male aggressive sexual pursuit that contribute to rape and coerced sex. For example, consent is often described as

something a woman gives and a man tries to get; it does not fit an egalitarian sexual relationship. Prevention that focuses on women's right to say no can create a gate-keeper/gate-crasher dynamic. Teaching ways to keep safe can turn to victim blaming if a woman is assaulted.

## Sexual ethics

The report suggests the following eight areas that may contribute to preventing sexual violence. One is what a Sydney project calls sexual ethics - a mutual negotiation where both parties' needs are considered. The project found that young people used many ethical and non-exploitative ways to explore sexual pleasure and reduce risks.

A second suggestion was that sexuality education should acknowledge the pleasure and positive aspects of sexuality, rather than focusing only on its dangers. Otherwise young people may dismiss sexuality education as out of touch with their experience. Without a legitimate way to learn about sexual pleasure, young men often turn to pornography, which contributes to their objectification of women.

## Healthy sexuality

Sexuality education has tended to avoid abuse, while violence prevention has avoided sexuality. Therefore, a third concept useful to both areas was healthy sexuality, where sexual interactions are something two adults share and where each person values the other's sexual enjoyment. It means being able to enjoy and control one's sexual and reproductive behaviour, being free from fear, shame, guilt and false beliefs, as well as from coercion, deception, abuse and dysfunction.

## Acknowledging women's desires

A fourth focus is acknowledging women's desire for sex, and encouraging young women to be aware of their physical and emotional feelings. Many young women describe feeling detached from their bodies, and say that sex "just happens". Setting boundaries means being able to say "yes" as well as "no", and being able to make and communicate clear choices.

## Consent

A fifth focus is consent. One researcher says we need to focus on how consent is demonstrated in everyday relationships rather than assuming that we have to legislate for this communication.

## The construction of gender

The construction of gender was the sixth area. Research found a discrepancy between young women's descriptions of sexual negotiation, what actually happened and the power relations involved. While traditional gender

## Rape Prevention Education

Rape Prevention Education (RPE) undertakes excellent work in Auckland to end sexual violence. It delivers four sexual violence prevention programmes, including BodySafe for young people.

BodySafe is delivered in over 25 schools in the Auckland area. It is currently being developed to fit with best practice guidelines around sexual violence prevention to include a whole school approach, ongoing evaluation, and a broader focus on healthy relationships, sexual ethics and bystander behaviour.

On 30 April RPE held a forum to launch Rape Awareness Week. Speakers included the Honourable Steve Chadwick, (Minister of Women's Affairs), Louise Nicholas, (New Zealander of the Year and author of *Louise Nicholas My Story* about her search for rape justice), and Dr Kim McGregor, (Director of Rape Prevention Education). For more information about RPE please phone 360 4001 ext 1 or BodySafe ext 4, email [info@rapecrisis.org.nz](mailto:info@rapecrisis.org.nz) or visit [www.rapecrisis.org.nz](http://www.rapecrisis.org.nz)

relations still operate between young men and women, young people believe the sexual double standard of women as sexually passive and men as sexually predatory is outdated. The report says that sexuality education needs to deliberately erode compulsory heterosexuality and this double standard, teaching children more fluid ways of being girls and boys.

### **Men can stop rape**

The seventh focus was engaging with young men. It is more effective for men to work with boys in modelling and creating a positive and non-violent masculinity. There is no unified organisation in New Zealand running

training for young men like the award-winning Men Can Stop Rape in the USA ([www.mencanstoprape.org/](http://www.mencanstoprape.org/)).

### **Adopt public health models**

The last point was that primary prevention needs to move beyond individual interventions, and adopt public health models that work at the community, organisational and society level.

The report stressed that these new ideas should add to, not replace, gender and power analyses that have been the basis of rape prevention programmes for 30 years.

For a full copy of the report see Auckland Women's Centre's website [www.awc.org.nz/hottopics](http://www.awc.org.nz/hottopics).

## **Mahinarangi Tocker - Wahine Toa**

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Singer/songwriter Mahinarangi Tocker died peacefully on 15 April after suffering a massive asthma attack a week earlier. Of Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa, Ngati Maniapoto, Hebrew and Celtic ancestry, Mahinarangi's upbringing overflowed with music. Mahinarangi was self-taught, learning to read music only in the latter years of her long career.

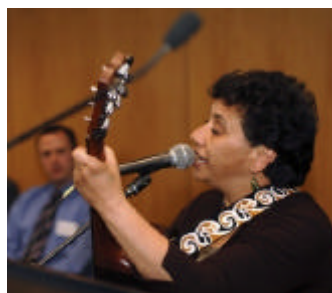
Mahinarangi Tocker generously shared her energy and talent to support women, lesbians, musicians, Maori, and other communities in Aotearoa.

Just weeks before Mahinarangi died the Auckland Women's Centre asked her to perform pro bono at the recent domestic violence awareness Memorial. Mahinarangi readily agreed, but in the event she was prevented from performing due to her ill-health.

In 2003, Mahinarangi tutored song writing workshops at the Auckland Women's Centre, inspiring the participants with her talent, generous spirit, humour and courage.

Judith Tizard, Associate Minister of Arts and Culture, paid this tribute to Mahinarangi's gifts to Aotearoa:

*"Mahinarangi was an inspirational musician and breathtaking singer. Her original compositions and soaring voice touched hearts and minds, both at home and overseas. She worked hard to create original music true to herself and her heritage."*



## **At the Auckland Women's Centre...**

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### **Library: recent additions**

We have recently added many books to the library including *Landings* by Jenny Patrick, *At the end of Darwin Rd* by Fiona Kidman, *The Moons of Jupiter* by Alice Munroe, *The Mammoth Book of Lesbian Erotica* by Rose Collis, and *Breathing Lessons* by Anne Tyler.

It costs \$5 for beneficiaries and between \$10 and \$20 for non-beneficiaries to join the library per year. Books are issued for a month, and there is a library returns box in the alcove on the porch if you return books after hours. **As well as being open during the week the library is also open every Saturday from 11am to 1.30pm.**

### **Therapeutic massage**

Available for beneficiaries and other women on low incomes on Mondays between 9.15am and 2.30pm, for an

hour-long session. Cost is \$25 for beneficiaries and \$40 for non-beneficiaries.

### **Health services**

With WONS: Nursing, Education and Health Promotion Services, our smear tests and breast examinations service includes full consultations on women's health issues, such as menopause and PMS. The next clinic with appointments available is on Friday, 20 June. Appointments are essential.

### **Counselling**

Low cost one-to-one counselling is available at the Centre. All counsellors are professionally trained and supervised. They use a sliding scale of \$30 to \$80 for fees and cater for a diverse range of issues. Please ring the Centre for an appointment.

# Awareness through remembrance

A powerful community event was held in Auckland on 7 March in memory of the women and children who are harmed or killed by domestic violence each year in New Zealand.

One hundred and fifty people attended the service, which was organised by the Auckland Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children, of which the Auckland Women's Centre is a member.

We wish to offer special thanks to Christina Pusztay for sharing memories of growing up without her mother, Eileen Foley, whom she and her siblings were

deprived of due to a tragic act of domestic violence, witnessed before their eyes as small children.



Christina's speech affirmed both the need for victims to be supported and for perpetrators to be held accountable.

**Christina and her sister, Mary-Anne Lister, at the Memorial with a photo of their mother.**

## Clinton vs Obama

The United States election primaries have generated interesting conversations amongst feminists about whether to support Hillary Clinton, a white woman, or Barrack Obama, a black man, for the Democratic Party nomination. Two US feminist leaders, both anti-racist activists, have written interesting open letters on the choice facing US voters that allow us to reflect on the role of sexism and racism in today's world.

Alice Walker, author of the critically acclaimed feminist novel, *The Colour Purple*, has written an open letter supporting Obama:

*"When I have supported white people, men and women, it was because I thought them the best possible people to do whatever the job required. Nothing else would have occurred to me. If Obama were in any sense mediocre, he would be forgotten by now. He is, in fact, a remarkable human being, not perfect, but humanly stunning, like King was*

*and like Mandela is. We look at him, as we looked at them, and are glad to be of our species. He is the change America has been trying desperately and for centuries to hide, ignore, kill. The change America must have if we are to convince the rest of the world that we care about people other than our (white) selves."* The full text is available at [www.theroot.com/id/45469](http://www.theroot.com/id/45469)

Robin Morgan, author of the classic feminist anthology, *Sisterhood is Powerful* is calling on women to support Hillary Clinton:

*"I support Hillary Rodham because she's the best qualified of all candidates running in both parties. I support her because her progressive politics are as strong as her proven ability to withstand what will be a massive right-wing assault in the general election. ... Me, I'm voting for Hillary not because she's a woman - but because I am."* The full text is available at [www.womensmediacenter.com/ex/020108.html](http://www.womensmediacenter.com/ex/020108.html).

## WELL WOMEN'S CLINIC

Clinics once a month at Auckland Women's Centre, Ph: 376 3227

### Free

Cervical smear tests for women:

Who are due for a smear test and are Community Service Card holders.

Who have not had a test in five years.

### Advice

On managing periods, PMS, menopause, stress, incontinence using natural remedies, diet and lifestyle

Consultations \$45 (½ hour)



**Nursing, Education and  
Health Promotion Services**

For other clinics, Ph: 523 0263