

Little Book of Refuges



NSW Women's Refuge Movement

Structure of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement

Regionals

Due to the diverse and expansive area covered, the NSW Women's Refuge Movement developed Regional meetings where refuges within geographical areas meet on a regular basis for the purpose of sharing information and discussing important issues relating to their region and the Movement as a whole. A delegate, endorsed by that region, represents the region at the state Working Party meeting held monthly.

Support Groups

In recognition of the disadvantages faced by some groups, statewide networks were formed to provide a forum for support, networking and advocacy in raising specific issues. These include: Walan Jineras Koori Support, NESB Support Group, Lesbian Support, Child Support and Young Women's Group.

NSW Women's Refuge Working Party

The NSW Women's Refuge Working Party (which meets once a month) is a smaller and more manageable body that can implement decisions made at conference. It also has the authority to make decisions between conferences, if necessary. Working Party is made up of delegates from the various regions as well as the Koori, lesbian, NESB, young women and child support groups. The delegates' role is to represent the views of their region (and/or representational base) and provide feedback on any decisions which Working Party makes or activates it takes on.

State Conferences

Major policy decisions which affect the Movement are made at the state conferences of the Women's Refuge Movement. These conferences are held three times a year and all refuges are encouraged to take their views and proposals to be heard and discussed.

NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre

The NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre is the contact point for the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. The NSW Women's Refuge Working Party forms the management committee of the WRRRC and ensures that the centre reflects the interests of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. The Executive Officer's role includes representing the NSW Women's Refuge Movement in line with endorsed policies and philosophies. There is also a particular focus on policy formation and specific projects.

Acknowledgements

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement's Little Book of Refuges- First Edition is a project of the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party.

The Project was coordinated by the NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre Centre and Sub Group.

Project Consultant and Writer – Jennifer Germon

Graphic Design - Cara Kirkwood

The Copyright of this document belongs to:
NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party
619 Elizabeth Street, Redfern NSW 2016
Australia
Published November 6, 2002

CONTENTS

◆ Forward	5
◆ Albury Wodonga Women's Refuge	7
◆ Armidale Women's Shelter	9
◆ Bega Women's Refuge	11
◆ Bonnie Women's Refuge	13
◆ Bringa Women's Refuge	15
◆ Butler Lodge	17
◆ Carrie's Place	18
◆ Eastlakes Women and Children's Service	20
◆ Elsie Refuge for Women and Children	22
◆ Erin's Place	23
◆ Faith Cottage	25
◆ Griffith Women's Refuge (Kulkuna Cottage)	27
◆ Inverell Refuge Centre	29
◆ Jenny's Place	31
◆ Kempsey Women and Children's Service	33
◆ Killara Women's Refuge	35
◆ Louisa Women's Refuge	36
◆ Manning District Emergency Accommodation	37
◆ Marian Centre	39
◆ Moree Women's Refuge (Ngala House)	41
◆ Muswellbrook Women and Children's Refuge	43
◆ Penrith Women's Refuge	44
◆ Tanderra Refuge	46
◆ Toukley Women's Refuge	47

◆ Tweed Shire Women and Children's Refuge	49
◆ Warrina Women and Children's Refuge	51
◆ Western Sydney sole Women's Accommodation Service	53
◆ Wimlah Refuge	55
◆ Woollongong Women's Refuge	56
◆ Woy Woy Women's Refuge	57
◆ Yinganeh Aboriginal Women's Refuge	59

NSW Women's Refuge Movement

Little Book Of Refuges

1st Edition

Forward

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement is made up of 55 women's refuges across NSW who provide support and accommodation to women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

The support offered by women's refuges in the early seventies, when the first refuge was funded, was limited to a safe place and informal support by workers and other women residents. Whilst maintaining a strong commitment to feminist philosophy, refuges have evolved over the years to meet the changing needs and demands of our society so that they can continue to effectively respond to the needs of women and children. Many refuges have introduced innovative strategies to address issues as identified by their local community. There is a greater focus on not only providing crisis support and accommodation, but branching out to include follow up, outreach support and specialised women and children's groups. Networks are often formed with other organisations and departments to enable a cohesive response.

However in recent times, the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party has become aware that there remains in the broader community, an outdated perception of what women's refuges in NSW offer. In response to this, the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party and Resource Centre have initiated the "NSW Women's Refuge Book of Refuges" offering member refuges the opportunity to include a description of the services they offer. This is a living document, which will be added to as more refuges take up the opportunity to include information on the services that they provide. This is a bold step as women's refuges have historically been shrouded by secrecy for reasons of security. However, it reflects the direction of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement in presenting as a visible and strong advocate for women and children who have experienced domestic violence, as well as highlighting the diverse types of support needed to provide an effective response.

The first edition includes 28 of the 55 refuges who are members of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. The amount of information provided by each service varies, depending on what was submitted. However we expect that following editions will continue to grow in content and numbers that participate.

Twenty-eight years on from when the first women's refuge was funded in 1974, the NSW Women's Refuge Movement stands strong. This document is a small snapshot of who we are.

Thank you to all the refuges who participated, to the wonderful Jenz German for her writing efforts and to Cara Kirkwood for her artistic talents.

Yvonne Wilson
On behalf of the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party

Pamela Foster
NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre.

Albury Wodonga Women's Refuge

History

Albury Women's Refuge was established in 1976 by a group of feminist women, They began in 1975 by offering women and children who were escaping domestic violence shelter in their homes or in caravans to protect them from further abuse. The refuge ran completely on the support and time of volunteers until funding was received in September 1977. Volunteers continued to help staff the refuge for a further 18 months.

Management structure

The refuge operates using a community based management committee. Interested and supportive women from the community are nominated and elected at the AGM to vacant positions on the committee.

Model

The refuge provides crisis accommodation for women and their dependant children who are homeless due to domestic violence or other crisis. The residents of the service each have their own room and share communal living areas such as the kitchen, lounge areas etc. The refuge also provides an outreach services for women and children who do not require accommodation, including a specific Aboriginal outreach program. Other services include information and referral to other agencies and advocacy and lobbying for improved responses to the client group.

Networks

The workers from the service are involved in many interagency networks including: Local domestic violence committee, local SAAP interagency, Women's Centre, Community Health, Child Protection groups (Kids Count), Repeat Offenders' Group, Birthright Committee, Kin Koori Network Meeting, NCOSS Rural Consultations, SUBPACT (Police Advisory Group), Regional SAAP interagency

Special Projects

Outreach Domestic violence Community Information and Support

The refuge offers an outreach service to women who have experienced domestic violence and require support and information but not necessarily refuge accommodation. For example, when the perpetrator has been given an "exclusion order" attached to an Apprehended Violence Order, or when the offender is in custody and the issue of the women and child's safety is attended to.

Womens Domestic Violence Group

A women's group is held weekly at the refuge that aims to educate women in the community on issues to do with domestic violence and the effects of domestic violence. The group is facilitated by refuge workers who also engage guest speakers to talk on domestic violence issues.

After School Social Group

Ex-resident children are offered a weekly after school social group. Children are picked up after school and transported to the refuge or other venues dependant on the planned activity. The group aims to provide children who have experience domestic violence long term support to deal with

issues that are impacting on their lives. This includes support to the child with settlement and behavioural issues and education on protective behaviours and safety issues.

Pre- School Group

A weekly pre-school aged children's group offers ex-resident and resident women and children interactive play activities. A protocol was developed between the refuge and DoCS that provides supervised access top non-custodial mothers and their children at the playgroup. Child Support Workers attend client case management meetings with DoCS to ensure that issues relevant to the child are attended to appropriately.

Safer Times Round Albury-Wodonga (STRAWS)

The NSW Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women, together with the Albury Wodonga Women's Refuge facilitated the development of a working party to address issues of public safety for women. The aim of STRAWS is to promote safe entertainment venues for women in Albury and Wodonga, and to develop and enhance awareness of women's public safety issues in the Albury Wodonga area.

Women's Shelter Armidale

History

Armidale Refuge is located in the New England region of New South Wales. In 1976 a group of women in the Armidale community, along with representatives of local service clubs including ZONTA began lobbying for resources to establish a women's refuge in their area. The group embarked on a fundraising drive raising \$60,000 through a variety of activities. The following year the group purchased an old house that had been earmarked for demolition and moved it onto a property leased from the Armidale Council for a peppercorn rent. Renovations to the house were made possible by the generous donation of building materials and labour and concerned groups and individuals in the community. While the old house was being renovated the refuge operated out of premises loaned by the University of New England.

Management Structure

Armidale Women's Shelter has been government funded since 1978. It is an incorporated association run by a management committee of ten local women. The day to day running of the services is overseen by a manager and is staffed by four full-time and six casual support workers.

Model

The service is staffed from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday by the manager and three support staff. An on-call worker is available during non-business hours. The refuge's crisis line is diverted to the on-call worker's mobile phone after hours enabling a rapid response to any crisis needs during her shift.

Networks

Refuge staff are members of the local Domestic Violence Steering Committee and liaise closely with a range of other agencies in the Armidale area. These include the Police, the local hospital and community health services that include the Aboriginal Medical Service, Community Legal Centres, the Departments of Housing (DoH), Education, (DoE) and Community Services (DoCS), St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army, Probation and Parole, Child Sexual Assault Services and the University of New England.

Special Projects

Armidale refuge runs a variety of support groups and domestic violence prevention programmes. Yapa Dhurra is a support group for Aboriginal Elder Women who are using their leadership roles to tackle the problem of domestic violence. This group has now been in operation for seven years and meets fortnightly at the refuge to strategise and discuss issues affecting the community. This program has enormous respect within the community as reflected in the high attendance at its meetings.

Vavina Amai is a support group for migrant women and their children that has been running for the past five years. Attendance at this group is also high with an average of 20 women (and numerous children) at each meeting. The group meets fortnightly offering support and friendship to women and their children. This group is ethnically and culturally diverse with women from Papua New Guinea, Scotland, North America, Russia, Iran, Indochina, the Pacific Islands, Africa, India, and elsewhere. The aim of the group is to remove the barriers that prevent migrant women accessing the refuge and facilitate an appreciation of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Moving Forward is a domestic violence prevention program the service has developed for high school students. Refuge staff facilitate workshops at high schools to examine what domestic violence is, its prevalence in the community and the effects of abuse on women and children. Every year the program is taken to more than a dozen high schools across northern NSW and has been running now for six years.

Bega Women's Refuge

History

Bega Women's Refuge is located in the Far South Coast region of New South Wales. The service commenced operations in 1987 staffed entirely by voluntary workers and furnished through community donations of furniture.

Management Structure and Funding

The service became incorporated in 1990 and operates under a collective structure. The management committee is made up of representatives from other women's and children's services, a local accountant, one community member/ex-resident and support workers from the refuge. Bega Refuge received its first round of government funding in 1989, two years after opening its doors. Initially the service received funding equivalent to fifty per cent of its operational costs under a 'two for one' agreement with another refuge in the region. The service is now fully funded by the Department of Community Services under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Scheme.

Model

Bega Refuge has historically provided a 24 hour crisis service and continues to do so with the service staffed weekdays and weekends. An on-call worker after hours ensures that women have access to the service 24 hours per day. The refuge provides crisis accommodation to women and children escaping domestic and family violence and houses homeless women and children provided beds when space permits. Up to four families can be accommodated at any given time. The service offers a range of services including information and referral, advocacy and lobbying, assistance to clients in securing short term supported housing, counselling for women, brokerage assistance, and court support. Bega Refuge also provides follow-up and outreach support for ex-residents and other women in the community. It co-facilitates Domestic Violence group programs in conjunction with the local Women's Resource Centre, Southern Women's Housing, and Far South Coast Family Support.

Networks

The service has many other interagency linkages both local and regional. It is involved with the Bega Valley Court Assistance Scheme, Bega Valley Domestic Violence Committee, Gudu Wandjer (Eden Safe House), Bega Shire Council's Planning Committee, Local Aboriginal and Police networks, and the Bega Valley Women's Services Network. Networks with regional agencies include the Koori Domestic Violence Network, the South Coast Regional Refuge Group, Southern Women's Housing Collective, Bandara Children's Services Management and the Youth Housing Forum.

Special Projects

An outstanding initiative of Bega Refuge in conjunction with other local women's services is the Bega Women's Quilting Group. This project involved residents and ex-residents of the refuge and

other women in the community who worked together to produce a beautiful and poignant quilt exhibited at the 2002 Sydney Quilt Show. Each contributor to the quilt used their 'patch' to express the impact of domestic violence on their lives. Such projects have a two-fold objective, firstly as a medium for creative expression and as a (non-verbal) vehicle for exploring the effects of trauma-related issues. The second objective is an educational one, the quilts provide a visual representation through which to extend a message to the viewer(s). Following the showing of the quilt at the Sydney Exhibition, the refuge received a considerable amount of positive feedback that . As one woman wrote,

'Congratulations to all those involved in creating that wonderful quilt ... The messages in it were very direct, and were not wasted on me. In fact they caused me a sleepless night; (remembering). Back about 35-40 years ago I used to dream of a safe place, where I could go, and close a strong door – turn a big key ... In those days Women's Refuges had not been introduced, but hopefully, they are here to stay, while there is a need for them'.

Bonnie Women's Refuge

History

Bonnie's Women's Refuge, located in the South West Metropolitan Sydney region was established in 1974 after a group of women in Green Valley organised a meeting to discuss the needs of women in the area. From that meeting came a resolution to set up both a women's health centre and a refuge for women escaping domestic violence. After forming an organising committee the group successfully lobbied the Department of Housing for the use of a house earmarked for demolition. Later that year Bonnie Women's Refuge was born. In the first six months of operation the refuge accommodated 84 people. The service received its first government funding in June 1975 and used the money to relocate to a property in Liverpool. In April 1979 the service moved into premises purpose built on land secured from the Fairfield Council where it remains today. In 1983 Bonnie's was involved in the establishment of Ammberley's Single Women's Refuge.

A decade later Bonnie's secured \$150,000 for the construction of a transitional or exit house on the block next door to the refuge. After a number of setbacks the exit house finally opened its doors in 1993, then in 2000 the service acquired another two exit houses funded under the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP).

Management Structure and Funding

Initially the refuge relied upon small amounts of funding from St Vincent de Paul, The Smith Family and other charitable organisations along with generous donations of food, clothing and labour power from the local community. Today it is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Program (SAAP) and operates as a non-profit organisation. Overall responsibility for the service rests with a management committee as outlined in the service's constitution. A Coordinator has the delegated authority to manage the day to day administration and running of the refuge. The refuge operates under the guidelines of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, the terms and conditions of the service agreement and requirements of other regulatory bodies. It also follows the overarching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.

Model

Bonnie Women's Refuge provides both crisis and medium term accommodation for women escaping domestic violence in a safe and supportive environment. The refuge operates through a feminist philosophical framework that emphasises providing support to clients to enable them to work toward independent lives free of violence and fear. Bonnie Refuge aims to assist clients' build self esteem and develop independence while in the refuge, providing a range of outreach support services to ex-residents once they return to living in the community.

Brokerage is particularly important to the operation of Bonnie's Refuge enabling the staff to offer flexible service provision - especially for women without an income.

Almost half of the women who access Bonnie's refuge are from non English speaking backgrounds. To cater for the needs of these clients, Bonnie's employs bilingual support workers and places strong emphasis on linkages with other agencies that offer culturally specific services.

Staffed 24 hours, seven days per week Bonnie's housed 224 women and 327 children in the 2000-1 financial year. Sadly the refuge had to turn away an additional 309 women and their children during the same period, many of whom had particularly complex needs such as mental health issues, child protection issues and/or complicated immigration issues. Bonnie's continues to be the only refuge in the state that accommodates dependant male children up to the age of eighteen years.

Networks

Bonnie's has been instrumental in the development and implementation of common and joint assessment processes with other local agencies, an initiative that has facilitated increased communication between agencies through a 'common language'.

Because a large percentage of client's come from non English speaking backgrounds the service has strong networks with local interpreter services. Other partnerships include working with the agencies such as the Transcultural Mental Health team which provide ethnic specific services.

The service works in conjunction with Hume Housing on two projects. The first funded by the Crisis Accommodation Programme provides exit housing for Bonnie's residents. Hume Housing also accommodates one of Bonnie's clients every three months.

Special Projects

In 2000 Bonnie's Refuge made history by securing funding for a project known as Violetta's Place. This is an innovative program providing medium to long term supported accommodation for homeless women and children with high and complex needs escaping domestic violence. The program operates in partnership with Ammberly's Single Women's Refuge, Ettinger House (Mental Health Advocacy Project) and Women's Housing. The nature of this partnership enables the provision of services not generally available within the framework of existing services.

During the 2000-2001 financial year approval was given by the Department of Housing for the purchase of six 2-3 bedroom units for the project under the Crisis Accommodation Program (innovative projects for complex needs). Three of these units provide long term housing for women with complex needs and the remaining 3 operate as exit houses. SAAP has provided financial support for the project allocating \$10,000 to each of the four participating services. This project also marked the first instance of two sister refuges working in partnership to meet the growing demand for women and children with complex needs escaping domestic violence.

Bringa Women's Refuge

(Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre)

History

Bringa Refuge is located in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Sydney. The organisation was founded in 1975 and registered as a Public Company two years later as the Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre. Bringa Refuge functions as the core business of the organisation. The service has historically operated with a strong legal emphasis because most women who utilise the service require assistance in dealing with the Family Court. A strong supporter of the Women's Refuge Movement, Bringa Refuge operates under feminist principles in order to empower the many women and children who use the service.

Management Structure and Funding

The service is managed by a Board of Directors made up of local women who have the expertise and skills to assist workers at the refuge operate an effective service.

Bringa Refuge was originally funded in 1976 under the Commonwealth Health Program. In the early nineteen eighties it received partial funding (0.5 salary) to add a resource component to the existing services offered and later CSPG funding which enabled the refuge to provide a Family Support Service for women and children.

In nineteen ninety four funding was secured for a specialist Child Therapist position to provide specific services for children at the refuge and others at risk in the community. The following year CSPG funding enabled the establishment of a Young Pregnant Women's Scheme. Today the main source of funding for the refuge comes from the Department of Community Service's Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Workers at Bringa Refuge operate in teams including Child Support and Refuge teams which work predominantly with the women and children in the refuge. Another, the Refuge and Resource team also works with residents although the main focus is to support non-resident clients who access the Resource Centre. All workers are paid the same hourly rate and share responsibility for the running of the service.

Some of the refuge staff sit on committees and attend meetings with both government and non-government agencies, write submissions, and lobby for the rights of women and children. High priority is given to Child Support and while there are specialist children's workers, all staff are charged with advocating on behalf of children and providing support to them where necessary. Others specialist areas include Housing, Legal, Immigration, and group facilitation.

Bringa Refuge is staffed from 8am until 10pm weekdays and 4pm to 10pm on the weekends. An on-call worker ensures 24 hour access to the service. It offers a range of support services to clients

including emergency financial assistance, counselling for both women and children, assistance dealing with welfare agencies and the Courts and a range of outreach services that include (non-funded) follow-up support. The premises are wheelchair accessible with ramps and toilet facilities.

In addition to crisis accommodation, Bringa operates a halfway house and three medium term supported housing facilities and where necessary assists clients locate and access other forms of short-term supported accommodation.

Networks

Interagency networks include representation on the following committees: Children at Risk Committee, Regional Violence Reference Group Committee, the Local Domestic Violence Committee, Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Committee, SAAP Framework Northern Sydney Committee, and the Standing Inter-Agency Advisory Committee on Court Safety.

Bringa Refuge also has linkages with Manly Warringah Interagency, Manly Warringah Pittwater Aboriginal Support Group, DOCS Helpline and Associated Issues for Non-Government Organisations, and the Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group.

Special Projects

Bringa Refuge is involved in a number of special projects. The service regularly provides placements for final year students studying at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. The service is also involved in a partnership with the Royal North Shore Hospital providing services to women who have experienced sexual abuse as children.

The service is currently involved in a pilot programme with the local Police whereby refuge staff accompany Police to domestic violence call-outs to speak with and offer support to the women involved. This pilot was initiated from a concern over the large number of Police call-outs that resulted in no action being taken against the perpetrator.

Butler Lodge

History

Butler Lodge is located in the Metropolitan South West region of New South Wales. The refuge is one of St Vincent de Paul's special projects. Established in 1990, the service was originally located in Glebe before relocating to Burwood a decade later.

Management Structure

The service is managed by a voluntary community based management committee and operates a hierarchical staffing structure.

Model

Butler Lodge provides case management and support services to women and children escaping domestic violence with an emphasis on assisting families gain safe and secure housing. support services include counselling and child support services, brokerage and assistance with income support. The refuge is also involved in the Court Assistance program and supports clients in the Family Court. It offers outreach services to ex-residents. Crisis accommodation is staffed 24 hours per day to ensure consistent access and support for residents, ex-residents and other women needing to access the service.

Networks

The refuge works closely with its local SAAP interagency and Domestic Violence Committee.

Carrie's Place

History

In 1978 a group of professional women identified a need for a women's refuge in the Lower Hunter Region of New South Wales. Workers from other women's refuges addressed a public meeting called by the Maitland City Council which attracted 85 interested local people. From that meeting a steering committee was formed to investigate forming a co-operative. Within a year the co-operative was formed and a house purchased in Maitland. The purchase was made possible by the generous support of local business people and monies raised from a number of fund-raising activities.

The day to day running of the refuge was initially funded by donations from the public and local service organisations. While the service did receive a small amount of government funding in its first year, it was heavily reliant on the generosity and commitment of a team of voluntary workers. It was not until 1984 that the service was fully funded by the then Department of Youth and Community Services and from that point ceased using voluntary workers. In 1988 Carrie's Place secured a grant to construct purpose built premises which it moved into in November 1991 while retaining the original premises.

Carrie's Place is named after one of Australia's pioneer women, Caroline Chisholm. Concerned at the plight of many women who arrived on ships from Britain during the mid eighteenth century, Caroline established two women's hostels, one in Sydney and the other in Maitland.

Management Structure and Funding

Carrie's Place operates as a co-operative and is managed by a community based Board of Directors. The service's main source of funding is the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program which is supplemented by client fees, donations and interest from term deposits.

Model

Carrie's place operates from a feminist philosophical framework. The service is staffed from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday with access to the refuge after hours provided by an on-call worker. The service offers include information and referral, advocacy and lobbying in addition to crisis accommodation, brokerage and emergency outreach services and follow-up support to ex-clients. Specific outreach services are offered to both Aboriginal and lesbian women and their children. The crisis accommodation is wheelchair accessible and has telephone services for the hearing impaired. Like many other refuges, Carrie's Place turns away more women and children than it is able to accommodate. Such is the demand for services that in the 2000-2001 financial year, the service accommodated 86 women and 113 children and had to turn away an additional 291 women and 368 children.

Networks

Carrie's Place is involved with the Child Protection Interagency, the Hunter Women's Network, the local Domestic Violence Co-ordinating Committee, and the local Mental Health Interagency.

Special Projects

The hallmark of Carrie's Place outreach program are its Butterfly Groups. There are three separate support groups in this program, and attendance is made up of refuge residents and women referred by outside agencies. Two of the groups operate from outside the refuge and the third from the refuge premises. The success of these groups has led to other local refuges adopting the model. The outreach program was accessed by over 2000 women in the 2000-2001 financial year, such high numbers being testimony to the success of the program.

Eastlakes Women and Children's Refuge

History

Eastlakes Refuge is located in Swansea in the Hunter region of New South Wales. The service was founded by four members of the community following the identification by a local community organisation of the need for crisis accommodation women and children escaping domestic violence in the area. In February 1977 a statutory committee was elected and in July of the same year was reformed into a planning cum management committee. Lake MacQuarie Shire Council gave permission to the management committee in 1978 for the use of a house that had been donated for use as a refuge. Three years later the Council gifted a neighbouring cottage for use as an extended stay facility for refuge clients. In the early 1990s Eastlakes Refuge secured CAP funding for the construction of a purpose built 5 bedroom house from which the refuge operates today.

Management Structure

Eastlakes Refuge is run by a community based management committee. The service first received funding from the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Scheme in 1990. The Department continues to be the major funding body of the service today.

Model

The refuge provides crisis accommodation, halfway and medium term exit housing as well as a range of support services for women and children escaping domestic violence and other intolerable living conditions. The purpose built premises are fully wheelchair accessible (including telephone services for people with hearing impairments) and staffed from 8am to 6pm weekdays and 8am to 8pm on the weekends. Out of hours access is available via an on-call worker. Eastlakes Refuge accommodates homeless women as well as those with mental health issues, and drug and alcohol dependencies.

Among the support services offered are assistance accessing income support, emergency financial assistance and brokerage. Counselling is available to both women and children along with a range of group programmes that includes a positive parenting workshop run in partnership with Eastlake Family Support.

Outreach services include services specific to Aboriginal, NESB, and lesbian women and their respective children. The outreach programme includes group programmes for women and children living in the community.

Networks

In addition to the partnerships already mentioned, Eastlakes is involved in a number of interagency networks. The service is involved with the Newcastle Homeless Interagency Network, the Local Domestic Violence Committee, the Swansea Chamber of Commerce, SAAP Interagency, and the local SAAP Women's Services Network. The service's participation in the Wendale Community Renewal Scheme is one of many examples of Eastlake's involvement in the local community.

Special Projects

Eastlake's has taken on the role of central referral agency for the Domestic Violence Intervention Response Team (DVIRT) in the Hunter region. The DVIR team provides women and children in the community with a response within twenty four hours of a domestic violence incident. At initial contact a team member informs the women of the kind of assistance they are able to offer and with permission takes responsibility for making referrals to all appropriate agencies. Team members also provide follow-up to the women who use the DVIRT services.

Elsie Refuge for Women and Children

History

Elsie Refuge, the first women's refuge in New South Wales has a long and colourful history. In March 1974 a group of feminist women squatted in a derelict housing commission building in the inner Sydney suburb of Glebe and set up a household offering refuge to women and children escaping domestic violence. Word spread rapidly throughout the then burgeoning women's liberation movement about the action taken by the women, known as the 'Elsie Collective'. Women from around the country visited the service, returning to their own communities to establish similar services in their local areas.

Management Structure and Funding

Since its inception Elsie Refuge has operated under a collective framework. In 1975 the Commonwealth Government made funds available to the service following strenuous lobbying by collective members of the then Treasurer, Bill Hayden. The service was initially funded from the Community Health budget. In 1981, State governments were charged with responsibility for funding refuges from their general revenue budgets although the Commonwealth continued to contribute through the Women's Emergency Services Programme (WESP). The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was introduced nationwide in January 1985 governed by an agreement between the Commonwealth and State governments.

Model

Like all member services of the Women's Refuge Movement, Elsie's operates under a feminist framework that frames domestic violence as a structural rather than an individual problem. The service is staffed each day from 8.30 am through till midnight and a paging system is used after hours to ensure that support services are accessible on a 24 hour basis .

Erin's Place

History

Erin's Place is located in the Northern Metropolitan area of Sydney. In 1988 two social work students, Carolyn Wilson and Joanna Rawstone undertook research into the need for crisis accommodation for women in the Ryde Area. The research was conducted under the auspice of Eastwood Christian Community Aid and found that there was indeed significant need for such a service. In October of 1990 Ryde Women's Refuge was established providing crisis accommodation from temporary premises at Dundas.

Management Structure and Funding

The service originally employed two co-ordinators but in 1992 a decision was made to operate under a collective model. Three years later the service was restructured with the day to day running of the service once again overseen by a co-ordinator who is responsible to a community based management committee. Erin's Place is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Erin's Place provides supported crisis accommodation for women with dependent children who are escaping domestic violence. The facility offers communal type living for up to four families at a time, each occupying one bedroom and sharing all other household facilities and living spaces. The service provides counselling for both women and for children, court support, advocacy, information, brokerage and emergency financial assistance, as well as appropriate referrals to other agencies. Once a family leaves the crisis accommodation Erin's Place provides limited follow-up support for a period of six weeks before referring the family to appropriate services in the area in which they have settled. The service is staffed from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday with an on call worker available at weekends and after hours.

Networks

Erin's Place is involved in a number of interagency networks including the Ryde/Hunters Hill Interagency, the Ryde/Hunters Hill Domestic Violence Committee, Ryde Child and Adolescent's at Risk Committee, Ryde/Parramatta Court Assistance Scheme Steering Committee and the Northern Sydney Multicultural Network. The service was involved in organising the North Shore Domestic Violence Phone with other agencies.

Special Projects

Erin's Place offers in-house projects such as the Moon and Stars Workshops designed to promote the bonding of women and children and the Star for a Day project where children write and perform their own 'movie' which is videotaped by the service's Child Support Worker.

The service's community outreach programs have included an art exhibition with a domestic violence focus at the Top Ryde Shopping Centre. The refuge has a strong presence at local shopping centres and malls every year on Stop Domestic Violence day and also has a stall at the annual Eastwood Multicultural Information Day in Eastwood.

Faith Cottage

History

Faith Cottage is a Salvation Army run service located in Newcastle in the Central Coast/Hunter region of New South Wales. The service opened its doors in July 1975 in Mayfield and was furnished by donations from the Salvation Army and supportive individuals in the community. Fully funded by the Salvation until 1985, the refuge is now funded by the Department of Community Service's Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. In late 1993 the refuge moved to its current premises.

Management Structure

A manager oversees the day to day running of the service and is responsible to the Salvation Army Divisional Corps and Social Program Secretary. The refuge is funded by the Department of Community Services under its Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Faith Cottage provides a 24 hour, 7 day crisis accommodation service that offers a holistic approach to support women with accompanying children who are homeless or escaping domestic violence. In addition to the crisis accommodation, Faith Cottage also provides halfway and medium term supported housing to clients. Like many other refuges it functions as an information and referral service and lobbies and advocates on behalf of clients. It offers follow-up support and outreach services to all ex-clients as well as to any women in the community in need.

Included in the refuge's outreach programme are services specific to Aboriginal women and children, women and children from non-English speaking backgrounds, and for lesbians and their children. Clients with mental health issues are accommodated by the service if they are able to self manage and women with drug or alcohol issues are supported if they agree to enter de-toxification or rehabilitation programmes.

Networks

Interagency networks include the local SAAP network, the Violence Against Women committee, Newcastle Domestic Violence Committee, the Migrant Resource Centre Network and the Domestic Violence Court Support scheme.

Special Projects

Fortnightly playgroups are held at the refuge during school term. The group is open to the children of both residents and ex-residents. Every second Tuesday, staff provide transport for families to gather at the service. In addition to providing a range of activities for the children, craft materials are available for the mothers. Guest speakers from a range of organisations address the women on issues as diverse as practical First Aid tips to the kinds of courses on offer at the local TAFE, to services available from Family Support.

Faith Cottage offers residents and ex-residents the opportunity to 'get away from it all', with free camps held twice a year. The service transports children who are in or who have stayed in the refuge for a six day adventure. This camp caters for nine to twelve year olds and offers an action packed program. Each child is assigned an adult Team Leader who looks out for them during their stay. Workshops on self-esteem building, team building and social skills tie into many of the outdoor activities on offer (including, rock climbing and abseiling) that give youngsters an opportunity to work together in physically and mentally challenging situations. Participants are also taken on excursions to Taronga Zoo, to the movies and have a day at the beach.

The Salvation Army Collaroy also runs a camp for single mothers with pre-school aged children twice a year at not cost to the participants. The women stay in motel-style accommodation with meals provided. Families are transported to and from the camp by refuge staff as well as on outings to the zoo for instance, or to the movies. The program includes workshops on positive parenting and self esteem building, and classes on financial planning, nutrition on a shoestring and basic maintenance skills.

Griffith Women's Refuge

(Kulkuna Cottage Women's Refuge)

History

Griffith Women's Refuge, located in the Riverina region of New South Wales, began its operations in 1978 following the establishment of two local community groups. One of the groups was looking to establish a men's shelter and the other a refuge for women escaping domestic violence. The Griffith Council supported the establishment of a women's refuge by providing premises to house the refuge on the understanding that the house would have to be relocated at a future date. Funding was secured to get the service up and running and later to move the three bedroom house onto a property provided by Water Resources that had been held in trust for community projects. After intense lobbying, funding was secured for the reconfiguration of the house and addition of four extra bedrooms, service areas and living space. A free-standing children's annex was built at the refuge by the local Lions Club. In 1997 the service was successful in securing funding through CAP for construction of two two-bedroom villas which are located on the property adjoining the refuge. These villas provide exit housing for clients of the service.

Management Structure

Griffith Refuge is a both Company Limited by Guarantee and a Public Benevolent Institution overseen by a Board of Directors which is made up of women from the local community. Historically the refuge has been successful in having a Board of Management that has been supportive of the service and staff. While difficult from time to time to maintain the numbers on the Board, a core of committed women from the local community have been involved for many years. This has allowed for stability within the service and maintained a level of expertise that has resulted in stable service provision. Griffith Refuge is funded by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program through the Department of Community Services.

Model

The service offers high security supported crisis accommodation for women with or without dependent children escaping domestic violence (and/or other traumas) who require short term safe accommodation. Griffith Refuge provides a communal living environment with each family occupying their own bedroom. The service is provided free of charge to those women without an income, with accommodation, food, and laundry/cleaning products all provided. Women using the service who do have an income contribute 25% of it towards the cost of their accommodation.

The refuge provides outreach support services to women in the community. As the only women's service in the area, the refuge also acts as a resource/drop in centre for women and children in need.

Staff at the service are passionate and committed to the provision of a 24 hour, seven day a week service as the majority of clients contact the refuge at night and at weekends. Many clients arrive on the doorstep at night as self-referrals. Griffith Refuge is situated in an isolated area of the State which is surrounded by small communities. Knowing that the service is staffed at all times, the

Police refer clients from up to 250kms away and will often transport women and children to the refuge.

Networks

Staff at the refuge are involved on the management committees of many local groups and organisations including, Griffith Interagency and the local Suicide Prevention Group, the Aboriginal Lands Council and Koori Interagency, Family and Adolescent Counselling Service, Griffith Domestic Violence Committee, Domestic Violence Regional Specialist Reference Committee, the Langunyah Youth Refuge and the Regional Saap Services Network in addition to the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party.

Special Projects

Griffith Refuge has been responsible for implementing signed agreements between themselves Community Housing, Public Housing, the Lands Council and the local Multicultural Centre. The agreements clearly define what services each of the signatories can offer mutual clients and facilitates an integrated approach to service provision.

Recently funding has been obtained from the Griffith City Council for the implementation and production of audio tapes for women of non-English speaking background in six languages. These tapes are designed to provide information about the services offered by the refuge and an overview of the range of options available to NESB women including basic immigration information and how and where to access assistance.

The refuge also runs a number of support groups for its clients. A women's' outreach group is facilitated by the refuge twice a month as is a playgroup for pre-schoolers. In addition the service runs an after-school group for children up to the age of 12 years once a week and provides intensive one-on-one support for adolescent boys and girls who are experiencing difficulties on a strictly per needs basis. Each of the groups are client driven, with clients involved in both their planning and implementation. Refuge clients are invited to participate in the support groups as are women and children in the local and surrounding communities.

Inverell Refuge Centre

History

Inverell Refuge is located in the New England region of New SouthWales. It was established in the late 1970s after two local men, a doctor and a Salvation Army Officer identified a need for safe crisis accommodation for women experiencing domestic violence. The first meeting was called in February 1978 under the auspice of the Inter-Church Council. Regular monthly meetings generated a publicity campaign and consultations with the Department of Youth and Community Services and other NSW refuges including Tamworth and Armidale Refuges. St Vincent de Paul were approached to assist purchase premises to house the refuge. A lease was secured on a house with an option to purchase at a later date.

The refuge opened its doors for business in October 1979 staffed entirely by volunteers with its operational costs funded by donation. Six months later some funding was secured for a Co-ordinator's position. Then in 1981 the service received funding from the Department of Youth and Family Services which allowed for all staff working at the service to be paid. The management committee acted as trustees for the purchase of a house close to the original refuge premises in April the same year and in 1982 a block of land adjacent to the property was also purchased. By 1983 the refuge was operating to capacity and the need for larger premises to cope with increasing demand for the service became evident. Application was made to the Department of Housing for funding under its Special Purpose Housing Scheme. After long consultations and seemingly endless delays, the department purchased a block of land and began construction of a purpose built facility in 1988. The new refuge was officially opened at the end of May 1989.

Management Structure

Originally operating under a collective structure, the refuge committee changed to a community based management committee in 1999 and soon after appointed a co-ordinator to oversee the daily running of the service. The service is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Inverell Refuge offers a safe, secure caring environment for women and their dependent children experiencing domestic violence. The service aims to foster opportunities for clients to develop and enhance their own dignity and self respect. The service provides short term crisis accommodation to women and children in purpose built premises. It also offers medium term supported halfway and exit housing to ex-residents.

The facility is fully wheelchair accessible and staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to counselling and support services, the refuge provides emergency transport services, brokerage, follow-up and outreach services, court support and offers day programmes at the refuge and at the exit houses. Child support is supplemented with brokerage for childcare services and counselling and referrals other agencies working with children.

Networks

Inverell Refuge networks with a range of government agencies including the Departments of Community Services, Youth and Family Support, Housing and Centrelink. Interagency networks include Community Health, Mental Health, local counselling services, Aboriginal Health and Aboriginal Interagency, church groups, the Police and welfare agencies, Families First and Reconnect.

Special Projects

Recently Inverell Refuge secured funding from the Department of Gaming and Racing under the Casino Community Benefits Fund to cover the costs of running weekend retreats at the Copeton Dam Recreational Reserve. The retreats offer a range of programs and activities designed to facilitate team building, increased self esteem and other social skills.

Jenny's Place

History

Jenny's Place is located in Newcastle which lies in the Central Coast/Hunter region of New South Wales. The service was founded in 1976 in Islington and like many others relied heavily on the goodwill of voluntary workers. A decade after opening, Jenny's Place moved to premises at Cook's Hill where it remains today.

Management Structure and Funding.

The refuge operates through a collective management structure made up of six refuge workers with a broader collective responsible for resolving issues where there is or could be a conflict of interest. The service is funded through the Department of Community Services Supported Accommodation Assistance Program today but was initially funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Model

Jenny's Place employs feminist principles in the provision of its services to women and children escaping domestic violence. The refuge provides crisis accommodation and assists clients to access short-term supported housing when they are ready to leave the refuge.

One-on-one and group counselling services are available to residents and ex-residents of the service. Children requiring counselling are referred to external agencies. Jenny's place offers child support, emergency financial assistance and brokerage. The refuge is a member of the local Court Support scheme and assists women in their dealings with the justice system. Follow up and outreach services are provided to all ex-residents of the refuge.

The refuge also provides an information, referral and advocacy service through it's Domestic Violence Telephone Information Service which is operational Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Networks

Jenny's Place is involved in three key interagency networks. These include the SAAP network, the local Court Support program and the local Homelessness Interagency.

Special Projects

Jenny's Place is involved in the staff development programmes at local schools. Every year staff from the refuge travel to schools in the area to educate and inform staff about domestic violence and its impact on children. Among the issues addressed in these workshops are general information about domestic violence with a specific focus on child safety and the needs of children affected by this kind of violence. Refuge workers also run sessions in the classroom with students. Other community education initiatives include providing training sessions to community groups and services such as Lifeline, the Departments of Disability and Aging, and Housing, Rotary, View Clubs, and the Police.

The refuge provide a general advocacy and support service to refuge clients dealing with Centrelink. Refuge staff make contact with a social worker at the Department and accompany women to the office for any necessary appointments. A initiative in partnership with Cessnock branch of the department is currently being set up to address some of the difficulties faced by women in isolated rural areas. The refuge receives many referrals from the Lower Hunter region, and so Jenny's Place staff are to offer a fortnightly support and referral service to assist clients at Cessnock experiencing domestic violence, relationship issues, parenting problems and associated issues. Outreach support will be provided and where appropriate referrals made to local or services in Newcastle that offer counselling, family support, childcare, crisis accommodation and other relevant services. The project will be piloted and extended if demand requires it.

Kempsey Women and Children's Service

History

Kempsey Women's refuge provides crisis accommodation and support for women and children escaping domestic violence and other forms of abuse. Previously known as the Kempsey Women's Housing Service, the service underwent a major restructure in 1999 under the auspice of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party at the invitation of the Department of Community Services. Over the next eighteen months the refuge accommodated more than 200 women and children in crisis housing and provided information and referrals to a further 228 women.

Since reopening its doors, Kempsey Women's Refuge has worked hard to make its service accessible *and* attractive to Indigenous women. The employment of an Indigenous Outreach worker has extended the capability of the service to address issues of violence in the community. Outreach forms a major component of service provision at Kempsey. Refuge staff offer various forms of outreach support including home visits, a support group for ex-residents, and support for women in the community who choose not to use refuge accommodation.

Management Structure and Funding

Kempsey Women and Children's Service is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and operates through a community based management committee to whom the manager of the service is responsible. The service is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Networks

Interagency linkages are vital to the effective functioning of the service within the local community. Local agencies refer clients to the refuge and the refuge refers client's on to other services in the area. The refuges works closely with Centrelink, the Department of Housing, Community Housing, Community Health, Mental Health, Durri Medical Centre, Family Support Service, Many Rivers Violence Protection Unit, Domestic Violence Court Support and the Kempsey Police.

In addition refuge staff are active members of a variety of local (and state) committees such as the Domestic Violence committees, the Community Services Committee and the Community Housing Mid North Coast Management Committee. This involvement facilitates effective networking and serves to increase the community's awareness of the work being done by the refuge staff.

Model

Kempsey Refuge's emphasis on providing an environment that encourages autonomy, self-reliance and independence is in keeping with a commitment to a feminist philosophy that perceives domestic violence in structural terms - as a social problem rather than an individual one.

The refuge provides a range of housing options for its clients. These include crisis accommodation, medium term transition housing where women and children are supported toward independent living, and outreach support for women living in independent accommodation.

Services for children include a child support worker, a support group, activities and outings, and advocacy and referrals to health services and other agencies. Facilities for children include a playground complete with sandpit, a range of play equipment and a shade sail.

Killara Women's Refuge

History

Killara Refuge is located in the Eastern suburbs of Sydney. It was originally founded in nineteen ninety one. In November 2000 it closed its doors temporarily, reopening in June of the following year under the auspice of the Women's Refuge Movement Working Party.

Management Structure and Funding.

The service is managed by a community based committee. The day to day running of Killara Refuge is the responsibility of a Manager who reports directly to the committee.

Model

The refuge operates from a five bedroom house that is able to accommodate up to 16 adults and children and 2 babies in a communal residential setting. Killara is staffed twenty four hours per day via an on call worker and supplements its crisis accommodation service with counselling, child support, income support and emergency financial assistance, and court assistance.

Using a case management model, support workers provide individually tailored programmes that emphasise joint responsibility for decision making and outcomes between the worker and client. The children's programme follows a model that involves goal setting, achievement and intervention. Killara staff facilitate a range of support groups that deal specifically with issues of self-development, domestic violence, and the legal system.

Killara is funded to provide specific services to the local Aboriginal community that include outreach and in-house programmes.

Networks

Killara is involved in interagency networks with the local Domestic Violence Committee, Aboriginal Interagency, Randwick Interagency, Waverly Interagency and Court Support and 'The Shack' Youth Service.

Louisa Women's Refuge

Model

Louisa Refuge provides crisis and medium term supported accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence. Increasingly families accessing the service have high and complex needs. Children often have behavioural problems, families may have mental health issues or homelessness issues, and traumatic stress disorders are becoming more common. In response to this Louisa, in partnership with Department of Housing, now offers a supported halfway housing for families with complex needs (see below).

Networks

The service works closely with local child protection, housing and domestic violence agencies.

Special Projects

In the 2000/2001 financial year Louisa was successful in gaining funding for a halfway house in collaboration with the Department of Housing. The property, a 3 bedroom house in South Queanbeyan, accommodates clients with complex needs where shared living arrangements are inappropriate. Staff from the refuge work with tenants in the halfway house to facilitate their return to mainstream housing. When the clients are ready to move out of supported accommodation they are housed by the Department through its priority housing scheme.

Manning District Emergency Accommodation

History

Manning District refuge is located in the mid-North Coast region of New South Wales at Taree. In the late 1970s a group of women from the local community formed a steering committee to tackle the problem of domestic violence in their community. The refuge opened for business as a generalist service in 1983 and in the early nineteen nineties joined the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.

Management Structure and Funding.

The service is managed by a community based Committee and is structured hierarchically. Support workers are responsible to a Coordinator/Manager who oversees the day to day running of the service and who is in turn responsible to the Management Committee. Manning District Refuge is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Manning District Refuge provides crisis and medium term supported accommodation to women and children escaping domestic violence. It is staffed every day from 9am to 6pm with an on-call worker providing access to the service out of hours.

Among the support services available are one on one counselling for women and children, court support and legal assistance, assistance with AVO application, brokerage and emergency financial assistance. A weekly women's group provides educational, vocational, and leisure activities for residents and ex-residents.

The refuge is funded to provide specific services to Indigenous women and children and employs two Aboriginal support workers, one full-time and the other part-time to achieve this both in-house and in the community. Aboriginal Health Services provide funding for a Domestic Violence counsellor who works with residents and with women living in the community. Manning District Refuge's outreach program also includes specific services to NESB women and their children.

Networks

The refuge is involved in many interagency networks throughout the region. At a local level it works with the Domestic Violence Monitoring Committee,, the Greater Taree City council community Services Development Committee, the Manning Valley Interagency including the Manning Valley Interagency Accommodation sub-Committee, Community Housing, Child Protection Committee, Multicultural Network, and CSA. The service participates in the WRM's regional meetings, State conferences, Child Support Conferences and also attends SAAP regional meetings.

Aboriginal specific networks include the Wirrawi Aboriginal Women's Group, AJAC (State and regional), Aboriginal Sexual Assault Prevention Council, Regional Premier Community Solutions

Panel. Manning District refuge has also been actively involved in local consultations with the ECAV.

Special Projects

The refuge is active in the community and has been involved in a range of projects with other agencies. For example in partnership with MDEA and the Police the service was successful in obtaining funding for a twelve month pilot project to provide support to women escaping domestic violence in their dealing with the Police and the justice system. The pilot project is funded by the Casino Community Benefits scheme.

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy is another project that Manning District Refuge is involved in. This project is run in conjunction with the local Council, the Department of Community Services, and the Aboriginal Lands Council and was designed to encourage the employment of local Aboriginal youth by local business and service groups.

A theatre production entitled 'The Blue Skirt' was written by a young local woman and performed by the students from the drama group of Taree High School. The play, again dealing with domestic violence issues, completed a successful tour of high schools in the region. Responsibility for the distribution of the production was taken on by Seaview Press, and the project was funded by the Department of Regional Services and Transport. Other initiatives include the production of a puppet show that has been performed in local schools to educate primary school children about domestic violence issues.

Another initiative of the service has been the production and distribution of a video entitled 'Don't Bash the Lovin' Out of Me'. The video features women talking about their experiences of domestic violence and was funded by the Department of Women.

Marian Centre

History

The Marian Centre is located in the Inner Western Metropolitan area of Sydney. It was originally founded in 1988 as a family and single women's refuge at the old Lewisham Hospital site. The service changed its focus in the early 1990s and after refurbishment the premises reopened as a refuge for women and children escaping domestic violence in 1993. At capacity the Marian Centre can accommodate twenty two families and 3 single women. Residents live in a communal setting sharing cooking, living and laundry facilities while most of the bedrooms in the facility have their own bathrooms. The facility is highly secure, it is alarmed and a security guard is present on site each night and on call at other times.

Management Structure and Funding.

The management team consists of the Manager, Women's Services Coordinator and Child Services Coordinator. This team coordinates 5 refuge support staff, 2 part-time night workers, a Resource worker, 3 child support staff, 2 administrative staff and domestic staff. The service has always and continues to be funded by the Department of Community Services, more recently under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Scheme.

Model

The Marian Centre offers a twenty-four hour seven day a week service tailored to the needs of each of the resident families. The diversity of refuge clients is reflected in the composition of the staff which includes bilingual and Koori workers. Working from a feminist perspective, the Marian Centre supports women towards independent living free from violence.

In addition to crisis accommodation, the Centre provides advocacy services by assisting women and children to secure short-term supported housing, access income support and court support – including AVO applications – and also provides a range of brokerage services. Other support services include counselling for both women and children and dedicated child support along with a range of follow-up and outreach services. The service is available to women with drug and alcohol dependency and/or mental health issues

Networks

The Marian Centre is involved in a number of interagency networks. It works with the local council's Domestic Violence Group, local Domestic Violence Committees and is a member of the local Court Support Scheme. The Marian Centre is also actively involved with the local schools. It is also a member of the SAAP Interagency network and has a partnership with SWISH and MACH Community Tenancy Schemes.

Special Projects

The Centre has run a number of successful courses in conjunction with the Petersham TAFE outreach. Held at the refuge, the courses include English literacy and introductions to tertiary education. The service also provides community education by offering workshops to women in the community on domestic violence issues. Periodically, the Marian Centre makes Reiki and massage available for residents of the refuge. Evaluations of this initiative have found it extremely beneficial to both the women and their children.

Moree Women's Refuge (Ngala House)

History

Ngala House , located in the New England region of New South Wales, was established in 1983. Originally staffed by volunteers, the refuge relied heavily on the goodwill of volunteers to staff the service and community support to raise funds to furnish the refuge and cover the costs of its day to day operations.

Management Structure and Funding.

The Management Committee is made up of seven women from a cross section of the community. A Coordinator is responsible for the daily running of the service and reports directly to the Committee. The service is funded by the Department of Community Services through its Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Moree Refuge uses a case management model of service delivery for women and children of all nationalities who are escaping domestic violence and upholds the over-arching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. The refuge is staffed twenty four hours a day via an on-call worker. It provides a range of services that includes crisis accommodation and assistance to clients to access short-term supported housing. other in-house support services include one on one and group counselling, child support, emergency financial assistance, brokerage and assistance to access income support.

Moree Refuge runs a parenting program for residents and a range of domestic violence educational programmes. It is also involved in the local Court Assistance Program and provides support for refuge clients in Court and with their AVO applications.

Outreach and follow-up services are provided that include specific outreach to Aboriginal women and their children. The outreach program extends beyond Moree to other towns in the local catchment area.

The service also runs a range of domestic violence education programmes which are tailored to various target groups such as other community services, community groups and all of the local schools.

Networks

Moree Refuge enjoys healthy working relationships with all of the associated services within the local community and the wider New England region. It is involved in the Moree Interagency Network which is made up of representatives from the refuge, local Council, the Moree Neighbourhood Centre and Centrelink among others. The service also networks with the Moree Aboriginal Interagency and is involved in the Farm Family Business Project.

Special Projects

Moree Refuge was involved in the organisation of the Northern Region Aboriginal Women's Gathering which was held early in 2002. This gathering brought together Koori women from around the region to discuss community and family violence and develop strategies for empowering and protecting indigenous women and children living with violence.

Muswellbrook Women and Children's Refuge

Nydia's Place

History

The Muswellbrook refuge is located in the Upper Hunter region of New South Wales. It was founded in 1983 after a group of concerned local women formed a steering committee to address the issue of domestic violence in their community. After intense lobbying the committee was successful in obtaining funding for the construction of a purpose built facility which was completed and opened for business in 1988.

Management Structure and Funding.

Nydia's Place is registered as a public company that is overseen by a Board of Directors made up of women from the local community and refuge staff. The service is funded by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program through the Department of Community Services.

Model

The refuge offers wheelchair accessible crisis accommodation to women and children escaping domestic violence. The service is staffed weekdays from 9am to 6pm and on Saturdays from 10am to 3pm. While the service does not operate halfway or exit housing it does assist residents to find short-term supported accommodation once they are ready to leave the refuge.

Support services include counselling for women and for children as well as child support programmes, income assistance and brokerage. Muswellbrook is a member of the local Court Assistance Program and provides support at Court for refuge residents including assistance with AVO applications. Follow-up and outreach services are also offered to ex-resident women and their children.

The service runs a number of support groups that meet weekly. These include a follow-up group for ex-residents of the service, a youth group for young people affected by domestic violence, and a domestic violence group modelled on the Butterfly Groups developed by Carrie's Place refuge.

Penrith Women's Refuge

History

Penrith Women's Refuge is located in the Western Metropolitan region of New South Wales. The refuge was established in the late 1970s by a group of Christian women involved in the Penrith Community Aid service who were concerned about the plight of disadvantaged women in the area. The refuge was originally known as the Penrith Community Aid Women's Refuge (PCAWR) and was funded for the first time in 1981. While the service was a member of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, it rejected the draft guidelines for the overarching (feminist) principles of service provision in WRM refuges. As a result the service was voted out of the movement at the State Conference of November 1986. The service continued to operate independently of the WRM until early 1994. That year a co-ordinator was employed to implement the changes resulting from a major restructure.

Management Structure and Funding

Penrith Women's Refuge became an incorporated society in 1994 and like many other WRM services operates under a community based management committee with a co-ordinator managing the day to day operations of the service. The service is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Penrith Refuge provides crisis accommodation to women and children escaping domestic violence. The service operates from a five bedroom house and is staffed 24 hours per day via an on-call worker. It also provides a range of support services for clients including counselling for both women and children, assistance in accessing income support, emergency financial assistance and court support, as well as follow-up support for ex-residents.

The service co-facilitates a weekly domestic violence group in co-operation with the Penrith Women's Health Centre and facilitates a domestic violence group with the Glenmore Park Community Development Project. Staff at the refuge are active in community education speaking to the community about the range of services offered by the refuge.

In July 2002, Penrith Refuge received funding for a part-time outreach worker. This position is the refuge's response to the increase in the number of calls from women who do not require supported accommodation but rather other forms of support.

Networks

Penrith Refuge networks with the Violence Against Women (VAW) unit, the local Child Protection Interest Group and the Nepean Domestic Violence Committee.

Special Projects

At present the service is in negotiations with the Department of Community Services for funding to move the refuge office space to a house located next door to the refuge premises. A property donated to the refuge a number of years ago was traded for the neighbouring house.

Negotiations are also underway with the Office of Community Housing to take over the costs of maintaining the second building to enable the development of a resource and drop in centre for women and children at the premises. If successful Penrith Refuge will facilitate programs for women in partnership with the local Women's Health Centre, Family Skills, and Cawarra Women's Refuge. Moving the office space to the adjacent building has the advantage of providing an additional room at the refuge for crisis accommodation.

Tanderra Refuge

History

In 1981 a steering committee was formed to establish a women's refuge in the Toronto area. The following year the group received a grant of \$10,000 from the Toronto Trade Fair which enabled the purchase of a three-bedroom house from Council. The service opened under the umbrella of Council on the Hunter Development Assistance Scheme and was staffed by volunteers. Following the establishment of a management committee the refuge received funding from the Women's Refuge mainstream funding scheme.

Management Structure

Tanderra Refuge is funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program by the Department of Community Services. Operating under a collective model, all refuge staff are members of the management committee with the balance of members made up of women from the local community.

Special Projects

Tanderra Refuge has designed a program for the children of women who access refuge services called the 426 club. The program is being piloted in the final term of 2002 and if successful referrals will be taken for participants to join the program in the first term of following year. The eight week program will convene weekly for two hour sessions facilitated by the refuge's child support workers. Activities include exercises to enhance self esteem, explore creative expression, and problem solving. Workshops teaching strategies for conflict resolution and dealing with bullying will also be offered.

Toukley Women's Refuge

History

Toukley Women's Refuge was founded in 1975 under the name of Central Coast Women's Crisis Centre and Refuge (CCWCCR). It is located in the Central Coast/Hunter region of New South Wales. The service was set up by local women responding to situations of violence and homelessness affecting women and children across the country. Those women were active in their communities with connections to local church groups and various community service organisations. The incorporation of feminist principles in the policy and work practices of the service evolved over time and paralleled a growth in women's consciousness and politicisation during the nineteen seventies.

Management Structure and Funding

The CCWCCR secured a lease on a large five-bedroom house in 1976 after obtaining a small grant through the Australia Assistance Plan to cover rental costs but for a number of years the service was reliant on community goodwill and donations of food, clothing and transport. Finally in October 1979, the service secured an annual grant for running costs along with a small capital grant that allowed for the purchase of furniture, equipment and renovations to the building. That funding enabled the service to employ a co-ordinator and a staff of part-time support workers.

In 1990 the service became an incorporated society changing its name to the Toukley Women's Refuge Inc. Today the service is funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program through the Department of Community Services.

Model

Toukley Women's Refuge employs feminist principles in its work practices and in the provision of care to the women and children escaping domestic violence who access refuge services. It provides crisis accommodation for up to four women with children and two single women at any given time and provides follow-up services for ex-residents and their children. Outreach services provide programs for women and for children in the community. Toukley Refuge is staffed 24 hours per day, seven days per week in a fully wheelchair accessible facility.

Networks

The service is involved in a range of interagency networks including the Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee, various child interagency groups, the Central Coast Court Support Committee, the Jigsaw Project, Central Coast Suicide Support Committee and the local Stop DV Day Committee among others.

Special Projects

Child support has long been central to the services offered by Toukley Women's Refuge. By 1985 child care services were well resourced at the refuge and the dedicated child support staff had

established themselves as active networkers and lobbyists working to improve the status and rights of children. In addition to the programmes offered by the refuge for younger children are regular camping trips that specifically cater for the teenaged children of refuge clients.

Tweed Shire Women and Children's Refuge

History

Tweed Shire Women and Children's Refuge situated on the North Coast of New South Wales was founded in November 1985 by seven local women. Known as the Tweed Shire Women's Refuge Collective the group was made up of a social worker, sociologist, solicitor, refuge workers, solicitor, librarian and CYSS project officer. The desire to establish a refuge in the area was motivated by a number of factors that included a complete lack of women's health and support services in the Shire and a lack of non-institutional services and support for women residing in a conservative rural community regional. Added to that, local unemployment figures at the time were the second highest in the State and the regional population growth rate four times higher than the State average. Statistical information on domestic violence was gathered from relevant government agencies such as the Departments of Social Security and Community Services, community agencies, the Police and local hospitals. Local politicians were canvassed for support as was the local Council who proved very supportive.

In early 1986 the collective decided to incorporate the refuge with a resource centre in its funding applications. It was felt that women seeking assistance at the refuge would be better served by a resource centre coordinating workshops, support groups and other forms of support to women in isolated situations and for those establishing new lives after leaving the refuge. The Resource Centre opened in 1987 staffed by volunteers and managed by a Coordinator.

Ongoing and persistent lobbying of politicians led to the service receiving its first substantial funding at the beginning of 1991. With that funding premises were secured on the outskirts of Murwillumbah. Later, additional funding was secured for a purpose-built refuge with facilities to accommodate five families at a location closer to transport and other services than the Murwillumbah property had been. Since 1994 Tweed Shire Refuge has leased six properties from the local Office of Community Housing which are used to provide housing options for women and children after they leave the refuge as well as homeless women and their children.

Management Structure and Funding

Tweed Shire Refuge is run by a community-based committee that employs a manager to oversee the day to day running of the service. Originally a collective, the service became incorporated under the name of the Tweed Shire Women's Service Inc. in November 1991. The service is funded by the Department of Community Services through its Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

Model

Tweed Shire Refuge applies feminist principles and philosophies to its services provision. It offers crisis and medium term supported housing in a communal living type setting. Counselling services are available for both women and children at the service and crisis counselling is provided free of charge to women in the community.

Residents receive assistance and support to access income support, brokerage services and where necessary, the refuge provides emergency financial assistance. Refuge staff are involved in the local court support program and work closely with Child Protection agencies. Outreach services are provided to women and children through external agencies.

During the 2000-2001 financial year the refuge provided accommodation to 86 women and 144 children. Unfortunately an additional 191 women and 250 children had to be turned away from the refuge because the demand for services continually outweighs the service's capacity.

Networks

The service has strong interagency networks with Child Protection services, local health professionals and Community Health, local schools and pre-schools, the Departments of Housing (DoH), Community Services (DoCS), and Family Services (DoFS), and the local Domestic Violence Committee.

Special Projects

Tweed Shire Refuge offers a parenting course to clients of the service and also regularly runs a protective behaviour group for children and young people at the refuge. Other community education initiatives are offered in partnership with various service providers and local community organisations that cover a wide range of topics including domestic violence awareness, health and personal development programmes. Child support workers run protective behaviours workshops for children and a group called 'Seasons for Growth' which provides an opportunity for children and young people to address issues around loss and grief.

Actively engaged in community education through the local TAFE, the service also produces an electronic bulletin called the 'femail newsletter' which has a bi-monthly distribution of 700 copies per issue. The first issue of femail rolled off the presses in 1991 and was originally produced to provide a forum for issues that affect women and a bulletin board with up-to-date information on local resources. Over the years it has grown in size, content and circulation. The newsletter has developed to include an increasing number of theme-based topics thus allowing for an in-depth exploration of the issues. femail relies on submissions from women in the community and gratefully accepts assistance and advice from the regular volunteer production team with respect to research, writing, layout, design and distribution.

Warrina Women and Children's Refuge

History

Warrina Refuge is located on the Northern coast of New South Wales at Coff's Harbour. Established in the early 1970s, like many other fledgling refuges, it was staffed entirely by volunteers. The service finally secured funding in the mid-1970s and became an incorporated society in nineteen eighty nine.

Management Structure

The refuge operates as a co-operative and is governed by a community based Board of Management. The service is funded by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program through the Department of Community Services.

Model

In addition to providing crisis accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence Warrina operates 3 exit house facilities, medium term supported housing and assists clients with other accommodation needs. The premises are fully wheelchair accessible and staffed from 8.30 to 5pm daily. Crisis services are accessible 24 hour per day via an on-call worker.

Support services include a resource centre, and counselling and in-house group work for both women and children. Warrina has secured 3 year funding for a program called 'Breaking Free' run in partnership with PANOC (Health) and Burnside. This initiative involves group work for children who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence.

Refuge staff advocate on behalf of clients and assist them to access income support, apply for Apprehended Violence Orders, and court support . Specific outreach services cater to NESB Aboriginal and lesbian women and their respective children.

Networks

In addition to the partnerships discussed above, Warrina Refuge is involved in the local Child Protection Interagency, Wandarra Aboriginal Children's Service, Koori Interagency, Community Housing Network, and Burnside Women's Health. The service also networks with the Regional VAW Reference Group and is involved in crisis accommodation brokerage.

For the past three years the refuge has auspiced the Coffs Harbour Women's DV Court Assistance program and the local Domestic Violence Committee.

Special Projects

Warrina Refuge has recently opened a Women's Information and Resource Centre that facilitates group programmes and provides one-on-one counselling and support services to (non-residential) women and children in the wider community.

The service's Aboriginal Women's Outreach Project has produced a series of videos documenting Aboriginal women's experience of domestic violence. This initiative was funded by the Department for Women.

Western Sydney Sole Women's Accommodation Service

History

Until 1998 Western Sydney Sole Women's Accommodation Service (WSSWAS) was known as Lucy's Out West. That year the Women's Activity Self-Help House (WASH) took over the auspice of the service and for a short time it was known as Jacaranda Sole Women's Refuge. The services operated from premises that were made up of six one-bedroom units in a Mt Druit suburb. The service was successful in securing purpose-built accessible premises in 1999.

Originally used as a youth accommodation residence, it now houses communal living-style crisis accommodation. Five of the original one-bedroom units are used for medium-term exit housing while the sixth operates as a Drop-in Centre and base for the Outreach Program team.

Nineteen ninety nine was also the year that the Women's Refuge Movement was approached by the Department of Community Services to auspice the then floundering service. Upon its incorporation in August 2000, the service changed its name to WSSWAS.

Management Structure and Funding

The service's day to day operations are overseen by a manager who is responsible to a community based management committee. WSSWAS is funded by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program through the Department of Community Services.

Model

The service offers support and accommodation to women without accompanying children who are escaping domestic violence. It is one of only three WRM refuges to provide services for women without dependants. The service accommodates a total of nine women for periods of six to eight weeks in its crisis accommodation and has exit housing facilities for a further five. Average stay in the exit housing is three to six months. In-house programmes include self esteem and conflict resolution workshops. An Outreach Office provides medium term support, follow-up and brokerage services for clients as well as community education services.

The service also operates a drop-in centre which is open four days per week offering services to women in the community who wish to access support, information and advice on domestic violence related issues. Shower and laundry facilities are provided at the drop in centre.

The service is staffed from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday but is accessible 24 hours per day via on call workers. As well as general support workers, WSSWAS employs an NESB support worker and an Aboriginal outreach worker who works in the local Koori communities.

Networks

WSSWAS works closely with both the Nepean Domestic Violence Committee and the Outer Western Domestic Violence Committee and has strong linkages with the Blacktown Migrant and Hawkesbury Interagency groups.

In addition, the service works with the Mt Druitt Community Legal Service which provides free legal advice to WSSWAS clients at the Outreach office once a month. WSSWAS staff are involved in the Penrith/Mt Druitt Court Assistance Scheme.

Special Projects

Statistical data collected by WSSWAS identified a gap in service provision for women over the age of 50 living with or escaping domestic violence. Almost one third of WSSWAS clients fall into this age group. Following consultations with the Aged Abuse Monitoring Project, WSSWAS has created a specialist Older Women Project worker position which will have responsibility for developing information, referral and support services for older women. The project worker will also be responsible for awareness campaigns targetting the older population in the community. The support worker will liaise with other agencies and support services to ensure that older women are able to access services appropriate to their needs, including crisis accommodation. The programme will be piloted for twelve months and then reviewed to determine the feasibility of on-going service provision for this client group.

Wimlah Refuge

History

Wimlah Refuge is located in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales. The service first opened its doors in February 1997. It obtained funding from the Department of Community Services following the closure of the original Mountain Women's Refuge early in nineteen ninety six.

Management Structure

The refuge is auspiced by the Mountain Women's Resource Centre. A co-ordinator is responsible for the day to day operations of the service which are overseen by a Steering Committee. Despite the hierarchical structure, Wimlah staff who include the Co-ordinator, three general support staff, one full-time and one part-time child support staff work co-operatively in teams work to provide effective support services to families that use the refuge. The service is funded through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP).

Model

Wimlah Refuge is committed to upholding social justice principles in its service delivery offering accommodation, support services and community education initiatives to support social relations and structures that uphold the rights of women and children to live free from domestic violence. It offers information and referral services, staff advocate and lobby on behalf of its clients in various settings from Centrelink to the Family Court. In addition to crisis accommodation, Wimlah, in a SAAP funded partnership with Blue Gum Women's Housing and Community housing, offers a medium term supported housing facility for ex-residents of the refuge.

Networks

Wimlah Refuge staff are members of various management committees including Penrith Women's Refuge, Gunedoo Child Protection Service, Blue Mountains Support Service and the Blue Mountains Women's Health Centre. Interagency networks include the Blue Mountains Interagency, the Local Housing Forum, the Blue Mountains Domestic Violence Committee, and the Wentworth Area Regional VAW Protection Reference Group and the local Women's Health Network.

Special Projects

One of Wimlah's initiatives has been to provide support for homeless or itinerant women in the Blue Mountains area by providing bathroom and laundering facilities free of charge.

Woollongong Women's Refuge

History

Located in the Illawarra South Coast region of New South Wales, Woollongong Women's Refuge began operating in 1985 after a collective of local women obtained funding for a refuge. Two years later it moved into purpose built premises run by a range of generalist and specialist support workers.

Management Structure

The broader collective manages the refuge, it is made up of women from the community, ex-residents and refuge staff. Service delivery and work practices are guided by feminist principles.

Model

The crisis service operates out of a six bedroom house with a communal living facilities. Children are well provided for at the refuge which is equipped with well designated indoor and outdoor spaces.

The service also provides ten bedsit units, some of which can double up for larger families. Accommodation for women with older male children is also available.

Special Projects

Plans are underway for Woollongong Refuge to secure an additional ten units in partnership with the Illawarra Housing Trust and the Department of Housing. The units will be occupied by families no longer in need of crisis support. This initiative is a response to the shortage of accommodation in the Woollongong area and is intended to provide stable supported accommodation for ex-residents of the refuge preparing to move into mainstream housing.

WOY WOY WOMEN'S REFUGE

History

WoyWoy Women's Refuge is located in the Hunter/Central Coast region of NSW. The refuge provides safe supported crisis accommodation to women with dependant children escaping domestic violence or other intolerable living conditions.

The refuge began operation in August 1976 from a pair of partly-furnished semi-detached cottages in Umina. Nine months later it moved to more suitable premises and the following year became registered as a charitable organisation. Then in 1982 a lease was signed with the Emergency Accommodation Unit of the Housing Commission for a four bedroom brick veneer house in Kariong where the refuge operates from today. The service's rent was originally funded under the CAP scheme with other costs being met by donation.

Management Structure

The current management structure consists of a Board of Directors made up of a Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and board members. Originally the service was managed by the Woy Woy and District Community Services Department. In February 1978 the refuge gained autonomy when it became a charitable organisation.

Nineteen eighty one saw the refuge become incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. Today Woy Woy is funded by the government through the Department of Community Services' Supported Accommodation Assistance Program having been funded by government since the 1977/78 financial year.

Model

Like other refuges Woy Woy offers a range of services for women and children escaping domestic violence beyond that of crisis accommodation. It offers everything from information and referrals to appropriate agencies, assistance accessing income support and AVO applications, court support, provides emergency financial assistance and brokerage services.

Woy Woy also has a medium term housing facility and provides outreach services to families in the community. The refuge provides counselling for women and runs a weekly self help group. A dedicated child support worker looks after child residents offering a program that includes counselling services specifically tailored to youngsters.

Networks

Woy Woy is involved in a number of local interagency networks. These include the local Domestic violence Committee, DVIRT, Kariong Neighbourhood Centre, the Peninsula Women's Health Centre, and SAAP Interagency. In addition to providing court support to women accessing the

service Woy Woy Refuge is an active participant in the Central Coast Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme.

Special Projects

One of the most successful of projects initiated by the Woy Woy Women's Refuge is its partnership with local police. At every domestic violence callout attended by police, victims are told about the DVIRT team and offered the option of contact with a team member. A sticker attached to the incident report signals that the woman does want contact prompting the police officer to pass the woman's name and contact details on to the refuge. Refuge workers then initiate contact with the woman.

While some women who access refuge services through the program take up the offer of crisis accommodation, others become outreach clients receiving regular visits by the refuge's outreach worker. Many of these contacts also require referrals to other services such as counselling or Centrelink so the refuge has constant and ongoing relationships with other local services and organisations. The partnership project has provided an effective means of getting information about support services out to women and children living with domestic violence. It also provides a readily available support network for at risk women in the community. As a testimony to the effectiveness of this project the model has been adopted and implemented by other refuges in regions throughout the State.

Yinganeh Aboriginal Women's Refuge

History

Yinganeh Refuge is located at South Lismore in Northern New South Wales. The service became an incorporated entity in 1982 and at that time received a small amount of funding. The refuge was originally situated in an old homestead on the edge of town before moving to a 3 bedroom house in Lismore. In nineteen eighty seven the service moved into larger premises, a six bedroom house that had formerly been used as a doctor's surgery. Now some fifteen years later, the building is under demolition to be replaced by a new purpose built facility on the same site.

Management Structure and Funding.

The service is run by a community based management committee of Koori women. Answerable to this committee is a Coordinator/Manager and an Administrative Manager who oversee the daily running of the service. Yinganeh Refuge is funded by the Department of Community Services under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Scheme.

Model

The refuge uses a case management model in the provision of services to local Aboriginal women and children. With a catchment area that extends some three to four hundred kilometres, the refuge offers a communal type living arrangement to indigenous women and children escaping domestic violence and sexual abuse. Homeless women are also accommodated at Yinganeh. The refuge is staffed twenty four hours per day via an on call worker who sleeps over at the refuge on occasion.

Housing options offered to clients include crisis housing and short and medium term supported accommodation. In-house support services include individual and group counselling for both women and children, brokerage and assistance to access income support, court support and advocacy. In addition to follow-up for ex-residents, the refuge also provides a range of outreach support services to local indigenous communities

Networks

Yinganeh Refuge has close links with many local and regional agencies and community groups. The service runs a program in conjunction with the Probation and Parole Service (see below). It is involved in a range of employment programmes including the CDEP's 'work for the dole' initiative, and in partnership with the Curachi Co-op provides 2 days per week work placements at the refuge for ex-residents. Yinganeh is also actively involved the Indigenous Wage Program which like the other employment programmes, is funded by Centrelink.

The service also works closely with Aboriginal Housing, the Bundjulang Tribal Society, the Ngulingah Land Council, the local Anti-violence Women's Group, and a group of community elders known as the Grandmother's Group.

Special Projects

In partnership with the local Probation Service, Yinganeh Refuge runs a Koori Women's supervision group. This group meets every second Tuesday and operates as an alternative to the traditional 'signing in' ritual of probation requirements. Activities include art therapy, story telling and community outings.

Rekindle the Spirit is an initiative set up to address men's violence in the local Aboriginal community. Yinganeh became involved in this program by sponsoring a female support worker to provide outreach and support services to women and children whose partners and fathers are involved in the Rekindle the Spirit program.