

BRISSC NEWS

Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre

Issue 4 August 2005

BRISSC is a woman's only space, offering information and support in a safe, friendly and empowering environment, free of charge. The support we provide is based on the belief that you have the right to

- Be listened to, believed and supported
- Be treated with respect, dignity and understanding
- Deal with your life, in your own way and at your own pace
- Choose who and what you tell and when
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Receive practical information including reporting, legal and medical options
- Interpreter support and disability support.



What's New

Renovations at Women's House: Women's House underwent extensive renovations over the last year which were completed in April. The completion coincided with Women's House 30th Birthday celebrations, which were held on April 9th. The birthday party was attended by past and present Women's House workers and community women. The afternoon and evening events included speeches, handing over of Women's House archives to the Fryer Library, a photo exhibition, and a video containing archival footage of women's marches and social action in Brisbane over the last 30 years. Of course there was also yummy food and drinks and live entertainment for attendees! Women's House is grateful to the Office for Women for providing funding for this event.

With the renovations complete, Women's House/BRISSC now has a new and disability accessible space downstairs for groups. See the *What's Happening* section for information on the next group that will be held in the new room.

BRISSC Staff News:

One of BRISSC's support workers, Barbara, will be away on leave for 7 weeks beginning mid-July. She will return the first week of September after some European adventures. In mid-July, BRISSC will welcome, Michele, a graduate entry UQ Social Work student who will be on placement with BRISSC until November. Bon Voyage Barbara and Welcome Michele!

Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre

Address: 15 Morrissey Street
Woolloongabba, 4012
Support: 3391 0004
Admin: 3391 2573
Fax: 3391 4735
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Other BRISSC News...

Support Groups at BRISSC:

From February to May of this year, BRISSC ran a ten-week support group, which involved twelve women who had experiences of incest. Women completed questionnaires at three time points over the course of the group (at the start, middle, and end), which asked them to rate things such as their general well-being and how much the effects of incest were affecting various aspects of their lives.

Statistical examination of women's questionnaires over these 3 time points indicated that:

- attending the group increased women's understanding of the causes of violence in society;
- increased their general well-being and self esteem;
- decreased the amount of guilt/self-blame they were experiencing;
- decreased the amount of self-hate they felt related to incest;
- increased the level of hope in their lives;
- and decreased the impact of incest on their daily activities.

There was limited evidence that the support group helped women to increase their ability to self-nurture/self-care .

Alison and Barbara, the group's co-facilitators, would like to acknowledge their appreciation to all the women who participated in the group and surveys.

BRISSC's Lobbying, Training and Worker Development:

On June 4th all workers at Women's House attended an anti-racism training that was held at Women's House in our newly renovated group space. The workshop was facilitated by Lilla Watson and Mary Graham and participants enjoyed the day's discussions and learning. BRISSC continues to work with the Tiddas Reference Group to plan specific events for and with Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander women, see *What's Happening* section for details.

BRISSC continues to network with other sexual assault services in Queensland through the attendance of monthly meetings of the Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN). Participation in QSAN is important to BRISSC in order to share information and knowledge with other services and workers, and to provide a cohesive voice with which to lobby for increased funding of sexual assault services. We are currently developing a state-wide poster campaign.

BRISSC worker, Alison, has been in consultation with Queensland Police Services (QPS) to give feedback on training materials that QPS has been developing for working with women who have experienced sexual violence. The training is part of a response to the recommendations that came out of the Seeking Justice Inquiry. It has been rewarding to see such a commitment from QPS to taking on feedback, suggested changes and criticisms of their material.

What's Happening?

Groups, Workshops and Courses

Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre

Ten week Support Group

Amanda Dearden, project worker Stephanie Anne and UQ student Michelle Ryan will be facilitating a ten week support group for survivors of sexual assault. This will be a closed group, starting on Wednesday 10th August 2005 (TBC). Please contact Amanda at BRISSC on 3391 2573 if you are interested in being part of this group. (A maximum of twelve women can attend, preference will be given to women on BRISSC's group wait list).

Tiddas Dreaming

The Tiddas Reference Group and BRISSC will be opening Sexual Violence Awareness Month with a strengthening up and moving on 'yarning up' event for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander women. This women and children only event will provide opportunities for women to share their strength and courage and ways to move beyond their experiences of sexual violence.

Food will be provided.

Where: Jagerra Arts, Musgrave Park

When: Saturday, 1st of October, 2-7pm

Contact BRISSC: 3391 2573 for more info.

Creating hArt space!

A number of women have expressed an interest in BRISSC providing opportunities for creative expression, hArt space will be trialed over the next couple of months, Wed 3:30—5 pm in the new downstairs group room. This will be a free, open group space, where women can come and explore there creative energy. Bring along your creativity and any contributions to art materials. Call BRISSC for more info.

Breaking the Silence

A non therapeutic self help support group for women who have experienced rape/sexual assault. This group is ongoing and allows new members to join at any time.

No bookings required, gold coin donations.

When: 11am– 12.30 pm, Once a month, first Friday of the month.

Where: Womenspace, 12/14 Homebush Road Kedron

Contact Trish at Self Help QLD for more info 07 3344 6919

Brisbane Institute of Tafe Free Women's Safety Session

An empowering session that presents simple, practical, physical and psychological tips to increase your confidence and safety. Presented by Senior Constable Lis Brown of the Queensland Police Service. Phone 131 248, Mon - Fri 8.00– 5.30 to enroll.

- *Tues 23rd August - 1 night, 6pm-9pm Ithica Campus, Fulcher Rd, Red Hill. (Course Code 22108)*

Redlands Groups

(Collaborative projects of Recovery After Sexual abuse: Life Line, Redland Community Centre and Queensland Health.)

MONTAGE GROUP

For women recovering from childhood sexual abuse 9am-12 noon, 10 weeks, dates to be confirmed. Next FREE group to be held in Wynnum. Ph: Samantha 3893 8111

CHRYSALIS GROUP

Free Program for non-offending parents of children recovering from sexual abuse.

2hrs per week for 6 weeks.

Phone Christine on 3245 2117 or 3823 2555



Surviving Abuse and Achieving Justice - book launch and seminar

Roni Askey-Doran is a freelance travel writer, a journalist and an author. She has written three novels, two of them on the subject of sexual abuse: "Pendulum" and "Chasing Unicorns". Roni is also a survivor of sexual abuse.

Brisbane Book Launch Events:

Monday 15th August, 5.30 pm at Avid Reader Bookstore, Boundary Street, West End.

Confirmed speakers include Mike Reynolds AM MP, and Cr Geraldine Knapp.

Wine and Cheese will be provided for this event.

Wednesday 9th November, 12 noon at the Brisbane Central City Library Theatrette.

Speakers are still to be confirmed for this event.

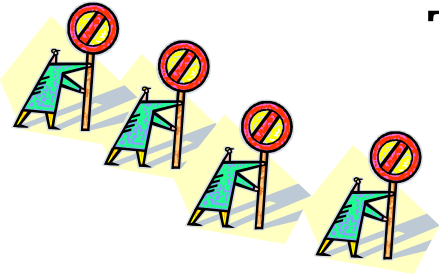
This book will be launched in a number of places across Queensland,

Check the website for more details: www.roniaskeydoran.com

This talk is for everyone; especially the survivors of sexual abuse, their families and friends. The seminar also reaches out to parents and teachers, as well as carers and supervisors, and even sports coaches, who must now arm themselves with knowledge in order to prevent sexual abuse, and who also need to be aware of the signs of abuse in the children with whom they have contact. The professionals and volunteers who deal with the victims and survivors of abuse on a daily basis are also an integral group to which the subject of sexual abuse is of great interest, including psychologists, counsellors, therapists, and other health workers, and the police to whom the crime is reported, the barristers and the prosecutors working in the justice department who prosecute the offenders, the judges who rule on sentencing of the crimes, and the lawmakers and politicians who design the legal processes of seeking and achieving justice.

Contact Roni at info@roniaskeydoran.com or phone (07) 4788 9542 / 0409 752 540





Together we can make a stand against sexual violence....

Reclaim the Night (RTN)

The annual Reclaim the Night Rally, march and festival are an important statement in the campaign to stop all forms of sexual violence against women and children. They're also a validation of women's strength, survival and solidarity.

This event falls on the last Friday of October each year- this year it is on **Friday 28th October 2005**

RTN is a public demonstration that aims to raise community awareness about sexual violence against women and children. This event is organized by a voluntary collective which is formed each year by committed and hardworking women from the community.

The Reclaim the Night Collective is calling for new members to start organising this years reclaim the night event. If you are interested in learning new skills in organising events or just want to get involved please phone: **3391 2573.**

National Abuse Free Contact Campaign

This campaign was initiated because of concerns relating to the exposure of children to abuse and domestic violence following separation as a result of unsafe contact arrangements, usually ordered by the family court.

The campaign aims to make the government listen, and to prioritise the safety of victims of violence.

Children who have been sexually abused by a parent are currently the only category of rape victim who can be compelled by a court order to have a continuing relationship with the person who has offended against them.

Interested people can join the campaign and interact via a national email discussion list. This group was involved in the recent DV fatality review and petition to the Queensland Government.

If you are interested in being part of this campaign please call Amanda at BRISSC 3391 2573, or Barb at Women's House Shelta on 3391 0005.

We are currently seeking donations to enable us to print a range of Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention resources. We are seeking \$2000 for stickers and \$5000 to print a booklet about incest. If you or a person/organisation you know is able to make a tax deductible contribution to help raise printing funds for stickers and other resources, please call 07 3391 2573 or send a cheque to our Management Body, Women's Community Aid Association, 15 Morrisey Street Woolloongabba, 4102. (ABN 43 009 935 488).

October is Sexual Violence Awareness Month...

Sexual Violence Awareness Month (SVAM) is almost here!!!



This year's theme is 'Stop Incest!'

Every year sexual assault services and other organisations across Australia organize events to raise awareness within the community around the existence and prevalence of sexual violence.

You can get involved in raising awareness of sexual violence and attending some of the great events being organised in the local community.

This month provides all members of the community with an ideal opportunity to become involved and demonstrate concern about sexual violence.

Why not wear a teal ribbon!!! BRISSC and other sexual assault services throughout QLD including Centre Against Violence at Logan, provide teal ribbons that can be worn throughout October in recognition of those who have experienced sexual violence and as a way of breaking the silence in the community.

The theme of Sexual Violence awareness month for the past few years has been: 'Sexual Violence: now is the time to draw the line'.

Sexual Violence
NOW IS THE TIME TO DRAW THE LINE

STOP INCEST!

BRISSC'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS- SVAM 2005!

July- October 2005.

Weekly Reclaim the Night organising Collective meetings- you can join in the organising of Reclaim the Night- no experience necessary. Call 3391 2573 for more details.

Reclaim the Night

*Friday the 28th of October
Rally 6pm, King George Square, Brisbane City. March across Goodwill Bridge to celebration and Festival at Queensland College of Art, Southbank.*

***Watch this space for more event details!!!
Please let us know if you have ideas or events you would like to see for SVAM this year, phone 3391 2573.***

Support Service Contacts:

Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline:
(24 hrs)

1800 010 120

Domestic Violence Telephone Service
(24 hrs)

1800 811 811

Lifeline (24 hrs)

131 114

Kids Help Line- for people up to 18yrs
(24 hrs)

1800 551 800

Parentline

1300 301 300

Salvo Care (24 hrs)

3831 9016

Sexual Crimes Investigations Unit

3364 6430

Interesting Websites

Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre www.brissc.com.au

Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault www.aifs.gov.au/acssa

WEAVIN- Women Educating Against Violence Information Network
www.weavin.org.au

Women's Safety after Separation
<http://wsas.here.ws>

We welcome your Feedback!

If you would like to give us feedback on our services, including our newsletters, events, workshops, website, telephone/face to face support or groups, please phone us on 3391 2573, email info@brissc.com.au, or write to us at 15 Morrisey Street Woolloongabba 4102.

We value women's feedback and look forward to hearing ideas on how we can improve our services.

Important Notice!!

If you wish to continue to receive the BRISSC Newsletter you must contact us to confirm your contact details.

Unfortunately a number of newsletters are returned to us unopened, so in order to reduce unnecessary postage, we will only post newsletters to those people who have recently confirmed their details and desire to stay on our mailing list.

We will also be working on developing an email based newsletter, please let us know if you would prefer an electronic newsletter in future.

Please contact us on:

Admin Ph: 3391 2573

Support Ph: 3391 0004

Email: info@brissc.com.au

Or post us your contact details slip below to: BRISSC, 15 Morrisey St, Woolloongabba 4102.

Thank you!

Please update my contacts on the BRISSC mailing list! (All sections are Optional)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Would you like email updates/newsletter? _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile: _____ Work Ph: _____

Is it okay for BRISSC to leave a message for you on the above number/s? _____

(Please circle where appropriate) I am interested in Support Groups (Yes/No), Workshops (Yes/No), Social Action (Yes/No), Newsletter/Events (Yes/No), I am interested in being a guest speaker at BRISSC awareness raising events: (Yes/No),

other interests include: _____

Final Thought....

Many women accessing support at BRISSC have struggled with an inner voice that can be harsh, critical and unfair. Sometimes this part engages in self blame for sexual violence even though the responsibility for sexual violence really belongs with the perpetrator who made the choice to violate and abuse your trust. Many women are learning to be gentle with themselves as an important part of their healing from abuse. The following is an affirmation that may be helpful, warm regards, BRISSC Collective.

I am learning to be gentle with myself...

One of the qualities that was not bestowed on me a child was that of gentleness. The sexual abuse certainly was not gentle to body, spirit, emotional or intellect. Instead I received harshness, disrespect and sometimes brutality. It is not surprising that one of the most difficult things for me to give myself today is gentleness.

Whenever I am feeling critical of myself, I will stop and remember that this criticism emanates from the messages I received from my abusers. Today instead of continuing to support this false legacy, I will begin to replace this critical thought with the one I originally deserved to hear- one of gentleness and support of my precious being. This is how I can continue to hold the appropriate people accountable and begin to adopt a much deserved attitude of gentleness toward myself. Above all else in my process of recovery from sexual abuse, I need to be most gentle with all parts of myself. I have too long borne the burden of someone else's shame.

Today I can be most gentle with myself by honouring and respecting my feelings and affirming the beautiful and unique pace of my own process. In times of great pain and fear, I will treat myself as I would a very young child- with understanding, patience and gentleness.

** just for today I will recognise and affirm one way that I have been gentle with my healing self.*

From 'On the Path: Affirmations for adults recovering from Childhood sexual abuse (Harper Collins, 1991).

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Or contact us on:

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Support Ph: 3391 0004

Email: info@brissc.com.au

Thank you!