

The Advocate

Annual Appeal a Chance to Make Change



CEO Annette Gillespie

Winter is well and truly here and it's definitely time to rug up and enjoy the warm, safe comfort of home, for those of us fortunate enough to have one.

As one of our supporters I know that you are aware of Christchurch Women's Refuge's commitment to helping the thousands of Canterbury women, children and young people whose lives are affected by family violence. We know that you are committed to supporting them too.

Our Annual Appeal is fast approaching – 19-25 July – and it is a great opportunity for us to really spread the message about family violence in Canterbury, what we at Christchurch Women's Refuge do and what everyone in our community can do to help, because family violence is everyone's problem – it affects our children, families and communities.

It is also a chance for us to generate some of the much-needed funding necessary to undertake our work with local women and children. Work such as providing safety to at-risk families; supporting women to create positive change in their own lives and that of their children; assisting women to access the essential services they need to keep themselves and their families safe; helping children to understand their experiences, plan to keep themselves safe in the present and look forward to a violence-free future; and creating safer, healthier communities that value all of their members.

On Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th July, Christchurch Women's Refuge is undertaking a Street Appeal throughout Christchurch, in Rangiora (where

we have a full-time office), and in Rolleston. By joining us for just two hours you, your staff, colleagues, friends or families can make change. Another option to really get involved is to recruit your staff, colleagues, friends or families and undertake your own fundraising activity for Christchurch Women's Refuge.

Christchurch Women's Refuge began New Zealand's refuge movement over 37 years ago. To have led the way in caring for and supporting New Zealand families is something we as Cantabrians should all champion and value, and it is a role that we want Canterbury to maintain. Creating safer families is a crusade we can all be part of, and proud of.

When you join us you are helping to support Canterbury families, women and children break the cycle of violence, because all the money we collect through our local appeal stays here.

In this newsletter you will find more information about the appeal, some of the people involved and ideas about how you can be part of the solution. I hope that you will join us in July to make a real difference to the women, children and young people who come to us for support and safety.

I thank you on their behalf for all the support you've given and no doubt will continue to give Christchurch Women's Refuge – never forget that it's your continuing assistance that ensures we are here for all the families who simply want the security of a safe home.

Annette Gillespie
Chief Executive Officer

Annual Appeal Week: 19-25 July

Christchurch Women's Refuge Street Appeal:

Friday (23rd) and Saturday (24th) July.

Times:

8:30am – 5:30pm in the central city (Friday 23) and from 9am-5pm in malls and suburban stores (both days).

Locations:

We are collecting throughout Christchurch, Rolleston and Rangiora.

Needed:

Collectors to fill slots (ideally two hours) and volunteers to help before and during the appeal days with administration. To volunteer call 353 7406, email enquiries@womensrefuge.co.nz or visit www.womensrefuge.co.nz. You can also donate online.

A Survivor's Story

Lynda was a social, confident woman with a job she loved; she had three grown-up daughters and then she met a man she fell in love with. She spent 14 years with him, on and off. Their last period together lasted three years, until finally she realised he really couldn't change. This is her story:

"It was magical when we first got together. He was charming, funny, very loving and kind. The relationship was good in all aspects. But within about four months, signs of his controlling nature started to come through. He was very possessive and jealous and eventually others noticed.

"There was emotional and verbal abuse and head games. He wanted me with him 24-hours a day, he would start rows late at night so that he would tire me out, he'd want to sit up half the night arguing – he could do that for a whole week.

"Every area of my life was affected – social, work, family. I had had lots of family contact before, but every week now I had to choose. Over the journey I did stand up to him and challenge him though. One day he had been violent in broad daylight, so I went out with friends that night to a bar. He called 61 times (in just over three hours). In the end I just went home. Then there were three days' interrogation about where I had gone and who I had talked to. It just wasn't worth it.

"It gradually became physical. He kicked a hole in the wall for no particular reason. At first he'd push me, or punch the wall right by my head – the message was clear. I withdrew from family and friends. I hid the bruises and I lied to the doctor when he broke my finger – he came into the doctor's office with me, to make sure." An unprovoked and unexpected attack in bed one night left Lynda with a brain injury which took nine months to heal.

"There is a high cost to this stuff. I couldn't work and I had loved my job, then he overdosed and he became a full-time job. It affected my children, family, friends – it was very, very frightening for them. I didn't really see the life or death situation that they did. They were very frightened he'd kill me or I'd take my own life.

"Most of my friends disappeared – I didn't want to be isolated but sometimes I didn't want to be around them as I was bruised, and I didn't want to communicate. I was ashamed. I knew I was in this awful situation but I wasn't ready to leave. In the end all I had was him.

"He was a sweet-talker – that's what tied me in for so long. He'd be so sorry, so brutally honest about himself and what he'd done. I did really love him and wanted it to work. It would be good for a while, then bad – but the cycle where it was ok got smaller and smaller."

"I went to another support agency and also talked to Carol (a Christchurch Women's Refuge worker) on the phone. It was just enough of a lifeline for me to keep sane and keep me going. Those little bits of contact with Refuge and a friend helped me move to a place where I thought if I leave him, I'll be ok. I had so much support and that was really lifesaving.

"In the end the pain just became bigger than the love. I didn't enjoy the calm because I knew the storm was coming – there was always an impending sense of doom.

"When he was unfaithful for a second time I decided I'd had enough. I got divorce papers and I met him in a park with a friend of mine as support and I told him it was over. He was begging, saying "I love you" but I made him sign the papers, then I dropped off all his stuff. I changed my phone numbers so he couldn't contact me and I went to the Police and got them to remind him that I had a Protection Order against him.

"It was a horrendous time, just awful. But I told all my friends and family that this is what I'm going to do. I accessed support programmes and Christchurch Women's Refuge had a course coming up. It got me to look at my strengths and kept me focussed on the reality of the situation I had been living with. Having the support and focus strengthened me to get through a very difficult period.

"It's been over a year now. I took my time to heal, to do a day-by-day routine. Now I'm firing ahead – I'm doing courses at CPIT, working out what I want to do with the rest of my life.

"The family relationships and relationships with my children – there was lots of damage done, but things are healing. I'm living now and I love it. It's the simple stuff, like going out with good people and going home to a safe house. Just being happy and being safe. I'm a liver and I feel like I've got myself back again.

"Now things are just good."



Staff Story – Carol Brown

Dealing with life's unpleasant realities - such as family violence- is not how many people would choose to spend their working day. It requires truly dedicated people with a real passion to make change. One of those people is Carol Brown, Christchurch Women's Refuge's Client Services Manager. Carol's role is a challenging one that includes facilitating groups, overseeing client interactions, working with high risk clients and managing the residential Safe House and its part-time staff of four.

Carol has been involved with women's refuge for 10 years. "I was supporting children with behavioural and academic difficulties and I saw that there was a connection between the dysfunctional family environment - particularly where abuse or violence was present - and the children's behaviour at school" she says.

Carol began as a volunteer and after three years took up paid work in the residential side of refuge, eventually evolving into community outreach and education roles.

"I have a real passion for this work" says Carol. "What inspires me is the feedback and excitement from the women and children we work with - seeing women gaining an understanding of the effects on them and their children and wanting to move forward and not stay in an abusive relationship.

"And the children love the group programme. I haven't seen a child that hasn't thoroughly enjoyed participating in it - many want to go through it again. Even in the Safe House - a lot of the kids see it as a holiday. They get to be warm, fed, not be frightened. It seems very ordinary, but it is hopefully the beginning of a better life for them.

"The focus on children has increased over years, and Christchurch Women's Refuge has the strongest focus on children's safety that I am

aware of in refuge. There has been a general growth of knowledge around the dynamics of family violence, coupled with a lot more collaboration with other non-government organisations, Police and Child, Youth and Family etc to better use that knowledge."

But for victims, have things really improved? "I'd have to say no" Carol says. "In fact, I have noticed that there's been an increase in the intensity of violence over time - it's much more extreme. And I notice that we are also seeing the very young and very old accessing the service more now, although I think this is evidence that people are willing to address the issue more readily than before.



Carol Brown,
Women's Refuge Client Services Manager

"The biggest challenge for clients is the near toleration of family violence - the perpetrators are at times not really being held accountable through the court system. Theft gets longer and harsher penalties than assault against women and children - the consequences for abusers are not equal to the crime. A man gets out on bail and so the woman has to hide away to keep safe - it is incredibly stressful for women."

Despite the challenges, Carol retains her passion for the work. "One of the best things for me personally is being able to work with clients with multiple issues; to make them aware of their options and the resources available and help them address these issues. We can give a woman a safe place to rest and regain her energy to address her basic needs, be they physical health, housing, parenting or court orders etc. To see a family with so many things to deal with move forward and be safe and happy - that makes it all worthwhile."

In Through the Back Door

From mid-June Christchurch Women's Refuge - with support from Christchurch City Council and the Ministry of Social Development - will be piloting a new social marketing campaign called 'In Through the Back Door'.

The campaign will see family violence prevention posters placed in public toilets of Council service centres (toilets are one of the few places where women who are controlled and in an abusive relationship can be safely alone). The posters will convey messages about what family violence is; what it looks like and feels like; how to recognise it in your own relationships or those of other people; and how to contact Christchurch Women's Refuge for help, support or information. The intention is to roll this campaign out in a wider variety of public or busy spaces in the future, resources permitting.



Support Our Annual Appeal

Our Annual Appeal in the week of 19-25 July is a great opportunity for you to support Christchurch Women's Refuge and its work by raising the funds essential to create safer families and stronger communities in Canterbury.



Check out the accompanying poster for fundraising ideas (also available on www.womensrefuge.co.nz or in hard copy from enquiries@womensrefuge.co.nz), but don't be restricted by our lack of imagination. Try organising your own events – it's a chance for you to help make change to women, children and young people's lives, and have fun along the way.

Here's some ideas to get you started:

- Don't have two hours to make change on the street? How about donating two hours of your wages instead?
- Could your business host a collection bucket for the month of July? Encourage staff and clients to donate their change
- Have you got great gardeners, bakers, painters etc at work or home? Arrange a skills auction amongst friends and colleagues
- Get back to childhood and hold a schools sports day – three legged races, egg races, tug-o-wars
- Let your talent shine with a Karaoke night (you could pay people to stop singing!)
- Go without for Appeal Week (19-25 July) or, better still, all July, give up one luxury – alcohol, cigarettes, cafe coffee, takeaways etc.
- Organise or take part in a fun run/walk/swim/bike ride and get sponsors through www.givealittle.co.nz
- Organise a mid-winter Christmas party and ask for donations to attend.

Whatever you do, tell your friends, family, colleagues and invite them to join you in making a difference.

Annual Appeal Week: 19-25 July

Christchurch Women's Refuge Street Appeal
Friday (23rd) and Saturday (24th) July

Have Fun Fundraising



What your donation or fundraising can do:

- \$10 helps provide resources for children's groups
- \$20 helps fund our driving service
- \$50 will help resource our 24-hour crisis line
- \$75 will help provide food, nappies, baby food and toiletries for the Safe House
- \$110 covers Safe House residents' rent for one week
- \$500 provides electricity to keep families in the Safe House warm for one month
- \$1150 pays for a woman to undertake a life-changing 10-week programme
- \$1275 pays for a child to undertake a life-changing 10-week programme

Please join us in creating safer families and stronger communities – donate today at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

“Thanks for opening my eyes”

Christchurch Women's Refuge client

Items we are always looking for include:

- Disposable nappies – variety of ages
- Toilet paper and sanitary items
- Non-perishable foods
- Women and children's new underwear – variety of sizes

Did You Know?

- We are award winning. Christchurch Women's Refuge won the large charity section of the 2009 Champion Canterbury Business Awards.
- It started here. Christchurch Women's Refuge established the very first refuge in New Zealand in 1973 – in fact, it was the first refuge to be established outside the United Kingdom.
- Size matters. Christchurch Women's Refuge is the biggest refuge in the country. Since we started we estimate that approximately 11,000 individuals have received our support.
- Not all refuges are the same. There are now 51 refuges affiliated to the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) and they operate independently. They may have differing philosophies, offer different services or support specific client bases. Christchurch Women's Refuge offers all refuge services as well as Ministry of Justice approved programmes for all women and children. We also host the 'It's not OK' campaign in Canterbury and partner the University of Canterbury in two current research projects.
- We are not just a Safe House. We long ago evolved to provide prevention and early intervention services. The majority of our clients are now 'community clients', who do not access the emergency Safe House services at all.
- We are not just for women. We have been working with children since 1988. We run separate group and individual 10-week programmes for children to ensure their different needs are met appropriately.



- We are not just for women and girls. We work with young men up to 17-years-old who have been victims of family violence and support safe male caregivers and grandparents.
- We are not a government agency. We are an independent agency and approximately only 30% of our income comes from government – the rest we must find ourselves.
- We are not just for Christchurch. Our services are available to all of Canterbury, and Kaikoura to Ashburton is our 'catchment'. We have an office in Rangiora to support North Canterbury and are currently extending our services in Selwyn.
- It's important to act locally. To best support local families it is best to support your local refuge directly, so that you know that your donation will stay here to make a difference in Canterbury.

Thanks to our Supporters

Thanks to all the individuals, groups, businesses and Trusts that supported us over the last few months. Key supporters appear on our Sponsors page at www.womensrefuge.co.nz

A special thank you to Sarah Campagnolo and Julia Capon who – with the support of some wonderfully talented women and helpful men – staged three popular performances of the Vagina Monologues in April to raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence against women. It was a thought provoking production by some dedicated people who wanted to get involved, use their talents to help others and have fun along the way. Christchurch Women's Refuge benefitted from all of their hard work by almost \$3000. Thanks Julia, Sarah and friends.



Sarah presents the proceeds of the Vagina Monologues to Christchurch Women's Refuge CEO, Annette Gillespie.

Clean Heat for Charity

Winter has kicked in and if your heat pump is over 12-months-old it is time to have it professionally cleaned. Without thorough cleaning heat pumps lose efficiency, costing you more to run, and do not keep your air clean.



Cleaning the filters is only quarter of the job so don't risk your health, and that of your family. Aircon Cleaners specialise in cleaning heat pumps and have offered to donate \$12 off the price of each heat pump cleaning if you mention Christchurch Women's Refuge when you book. To ensure that your unit runs smoother, cleaner and more efficiently call 0800 480 482 and quote Christchurch Women's Refuge.

"For the first time I felt I was not alone"

Christchurch Women's Refuge client

Every Piece Matters in October

Christchurch Women's Refuge is one of the five Christchurch Jigsaw partners that will host the annual Jigsaw conference on 28-29 October at the Hotel Grand Chancellor.

Jigsaw is a community based network of independent agencies whose main focus is the prevention of child abuse, neglect and family violence. They also have a strong commitment to helping families provide the safe and nurturing environment that children need to reach their full potential.

The conference has the theme 'Every Piece Matters' and this year the Jigsaw conference is open to anyone who wishes to attend, so that together we can make the children and families of New Zealand safer. It will be a great opportunity for all agencies, organisations and individuals who are concerned with children, families and positive parenting to talk, be inspired and learn together. To find out more please contact maree@jigsaw.org.nz



Frocktails on 21 July

Ladies, mark out 5.30-7.30pm on Wednesday 21 July for three fabulous things in one event - fashion, cocktails (well, wine!) and shopping!

At this interactive fashion event, organised in partnership with Love Your Shoes and Annah Stretton, you will have the chance to meet, greet and network; admire, try on and purchase new fashion looks and a fabulous range of shoes; enjoy a glass of wine and delicious canapés from the Hotel So kitchen; and bid on some great items in a silent auction. What more could you asked for to brighten up a grim winter evening? The cost is \$35 and profits from the auction, plus a percentage of the ticket price, go to Christchurch Women's Refuge.

Contact enquiries@womensrefuge.co.nz or call 353 7406 to book now (and spread the word!)



Seeking Old Shoes

Any old shoes under the bed? We need as many pairs as possible for a display in Cashel Mall on Friday 23 July. Any kind will do - sneakers, jandals, work shoes - as long as you don't want them back again. Ideally we need 30 pairs of booties or shoes for children under one year old; 30 pairs for children one-five years old; 20 for children five-ten years old; 10 for adolescents; 120 pairs of women's shoes and 60 pairs of men's shoes. That is 260 pairs - the approximate death toll from family violence since 2000.

Christchurch Women's Refuge would like to acknowledge The Southern Trust, who generously funded this edition of The Advocate.



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If you would prefer to receive your copy of *The Advocate* by email please contact us by emailing Julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or calling (03) 353 7501.

Join the journey to a violence free society

Charities Commission Number CC 30026

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

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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 of cardholder _____

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 7501, at Julie@womensrefuge.co.nz or visit www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Thank you! We will send you a receipt

