



SOUTH AYRSHIRE
WOMEN'S AID

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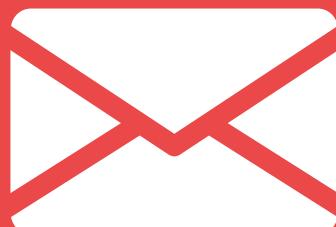
Welcome to our newsletter

In this issue we will cover our referral intake, information, recent events, thank you's and feedback on our service covering the period September 2022 - December 2022.

We are open to the public and can be contacted between 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Telephone: 01292 266482

Email: support@sawamail.org.uk



Referrals

September 2022 - December 2022

Women Support Service (WSS)

Through September to December we have had 152 WSS referrals, with 68 of these being self-referrals. We have also taken many referrals from the Domestic Abuse Unit Police, Social Work and with the remainder from other organisations e.g. Assist, Education, Health, Housing to name a few.

Children and Young People Service (CYP)

We have received 16 referrals to Children, Young People Service, 9 of these were received from parent/family friend, with the remainder from other organisations e.g school, police



The Queen's Green Canopy Tree

We are honoured to have received the gift of a special tree from The Queen's Green Canopy, Tree of Trees which stood tall as a message of hope, regeneration and optimism of the nation and the world as part of the Platinum Jubilee. Her Majesty planted over 1,500 trees all over the world during her 70 year reign. There were 350 trees which formed part of the sculpture which were set in recycled aluminium pots embossed with Her Majesty's cypher and are now being gifted to selected community groups and organisations to celebrate their work and inspire the next generation of tree planters across the nation. The gift of the tree is a thank you for all the valuable and tireless work that volunteers and individuals undertake for the benefit of their communities. South Ayrshire Women's Aid joins over 300 organisations from across the UK who were recently announced by the Queen's Green Canopy as recipients of these special trees in the Queen's name. This was presented to us by Lord-Lieutenant of Ayrshire & Arran and Sheriff Iona McDonald OBE and planted in our new refuge garden on Monday, 10th October 2022. The tree becomes part of the living legacy in honour of Her Majesty and will continue to spread this message in honour of her extraordinary service to her country and her people.



"We are delighted to be chosen to receive a tree from the Queen's Green Canopy Tree of Trees. As one of over 300 organisations across the UK, South Ayrshire Women's Aid is proud to become part of the living legacy in honour and loving memory of Her Majesty."

The Lord-Lieutenant Sheriff Iona McDonald OBE remarked

"I am delighted that South Ayrshire Womens Aid have been chosen to receive this tree as it recognises the significant contribution that they make to the wider community in South Ayrshire and that it will take pride of place in their newly designed garden."

South Ayrshire's Provost Iain Campbell said:

"It was a privilege to be involved in the planting of a tree that will become part of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's lasting legacy. The extension of the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative is a wonderful tribute.

"I think it's fitting that the vital work of the Women's Refuge is recognised in this way."



Reclaim The Night

Another year and another success for South Ayrshire Reclaim The Night. Over 250 supporters attended this event to raise awareness for women and girls' right to walk safely through our towns at night and is part of the worldwide movement of 16 Days of Action to end violence against women.

We would like to thank each and every one who came along and showed their support. Many thanks to South Ayrshire Violence against Women Partnership for their hard work once again making this event one to remember.



16 Days of Action

- Staff attended Ayr Fire Station to sign the pledge to end violence against women
- We also participated in a Winter Warmer Event on Friday 9th December within the Ally MacLeod Suite at Somerset Park to raise awareness of our service and what we can provide
- SAWA Manager attended Ayrshire College student exhibition at Ayr Campus and was really thankful to see everyone showing their support to end violence against women and girls
- Our Training Worker attended Lochside Women's Group to deliver an input on gender-based violence
- We were privileged to also take part in South Ayrshire Festive Safety Campaign aimed to keep residents, visitors and businesses safe throughout the festive period.
- Our CYP workers presented at South Ayrshire schools for drop-ins if any pupil, staff member needed any information about our service
- Our Manager met with Police Scotland Division Commander Faroque Hussain which resulted in SAWA being able to share both concerns and good practice for our families who have been involved with the Police, particularly when giving statements and in time of incidents.



Partnership Working

August 2022 - December 2022

MARAC

This is now very much established in South Ayrshire, with positive relationships building between the different agencies and excellent collaboration shown to help keep women and families safe.

FESTIVE ACTION PLAN

In December SAWA connected with the local police with a view to supporting women in interviews outside normal working hours.

AYRSHIRE WELLBEING ALLIANCE

Our Assistant Manager delivered an information session on SAWA services and domestic abuse at the November meeting of the Ayrshire Wellbeing Alliance, held in Dundonald Business Park. The Alliance meets quarterly and brings together a variety of services and agencies with a shared aim to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Ayrshire.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN'S PARTNERSHIP

SAWA worked together with the local VAWP during the 16 Days of Action campaign this year, with in-house activities in refuge, pop up information sessions in the schools delivered by the CYP service, and some colleagues attending the annual Reclaim the Night walk.

CO-OP LOCAL CAUSE

This is a fantastic scheme which allows Co-op members the chance to raise funds in order to support local causes. We have been working alongside Co-op Pioneers and we would like to say thank you to all Co-op staff and customers for raising a fantastic amount of £2570.50 through the Co-op Local Community Fund. We feel extremely lucky to be involved in this and very grateful to everyone who selected us as their cause.

We are delighted to say we have again been successful for Round 8 and are hopeful to receive another generous donation in 2023. If you are a Co-op member, please log in and choose us as your local cause. If you are not, it is easy to sign up by visiting www.coop.co.uk

ASDA GREEN TOKEN

We have been nominated this year to be part of the Asda Green Foundation Giving online vote through our local store in Ayr. This online vote was live until Saturday 31st December. We are grateful to everyone who voted for us and can report we came 3rd place.

DRIVING LESSONS

Women in our service can still obtain free lessons from a local driving instructor Jane. We are thrilled to report one of our service-users recently passed their driving test and is looking forward to being on the road.

TRAINING

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

In September SAWA organised the venue and refreshments for this full days training. All SAWA staff and delegates from North & East Ayrshire Women's Aid attended this training delivered by Women's Support Project raising awareness of the different forms of commercial sexual exploitation, the factors and causes which can increase women's vulnerability to sexual exploitation.

All staff are now well equipped with knowledge to fully support women who have been affected by commercial sexual exploitation.

NALOXONE TRAINING

In October our full team received training from NHS Addiction Services.

All staff are now trained to use and carry Naloxone. This is a medicine that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose.



Children Support Service

AWARENESS RAISING

CYP workers have continued to deliver awareness raising sessions, alongside our training worker, in secondary schools across South Ayrshire. Each session focuses on healthy and unhealthy relationships, where young people are encouraged to engage in group work and facilitate conversations to help raise awareness of Domestic Abuse.

To continue to raise awareness of the CYP service, CYP workers have created and launched the CYP Instagram account. This is a social media platform which young people both in the service and out with the service can engage with. The platform will be used to raise awareness of the service, highlight events that may be upcoming and will share information on identifying signs of domestic abuse. As part of the drop-in sessions, young people have been asked what content they would like to see and what would be most beneficial to them. This is a platform for young people, so CYP workers will continue to engage with them and utilise their ideas to create an account that meets their needs.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY/FESTIVE PERIOD

During the October holidays, CYP workers provided CYP in refuge the opportunity to attend activity days. CYP were given control over activities and enjoyed engaging in arts and crafts, boardgames and baking with workers. Families in refuge were also provided tickets for the Farm Park during this time which afforded them the opportunity to spend quality time as a family, without worrying about financial strain.

Over the Christmas period, CYP in the service both in refuge and in the community received toy donations, food and vouchers. Thanks again to all our partnering agencies, Cash for Kids, KidzOut, the Sarwar Foundation and Southside Church for helping our families this Christmas.



Children Support Service

TRAINING

CYP workers value any opportunity for professional development and were both able to attend the 3-day facilitator training for the Escape the Trap Program. This is a program that can be used with young people on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting. Designed to support young people to learn about the dynamics of grooming, coercion and power and control. Now that both CYP workers are trained facilitators, this program will be rolled out to young people in our service. CYP workers have also made links with school wellbeing hubs to discuss plans for facilitating an Escape the Trap group for at risk young people.

As well as this, CYP workers completed LIAM training, which is an anxiety management program. This training will allow workers to complete targeted anxiety management work with CYP in the service, which is a huge benefit to CYP who may be waiting for support through CAMHS and this can be offered as an alternative.



Specialist Support Worker

We would like to give a warm welcome to our new Specialist Support Worker, Eilidh Campbell who joined our service on 7th November 2022.

Eilidh has spent the past three years studying and has recently qualified with a diploma in counselling. She has been working with women accessing services within Women's Aid throughout her training and Eilidh is delighted to take up our new role of Specialist Support Worker.

Eilidh is an integrative counsellor with a focus on person centred therapy which she believes can help women in a variety of ways. Some of these include working through trauma, building confidence and regaining independence by exploring thoughts and feelings in a safe, non-judgmental environment.

We would like to sincerely thank the Robertson Trust who has provided the funding required for this post.



Training Worker

As September arrived, students and teachers returned to the classroom. This provided opportunities to deliver Healthy Relationship inputs to 29 x S1 students, 98 x S2 students, 65 x S3 students, 68 x S4 students and 34 x S6 students, reaching 294 students in total. Students engaged in conversations about navigating relationships both in person and online and gave thought to what they believe to be socially acceptable norms such as keeping your location on through snap chat or that jealousy is a sign of love. Through engaging in conversations about abuse, healthy and unhealthy behaviours, we saw young people's thoughts changed at the end of the input.

Feedback included comments such as;

'I enjoyed it because we got to share lots of answers', 'this taught me a lot on what to look out for in relationships' and one key learning shared was 'we all have the right to feel safe and respected'.

The Training Worker delivered a Gender Based Violence online training to staff including lecturers from UWS, Ayr. This training explored GBV though a gendered lens, reviewing an intersectional approach to understanding the risks and impact of GBV. Other training in the community included a SAC training exploring safety assessment and risk management.

Through November and December, we engaged in 16 Days of Action including delivering inputs to women in both the Wallacetown and Lochside community groups. Talking about violence to women and girls supported the strategy of promoting awareness of VAWG and the support and resources available. As a member of the joint action working group with partner agencies our trainer attended the Thriving community's production of Hysteria, which as a newcomer to the South Ayrshire community, it was informative to learn about the women who were accused and murdered following their witch trial in 1608.

Wrapping up 2022 has been fun here at SAWA sorting donated toys and gifts generously gifted by so many individual and community groups within South Ayrshire.

Our trainer looks forward to the new year participating in continued conversations, collaboration, and partnerships; all working together to address gender-based violence in our local community.

Refuge Accommodation, The Willows

Many thanks to Christ In Action who continually assist agencies in our local area with food and hygiene products.

We are very fortunate to receive these food parcels weekly and women are extremely grateful.



Many Thanks to Ayrshire Quilters who kindly donated another batch of beautiful quilts for women and children in our refuge. The children have spent many hours using these as their play mat, comforters, snuggle blankets which they will then take with them to their forever home.



We applied to Scottish Children's Lottery Chance to Flourish for children's garden activities and outdoor toys to be purchased for our new garden providing a safe place for children to relax, play and learn which will also improve mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Thank you !





Christmas Thank Yous



ALL WARRIORS GYM

We were overwhelmed with the Christmas donations received from All Warriors gym staff and members for families in our service. We are very grateful for their continued support over the years. All the gifts were collected and delivered by SAWA Team in plenty of time for Christmas.

LOCHLIE CONSTRUCTION GROUP

Whilst renovating our refuge facility we developed a great working relationship with Lochlie and they were very supportive of the work we carry out. We were amazed to hear they had provided gifts to every child in our service. We are truly grateful.

SOUTHSIDE CHURCH

Given the cost of living crisis and families struggling financially we were delighted to be able to deliver beautifully wrapped food hampers, butcher voucher and food donations from Southside Church. These were gratefully received and eased so much financial pressure for women to prepare a Christmas Dinner.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

We were overjoyed to receive a Festival Tree invitation from Holy Trinity Church this year. SAWA Christmas Tree was displayed in their beautiful church throughout the festive period. We are very grateful to all the congregation who also donated Christmas gifts and cash donations.

STAIR PARISH CHURCH

One again this year we received a tremendous amount of Christmas gifts from Stair Parish Church. This has been a continued support over the years and we are feel very blessed to have been chosen again this year.

LILY SIMPSON BROWN

The most kind and caring S1 Queen Margaret pupil went above and beyond again this year by raising just over £900 and did the thoughtful Christmas shop making sure all ages in our service was covered.



Christmas Thank Yous



CHILDREN'S AID CHARITY

We applied and were successful in receiving cash donation of £1500 from Children's Charity Aid which allowed us to buy a gift for every child in our service.

We would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to the trustees of this charity for their overwhelming kindness and generosity.

KIDS OUT

We kindly received toy boxes again this year and these were distributed to children in our service

SOME QUOTES RECEIVED FROM FAMILIES FOR CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

"From the bottom of our hearts we would like to say a huge thank you for the kindness, generosity to think of children like my daughter who through no fault of her own is in a different family situation this Christmas. Opening these gifts will bring joy to her heart and I can't wait to see her big smiles and sparkle in her eyes"

"Thanks for everything. The gifts were fantastic and the children really enjoyed them. Thank you for helping to make Christmas special".

"Thank you so much for our presents - you made the happiest kids today".

"Thank you for all the kind gifts, it was so nice to include my older children".

"These toys have made a big difference. If it wasn't for this help I would have really struggled. I really appreciate it".

"Thank you so much for the lovely gifts. I really appreciate it. My daughter has been wanting a doll's house and I couldn't afford one. She will be very excited when she sees this".

"Getting the toys helped me a lot for Christmas. It has made our year more special".

Volunteers



Thank you to our kind-hearted and dedicated volunteers we currently have who are making a difference to women and children's lives. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with our service please send your CV to office@sawamail.org.uk.

Donations



We would like to say a sincere thank you for all the donations received over the past few months from cash, cheques, toiletries and clothes.

Evaluation Feedback

Evaluations from our families we support are extremely important to us as it helps shape our service and make any adjustments that we feel would enhance the support we provide. Thank you to those who have provided this valuable feedback.



"A big thank you for being so flexible with working hours, my worker was so helpful and encouraging. She made me feel that I did not do anything wrong and explained why I was feeling the way I was. She was fabulous in every way"

"I would not have survived the last year if it had not been for the support I received from Women's Aid. Thank you!"

I feel very happy and safe . I am delighted to be staying at the Willows and receive amazing support from workers and also the Children's Team. Everyone is amazing.

"I come into the office and everyone is so welcoming".

"I am happy staying at the Willows. The service I get is excellent, I am supported really well here".

"I have grown in confidence for sure".

"Staff are never judging, they always made the time to listen to me even if an appointment had not been planned".

"The support has helped me feel more confident in school and my stress levels when seeing a certain person. Although group work isn't for me I still found a friend and coping strategies".

"The family group was so much fun"

"It is a good service, you can talk to someone and be listened to".

"I am now able to recognise my feelings and have lots of skills and tools to help manage them".