

A Word from the Manager



"There are hundreds of battles being fought around the world that need your skills, your minds, your resources. No battle is irrelevant. No victory is too small..... A political struggle that does not have women at the heart of it, above it, below it and within it is no struggle at all. The point is the battle must be joined." Arandhati Roy

As Arandhati Roy says, a battle without women is no battle at all. I have now joined the battle being waged from Women's Health Goulburn North East to improve the health and well being of women in our area. Over the last months we have identified a number of key issues which we as a team in conjunction with our partners, will be addressing over the next 12 months.

The end of the financial year is always a busy time, finalising the organisation's finances, drawing up budgets and planning our objectives for the new year.

We finished this financial year with a couple of "wins". The organisation has finally been granted DGR status, well done to Christine for her perseverance, and DHS has increased our recurrent funding which will enable us to provide a presence across the whole of the Hume region.

In my short time in "the battle", I have quickly learnt that the team at WHGNE have the skills, minds and resources which we need to pursue the goals we have set in the last couple of weeks, and to make a difference for women's health and wellbeing in our region.

Susie Reid Manager

Homicide Law Reform

The Victorian Law Reform Commission's recommendations for reforming defences to

homicide are due to be presented to the Victorian Parliament in the 2005 Spring session of parliament.

Now is the time to ensure the government hears the community's insistence that homicide law be changed to reflect social reality.

We encourage you to write to the Attorney General Rob Hulls, and to your local Member of Parliament, urging that the reforms proposed in the report be adopted as a package. They mark an important step in redressing gender bias in existing homicide law, and in sending a strong message to the community that violence against women will not be tolerated or excused.

Please phone WHGNE for a draft letter. Feel free to amend as required to reflect your own views then simply insert your/your agency's details in the appropriate blank spaces and send copies to both your local member and to the Attorney General.

Parliamentarians' addresses can be found at:
<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/mps.html>
State Government Call Centre: 1300 366 356
(local call cost)

Copies of the VLRC 'Defences to Homicide: Final Report' can be downloaded from the VLRC website www.lawreform.vic.gov.au or obtained by phoning (03) 8619 8619



Rebecca Chalwell, Julie Smyth, Jodie Sorensen, Michelle Christensen, Lucy Tozer & Sandy King proudly displaying *Mothers of Indigo* booklet

Beyond the Myths – Realities of Motherhood

On Friday the 10th June, Bright Art Gallery hosted the launch of the *Myths of Motherhood* exhibition. Jean Farrington, the Health Promotion Worker for Families and Young People at Alpine Health, in partnership with WHGNE and Bright Art Gallery organised the exhibition and the opening. The exhibition comprised photos and writings from the three *Picturing Motherhood* projects WHGNE has facilitated, one in the Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires in 2002 and two in the Indigo Shire in late 2004.

The evening was introduced by Art Gallery President, Neville Garner, and Jean Farrington introduced the speakers. The speakers, Sandy King from WHGNE and Mary Doyle, Early Parenting Coordinator at Alpine Health, shared poems, outcomes from the project, and inspirations from mums over the ages. This was interspersed with the constant challenges, joys, stresses and rewards of mothering. As one mum said 'the minutes are fantastic, the hours can be grueling'.

The exhibition aimed to broaden discussions of 'what is motherhood?' beyond the mass media myths, to move beyond unhelpful expectations and isolating experiences that keep many mums in a cycle of guilt, loneliness, and low self confidence despite enormous amounts of love for their children.

Alpine Health coordinated a 'Myrtleford Mums Afternoon' facilitated by Sandy on June 21 to explore the demand for a *Picturing Motherhood Project* in the Alpine Shire. Mums present found enormous comfort and relief in sharing their own stories and hearing those of others. The hope and inspiration of coming together in non-judgement and full acceptance of the big role mums play can do wonders for easing that sense of isolation and being the 'only one'. If you are interested in following up on these initiatives, please contact Jean at Alpine Health on 5755 0132.



Sandy King, Jean Farrington and Myrtleford mums

Mothers of Indigo

Following the *Picturing Motherhood* project located in Indigo Shire, the Shire of Indigo funded the production of a booklet of the photos, stories, poems and resources available to mothers, family, friends and workers within the shire.

The booklet, *Mothers of Indigo 2004/2005: In photographs and written words*, was a collaborative effort between the Indigo Shire – Ruth Tai, then Community Services Manager, Rebecca Chalwell a trainee on placement at the Shire, Sandy King from WHGNE, and the women involved in the *Picturing Motherhood* project from Barnawartha/ Chiltern and Beechworth groups.

Julie Smyth and Michelle Christesen facilitated the coming together of the experiences of participating mums and supported the production of a fantastic community resource and memoir.

Lucy Tozer and Julie Smyth Launched the booklet at the opening night of the *Myths of Motherhood* exhibition at the Bright Art Gallery. Contact WHGNE for a copy.



Lucy Tozer and Julie Smyth sharing their story of motherhood and launching the booklet

Women Leading Change

In September 2004, the Australasian Council of Women and Policing was successful in winning a project grant from the Australian Government Office for Women to develop a leadership education module for women in policing and women in the community.

The overall aim of this project is to bring women in policing and women in the community together, enabling them to participate in a collaborative training program that will develop their leadership skills and knowledge.

The leadership module, its supporting materials, a "train the trainer" program and the pilot course will initially involve two States' police services (Victoria and WA) in the delivery of the pilot in 2005.

Women from any of these groups are encouraged to apply:

- ❑ Local Council
- ❑ TAFE college personnel
- ❑ Workers with street kids, domestic violence
- ❑ Neighbourhood centres
- ❑ Community legal centres
- ❑ Women's refuges
- ❑ Ethnic groups
- ❑ Women's groups and networks
- ❑ Neighbourhood Watch
- ❑ Church groups

The closing date for applications is 12th July, Applications are encouraged from across the north east and Goulburn valley. Anyone who is interested to apply contact **Alison A. Ridley**, Pilot Coordinator 03 5799 2825 Email: roar@eck.net.au

Fly a White Balloon Day

'Fly a White Balloon Day' has been a community event held across our region for the past five years.

The White Balloon was adopted in 1997 as a symbol of support for survivors of child sexual abuse.

It arose following a public meeting in Belgium in 1996 when 300,000 people gathered with white balloons to show public sympathy and support for the parents of girls who were sexually abused and were either missing or murdered at the hand of a previously convicted and then released paedophile.

On September 6th 2005 everyone is encouraged to display a white balloon. This display raises awareness about child sexual abuse and demonstrates community desire for children to be protected from sexual abuse as well as, sends a support message to those who are suffering.

Balloons can be collected or purchased from Ovens and King Community Health Service 86 -90 Rowan Street or from our office from August onwards.

For more information on being involved contact Kaye Ryan, 5722 2355 or ryank@ovensandking.org.au

Request for Information from Kaz Cooke.

Hello! I need your help with my next book, 'Girl Stuff', for girls aged 10 to 18. Questionnaires are available for girls aged 10 to 18, and there's one for adults: parents, grandparents, teachers, health professionals, and interested bystanders.

Questionnaires can be filled in anonymously. All you have to do is go to <http://www.kazbook.com> and tell me what you think!

Kaz Cooke Author of Real Gorgeous: The Real Guide to Body and Beauty; Up the Duff; Kidwrangling . . .and 'Girl Stuff', for girls aged 10 to 18, to be published in 2007 by Penguin Books Australia

WHGNE provides free internet access.

2005 Youth Forum

Have you, as a young person, any suggestions for new projects for young people?

Well here's a chance to have your say about the issues facing young rural people

Be heard, enjoy good food, guest speakers, live music & drama performances

Be yourself and be a part of the 2005 Youth Forum!!!

Wednesday 13th July, 9-3 at Benalla. Transport available from Mansfield, registrations close 11th July. For further information contact Jane Archbold (Benalla) on 0429621902 or Mark Lee (Mansfield) on 0408 385992

Professional Training – Hume Region

Women's Health Goulburn North East

For further information contact 03 5722 3009 or e.fahey@whealth.com.au

Children and Domestic Violence

The training will explore providing support to children affected by domestic and family violence, developing plans, advocacy and information. DVIRC will facilitate the two day training. 7-8 Dec, Benalla

Shepparton School of Rural Health

For further information bhe@unimelb.edu.au

Becoming a CSI: Finding evidence to inform practice 19th July, Shepparton, 9.30-1.30

Alexandra District Hospital – Community Health

For further information contact 03 5772 0800

Falls Forum

The latest in Falls prevention research, practical tools and strategies to health professionals working with older people. Benalla, 19th August, 10-4

Centre for Grief Education

For further information 03 9545 6377

Understanding and Supporting the Bereaved Child –

Facilitator Training 17th August 9.30-4.30 Albury

Coping with Trauma and Crisis in Schools

18th August 9.30-4.30

Goulburn Ovens TAFE

For further information 1300 733 111

Eating Disorders: A Psycho-Biological Approach

29th July 10-4, Shepparton.

Counselling Children

Designed to enhance the knowledge of health and welfare professionals who work therapeutically with children 26th August 9-4

Early childhood-cognitive & physical development

For allied health professionals who work with children (0-6) in a counselling or case management role. 6th October 9.30-4.00, Shepparton

The Centre

For further information 03 5762 4311

How to run effective meetings, keep members motivated and involved, get things achieved and stay focussed for non profit organisations

19th and 26th July, 6-9pm, Free, Benalla, check dates

Helen La Nauze Fund

For further information 02 6027 3297

Promoting Philanthropy in the Albury Wodonga Region

8th July, 12.30-5.30, Albury

SkillPath

For further information contact 1800 145 231

Dealing Effectively with Unacceptable Employee Behaviour.

21st September, 9-4, Albury

DHS

For further information 03 5751 9383

Core Health Promotion Short Course 2005

A practical introduction to health promotion theory and practice. The course aims to increase participants' confidence to integrate health promotion into their own work practices.

Wangaratta, 18,19,25,26th August and 15th Sept.

New Books in the Library

When Someone You Love Has a MENTAL ILLNESS:

A handbook for family, friends and caregivers by

Rebecca Woolis

This book presents easy-to-follow practical guidelines for coping with the multitude of problems that regularly confront families. In minutes the reader can find helpful suggestions for dealing with any problems that might arise.

How to manage your mother: Understanding the most difficult, complicated and fascinating

relationship in your life by Alyce Faye Cleese and Brian Bates

In this warm, funny book dozens of revealing stories from well-known personalities show that it is possible to improve your relationship with your mother, or at the very least to begin to understand it. The book includes a practical 10-step plan and questionnaire to help you get back on track with your mother.

Women's Experience of Postnatal Depression:

Kitchen table conversations by Lisa Fetting and Belinda Tune

The authors have talked to women about their experience of postnatal depression (PND) and this book comprises edited versions of twenty-two of their conversations. In each story, readers are offered an opportunity to see postnatal depression and some of its effects in the context of a woman's life. For those who are suffering from PND or its effects, reading each of these stories will offer an opportunity to 'meet' another person who has experienced what she or he is experiencing now and learn that they are not alone.

For health professionals there is also much to be learnt.

Women's Health Goulburn North East ACN A0039392E ABN 75 815 140 163

57 Rowan Street PO Box 853 Wangaratta 3676

Ph. 03 5722 3009

whealth@whealth.com.au www.whealth.com.au