



LAUREL HOUSE

## **North and North West Tasmania Sexual Assault Support Services Inc**

### **Welcome to the Laurel House Newsletter**

The Laurel House Newsletter is produced and circulated amongst clients, service providers and the community to raise awareness of the services available at Laurel House North and North West.

It is also a venue to give advanced notice of upcoming groups and projects for survivors. There will also be a number of articles about Sexual Assault, stories from survivors, and links to other services for your information.

You can also view this newsletter on our website:  
[www.laurelhouse.org.au](http://www.laurelhouse.org.au)

**We are currently looking at which theme(s) to discuss in our newsletters throughout 2014. Should you have any ideas or areas of interest you would like us to provide information on throughout 2014, please contact Jacinta at [admin@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:admin@laurelhouse.org.au) or 6334 2740.**

### **About Laurel House**

Laurel House offers a wide range of services to all members of the community, including victims of recent rape and sexual assault (adults, children and their families and support people) adult survivors of child sexual abuse (historical sexual abuse) community education to any group, school, or organisation, and professional training to service providers in other agencies. We also offer debriefing and supervision to professionals working with victims/survivors of sexual assault.

Our Organisation offers outreach services to women, men and children within the 63 and 64 telephone regions of Tasmania. These areas currently include Campbell Town, the East Coast, West Tamar, Georgetown, Devonport, Smithton, Wynyard and Queenstown with services to other areas available as the need arises.

Telephone support is available to other rural areas.

# About the Workers

## **On Call Crisis Workers**

Laurel House is always on the lookout for workers to join our On Call Team in both our Launceston and North-West branches. Laurel House On Call workers are on duty from 5 p.m.—8.30 a.m. Monday-Friday, and offer a 24-hour service over weekends and public holidays.

If you would be interested in joining the Team, or if you have any questions, please contact Jacinta on 6334 2740 or [admin@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:admin@laurelhouse.org.au)

## **Day Team**

### **Welcome Gardia!**

On December 4th we welcomed Gardia to our Day Team. Gardia has been appointed as our Royal Commission worker and will be working with Laurel House from Monday—Thursday each week. Should you have any queries regarding the Royal Commission process, would like to make an appointment regarding your involvement with the Royal Commission into institutional responses to childhood sexual abuse, or would like to refer someone for counselling, please feel free to contact Laurel House on 6334 2740.

The Royal Commission worker in the North West is Willy, who can be contacted on 6431 9711.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Laurel House Day Team, please contact Jacinta on 6334 2740 or [admin@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:admin@laurelhouse.org.au)

# Community Education

Community education and professional training is a large component of the services we provide. We can tailor-make a specific programme for your Organization and/or your client group, dependent on your needs.

Our programmes can include:

- ◆ About Laurel House
- ◆ About Rape, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Child Sexual Assault
- ◆ The impact and the effects of sexual assault
- ◆ The myths of sexual assault
- ◆ How to handle a disclosure of recent rape and/or sexual assault
- ◆ How to handle a disclosure of historical sexual assault
- ◆ Support you in your work/organization

If you would like further information, or to arrange a Community Education session, please feel free to contact us on 6334 2740 or email [counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au)

## Groups

The Self-Esteem group that was advertised to be held from October—December has been postponed until 2014. If you are interested in joining this group, please feel free to contact Lisa or Benita.

We are looking into other groups that may be useful for our Clients in future in both the North and North West regions, and are open to suggestions as to what may be helpful for people. If you have a suggestion, or if you are interested in participating in a group at Laurel House, please feel free to contact us on 6334 2740 or email [counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au) in the North, or 64319711 or email [counsellors@laurelhousesw.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhousesw.org.au) in the North-West.

# **Annual General Meeting/Strategic Planning Day**

North and North West Tasmania Sexual Assault Support Services Inc. (Laurel House North and Laurel House North West) held the Annual General Meeting and Strategic Planning day on November 16th at the Sebel Hotel, Launceston. The meeting was a great success with participants attending from throughout the North and North-West regions.

As a result of this meeting, ongoing discussions will be held around the Laurel House Strategic plan, and we look forward to some exciting discussions and changes throughout the Service.

If you would like a copy of the 2012-13 Annual General Report, please contact Jacinta on 6334 2740 or email [admin@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:admin@laurelhouse.org.au)





## Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

You may be aware that in November 2012 the Australian Government announced a Royal Commission to investigate Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Laurel House has been funded to offer counselling and support to people who may be impacted by the Royal Commission. This includes anyone who experienced sexual abuse as a child in an institutional setting; and people associated with or affected by the work of the Royal Commission including family members, professionals, or employees or volunteers of the institution where the abuse took place.

Laurel House is completely independent of the Royal Commission, and our client focused service delivery model remains the same. This means people may want to tell their story to Laurel House, before making a decision about whether they want to contact the Royal Commission, and what they would like the Royal Commission to know.

### ***Why a Royal Commission in to Child Sexual Abuse?***

It is hoped that a Royal Commission will be a means of acknowledging how many people's experiences of sexual abuse have been 'swept under the carpet'. It is also hoped that future generations of children and adult survivors will be believed, and protected from abuse.

### ***What's involved in speaking to the Royal Commission?***

We acknowledge this is a highly sensitive issue and understand making contact with a support service can be very challenging for survivors and for those indirectly affected.

Laurel House counsellors are willing to answer any questions about the processes involved. This may include information and advice about what to expect from the Royal Commission, and case management and ongoing support throughout the process, including written documents for the Commissioners if you do not want to tell your story in person.

We are also available to attend your work place to present further information about Laurel House and The Royal Commission in to Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

For further information, please contact Laurel House (North) 6334 2740 or (North-West) 6431 9711

# Engaging Men In Sexual Assault Prevention

“...there is strong evidence that indicates that gender equality and respectful relationships are key to reducing sexual violence” and “A strong belief in gender stereotypes and a weak belief in gender equality are key determinants in the perpetration of sexual violence.”

These quotes are from an article in the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault titled “Engaging Men In Sexual Assault Prevention” by Mary Stathopoulos (ACSSA WRAP No. 14, 2013). The following is a very brief “cut and paste” summary of the article for you to have a read of and consider. Please see <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/wrap/wrap14/w14a.html>) for the full article.

The Key messages from the article are:

“The next step in sexual assault prevention is to engage men - both as facilitators and as participants in prevention.

If men are to be engaged in the prevention of sexual assault there must be a shared understanding of the fact that men have a positive role to play.

A consideration of how to engage men in prevention efforts must take into account the ways in which some men may resist prevention messages - whether that resistance stems from discomfort, rejection of ideas, or from other sources.

There is a tension when masculine gender stereotypes are used as a tool for engaging men in prevention while evidence suggests that these same stereotypes can contribute as underlying factors in the perpetration of sexual assault and violence against women.”

The headings (and some extra information) for the article are:

**What is men’s role in sexual assault prevention?**

**Masculinities and sexual assault prevention**

**What are masculinities?**

**What is meant by engagement?**

**Men as recipients of prevention messages and participants in prevention programs**

**Men as educators and facilitators of prevention messages and programs**

**Challenges in engaging men**

**Using masculine stereotypes to engage men in sexual assault and violence prevention**

**Men’s resistance to prevention messages**

**Conclusion**

The following is an expansion on some of the headings mentioned above:

**Men as recipients of prevention messages and participants in prevention programs**

“Targeting men as the recipients of prevention messages means that the messages are aimed at men and are relevant to their needs. Yet achieving this aim can be quite difficult and requires thoughtful understanding of the intended audience and creating a balance between drawing men into the discussion on prevention while challenging beliefs about gender and equality.

As a starting point, being engaged in prevention can be considered a process, such as the following:

to listen and take note of victim/survivors stories and statistics about sexual violence;  
to interrogate one's attitude about gender, masculine norms and stereotypes;  
to change behaviour;  
to seek to change other people's attitudes about gender, masculine norms and stereotypes;  
to seek to change other people's behaviour; and  
to commit to reducing sexual assault against women (adapted from Crooks, Goodall, Hughes, Jaffe, & Baker, 2007)."

### **Challenges in engaging men**

Two key challenges in engaging men in prevention were identified both in the literature and in consultation with prevention facilitators and educators.

The first is the use of masculine stereotypes to engage men in sexual assault and violence prevention. The second is the notion of resistance in relation to prevention messages and programs.

### **Men's resistance to prevention messages**

An understanding of men's resistance to sexual assault primary prevention messages must be informed by the knowledge that men are not a homogenous group; they don't all feel, act and think the same way.

Crooks and colleagues (2007) theorised that there are four major obstacles or points of resistance for men in engaging in anti-violence spaces. These are:

defensiveness/denial/disbelief;

helplessness;

lack of prioritisation; and

fear of not being welcome (i.e., lacking legitimacy in the prevention space)."

This article talks about the importance of engaging men in primary prevention strategies to achieve reducing sexual violence against women. At Laurel House, we believe that the terminology needs to state that **elimination**, rather than reduction, of sexual violence, is the goal. In addition, while we believe it is important to remember that the cultural shift must involve men, it is the survivors of sexual assault who will decide which gender they will work with as they process through the harm that has been done to them by men who are sexually violent. We will continue to see children, women and men who are not physically or sexually violent and encourage men to take responsibility for challenging and ceasing the cultural stereotypes that endorse violence against women.

Please feel free to have a look at the full article when you can and to pass it on to all of your friends so a cultural shift about sexual violence can occur.

*From ACSSA Wrap No. 14 2013*

## Useful Websites and Contact Numbers

### Children

Bravehearts Inc. [www.bravehearts.org.au](http://www.bravehearts.org.au)

Australian Childhood Foundation [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

Kids Help Line [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

### Attempted Suicide and/or Self harm

Safe in Oz Pty Ltd. [www.safeinoz.com.au](http://www.safeinoz.com.au)

Time Out Programme [www.timeout.org.au](http://www.timeout.org.au) Mobile: 0407 102 140

Beyond Blue [www.ybblue.com.au](http://www.ybblue.com.au)

### Crisis Counselling

Laurel House (North) 6334 2740 or after hours 0409 800 394

Laurel House North West 6431 9711 (24/7) [www.laurelhouse.org.au](http://www.laurelhouse.org.au)

Sexual Assault Support Service Hobart Telephone 6231 1811

Lifeline [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) 131 114

24-hour Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Support—1800 Respect (1800 737 732)

Eating Disorders/Body Image—Tasmanian Eating Disorders Support Service—0439 189 886

### **Laurel House North**

PO Box 1062, Launceston 7250

Phone weekdays 8:30am – 5pm

**(03) 6334 2740**

After Hours Crisis Line

**0409 800 394**

Fax: (03) 6334 4234

Email: [counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au)

Website: [www.laurelhouse.org.au](http://www.laurelhouse.org.au)

### **Laurel House North West**

PO Box 499, Burnie

Phone weekdays 9.00am – 5pm

**(03) 6431 9711**

After Hours Crisis Line

**(03) 6431 9711**

Fax: (03) 6431 8710

Email: [counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au)

Website: [www.laurelhouse.org.au](http://www.laurelhouse.org.au)

## **Would you like to contribute to the Laurel House newsletter?**

Laurel House is looking for people to contribute stories, poems and artwork to the newsletter to share with survivors of sexual assault, family members and service providers. Items can be published anonymously if requested.

If you would like to contribute something to the newsletter please phone 6334 2740, or send your ideas to:

[counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:counsellors@laurelhouse.org.au) or PO Box 1062 Launceston, 7250. All items will be carefully considered and published in upcoming newsletters.