



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

Te Roopu Wahine o Tamaki Makaurau

**Facilitating empowerment and
well-being for women**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
2012 – 2013**

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COMMITMENTS

Mission Statement

The Auckland Women's Centre facilitates empowerment and well-being for women.

Philosophy

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

Constitutional Objectives

1. We recognise Maori as Tangata Whenua o Aotearoa and wholeheartedly embrace and uphold the principles and spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
2. We will create an environment for Auckland women to meet for support, discussion, information, referral, learning and sharing skills.
3. We will provide information on women's rights, healthcare and issues affecting women's lives from a feminist perspective.
4. We support and assist the development of women's self help initiatives.
5. We advocate at local and national levels on women's issues.
6. We network with other women's and community groups to promote women's empowerment in society.
7. We will 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.
8. Any income, benefit, or advantage shall be applied towards the charitable purposes of the Auckland Women's Centre.

Strategic Directions: July 2012 - June 2014

1. Deliver sustainable projects to improve the well-being of marginalised mothers and their families.
2. Provide affordable, accessible, quality services, programmes and resources for women in response to their needs.
3. Be an effective voice for women's equality and well-being.
4. Build and foster organisational capability and capacity.

GOVERNANCE COLLECTIVE REPORT

By Cissy Rock, Chairperson

I am struck by the regeneration which has occurred during the past year. Our commitment to find out what value we add to our sector has resulted in a number of initiatives that will continue to inform us.

Women's Talk drew in women who enjoy the discussion of topics central to their lives. A **survey** to uncover what our Gossip readers and Facebook friends thought about the Centre allowed us up-to-date opinion about our performance. New Collective members brought fresh ideas and energy, and **Sing For Your Supper**, our annual fundraiser, offered opportunities for celebration and profile raising.

The pressure to secure funding and balance the budget has spurred us to closely examine what we offer and how we can support these projects. A **new**

fundraising role has been created: the goal is to make

the Centre financial sustainable. The fantastic work of **Robyn Lambourne** as our Social Worker was one of the projects that had to finish due to funding constraints.

Leonie Morris remains a strong and responsive manager, juggling many balls to keep the women's centre relevant and meaningful. **Ellie Lim** provides brilliant front line support, with the help of wonderful volunteers, and she organises a great range of adult education opportunities. The amazing **Elizabeth Morey** retired after many years of service and **Tania Brady** has filled her shoes with great enthusiasm and knowledge. **Rochelle Carr** has taken the SKIP Single Mothers Project from strength to strength. **Anne Kelly** handled the MOE contract at Western Park Village with a great community led approach. Sadly, the talented

Donna Jaser has departed, but this role is now held by the wonderful **Sophie Richmond**, who is also our new Fundraising Coordinator.



Dr Judy McGregor

Another new initiative this year was the establishment of a Centre **Patron**, ably filled by the wonderful **Dr Judy McGregor**. One highlight of Judy's work as Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner at the Human Rights Commission from 2003-2012 was producing 'Caring Counts', a scathing inquiry into the wages and conditions of the female-dominated aged care workforce. In December 2012 Judy became Head of the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy at AUT. Judy is our speaker at the AGM where she will report on a recent UN meeting in Geneva she attended on behalf of New Zealand women.

As a Collective we see a good balance of the new and the existing, meaning a healthy future for the Centre, demonstrating our deep knowledge of the women's sector and our ability to adapt.



Our paid staff, Back row from left to right: Rochelle, Leonie, and Sophie. Front row: Anne, Ellie and Tania

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 communities, partnering with other agencies to provide a voice for gender equity, early childhood education support in Ranui, lesbian support and well-being, and delivering a SKIP Positive Parenting Single Mums Project.

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Information, Referral and Advice Service

In the 2012/13 financial year 3,474 women from all over Tamaki Makaurau received assistance from our extensive service. Women have made contact by phone, email or in person about: women's health services, educational courses and workshops, counselling support, emergency accommodation, budgeting resources, maternity and mothering, domestic and/or sexual violence support, migrant resources, women's activities and adventures, lesbian events and support, and much more.

Intensive support for women

Working from a strength-based approach, Centre staff and volunteers provide intensive face-to-face or telephone support to women experiencing major distress and seeking assistance with immediate needs. Empathetic listening, support and validation are provided, information is given, and referrals can be made to specialised crisis care services and community service providers for ongoing assistance. This financial year an additional 263 women received this type of intensive support from the Centre, 62 of whom had children under 17.

Therapeutic massage

Affordable massage for beneficiaries and other women on low incomes is available at the Centre. This service is very popular and bookings have to be made a few months in advance. A big thank you to Esme Anna for her wonderful skills and excellent service. Esme started full time study in March of this year. Since then the service has been operating under the nurturing hands of Maryann Kostanich, Rangimarie Smith and Jenny Naea.



Personal counselling

The Centre has benefited from retaining an experienced and talented counselling team. **Robyn Lawrence** and **Joan Prairie** provide high quality and low cost therapy sessions. Clients have a choice of counsellors and therapeutic modalities. Our counsellors are fully qualified, are members of a professional association and receive clinical supervision.

Free mammograms

We were delighted to host the Mobile Breast Screening Unit at the Centre again this year. Provided by Breast Screen Aotearoa, the Unit was based at the Centre for eight weeks, delivering free screening for women aged from 45 to 69.

SKIP SINGLE MUMS POSITIVE PARENTING PROJECT

We were thrilled to have this project renewed and hours extended to 30 per week. Our project engages single mums in fun, informative activities and leadership opportunities. It also develops collaborative partnerships within the Auckland community, strengthening our collective response to promoting positive parenting.

SKIP outcomes and achievements:

- SKIP workshops were specifically targeted to meet participants' needs where the non-judgemental SKIP approach enables parents to share stories, connect and plan SKIP strategies with positive parenting outcomes.
- We provided 27 positive parenting presentations, one off workshops, and a series of 3-5 week parenting programmes to the community. A total of 178 attended including 82 single mums, 87 partnered mums, 7 partnered dads, 1 single dad and 1 caregiver. This was above the MSD targets of 24 outreach workshops.
- We partnered with 11 organisations to deliver SKIP sessions including Roskill South Hub, Somali Women's Parenting group at Wesley Community Centre, and the Waitakere Women's Centre.
- Five wonderful single mums belong to the Core Group (Jeannie Maher, Ollie Roberts, Jo Fletcher, Tina Tucker, and Philippa Haith.) The Core Group ensures the project is participant-led and assists the mums to gain leadership skills enabling them to spread SKIP messages throughout their communities.
- New workshop tools and activities were created for parents. For example, Mums added to the list 'Ways to Show Love and Warmth' which grows longer every time new parents participate.



- One single mum, from the first SKIP workshop in February 2011, became a regular AWC volunteer.

- Two new events were held by SKIP AWC and our partners: 'Single Parent Family Fun Day' at Roskill South Oasis Hub (approximately 90 people participated) and the 'inaugural SKIP Single Mother's Day' at

AWC. Both celebrated parenting by normalising support through socialising and connecting with other single parents.

- We participated in three other community events - Toddlers Day Out (about 18,000 people attended), Molley Green Neighbourhood Festival (several thousand attended), and the Marvellous Mums expo in the Kelston Mall (30 attended).
- More than 40 attended the Single Mums Agency Network meetings, and 15 community agencies contributed to the initiative by sharing ideas, resources, and developing strong working relationships.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS

In 2012-2013, we were able to offer a wider variety of Courses and Workshops to meet the needs of our communities. In this past year we took a risk with eight new workshops/courses and we were absolutely thrilled with the feedback.

Our new weekend workshop **Self Esteem and Empowerment for Women** complements our existing assertiveness course. The tutor, Chris Johannis, is a counselor and has facilitated workshops at the North Shore Women's Centre, Youthline and Eden and came to us highly recommended by those agencies. In



the feedback of what women liked most about the workshop, they said "it was a safe environment to share thoughts" and "the exercises helped us: identify our issues, share them with each other and work well as a group".

Love it or Leave It ran as a one day workshop challenging participants to look at the emotional attachments we have to our possessions and exploring our own personal ways of accumulating and letting go. Using psycho drama techniques Marian Hammond and Estelle Mendelsohn facilitated the workshop in a beautifully nurturing way. Participants said, "I gained valuable insight into my attachment/collection of objects" and "it gave me the impetus to start "leaving objects".

Other new programmes this year were **How to start a Home Based Business, Towards Financial Freedom, For the Love of Leather (Leather craft workshop), Art Journaling** and **Belly Dancing**.

We continued to provide invaluable support groups such as: **Amazing Assertiveness For Women, Flourishing in Midlife and Beyond, Questioning?** (Support Group for discovering your Sexual Orientation), **Solo Mum's: Resourcing the Source, and Building A New Life After Separation workshops**.



We were also able to continue to offer our popular long standing courses and workshops: **Yoga, Pilates, Get Knitting, Lesbian DVD and Games Evenings, , Memoir Writing Toolkit, Introduction to Te Reo Māori, Mosaic Mash Up, Girls' and Women's Self Defence workshops and our Women's Book Club**.

Over the year, we have seen a steady growth in attendance at the **Lesbian/Bi/ Queer and Trans women social night**. With this growth has come an increasing sense of strength, connection and community. The women who attend are voicing their appreciation for the group. They have remarked on how its continuity (this is the social night's fourth year) offers them an on-going , stable base of support.

We offer empowering courses in a safe environment. We hold firm to our commitment to provide a women-only space in which women of all ages can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of belonging to their community.

PLAYGROUP AT RANUI CARAVAN PARK

In June 2012 we established a playgroup, Te Paa Whare, at the Ranui Caravan Park funded by the Ministry of Education, MoE. At playgroups children are given the opportunity to initiate free play and parents support their children's learning by playing. We were delighted to welcome Anne Kelly as the Playgroup Coordinator. Anne was a PlayCentre mum and lived at the Caravan Park for a short time. Te Paa Whare was a great success with all the children taking part. Many of the children have not been involved in Early Childhood Education (ECE) before. MoE decided that from June 2013 the contract would no longer include funding to rent Te Paa Whare. Thanks to Anne forming a partnership with the Ranui Baptist Church, her work continues centred on the Church and frequent visits to the Caravan Park.



SOCIAL WORKER

In February 2012 we employed a registered social worker, Robyn Lambourne, for 20 hours a week. As a mother of Maori and Chinese heritage with four adult children, two mokopuna and nine years' experience in the child protection team of Child, Youth and Family, Robyn was the perfect fit for this role. She provided intensive, whānau-centred case management for 28 predominantly Maori women and their whānau per year. She built supportive relationships with her clients and their whānau, connected them with other support in their local community, and worked with them to develop a pathway to achieve their goals. Unfortunately this position was disestablished at the end of June 2013 due to a lack of funding.

RESOURCES FOR THE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY

The Women's Library

The Centre's library contains many hundreds of books written for and by women, both popular fiction and non-fiction. It is a highly used resource for women wanting reading material for pleasure or study. During the last year Aorewa McLeod and Judith Humbert have done sterling work in the library, carrying out a stocktake and ensuring the books are catalogued and shelved correctly.

GOSSIP – our quarterly newsletter, website and Facebook page

GOSSIP is provided free to over 1,800 individuals and to about 250 community organisations each quarter, letting women know about the services and activities of the Centre, providing a space for others to promote woman-focused events, and featuring articles on a topical women's issue.

Our website www.awc.org.nz allows women from all over the world to find out about the Centre and to email us from our site. Visitor numbers continued to increase over this financial year. We receive about 1,500 visitors a month. The Centre also has a Facebook page which is updated frequently.

BEING A VOICE FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY

Our Chairperson, Cissy Rock organised three **Women's Talk** forums at the Centre last year, creating the space for women to reflect and converse. In August 2012 Julie Fairey, mother, trade unionist, feminist, blogger, and an elected member of the Puketapapa Local Board spoke on her beliefs and her work. In December, combined with our AGM, we heard from Ruth Herbert, an impressive, long-time researcher, campaigner and advocate against domestic and sexual violence. Cissy changed the format in May 2013 bringing a diverse panel of speakers together to discuss "How do you relate feminist concepts to your daily lives?" Each forum has been thought-provoking and inspiring and brought new women to the Centre.

In August 2012 the Centre established **Auckland 26 Weeks for Babies** a coalition of thirty-nine parenting, women's and trade union groups to support MP Sue Moroney's Bill to extend paid parental leave from 14 to 26 weeks. The coalition was launched with a flash mob at Britomart led by Jacqui Brown, star of the popular parenting show 'Keep Calm and Carry on'. In October a public meeting attracted over 70 people to hear a panel of speakers moderated by Michele A'Court. A majority of MPs support the Bill, but the Government has said that if the Bill is voted into law it will use its power of financial veto to strike the new law down.

In November 2012 we partnered with Women's Health Action to form **Silent Injustice**, a support group for women who are having bad experiences in the Family Court.

As many as 44% of all women earn less than the living wage of \$18.40 an hour! This year the Centre joined **Living Wage Aotearoa** to work for all employees to have both the basic necessities of life and to be able to participate as active citizens in society.

The Auckland Women's Centre continued to coordinate the **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children** which gained two new members this year. The Eastern Women's Refuge and the North Shore Women's Centre joined the existing members: Auckland Women's Centre, Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP, Homeworks Trust, Inner City Women's Group, the Mental Help Foundation, Mt Albert Psychological Services, SHINE Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday, Supportline Women's Refuge, and Women's Health Action Trust. The coalition shared relevant research, supported best practice in family violence intervention, and advocated for the sector by producing submissions to local and national government.

The Centre was part of the formation of the **CEDAW Coalition of New Zealand NGOs**, which represents a wide variety of women's civil society organisations. This coalition was established primarily to increase the glacial pace of implementation of the CEDAW recommendations.

We continued to run **Feminist Action** to provide women with the opportunity to discuss and work for gender equity. Feminist Action had a number of victories over the year, for example we successfully lobbied Toyworld to stop sex stereotyping their toys in their monthly catalogue.



WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE THE FOLLOWING WOMEN:

Members of the **Governance Collective** provide AWC with guidance and support within a collective framework. Members provide invaluable knowledge, skills, perspective and ideas. We wish to thank **Cissy Rock** (Chairperson), **Christy Parker** (Secretary), **Nicola Whyte** (Treasurer), **Natalie Thorburn**, **Katie Palmer du Preez** and **Aorewa McLeod** for their huge contributions. At our AGM in December 2012 **Sarah-Jane Olsen**, **Dale Little** and **Ruth Busch** were elected to the Governance Collective. We were sad to say goodbye to **Natalie** who gave much to the agency in 2012 and left when she took a job in Manukau at the beginning of 2013. Our heartfelt thanks also to Christy who also resigned this year after over five years of service.



Collective members: Nicola, Aorewa Cissy, Christy, and Natalie, with staff member, Ellie Lim

This year our frontline service has benefited from the hard work of many volunteers and student placements. We would like to thank the following women for their energy and enthusiasm: **Genevieve Smith**, **Jeannie Colmar**, **Cleone Campbell**, **Pinio Diamante**, **Veronika Rybova**, **Jessica Drost**, **Lara Simo** and **Amea Parker**.

In March 2013 our incredible Massage therapist **Esme Anna** committed herself to full time study, Esme was with us for almost one year and we were very sad to



Collective members: Katie, Dale, Sarah-Jane and Ruth

see her go but wish her all the best with her studies and new career. Since March we have had the pleasure of having the therapeutic hands of **Maryann Kostanich**, **Rangimarie Smith** and **Jenny Naea**.

We were also sad to see our long term volunteer Marilyn Johnson leave in 2012. Marilyn was a delight to work with as she brought to the frontline service a long herstory of involvement with feminism and lesbian rights and a wonderful sense of humour.

Other women who have generously contributed their time and effort to our crèche, mail-outs, advocacy work, cleaning and library include: **Aorewa McLeod**, **Barbara McArdle**, **Donogh Rees**, **Elizabeth Morey**, **Jenny Naea**, **Judy Mori**, **Liesa Walter**, **Lil Convery**, **Liz Sharp**, **Loretta Verry**, **Mary-Ann Kostanich**, **Nina Coker**, **Rosiena White**, **Silke Hartung**, **Tiara Betham**, **Tricia McLaughlin**, and **Wendy Rowe**. We also wish to express our special thanks to **Bronwyn Banks**, our talented and compassionate crèche supervisor.

We sincerely thank the **tutors** of our courses, activities and workshops, listed on the following page. Their ability to share their diverse skills and experiences allows us to offer a wide variety of support and learning opportunities to our community. Also listed on the next page are our **funders** whose generosity enables us to provide a wide range of services and programmes to women.

THE AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES AND WOMEN THAT SUPPORTED OUR WORK:

FUNDERS	Estelle Mendelsohn	Grey Lynn Community Centre
ANZ New Zealand Staff Foundation	Grace Kao	HIPPY
ASB Community Trust	Joan Prairie	Human Rights Commission
Auckland Council	Kate Millington	Inner City Women's Group
Creative Communities	Kathryn Tulloch	Mangere Women's Refuge
COGS	Lisa Dudson	Massey Community House
Cuesports Foundation	Lisa Williams	Mental Health Foundation
First Sovereign Trust	Marian Hammond	Mt Albert Physiological Services
Four Winds Charitable Trust	Margaret Lewis	National Council of Women
GABA Charitable Trust	Marilyn Gravette	New Zealand Families Violence Clearing House
Guardian Trust	Nancy Cooper	North Shore Women's Centre
John Ilott Charitable Trust	Morgan Libeau	Northern Family Works
John Logan Campbell Residuary Trust	Rosanna Marks	Odyssey House
Lion Foundation	Simone Bonny	Parent Aid
Ministry of Education	Susy Carryer	Plunket
Ministry of Social Development, MSD	Tania Hubber	Raeburn House
Nautilus Foundation	Vicky Wood	Rape Prevention Education
New Zealand Lottery Grants Board	Wende Jowsey	Rainbow Youth
Pub Charity Inc	AGENCIES	Ranui Baptist Community Care
Rule Foundation	Auckland Council	Ranui PlayCentre
SKIP, MSD	Auckland PlayCentre Association	Refresh
SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust	Auckland Regional Migrants Trust	Roskill South Oasis Early Intervention Hub
Trillian Trust	Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP	Shakti Women's Centre
United Way (NZ) Inc	Anglican Trust for Women and Children	SHINE
Waitemata Local Board	Auckland Women's Refuge	St Vincent de Paul, Otahuhu
	Barnardos	Stop Demand
	Campus Feminist Collective	Supportline Women's Refuge
TUTORS	Child Poverty Action	Tamaki Makaurau Lesbian Newsletter
Barb Wallis	Community Alcohol and Drug Services	Te Rito Rodney
Bianca Williams	CYF, Grey Lynn, Westgate	Tu Wahine Trust
Carol Rewega	Eastern Women's Refuge	The Hand Mirror Blog
Caroline Williams	Family Planning Association	Violence Free Waitakere
Cissy Rock	Glendene Hub	Waitakere Women's centre
Chris Johannis		Women's Health Action