



women's

RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Newsletter - July 2016



Health Awareness Event

Are you
well?

Inform and Inspire

When?

3rd of August
11am - 2pm

Where?

Crescent Arts Centre,
2-4 University Rd,
Belfast

Come along and take part in our
interactive zones

To register email: info@wrda.net
or call 028 90 230 212
Healthy lunch and refreshments
provided



Eat Well Zone

make sense of food labels,
sample healthy snacks, learn
about growing your own herbs,
get tested for allergies



Think Well Zone

are you coping with stress in a
healthy way? learn techniques
and exercises to improve your
mental wellbeing, try a
complimentary alternative
therapy session



Changing Habits Zone

try the smokerlyzer test, take
part in a zumba class, check
your blood pressure and
cholesterol, check your skin
for sundamage

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WomensResource
andDevelopmentAgency



@WRDA_team
@WSLobbyistNI





WRDA Statement on EU Referendum

By Ellen Finlay

Following the result of the EU Referendum, **WRDA is calling on the Northern Ireland Executive, UK Government, Irish Government and the European Union to:**

- ⇒ Protect the rights of women and their families
- ⇒ Ensure that women, particularly those from areas of disadvantage are engaging meaningfully in the decision making processes
- ⇒ Mitigate any negative impact the result may have on women and their families

The work of WRDA is underpinned by its vision of a **fair and equal society where women are empowered and can affect change and be influential in all areas of their lives.** We strive to advance women's equality and participation.

The fact is that 55.8% of people in Northern Ireland choose to remain within the EU, it is therefore imperative that the voices of women are heard loud and clear at such a critical time in the country. It is vital that all governments proactively engage with women from disadvantaged areas to ensure that every policy and legislative decision addresses their concerns.

Wherever or whatever the future negotiations hold, politicians must unite and ensure that women are not disadvantaged further.

WRDA Secure Funding For Good Relations Project



Community Relations Council
Equity Diversity Interdependence

WRDA are pleased to announce the launch of a new project '**Good Community Relations**' next month. The newly appointed post holder, Kellie O'Dowd, will be tasked with revising & adapting existing training materials and delivering this programme to groups regionally.

WRDA since its establishment in 1983 has been **pro-active in promoting and developing good relations between women of both traditions and the increasing diverse communities.** We have responded to the needs of women by developing programmes which have and continue to address inequalities, in women's political representation, leadership and health.

This Good Community Relations programme will engage grassroots women to access training and awareness of Good Relations issues and provide the opportunity for women to come together to learn and share experiences through the themes of sectarianism, racism and shared identity.

This project has been funded by the **Community Relations Council.**

If your group or organisation would be interested in taking part in this exciting new programme, contact **Katie English, Communications & Membership Worker** at info@wrda.net.

Sexual Violence and Abuse Training

By Megan McClure Botha

On Monday the 27th of June I attended **CPD accredited Sexual Violence and Abuse training.** The session was facilitated by Lindsay Rainey, **Onus Training NI.** This is a digest of some of the ongoing issues surrounding sexual violence and abuse in Northern Ireland.

Concerns were raised regarding an app called Mspy. This app can be downloaded by anyone for £24.99 and allows the downloader of the app to 'remotely track and control activity on smartphones and computers' according to the company's website.

This includes frequently called numbers and locations. It also allows for 'geofencing', creating a zone the phone user can't leave without the downloader being notified. Mspy's manufacturers state their app has many 'security, safety and convenience' uses however it could also be used by a stalker to track their victim or by an abusive partner who wishes to receive notifications when a woman visits Women's Aid or other 'geofenced' locations. Most shockingly, the person whose phone is being monitored won't know unless the downloader tells them. **This app clearly has the potential to cause enormous harm.**

The rise of human trafficking for sex work in Northern Ireland is also of huge concern. The **Northern Irish sex industry is the fastest growing in the UK** and many of the women involved have been trafficked. As the sex industry is growing so is the blight of human trafficking. Familiarise yourself with the signs of trafficking by visiting <http://hopeforjustice.org/spot-the-signs/>. If you suspect someone is being trafficked please contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or contact the PSNI on 101 (or 999 in an immediate emergency). Alternatively, if you don't want to become involved in the Criminal Justice system you can contact the 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline on 0808 802 1414.

In spite of the development of spy apps and increase in trafficking, small gains have been made in the fight against sexual violence and abuse. The Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Centre will store forensic evidence until the survivor is ready to go to the police. It is hoped this will increase the reporting of rape and serious sexual assault as many survivors choose not to go ahead with criminal proceedings in the immediate aftermath of an attack and feel unable to pursue a conviction later as the time for gathering forensic evidence has passed. The services offered by The Rowan provide survivors with vital breathing space to decide what to do next whilst also maximising the crucial 24 hour period for collecting forensic evidence. **Currently only 4% of all rapes in NI will result in a conviction,** hopefully the ability of The Rowan to store vital evidence for months and even years will see an increase in prosecutions and convictions.

You can help by telling others to be vigilant and proactive regarding smartphone security, looking out for the signs of trafficking and spreading knowledge about the services offered by The Rowan.



Understanding Domestic Violence. Ending Abuse

The Onus is on all of us.

WRDA Breast Cervical and Bowel Programme

By Katherine Robertson



Screening Saves Lives

Women's Resource and Development Agency have developed a ground breaking **Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness Programme**. It was developed to tackle the low uptake of screening invitations by women living in some areas of Northern Ireland.

The three session programme is currently funded by the **Public Health Agency** and incurs no cost to groups and individuals wishing to access it.

Katherine Robertson, WRDA's Training and Development Programme Worker explains: "This is a fantastic programme which aims to raise awareness of breast, cervical and bowel screening. In the first week we look at the importance of breast awareness and breast screening. This includes a practical demonstration on how to correctly check your breasts and explains the signs and symptoms to look for. Week two highlights the benefits of regular cervical screening, as well as what happens at a smear test, and includes the types of results and what they mean. In the final week we raise awareness of bowel cancer screening, what signs and symptoms to look out for, ways to reduce your risk of developing bowel cancer and how to take the screening test"

Liz Curran WRDA's Operation Manager said: "Impact assessments have shown that participants are more likely to attend screening after participating in the programme. Women sometimes fail to prioritise their own health as they are busy looking after everyone around them. Some women also struggle to talk about things like breast, bowel and cervical cancer and they can literally die of embarrassment as they don't want to get these areas checked out. Our programme tackles the barriers many women face when it comes to screening and encourages participants to avail of the screening services they are provided with"

WRDA Welcomes New Staff Member



This month we welcomed new staff member **Emma Gray, Training and Development Outreach Worker**, delivering the **Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness** sessions to groups with additional support needs. Emma previously worked in the Education, Training and Employment Project at Shankill Women's Centre and prior to this delivered a range of accredited training and personal development to young people throughout Northern Ireland.

Emma completed her degree at the University of Ulster in Sociology with Criminology in 2009 and the Community Facilitators Programme at WRDA in 2014 and since then has went on to develop teacher training skills at the University of Ulster's Transitional Justice Institute, in 2015 becoming a TJI Grassroots Facilitator.

If you wish to **contact Emma** regarding delivery of the BCB Programme to groups with additional needs please mail emma.gray@wrda.net

WRDA would also like to extend a huge thank you to Paula Murray for her hard work over the years and dedication to the Women's Sector. We wish her all the best in the future and look forward to welcoming her back as a Community Facilitator.

BREAST, CERVICAL+ BOWEL SCREENING AWARENESS PROGRAMME

Tailored for groups with additional needs:

- * Physical Impairment
- * Learning Difficulties
- * Ethnic Minority
- * Homeless
- * Mental Health



For more information or to book a training session please contact Emma on 02890 230 212 or email at emma.gray@wrda.net



Welcome New Members

We are delighted to have welcomed three new individual members to WRDA over the last two months.

Member of the Month ATLAS Women's Centre



Lisburn Women's Centre was established in November 1994. For the first time women in Lisburn had their own resource and information centre to provide; information, support, a drop-in centre, access to courses and health/community safety awareness. The centre based in Bridge Street, a neutral location, opened part time and was staffed by volunteers to offer taster sessions to women from all sections of the community. Within the first 2 years of opening funding was secured to employ staff and offer a wide range of courses supporting over 250 women. By 2002 the name changed to **ATLAS Women's Centre**, Adult Training Learning And Support and the centre moved to bigger premises in Sloan Street benefiting on average 1200 people each year.

ATLAS aims to:

- ⇒ increase people's confidence and self-esteem
- ⇒ promote mental and physical wellbeing
- ⇒ improve the quality of people's lives
- ⇒ increase aspiration and ambition
- ⇒ empower people to change
- ⇒ improve education and skills to help people become job ready, gain employment and support career progression

ATLAS strives to encourage and support everyone to believe in their own abilities. The provision of educational, health, and volunteering opportunities help build self-confidence and self-esteem, create friendships, develop skills, and promote good physical and mental health wellbeing.

Atlas continues to go from strength to strength. In 2009 ATLAS won the Pride of Place, Co-operation Ireland Awards for Enterprise in the Community and SERC Community group of the Year Award. In 2011 Atlas was highly commended for making an outstanding contribution to adult learning at The Star Awards in Dublin. In 2014/15 Atlas was awarded Bronze and Silver Award in the Workplace Charter on Domestic Violence, followed by runner up in Lisburn City Business Award for Investment In Health. The latest accolade went to Centre Manager Gay Sherry-Bingham who won the 2015 Ulster Star Charity Worker of The Year Award.

The Atlas Centre, now based in Lisburn City Centre has a social economy café open to participants and the public which provides healthy affordable meals to those within the community who are living in poverty. The crèche is now registered with social services enabling more parents to participate in community education and learning within Atlas and other organisations, such as Homestart, Barnardo's, Women's Aid, SEHSCT and Resurgam Trust.

WRDA would like to thank ATLAS for their hard work over the years and their dedication to providing education and support at the heart of the community.

To find out more information visit their website:

www.atlaswomenscentre.co.uk or find them on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/atlascentre.lisburn

#FaceHerFuture launched by The Fawcett Society



For hundreds of years women have worked to achieve basic rights at home, at work and in public life. The outcome of the EU Referendum is a call to action. A call to give women control over their lives and to create a more equal future.

In a post-Brexit world, **we believe women's rights are at risk.** The focus on the women's agenda could be lost, women's voices ignored and women's economic prosperity could be at risk as a result of a possible recession. Therefore, it is vital now than ever that we ensure we are heard and most importantly listened too.

Last week, Fawcett Society launched their **#FaceHerFuture** campaign standing together with women's organisations across the UK to call on the Government, all political parties, the leadership candidates and those involved in the anticipated EU negotiations to:

- ⇒ Ensure women across the country have an equal place at the decision making table and that their voices are heard.
- ⇒ Guarantee there will be no weakening of women's rights and continue progress towards equality for women.
- ⇒ Continue to work internationally and in the UK to tackle violence against women and girls, FGM and human trafficking, and close the gender pay gap.
- ⇒ Recognise that improving women's lives and creating a more equal society is better for our economy and our society.
- ⇒ Prioritise specific needs of women experiencing multiple disadvantage, based on race, sexuality, disability, income, vulnerability, migration status or other factors.
- ⇒ Urgently address the racism and violence that many women and men are experiencing, often disproportionately targeted at women. Protect EU migrant women from unfair treatment.

The majority of women's rights are in both UK and European law. As such leaving the EU doesn't immediately threaten them, but it does mean this government or future governments could choose to weaken or even eliminate some women's rights.

For more information on Fawcett Society's campaign why not visit their website: www.faceherfuture.co.uk

Are you on twitter? Why not get involved by:

1. Posting a picture with you and a woman who is important to you
2. Tweet your picture using #FaceHerFuture and tagging your friend, asking them to pass it on and do the same
3. Say which area of women's rights you're fighting for and why