

Summer 2011



Auckland  
**Women's  
Centre**

Auckland Women's Centre

**Gossip**

**Contact us**

4 Warnock St  
Grey Lynn

**Ph 376 3227**

**info@womens.org.nz**

PO Box 78271

Grey Lynn 1245

**www.awc.org.nz**

**Centre hours**

**Monday to Friday**

**9am - 4pm**

**Additional  
Library hours**

**Saturday**

**11am - 1.30pm**

*Thanks to the  
Oxford Sports Trust and  
the Cuesports Foundation  
for funding this  
newsletter and  
our course brochure.*

# Auckland Women's Centre News

We hope you had a lovely break over the Christmas/new year period. This is a big year for the Auckland Women's Centre (AWC) as our Teen Parent Project, Thrive, will become independent of AWC by 30 June 2011. We started working with teen parents in 2001 running a Teen Parent Support Group. Today Thrive is a top quality, wrap-around service with excellent staff and teen parent volunteers and with many partnerships and collaborations.

Thrive recently and gratefully received five-year partnership funding from the Todd Foundation, which will support them in employing a new manager in the next few months to take the agency forward at this exciting time. Thrive already has its own fantastic Governance Board, and by July, Thrive will be operating from its new base, somewhere in central-west Auckland.

Thrive's talented Governance Board includes:

**Rochana Sheward, Chairperson**, Manager, McLaren Park and Henderson South Community Initiatives

**Niles Newberry, Treasurer**, Senior Business and Planning Analyst, University of Auckland

**Anna Witten-Sage, Secretary**, Teacher, Massey High School

**Marama Davidson**, *Te Rarawa/Ngāpuhi/Ngāti Porou*: Advisor, Human Rights Commission

**Paul Davidson**, Tenancy Manager, Housing New Zealand Corporation

**Tara Joe Moala**, *Ngāti Mahanga (Tainui)*: Coordinator, Young Parents Mentoring Project

**Maria Kekus**, Executive Officer, Society for Youth Health Professionals, Aotearoa New Zealand (SYHPANZ)

**Annalise Myers**, former Development Manager of Thrive, now an independent community development consultant

**Lou Renner**, Injury Prevention Strategy Secretariat, Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)

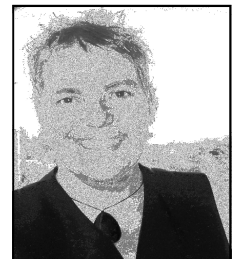
This is Thrive's penultimate feature in Gossip so find out more next time about Thrive's new location, the new Thrive team and, of course, the launch!

With the departure of Thrive from AWC, there is an opportunity now for AWC to provide more programmes for other women. At our strategic planning day in December, we identified a number of projects for further scoping, including: more support for solo mothers, older women, teens and young women, and offering more holistic health services. Central to the discussion was a recognition that the Auckland Women's Centre needs to undertake more outreach work, providing programmes off site.

For many years AWC has wanted to beef-up our work advocating for women. The birth of Feminist Action (see inside) provides an opportunity for us to work with interested women on this project.

At the end of last year we bid a sad farewell from our Governance Collective to the dynamic **Jules Radford-Poupard** who shifted to Waiheke. Jules has a deep analytical understanding of the women's and community sectors and gave her time generously to AWC. We are thrilled that **Cissy Rock**

was elected to our Governance Collective at the AGM in December. Cissy has spades of energy and commitment to women and knowledge about women's lives. We feel privileged that she has joined our agency. Cissy is already doing an excellent job of facilitating Feminist Action for us.



Cissy Rock

**Below are the answers to the quiz on page three**

1. c, 2. a, 3. a, 4. b, 5. d, 6. c, 7. d, 8. a, 9. d, 10. a, 11. d

# Available at the Women's Centre...

---

## Courses and groups

We have a jam-packed year coming up, full of our favourite courses and some new exciting offerings. Returning in Term 1 are Ageing Well, Beginners Te Reo and Tikanga Maori and Building a New Life After Separation. These courses only happen once or twice a year so it's a good idea to book in quickly.

Our most popular course, Amazing Assertiveness for women, also returns along with activities to feed the soul and look after your body like Hatha Yoga and Pilates/stretch.

We have three groups providing opportunities to have fun and meet new people. Our Women's Book Club, Crafty Goodness and Lesbian DVD night (all women welcome) meet monthly and are FREE to attend. Just let us know you're new and interested in coming along.

## "Exploring the female form"

This year we will be offering four exciting new weekend art workshops based on this theme. The first in the series invites participants to explore and create expressions of the female form using harakeke (flax). We are very pleased to have visiting Wanaka artist, Enger Pelosi-Fear, tutoring this weekend course. Stay tuned for mosaics, life drawing and sculpture in Terms 2 and 3.

Check out our website, community education brochure or phone 376 3227 x 201.

## Thrive, Teen Parent Project

For information about our wrap-around service and community development projects for pregnant

teenagers and teen parents, ph Gaby 376 3227 x 203 or Zee 376 3227 x 202.

## Information, Advice and Referral Service

Phone, e-mail, or drop in for friendly, non-judgmental assistance.

## Counselling

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

## Therapeutic massage

Available for beneficiaries and other **women on low incomes:** Mondays from 9.30am and 2.00pm, for an hour. Cost is \$25 for beneficiaries and \$40 for non-beneficiaries. Please book well in advance as demand is high.

## Women's Library: recent additions

Great books recently added to our library include:

- **Quinine**, by New Zealander, Kelly Ana
- **Unbearable Lightness**, by Portia De Rossi on her struggle with an eating disorder while terrified that her sexual orientation would be examined in the tabloids
- **Room**, by Emma Donoghue
- **The Hut Builder**, by Laurence Fearnley

Joining our library costs \$5 for beneficiaries and between \$10-\$20 for non-beneficiaries per year. As well as being open during the week, the library is also open every Saturday from 11.00am to 1.30pm.

---

## Anti-lesbian hate crime

On Saturday evening, 15 January, Mangawhai Heads couple, Juliet Leigh and Lindsay Curnow, were the victims of an arson attack. They were watching TV at home when they heard an explosion. The packing shed next to their house, which contained their horticultural business, Blooming Bulbs, had been set ablaze.

A week earlier, the packing shed, house and their car had been defaced with abusive anti-lesbian graffiti - versions of "dirty", "filthy", "trash" and repeatedly, "dikes" (sic). The police are certain the sequence of events constitute a hate crime. The shed and business were destroyed at a cost of over \$100,000.

The couple had, until then, felt safe in Mangawhai Heads, which is 100

kms north of Auckland. Lindsay said, "We have lived here seven years and never had a cross word with anyone in the district." They have been heartened by the support of the local community, but as the Northland Fire Safety Officer said of the arson, "It's a real nasty, nasty crime."

A Facebook page has been set up to support the couple. The page has brought to light other homophobic incidents. The Urge Bar on Karangahape Road reported that one of their patrons, Simon, was recently beaten up for being gay. In Christchurch, a gay male couple were forced to close their bakery after they suffered abuse and damage to their home and car as well as their business. One particular family and the family's friends gathered frequently outside

their business to hurl abuse at the couple and to drive away customers. One of those involved has been sentenced for their crime. Hopefully, justice will catch up with the homophobes of Mangawhai Heads soon.

In response to the attack on Lindsay and Juliet, Roslyn Noonan, Chief Human Rights Commissioner says "It is essential a strong message is given that this sort of behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any community. No-one in NZ should have to hide or live in fear of being attacked for who they are."

*AWC is sponsoring a raffle at the Big Gay Out on Sunday 13 Feb at Coyle Park in Pt Chev, with all proceeds going to Blooming Bulbs.*

# Test your knowledge of NZ's women's place in public life

**The Human Rights Commission** published its fourth *New Zealand Census of Women's Participation* in November. The report finds that New Zealand is sliding backwards in several areas of female participation. The report is online at [www.hrc.co.nz](http://www.hrc.co.nz), click on EEO, then highlights. Test your knowledge here; **the answers are on the front page.**

1. Women makeup 59% of public servants. What percentage of public sector chief executives are women?

- a. 58.6%
- b. 09.6%
- c. 17.6%
- d. 27.6%

2. In 2008 female representation on Government appointed boards was 42%. What % was it in 2010?

- a. 41.5%
- b. 42.5%
- c. 45.6%
- d. 47.5%

3. What percentage of judges are women?

- a. 26.03%
- b. 46.03%
- c. 36.03%
- d. 16.03%

4. What percentage of the police force are women?

- a. 19.3%
- b. 29.3%
- c. 39.3%
- d. 34.3%

5. In 2007 14.81% of newspaper editors were female. What was the percentage in 2010?

- a. 17.54%
- b. 21.54%
- c. 07.54%
- d. 11.54%

6. In 2007 33% of MPs were women. What was the percentage in 2010?

- a. 33.00%
- b. 34.00%
- c. 32.00%
- d. 36.00%

7. What percentage of university professors are women?

- a. 45.45%
- b. 51.45%
- c. 33.45%
- d. 22.45%

8. What percentage of the members of national sports boards are women?

- a. 24%
- b. 32%
- c. 38%
- d. 42%

9. What percentage of the Ministerial appointments to Auckland Council's Community Controlled Organisations are women?

- a. 49.6%
- b. 09.6%
- c. 39.6%
- d. 27.6%

10. What percentage of directorships of the top 100 companies on the NZ Stock Exchange are women?

- a. 09.32%
- b. 15.32%
- c. 22.32%
- d. 31.32%

11. What is the pay differential between male and female public servants?

- a. 05.4%
- b. 09.4%
- c. 12.4%
- d. 15.4%

## Feminist Action: Auckland

*Reclaiming feminism for a just and co-operative society*

- **Do you love being with other women and talking about things that are important to you?**
- **Are you action focused?**
- **Have you ever thought - "Its time for a feminist uprising!"?**

We are a group of women that meet on the first Wednesday of the month at AWC. As a new group we are currently focusing on working together on a couple of projects as a way of getting to know each other. For the next three months we want to try out the following format for our meetings:

### Format of meetings for the next three months

- 7.00 pm - Start with a half hour sharing circle
- 7.30 pm - Break into project groups, with an open space option for new/current issues to be discussed
- 8.30 pm - Come together for report back
- 9.00 pm - Close

The three projects we've identified are:

- A short video for YouTube about women's lives on the DPB (past and present).
- A sticker campaign – that raises awareness around the sexualisation and objectification of females.
- Exploring representation on the Advertising Standards Authority, in particular following up the fruit billboard.

All women are welcome to be part of this inclusive, fun, friendly and flourishing group. Contact Leonie for more info: [akcentre@womensz.org.nz](mailto:akcentre@womensz.org.nz) ph 376 3227 x 205

# Women's Human Rights in New Zealand

---

## By Geraldine Whiteford

In *Human Rights in New Zealand 2010*, the Human Rights Commission reviews New Zealand's human rights record, including a comprehensive discussion of the international human rights framework and how it relates to women. The chapter on Women's Rights addresses four critical issues for women: economic equity, violence against women, participation and representation, and maternity protection.

### **Economic equity**

Despite New Zealand's strong obligations to address discrimination and inequality in all aspects of economic life, New Zealand women are poorer than men. For example, women are over one-and-a-half times more likely than men to live in a household with a total annual income of \$30,000 or less. In the 2006 census, the median annual income from all sources for people aged over 15 was \$31,500 for men and \$19,100 for women, a gap of 39%.

The report then discusses the gender pay gap. Using the median hourly pay rate for all workers, it calculates the gender gap as 10.6%. When ethnicity is added, the gap is even greater, with the gender gap between European men and Pacific women at 24.4%!

The report discusses recent Government measures to address this gap. In 2004, a Pay and Employment Equity Unit was established in the Department of Labour to implement a plan of action. Reviews conducted by the unit in public service departments found gender pay gaps for median equivalent full-time hours ranged from 3% to 35%.

Despite this much needed work the unit was abolished in 2009. Instead, the Ministry of Women's Affairs was given a 12% funding increase to do more research and policy work on the gender pay gap. Unsurprisingly, the report states that little is known about the gender pay gap in the private sector. The report recommends a "timetabled approach to implementation of pay and employment equity that reflects economic conditions."

### **Violence Against Women**

Concerning domestic violence, the report of course highlights New Zealand's poor statistics in this area:

- In 2009, 14 women were murdered by their male partner or ex-partner.
- In 2006, 13,091 women and 5549 children used refuge services.
- Maori women are at three times higher risk of partner violence than women overall.

While recording concerns highlighted by researchers, such as inadequate services for disabled women and women from different ethnic backgrounds, difficulties in accessing legal aid, and lack of training in domestic violence for key groups including judges, the report, disappointingly, does not propose any new measures.

Concerning sexual violence against women, the report

notes that "despite sexual offences being the fifth most common offence reported in the Crime Survey and the most costly crime, only 10% of sexual offences are reported to the Police and of those only 8% result in the perpetrator's conviction."

In 2009, the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence released its reports. Its recommendations included changes to legislation concerning consent and reasonable belief and sustainable funding for specialist programmes to prevent sexual violence. While noting these recommendations, the Commission does not address the highly gendered nature of popular New Zealand culture that reinforces the objectification, sexualisation and disempowerment of women.

### **Participation and representation**

The Commission again carefully reports the statistics recording women's poor participation in leadership positions throughout New Zealand (see the quiz on page 3). Of publicly listed companies, 1.6% had female chief executives. In the state sector, women fare better, but still have not achieved equality with men.

In the labour market, women's participation rates are 62% compared with 74% for men. However, women are far more likely to work part-time and to be involved in unpaid work. The Commission's key recommendation is the "adoption of targets to improve representation of women in political and public office." Surely much more is needed to address the glacial pace of progress?

### **Maternity protection**

This section discusses key measures that protect mothers, including:

- New Zealand's paid parental leave provisions. The report notes that the scheme may exclude casual and seasonal workers who have not been in continuous employment with the same employer for six months.
- The statutory amendment which gives employees with caring responsibilities the right to request flexible work arrangements, noting that we do not know how many employees have used the scheme.

The shortage of low cost quality child care services with extended hours to accommodate, for example, shift workers.

### **In conclusion**

While critical of the sparse recommendations in this report, I agree with its conclusion: "*New Zealand is at a critical juncture in eliminating discrimination against women and achieving equality. The gains made by women in recent decades are fragile and at risk of being eroded. Concerted action by the Government, public agencies and civil society is needed to keep gender on the agenda.*"