

The Advocate

Enjoying a New View



Nicola Woodward, CEO

So much has happened since I joined Christchurch Women's Refuge as CEO in June. On top of our everyday work supporting women and children whose needs are now even greater than ever, we have held our annual appeal, added several new client service roles to the team, become involved in new collaborative projects in Christchurch and North Canterbury, started to develop a pioneering peer support specialist service and announced new strategic initiatives that will transform how we support families affected by violence.

For almost 40 years we have been supporting women and children to become safe. In order to achieve this we, like most others who support families affected by violence, have encouraged women and children to leave violent homes. As many of us in Canterbury now know from personal experience, leaving home is not easy – practically or emotionally. So instead of encouraging women and children to leave their homes, we started to ask 'how can we make it possible for them to stay?' The clear answer is to remove the violence from the home. It is the same problem, but a different perspective, and that changes everything.

"As many of us in Canterbury now know from personal experience, leaving home is not easy – practically or emotionally."

Finding refuge at home ...

Our belief that the safest place for women and children should be their homes has triggered a great deal of creative thinking over recent months. This has informed a new strategic direction that we will be implementing in partnership with other organisations over the next five years. The new plan includes a range of significant service innovations that we believe will make the choice for women and children to remain

at home a safe one. Making this option a reality for Canterbury women and children is even more important now as available housing becomes increasingly limited and rents rise. In many ways, our new strategic plan is an earthquake recovery plan for our region's most vulnerable families.

Next year we will begin to offer a 'home refuge' service based on Auckland agency Shine's safe@home service. This service will make homes physically safer from a person who has or could perpetrate violence and thus enable women and children to remain at home and connected

to their supportive (or potentially supportive) networks. It also means that, wherever possible, children will be able to stay in school and be with their friends. The reality is that many women living with family violence already choose to stay in their home in spite of the violence, so the development of our home refuge service will not only provide a viable alternative to coming into a Safe House, it will significantly improve women and children's safety. Within this context of familiarity and security we will also actively engage with extended family members, friends and neighbours so that they have the confidence, understanding and skills to support the women and children in their lives who are affected by family violence.

A space for men ...

Intervening with men when they are also at a point of crisis has immense potential to minimise violence, which is why Christchurch Women's Refuge is developing a temporary residential support service for men – a first for New Zealand. This service would be more than just alternative accommodation for men who are legally required to leave home because they have or may perpetrate violence against their partner and/or children; it will be a support service in a pro-social environment where men in the midst of a family violence crisis will be encouraged to recognise, understand and accept responsibility for their own behaviour and its consequences. With skilled support they can begin to plan and implement their own path away from violence. Key



... Enjoying a New View

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partners are already on board to provide the specialist men's programmes that, with our own specialist services for women and children, will form an integrated whole of family approach.

Accentuating the positive ...

We believe that everyone has the potential to move away from violence and become a great partner and parent if offered the right support, at the right time, in the right way. So often family violence is the product of family violence; the product of socialisation; the product of trauma. A good place to start in supporting recovery is to stop promoting disempowering labels of 'victim' and 'abuser' and start to project a belief in people's potential to recover from family violence and transform their own lives.

This is a strengths-based recovery approach and this is how we intend to work with families and communities from now onwards. The most powerful leaders and advocates of recovery are the women and men who have themselves recovered from the trauma of family violence, which is why we are also in the process of developing a new peer support specialist service (read more about this later in the newsletter) with the help of Pub Charity.

So far we've had tremendous support for our new strategy, with many saying that they believe it has great potential to break the cycle of family violence and bring about significant and sustained social change. The coming year will definitely be an exciting one for Christchurch Women's



Refuge and I hope that, as a supporter of our work for local families, you will join us on our journey. There is a great deal to do but the end result will be worth it if together we can make changes that help families live more safely.

But first there's Christmas ...

Christmas, New Year and the post-holiday period between January and March is traditionally our busiest time and when incidences of family violence generally peak. And, as we all continue to deal with the aftermath of the earthquakes, this period may be even harder than usual for many local families.

Everything we do is for the families we support and we couldn't do it without you, our supporters. If you can help Christchurch Women's Refuge to support local families this Christmas, we would be incredibly grateful. Together we have the ability to support families to transform their own lives, and that is a powerful gift to give.

Until next year, the team at Christchurch Women's Refuge wishes you a very safe and happy holiday.

Nicola Woodward
CEO

Rugby Coach Joins Crusade Against Family Violence

Crusaders Assistant Coach Daryl Gibson has signed up for a new role – Ambassador for Christchurch Women's Refuge.

Daryl is a well-known Canterbury sports personality who has played for both the All Blacks and Crusaders, and is also a dedicated family man with four children. That made the decision to lend his voice to Christchurch Women's Refuge's work against family violence an easy one. "I didn't have to think twice about it" says Gibson. "Family is so important to me; as a father and husband you want to know that your family are protected. I'm proud to stand up and say I'm against family violence and, if by lending my voice and support to this cause I can in any way make a difference, then I am keen to do it."

"We're absolutely delighted to have Daryl on board as an Ambassador" says Christchurch Women's Refuge CEO Nicola Woodward. "He is known and respected as a local and national sporting icon, as well as being a family man, and to have him lending his support to our work is a huge thing for us. Daryl totally gets that it is about providing families with a range of opportunities to become safe and then move forward, positively and responsibly, free from violence."

Daryl is very supportive of the work Christchurch Women's Refuge does in helping women and children to become and stay safe, and he also supports the new initiatives that are planned to add men into the solution. "It just makes so much sense to offer men the opportunity to take personal responsibility for the hurt they cause through their violence



Christchurch Women's Refuge's new ambassador, Daryl Gibson, signs the White Ribbon pledge.

and to try to sort out their problems so that maybe they can learn how to keep their family together, but in a safe, positive way."

The Crusaders management promotes a strong anti-violence message amongst their team and is very supportive of Daryl's new role. "It just fits with our whole spirit here – it's all about demonstrating respect for other people and encouraging them to be their best" says Gibson. "That's something I try to do for my kids, and that's what we do as a team."

Support for Families Affected by the Earthquakes

Anyone living in Canterbury knows first-hand the emotional and practical fallout caused by the earthquakes. Within just weeks of the September event there was a dramatically increased need for general social service support and that has continued to grow over the past year.

Christchurch Women's Refuge currently hosts two Earthquake Support Co-ordinators – Carol Brown and Louise Edmonds – who are part of a region-wide network that helps people to try to get some normality back into their lives by providing practical, general support such as finding new bedding or drapes, contacting council or builders to get repairs done, assisting with housing relocation, or referring them to a counsellor. Despite their general support role both Carol and Louise have found that their knowledge of family violence has been a great advantage as they see some relationships have transitioned into violence, or are coming close to it.

Despite all the attention given to the earthquakes and funding raised or donated, there are limited resources available for many of those affected. A major frustration is that some funds are limited or, as in the case of the Red Cross Fund, have such specific criteria that they are not accessible for many reasons. The reality Louise and Carol see is that many people are at breaking point and financial stress is a key component. Many people may have only one income and are struggling to survive, let alone cover extra earthquake-related costs. They need support, often in a way that seems so small for many of us, but can be life-changing for them.

"It breaks my heart to see how some families have been forced to live because the earthquakes have impacted on them so severely, and they

were already vulnerable beforehand" says Carol. "I see a huge increase in social poverty in this city which is not going away – it's actually going to grow. But it's hidden in certain suburbs while the rest of the city goes on with their lives."

Just one example was a family who needed \$2,000 for temporary accommodation while their house had urgent roof repairs. Their home had also become damp due to the roof leak and their bedding and curtains then became mouldy and needed replacing, but without external help they could not afford to move out of the house.

The Dove Trust, a long-standing supporter of Christchurch Women's Refuge, wanted to make a difference at ground level and offered Christchurch Women's Refuge \$15,000 to be used exclusively to support such earthquake-affected families. Before this resource was available Carol had to stitch together funds from a variety of social assistance providers and community organisations, and even resorted to public calls for help via a radio station.

Now this dedicated earthquake support fund means that Carol and Louise can access funds to ensure that people can be supported to dramatically improve their living situation. With the fund's help Carol and Louise, as well as previous support co-ordinator Rana Grey, have been able to provide practical support in the form of food, household items, petrol vouchers and even a respite weekend out of town for several isolated, elderly couples dealing with a range of issues including lost homes, health issues and uncertain futures.

"It's so nice to actually be able to do something for these people" says Carol. "Seeing the relief in their faces, knowing that someone actually cares – it's just fantastic."



Annual Appeal Outstrips Target

On Friday 22 and Saturday 23 July 110 hardy volunteers took to streets, malls and shops throughout Christchurch, Rolleston, Kaiapoi and Rangiora to collect for our annual appeal. Despite cold weather and a reduction in available collection venues we found out something amazing – that despite having so much 'taken' from them in the last year, the people of Canterbury were still willing to give.

This year's appeal had a target of \$18,000, down on last year's \$21,000 result of because of reduced collector numbers and central sites, and the constrained post-earthquake economy. But when the buckets were emptied at the end of the weekend, the people we met on Canterbury streets had raised over \$22,000 to support women and children living with family violence. Part of that success was no doubt due to the innovative and creative promotional campaign that local agency Deflux

provided pro bono. Additional fundraisers such as the Look Good, Feel Good, Do Good women's fashion, fun event on 21 July and the Sow a Seedling of Hope Campaign (sponsored by OfficeMax) raised an additional \$5,000.

On behalf of the women and children we work with, we want to say THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered, sponsored or supported us with donations of whatever value. It just goes to show that when efforts are combined, the results can be great.

The money raised has gone towards offering essential services to women and children – to resourcing the 24-hour phone line and to running last term's ten-week education programmes for women and for children. What a great investment of a couple of hours of time or a few dollars!



Appeal campaign billboard by Deflux, on Ferry Road

Thanks to our Supporters

It's been so busy here at Christchurch Women's Refuge that we didn't manage to get out a newsletter in September (we hope you noticed!), so we have lots of people to thank for their support over the last six months.

Thanks for investing in our work:

- ASB Community Partnership – assisting with insurance claim costs and Safe House childcare
- COGS – supporting rural services for North Canterbury
- Canterbury Community Trust – contributing to community services and staff costs
- Christchurch City Council – supporting the CEO function and role in family violence awareness
- Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Trust – funding increased holiday season crisis services
- Dove Charitable Trust – providing funds for earthquake-specific support
- J and M Ferrier Charitable Trust – helping fund our 24-hour crisis line
- Kelliher Charitable Trust – providing seven women or children access to 10-week education programmes
- Maurice Carter Charitable Trust – after hours Safe House support
- New Zealand Community Trust – helping cover Appeal costs
- Pub Charity Inc – supporting service to community clients and seed funding for Peer Support programme
- Tindall Foundation – supporting crisis line and police report follow-up
- Westpac Community Care Fund – replacement of resources for clients and staff

Thanks for your donations & fundraising:

- Auckland University Students' Association
- Handmade for Christchurch
- Rural Women of New Zealand
- NZ Tax Refunds
- Her Business Christchurch
- Aranui School
- Avonside Girls High School
- Christchurch Girls High School
- Hornby High School
- Lincoln High school
- Rudolf Steiner School Wellington
- St Andrews College
- Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti
- The Patchwork Quilt Club of North Canterbury
- Zonta clubs throughout Canterbury

We know that there are many other groups and individuals who have chosen to support women and children living with family violence by donating to Christchurch Women's Refuge. We want you all to know just how important your donation is in ensuring women and children have access to specialist, free, local phone support 24 hours a day; to qualified staff who can offer support, suggestions, and advocacy with other agencies; to education programmes for both women and children that might help change their lives; and to emergency accommodation. Your donation to Christchurch Women's Refuge is a gift that really can help change lives.



Featured Supporter:

The Patchwork Quilt Club of North Canterbury has been a faithful supporter for years. The women of this North Canterbury craft club have painstakingly created some beautiful creations for our clients. The quilts are all handmade and we have been lucky enough to pass on dozens of these quilts to lucky families, offering them something beautiful to brighten their bedrooms. Two are also currently adorning the walls of our Safe House. We want to thank the group for their effort and commitment to the families we work with.

Referrals to Christchurch Women's Refuge from Police have increased 7% – an actual increase of 171 more referrals.

1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

Embracing Experience of Family Violence

“A similar thing happened to me” – we’ve probably all said that. Talking with someone who has shared a similar experience can create a powerful sense of rapport, connection and mutual understanding.

Our earthquake experience is a great example. Most of us are probably now more able to understand the social and emotional effects of a natural disaster because we are recovering from our own – and over the past year most of us have probably felt at some stage that the only people who can really help are those who have experienced it. Of course this isn’t entirely true, but the ability to support each other, to learn and draw strength from each other’s stories, to listen with personal understanding, and to be able to offer support that’s grounded in lived experience is what’s brought many of us through. Those same principles, beliefs and experiences underpin the new peer support specialist service for families affected by family violence which Christchurch Women’s Refuge is currently developing, the first of its kind in New Zealand.

Peer support specialists will undergo a unique training programme grounded in challenging training, high standards of practice, and systems for assuring quality, safety and accountability. The service has enormous potential to encourage women to take the first step away from violence by reinforcing that their experiences will be acknowledged and understood. Peer support will also help women remain free from violence by walking

alongside them as they travel what for many people can be a lifelong journey. A growing body of women with a platform and voice as survivors of family violence and providers of specialist peer support can also help to eliminate the stigmatising and disempowering label of women as ‘victims’.



Peer support for men is also part of the plan and will be important in modelling positive relationships through which men who perpetrate violence can be challenged, encouraged and coached to take personal responsibility for their abusive behaviour by male peers who have successfully travelled the same path and now enjoy healthy relationships.

Pub Charity has been a faithful supporter of Christchurch Women’s Refuge for many years and has showed its belief in the power of specialist peer support by making a substantial grant to kick start the development of the service. In partnership with other family violence agencies, the University of Canterbury and Recovery Innovations, the first peer support training programme will commence in early 2012. If you, or a woman or man you know, have recovered from family violence and are interested in finding out more about the possibility of becoming a family violence peer support specialist, please contact us on 03 353 7400.

Here comes Christmas ...

Christmas is a time of year associated with much happiness for many people, but it is also a time of increased stress and violence. We are very grateful that so many people want to support women and children who are now or have been living with family violence and may not experience a happy Christmas.

Supporting the agency with monetary donations is always helpful, as is supporting clients with vouchers for groceries or petrol (which means they can also be gifted after Christmas to families who are not yet in our service).

If you’d like to buy gifts for women and children here are some ideas:

- Boxes of chocolates for families to share
- New toys and books for children
- Toiletry gift sets
- Children’s DVDs
- Board games
- Children’s colouring in/sticker/glitter sets



- Teenage diaries
- Bead making kits for older girls
- New makeup
- Christmas wrapping paper
- Family passes to holiday activities

Please note that we prefer items not to be wrapped, as this allows women and children to choose appropriate items for each other and – more importantly – to wrap them themselves so that they feel that they have contributed to the gift.

Did you know ...

that you can donate online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Check out our ‘Support the Refuge’ section to see how!’.

White Ribbon Ride Comes to Christchurch

On 24 November the White Ribbon Riders rolled into Christchurch to spread the word about standing up against violence towards women. White Ribbon Day is internationally observed on 25 November and is a day on which men wear a white ribbon as a personal pledge against violence towards women.

The South Island riders were part of the week-long motorcycle ride which is a key element of the White Ribbon campaign each year, but this was the first time the ride had included the South Island. "For us it's about standing up for what's right and sharing our message," said long-time



Shane Henry signs the pledge with Julie McCloy and Nicola Woodward from Christchurch Women's Refuge

ride organiser Shane Henry. "As men we have to understand we are part of the solution. By standing up and speaking out about it we can send a message to men and boys throughout New Zealand that violence is no longer the norm, and that relationships based on respect are much more satisfying and rewarding."

New ambassador Daryl Gibson and Crusader Head Coach Todd Blackadder both recently added their names to the official White Ribbon pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence towards women.

Joining the ride for the last kilometre was supporter and musician Rachel Dawick, who bicycled from Cape Reinga to Bluff to raise money for Christchurch Women's Refuge's work with women and children. Rachel and

fellow musician friends also put on a fundraising concert on the evening of White Ribbon Day.

Image courtesy of the Families Commission

Since the earthquakes, crisis calls to Christchurch Women's Refuge have increased 48%.

1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011

Like us on Facebook



Christchurch Women's Refuge has a Facebook presence! Check us out and 'Like' us to keep up to date on what we are doing and to share your thoughts with us.

Receive *The Advocate* by Email

Please help us reduce costs by choosing to receive *The Advocate* by email. Contact julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or call (03) 353 7400

Join the journey to a violence free society

Charities Commission Number CC 30026

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please add me to the email distribution list.

Please post to:

Christchurch Women's Refuge Inc., PO Box 32 034, Christchurch 8147

Here is my donation of \$25 \$75 \$150 \$200

Other amount (please enter) \$ _____

Cheque payable to Christchurch Women's Refuge

Or charge my Visa MasterCard Expiry date ____ / ____

Card No.

Name on Card _____

Please send me information about making a gift to Christchurch Women's Refuge in my will

If you wish to discuss a donation or make automatic payments please contact Julie on (03) 353 7400 or at julie@womensrefuge.co.nz
You can donate online at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Thank you! We will send you a receipt



CUT ALONG THE LINE