



**SOUTH AYRSHIRE  
WOMEN'S AID**

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**V O L U M E 6 - N E W S L E T T E R**

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Welcome to our newsletter

In this issue we will cover our referral intake, information, recent events, thank yous and feedback on our service covering the period January 2022 - April 2022.

With covid restrictions easing we are now able to interact with our service-users face-to-face.

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](mailto:support@sawamail.org.uk)



# Referrals

## January 2022 - April 2022

### Women Support Service (WSS)

Through January to April we have had 138 WSS referrals, 62 of these being self-referrals, 18 from police, 6 from 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 26 referrals to Children, Young People Service, 8 of these were received from parent/family friend, 4 from school, with the remainder from other organisations e.g. Assist, Social Work



## Partnership Working January 2022 - April 2022

Through January to April we have been partnership working with many agencies including South Ayrshire Council, Social Work Department, Adult & Child Protection Team, Police Scotland, Assist, Community Mental Health Team and other Women's Aid agencies.

We participated in a call with a postgraduate researcher at the University of Nottingham in the School of Sociology and Social Policy, who is currently carrying out research for her PhD in the use of technology in abuse & stalking. In turn, the researcher shared a variety of information resources for SAWA to use in prevention and protection work with women.

We also had the pleasure of working again with Genna - "The Gifted Kind" - a programme for women to become leaders of their own happiness. an opportunity to rediscover their identity and gain the self awareness needed to take their life to the next level. This course ran for a five week period in February 2022 and again was another great success for women who participated. Below are some comments from our recent group.

*"I wanted to find a new way of moving on and expressing/understanding my feelings and emotions. I felt really positive after the first session. I was given new skills and knowledge on how to reflect and make new goals for myself. Genna was really welcoming and put me at ease straight away. Setting group boundaries and rules was great as I automatically felt trust and reassurance within my group. I thoroughly enjoyed the group and have seen a huge difference in my moods since attending".*

*"The meditation and visualisation sections were powerful for me. We have come so far together and it helped that some of us knew each other from the PTSD Group – this made it easier. So very grateful to have done this and learned new things. Genna was a breath of fresh air. Makes you believe in yourself.*

*Perfect end to women's aid journey"*

## Partnership Working January 2022 - April 2022

We continue to work in partnership with Police Scotland and are active participants in the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland and the Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination meetings which allows families safety to be address.

More recently we have been part of the Implementation Group for Multi-Risk Assessment Conference to be embedded within the Ayrshire area. This will address the safety of high risk victims of domestic abuse and ensure that their voice is heard.

We are also involved in the Implementation Group for Safe and Together in the South Ayrshire Area and this will be rolled out in partnership with Criminal Justice, Local Authority, Health and other agencies. We have continued to build on our relationships with other organisations such as Cash for Kids, Kidz Out and the SARWAR Foundation.



# Success for Reclaim The Night



We are delighted to report Reclaim the Night Event went ahead and what a fantastic turn out. Many women, men and children marched together and showed unity and strength. Women should be able to walk streets without fear. We would like to sincerely thank South Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership for organising this event and for everyone coming together to make it such a huge success.

WELL DONE EVERYONE !



# The Willows Garden Update



We are delighted to report that our garden fundraising is going exceptionally well and we hope to be in a position to start our garden redesign in the near future. We would not have been able to go ahead without the generous donations and Lochlie Construction catapulting us closer to our goal.

Special thank you to the following funders/organisations

- Pumphouse Trust
- Co-op
- Ayr Ukes
- Lochlie Construction
- Ayrshire Housing
- Cash Donations from Public





## Freedom Group

We have recently started another Freedom Group which is a twelve week course aimed to help women make sense of and understand what has happened to them. It also describes in detail how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and very importantly how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed. The Programme looks at tactics, beliefs and actions of the perpetrator and how this impacts on women. This Group is delivered by Shirley Middleditch, Manager.

We will report with feedback once this programme is completed.





## Community Food Network

Our support worker Carol Boyd is now a representative on the Community Food Network. Information is shared regarding the provision of assistance for low income families to reduce poverty and disadvantage.

Representatives include - Foodbank, Food Pantries, Advice and Information Hubs, Home Energy, Southside Church Scotland, South Ayrshire Council, Children's 1st along with other agencies who attend, information and updates on the provision and demand of those services shared.

The attendance on this group is invaluable to our service and service users.







## Children Support Service

During the Easter holiday CYP workers provided families in the service the opportunity to go bowling. Thanks to funding from CFK, 7 families were able to take part. This was another successful trip and allowed for children and mums to interact with each other.

CYP workers were also able to provide these families with a £20 Greggs voucher each, which gave mum's the opportunity to treat their children. These were warmly received by families during this difficult time with the cost of living rising.

CYP workers also attended Child Sexual Exploitation Training, with the view of being able to deliver this training in the community.



## Children Support Service

### School Inputs and Partnership Working

We have delivered 6 sessions in schools, with 109 young people participating in these. We worked in partnership with the Campus Police Officer in one school to deliver 4 sessions to S3 around Healthy relationships to coincide with International Women's Day. We were contacted by another school looking to run 2 sessions with S4 girls. Again for this we covered healthy relationships, with the aim of them being able to identify and understand what makes a relationship healthy and unhealthy.

Feedback from these sessions has been positive with all participants reporting that they would be able to spot the signs of an unhealthy/abusive relationship and would now know where to get help or advice. Some of the comments from participants include:

"I have learned what are bad and healthy signs in a relationship, so I can recognise a healthy one."

"I learned a clear understanding between right and wrong."

"I already knew this but it has deepened my understanding."

"Knowing the signs will now help me to notice them."

Contact has been made with all secondary schools within South Ayrshire to attempt to schedule more of these now that school restrictions have eased.



## Specialist Support Worker

This month we received the fantastic news that the Specialist Support Worker's position has been granted funding for the next three years by the Robertson Trust. This will allow us to continue to offer CBT therapy to service users who are struggling with mental health issues and to run workshops such as the 8-week PTSD workshop that began this week.

In other news, recently the Specialist Support Worker took part in the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) Spring Conference. This involved taking part in a series of workshops to continue expanding and updating knowledge and skills on a range of issues such as depression and behaviour activation and working with regret using CBT.

### Recent Feedback

*"Having support for domestic abuse issues was great now I can concentrate on my therapy. I have come a long way which gives me a really nice feeling"*

*"Natalie is fantastic, we have had difficult conversations and she has a wonderful level of empathy. I never feel judged but she strikes the balance of what I need. She is an amazing person and I am thankful for this service"*

*"The way Natalie does core 10s and different evaluations is so good. Natalie has made me more confident. I used to think I had to please everyone, would never say no but Natalie has helped me set boundaries and say I can say no and do what pleases me".*

*"It has opened up a lot of things that I did not know about myself and not facing. Natalie is helping me to deal with that and using coping strategies. She is amazing. Over the years I have seen a lot of people who I felt have not listened but Natalie realised quickly there is a lot more going on with me. She has been so good".*



## Refuge Accommodation, The Willows

We are overwhelmed with the continued support from Christ In Action who 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.



To mark International Women's Day we celebrated women's achievements having tea and scones in our refuge communal kitchen. This was a fun day had by all who attended.

Many thanks to all donations of clothes recently recieved. These are now displayed in our communal area for women to choose their suitable size and preferred style.



## Feedback

"Kids are enjoying refuge. All the workers take really good care for us. I feel so much better since coming here. I was a shell of myself before getting support from Women's Aid. Having somewhere safe, not needing to worry made such a difference to me. I feel very welcome here. I call it my home now but I know it is just temp. We love it".



## Training Worker

We are hopeful that our new Training Worker will start in the not so distant future. She will deliver a range of training materials to children and young people within a variety of settings encompassing a range of topics that address the issue of violence against women and girls. She will also deliver training and awareness sessions within community groups and to those who also provide direct services to encourage a consistent, appropriate and effective response to women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse. If you wish to discuss training please be in touch as we are still able to provide this and we will be happy to assist.

Although we have been without a Training Worker for a few months we have made contact with all South Ayrshire secondary schools and we are delighted to report they are now in a position to allow us to deliver inputs on Healthy Relationships/Domestic Abuse Awareness. It is important to ensure schools are supporting children and parents experiencing domestic abuse at the earliest point we can. These inputs have been scheduled and we are looking forward to partnership working with our local primary and secondary schools again in the near future.

# 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](mailto: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. With this kindness and generosity we have been able to help families in need of support.

Many thanks to Ayr Inner Wheel who recently delivered many toiletries for women in our service and cash donations which will help towards families in crisis. They have continued to support our service over the years and we are truly grateful.

# Free Driving Lessons

Driving lessons can be expensive and some women although would love to drive have not been able to for a number of reasons such as being a victim of controlling behaviour partner would not allow this . Jane, a local driving instructor got in touch with us as she wanted to provide help and assistance to women who were keen to become a driver. This gesture meant so much to women we support making them feel worthy and empowered.

"Women's Aid have done so much for us as a family. In fact I start my driving lessons on Monday. This will give me my confidence, independence and basically my life back. My ex never let me get my license so for me to be able to do this whilst on benefits is amazing. When I pass my test I will be able to go on family holidays. It means so much to me and I am so grateful for this opportunity"



Jane also very kindly donated theory books free of charge and a cash donation to help other women buy tools which will help them pass their theory test.

*Thank you!*

# 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 have provided this valuable feedback.



"I could not fault your service, it is so worthwhile. I was made to feel very welcome when I came into the office and all the workers are approachable and have such a calming manner. You are all a bunch of lovely girls. Thank you !"

"My worker is absolutely wonderful, she promotes my independence and she is so professional".

"My worker deserves a diamond, she is one of a kind. I can feel myself welling up just thinking about how much she has done for me. She is the only person I could turn to. She is magnificent in every way. I can't thank her enough for or put into words how much she means to me".

"You did a fantastic job and I was not expecting all the support I got. It really is a great service for women. I would not be where I was just now if it was not from the support from all the workers".

"Everything the CYP workers have did so far is amazing. I thought my kids were out of control but the workers have helped me get back to being their mum. Thank you."

"Flip Out was a super day. We had such a good laugh. The boys went to their grans and I got to pay attention more to my daughter. It was good having quality time with her. Money is tight having 3 kids and on benefits so I could not have been able to do this day out without Women's Aid so thank you".