

On March 8<sup>th</sup> WHGNE hosted a very successful breakfast at Zucchini Bros attended by almost 70 people. An address from WHGNE Executive Officer, Susie Reid, was a feature of the event which concluded with dancing by Shantara Croke.

Following is Susie Reid's address in an edited form.

"Why are we here together to celebrate International Women's Day? Some of us would remember 1972, and hearing Helen Reddy on the radio singing, 'I am woman, hear me roar'. In 2007, there's a chorus of 'I'm not a feminist'. Some say feminism is passé because it worked. They argue that young women are free and independent and happy and there's no need for them to even think about feminism.

Or could it be because they are, indeed, young, and haven't yet faced the limitations on career and finance that occur to women much more than men after having children? ... Or because they haven't had to go to court in their own rape case? Or because they haven't yet had the discussion with their brother about who will look after an ageing parent?"...

Violence against women is entrenched and endemic in our Australian society, where one in three women has been sexually abused as a child, one in four experiences violence against her in her own home, and where 57% of Australian women state they have experienced at least one incidence of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime<sup>1</sup> ...



Executive Officer, Susie Reid with Natalie Greene, Chair of WHGNE Board at the International Women's Day Breakfast.

So why celebrate International Women's Day?

On this day, we do three things:

- we look back to the achievements won by women through decades of struggle;
- we look around with eyes wide open and maintain our rage;
- and we look forward to equality and justice for women...

For all of Susie's address please check our website [www.whealth.com.au](http://www.whealth.com.au)

### **Women's Health GHNE would like to welcome you to our Public Library**

Our free library holds information about anything and everything to do with women's health and well being – from menstruation to menopause; from family life to leaving a violent relationship! You are welcome to read, study or borrow items for up to four weeks. If you live in our region you can check out the catalogue on our website!

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/statistics.html> International Violence Against Women Survey: the Australian component 2003



## “BSAFE” INITIATIVE FOR WHGNE

This month WHGNE received notification from the Federal Government, through the National Community Crime Prevention Fund, that it was successful in a submission for a new initiative called “B-Safe.” The successful submission was developed collaboratively with Victoria Police and with the support of the Hume Region Family Violence Alliance.

*Bsafe* was an initiative of the Benalla Police and the Benalla Family violence Prevention Network, and has been trialed in that district over recent months. This funding will allow it to be extended to all 24 hour and 16 hour police stations in Hume region. Through the *Bsafe* project, Emergency Safety Kits will be supplied to people at high risk of violence in diverse rural locations; and a ‘Keep Safe Kit - for everyone’ will be developed. *Bsafe* aims to improve safety and response; deter offenders; and reduce fear of crime.

The funding is for three years, and a worker will be employed by Women's Health to co-ordinate the project. Sophie Mirabella presented WHGNE with a cheque for \$230,420 which will provide funding for this initiative for three years.

## Thankyou to Volunteers

WHGNE would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to all our volunteers, both past and present. Volunteers have contributed substantially in recent times in assisting us to improve the health of women in our region by giving of their time to assemble BreastScreen Packs(almost 5,500 in 06/07) that are then distributed via the Breast Screen Bus.

At present WHGNE is looking for

## more volunteers

to continue this important work and would encourage anyone who is keen to give it a go and would like to socialize with other friendly women, to register as a volunteer. This involves meeting once a week, or as often as you can spare, for a couple of hours on a Thursday afternoon. Call Karen on 0357223009 for details.



Upper Murray

## Centre Against Sexual Assault

Upper Murray Centre Against Sexual Assault would welcome men and women of the public to join our Board of Management. We welcome prospective board members to attend a meeting as an observer. This meeting will give you an opportunity to meet other Board members, observe how the Board operates and hear about the different issues UMCASA is engaged with at the moment. If, after attending the meeting, you would like to apply to join the Board, please forward a formal letter of interest along with an outline of you skills and experience as they relate to the role of UMCASA Board, to Virginia Mansell Lees, Chair of UMCASA. If you have any questions or queries about the UMCASA Board, please call Virginia on 0260 249807 or Kerry on 5722 2203.



## Women Gather in Myrtleford Starts June 7<sup>th</sup>

## Women Gather in Shepparton Starts June 12<sup>th</sup>

Meet friendly women

Explore life skills

Share stories

Be creative

Laugh a lot

***It's free!***

There's something for everyone in this 8 week program.

Starts June 7 from 9.30 to 12.30!

Call Claire or Karen on 5722 3009 for information and bookings.

## WELCOME TO NEW STAFF



### Ilena Young

My most recent experience has been developing services and connections for pregnant and parenting teenagers in the Albury-Wodonga area. This involved working with young people, services and networks to create a variety of courses, activities and information. Prior to this I worked in academia, industry and consulting, which included work on leisure, depression, work-life balance, sustainability and planning. My role for the next two years is to develop projects focussing on young women, including pregnancy, parenting and relationship issues, and I would love to hear any suggestions or ideas you may have.

### Claire Zara

Claire started at WHGNE as health promotion worker in February 07. Claire is currently working on two projects. Women Gathering and Real Life. Women Gathering is a program in response to what women stated they wanted to assist them to cope with life's stresses and combat isolation. Claire is also involved in the Real Life program which is a Relationship Education Awareness program aimed at young people in secondary schools.



### Young Rural Women wanted for participation in a Uni of Melb Thesis

Elly Taylor is studying a Postgrad. Dip. in Gender Studies at Uni of Melb and is writing a thesis on the difficulties faced by young rural women in trying to obtain surgical terminations. She is hoping to interview a small group of rural women in their late teens and early twenties who have had an abortion. These women's personal testimonies will be used to give an insight into the complexities and difficulties rural women encounter through trying to obtain a termination.

Interviews would be completely confidential, would take place some time in June/July 07, in a safe, non-judgemental environment, at a time and location that suited you. If you may be interested in participating Elly can be contacted by email at [e.taylor11@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:e.taylor11@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au) or on 0439 366940.

## WIN WIN WIN

**WHGNE is launching 2 new and innovative programs.**

**Read below, invite your inspiration to the party and help us name the programs... you could win**

**a bottle of Baileys Red Wine,  
or  
a Free Naturopathic Consultation!!**

We are launching two No Interest Loans Schemes or NILS \* for short and we need names for these programs. For more information, turn the page!

**NILS Programs** are set up with the intention of offering no interest small scale loans to people on low incomes. NILS target people who can't afford one-off basic necessities such as fridge's, washing machines etc to purchase new items with a fair and affordable repayment system.

We are launching two separate programs. The first is targeting *women on low incomes* in the *Wangaratta and Benalla council catchments*. This will be a basic program with loans available up to \$800 and repayable over one year. The second program is targeting *women exiting domestic violence* in the *whole of Hume region*. This program is very new, innovative and in demand, it allows for up to \$2000 loans repayable over two years.

These programs begin to tackle the limitations of finance and the impact this has on the health of individuals, families, a woman's ability to make choices, leave abuse relationships and quality of life. Additionally, free financial literacy sessions will assist all women to get a better grasp on money issues and develop their confidence and decision making power.

So try your creativity and come up with some names. We are looking for something short, easy to say and remember. Suggestions can be in another language (i.e. aboriginal word – we will seek permission, Italian etc), or made up words/acronyms. Email, drop in or phone your suggestions to either Sandy (Project Worker) or Karen at WHGNE on 03 5722 3009. Competition closes on July 10. Final decision will be made by the Project Steering group.

\* NILS is a registered trademark of Good Shephard Youth and Family Services.

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## Partner Rape Research Project

WHGNE and Upper Murray CASA

**Partner rape is a crime punishable by 25 years imprisonment (Crimes Act 1958).**

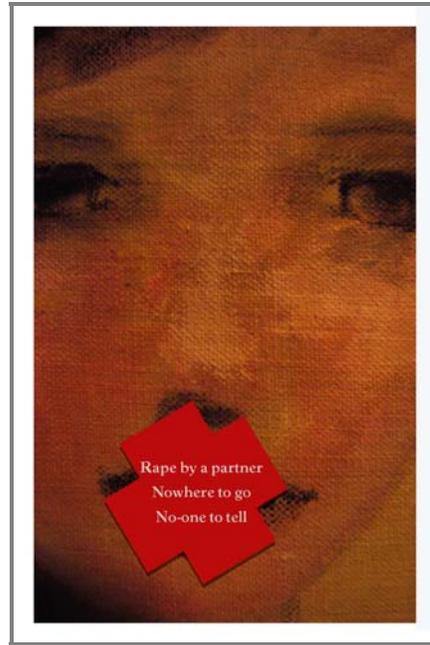
**Contact:**

i. Upper Murray Centre  
Against Sexual Assault  
1800 806 292

ii. Cooroonya Domestic  
Violence Services  
5722 1100 or 1800 721 100

iii. Victoria Police Sexual Offences  
and Child Abuse Units located at:

Benalla 57 621811  
Seymour 57 350200  
Wangaratta 57 230888  
Wodonga 0260 492600



**FOR HER, IT IS LIKE THIS...**

I was crying, yelling, screaming, saying, 'It's hurting, let me go'. But he never stopped.

I was too naïve and too scared to say no, but I do remember saying no ... it was useless, he went and did it anyway. He said, '...lay down and take it and I'm having some and I'm gonna take it', and that's what he told me. I said, 'No you're not', and we ended up in a big fight but he was stronger than me.

**FOR HIM,  
SHE THINKS IT IS LIKE THIS...**

He thought it was his right.  
He owned me with his piece of paper [the marriage certificate].  
He didn't think there was anything wrong with doing what he did. 'All men do that'.  
He said, 'You're my wife - we had sex'.  
He wouldn't say it was rape. I don't think he would even remember the night and what happened if I asked him today.

Keep in mind to regularly check our website!

[www.whealth.com.au](http://www.whealth.com.au)

whealth@whealth.com.au

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