



**midlothian
women's aid**

Changing Lives – Challenging Attitudes
Working to end domestic abuse



Annual Report 2009/10

Foreword

During the last year Midlothian Women's Aid has continued to drive forward in developing responsive services shaped by the needs of our service users and local community. We were delighted this year to expand our support service by introducing a group work programme for women that raises awareness of domestic abuse and healthy relationships.

We have also continued to develop and strengthen partnerships whilst taking a lead across the Midlothian community in driving forward the domestic abuse agenda. Our conference **Little Voices: 100,000 Lessons**, was a huge success which celebrated the creativity of our young service users as they presented their wonderful book and DVD.

As you read through this annual report you will see for yourself how innovative Midlothian Women's Aid is and how flexible we have become to survive in these present times. We are proud of our achievements this year and recognise our success is largely thanks to the dedication and commitment of all our members of the organisation who work to ensure that the damaging impact of domestic abuse is significantly reduced.

Thank you to all involved with the work of Midlothian Women's Aid Ltd.

The Board of Directors

Service user statistics

Susan Hunter, Refuge Manager explains that our statistics show a large increase in the number of women who contacted our service from the previous year.

We are pleased that this year we maintained an **87%** occupancy rate in our refuge, and voids were incurred largely due to turnover times between admitting new families. We recognise that many women face barriers to refuge.

In particular, we wish to improve access for women with no recourse to public funds and women with mental ill health, including addiction:

Source of Referrals		Method of Contact	
		Women	Assoc CYP
Self	1,200		
Friends/Relatives	100	Telephone	2,164
Other WA Groups	61	Drop In	755
Voluntary Orgs	45	Refuge Requests*	51
Social Work	446	Refuge Admissions	21
Housing	49		69
Police	72		18
Medical	55		
Other	136		

*Highlights the number of refuge request and the actual number of women and children we were able to accommodate

Conference: Little Voices: 100,000 Lessons

We are proud of the very successful conference that we hosted on 4th December 2009 at the beautiful Newbattle Abbey College. The 'Little Voices' conference idea was brought about through the organisations commitment to engage our young service users in the design of our work

Fiona McCabe, Children's Services Manager explains:

"We wanted to take the opportunity to share some of the lessons we had learnt when using participatory models of working with vulnerable children and young people"

Just under 100 attendees had the opportunity to hear inputs from key note speaker Kenny MacAskill, MSP Rhona Brankin as well as Superintendent Jaqueline Conway.

Here we are delighted to share some of the highlights from our conference...



Drama from Ross High School - Walk a day in my shoes...

Delegate Evaluation: "Amazing. Very powerful. The young people provided a provocative and powerful response to the issue"



Who Cares Scotland - Young person and support worker Lorraine McCulloch -

Delegate Evaluation: "The case study was excellent - well done to the young person"



Chief Superintendent Jaqueline Conway

Delegate Evaluation: "A great insight to police work, very pleased to see input"

Final thoughts on the day:

"Very positive vibe from all involved - nice to see a positive commitment to the issue" "Fantastic day - Well done"
"Would have liked to do all the workshops - just didn't have time" "Speakers were interesting and relevant"



Pupils from Ross High School

New resources created by our young people

We were delighted to launch these resources at our conference and Justice Minister Kenny MasA skill presented awards to all the children, young people and parents involved in developing these wonderful resources. Well done to all who were involved!

In October 2009 a number of children we work with took part in a series of poetry, writing and storytelling workshops, the result of which was the **Getting it Write** book.

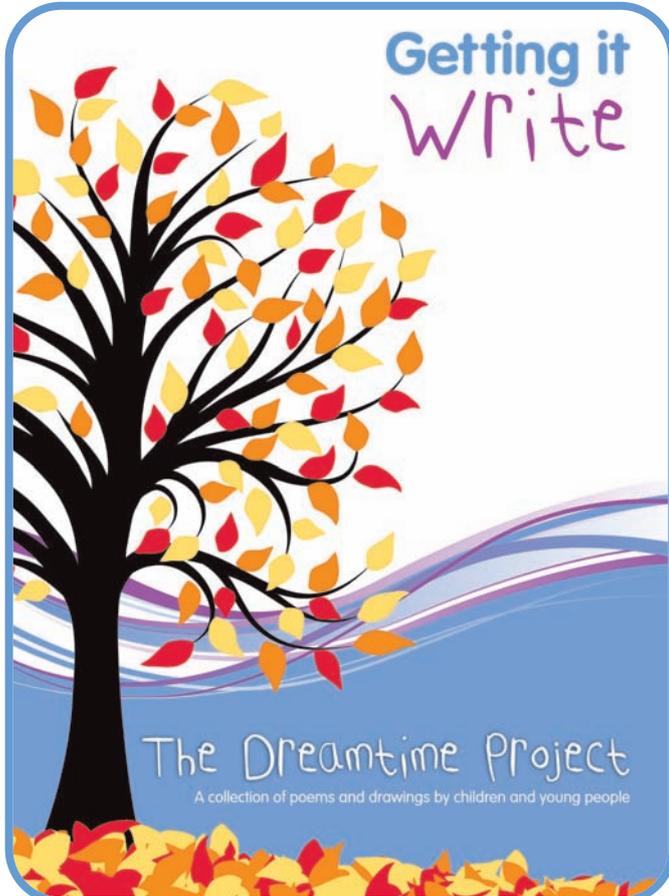
The book brings together the work of children and young people, aged from 7 months to 15 years old and presents a collage of their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Thank you to storyteller James Spence who helped to create the book with the children by exploring themes of their personal identity and the strengths and weaknesses we all possess, their feelings about love and friendship and how we can use our personal strengths to support one another throughout life.

The Dreamtime Project was funded with help from Midlothian Council, Awards for All Scotland and The Scottish Arts Council.

DVD: Watch this Space...

A group of eight children and young people took part in a series of creative workshops to explore their experiences of working with the children's service. Using the mediums of film and animation they created a six minute DVD.

The sessions helped those involved to explore their feelings about services and major changes to their lives when they are recovering from the associated trauma of domestic abuse.



The support we offer to women, children and young people

Last year **176** women and **58** children and young people contacted us for support for the very first time. We aim to ensure that we can meet the specific needs of each person who contacts us for support. Our service delivery for women, children and young people continues to operate through:

- Telephone support line
- Drop-in provision from our support offices in Penicuik & Dalkeith
- Individual appointments (office based & outreach)
- Group work
- Temporary accommodation through provision of refuge
- Dedicated service for children and young people
- Website with information about domestic abuse & information on the services available through MWA
- Email support for children & young people

Our popular group work programme

We were delighted this year to introduce group work support which runs every Tuesday morning and follows a 12 week structured programme.

Julie Watson, Women's Support Manager explains:

"The introduction of group work has been really exciting. For some time, women have requested that we create ways that they can meet with other women in similar situations to remove feelings of isolation. I don't underestimate how much courage it takes to contact our service but walking into a group of sometimes 20 people takes a lot!

The best part for me has been watching the women who take part growing in confidence each week. Every group has been very different but they have all been challenging, emotive and the relationships that have developed have been very special; the atmosphere in the group is wonderful and it's one of my favourite parts of the work we do."



Plenty of chocolates, sweets & tissues on offer at our group!

The Business Team Finance

Midlothian Council and The Scottish Government fund our core services. We have secured contracts with The Scottish Government to March 2011 for our Children's Service and Women's Support Service.

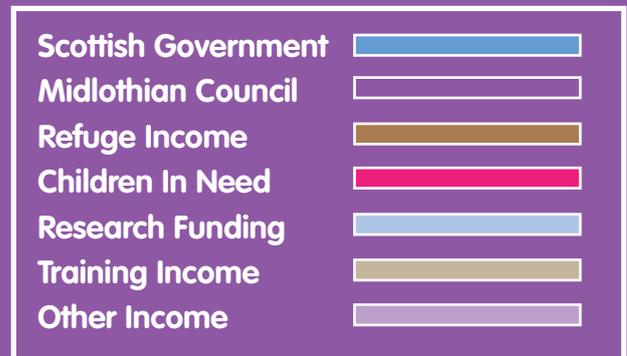
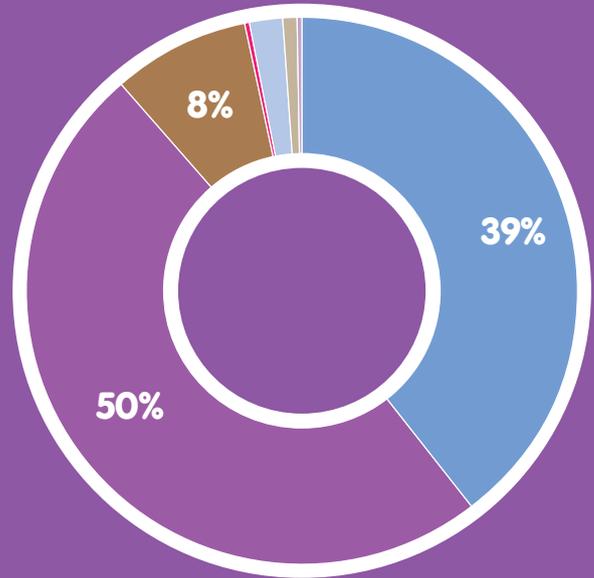
We also have a new Service Level Agreement with Midlothian Council for funding to March 2010. The SLA will facilitate future years' negotiations and has already strengthened our relationship with Midlothian Council. We receive Housing Benefit for some service users living in Refuge and our Supporting People grant ensures this crucial core service is maintained and developed. We receive funding for additional services and research projects from Awards for All and a number of small trusts. We are also very grateful to many local schools, churches and other organisations who support us in so many ways throughout the year.

We endeavour to spend our funding on direct charitable work as far as we are able. This year our spending on Governance has been greater than usual owing to the costs of transition, which includes our legal and professional expenses. The additional costs were in the region of £20,000.

This expenditure was necessary to ensure we followed legally correct and ethically sound procedures throughout the process of change.

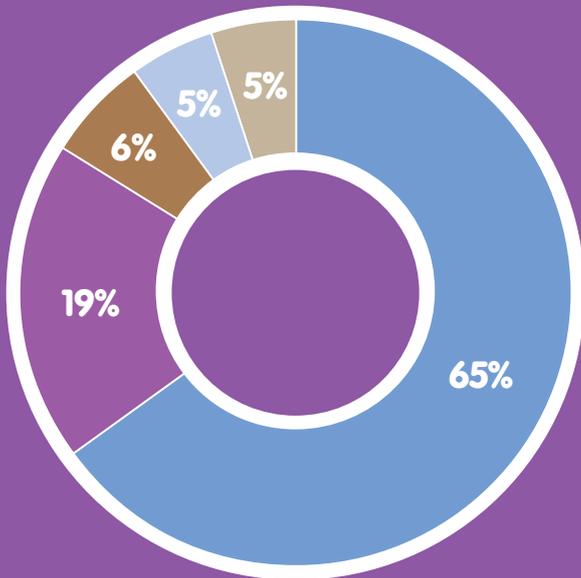
Our Financial Statements are audited by Henderson Loggie and a full set of our accounts can be obtained by contacting our office. The accounts are also available online at Companies House.

Income



The future

Expenditure



Wages & Salaries	
Premises	
Activities	
General Office Costs	
Governance Costs	

It has been a difficult year for many individuals and organisations with the poor economic climate and rising levels of unemployment. As an organisation we have risen to the challenges this has brought.

We have responded to the increased demand for our service that accompanies lower levels of employment and escalating levels of personal debt and we are campaigning for increased funding to support our services.

We are operating at a stable level financially and have contingency reserves to cover a three month period. We have started negotiations with Midlothian Council for the next financial year and hope to have a contract in place well before the year end.

Our key priorities for the next year:

- Strategic plan development
- Staff development
- Establish service user group
- Securing funding beyond 2011



How to contact us

info@midlothianwomensaid.org
cyp@midlothianwomensaid.org
www.midlothianwomensaid.org

Women's Support Line: (Mon – Fri, 9am – 2pm)
Dalkeith Office: 29a Eskbank Road
Penicuik Office: (wheelchair accessible) 10 Carnethy Avenue
National Domestic Abuse Helpline: (24 hours, 7 days per week)

0131 561 5800
0131 663 9827
01968 670970
0800 027 1234

A big thank you to the many individuals who have continued to support our work with their generosity through out the year. Full details can be found on our web site.

- Scottish Government
- Midlothian Council
- Awards for All Scotland
- John Watson's Trust
- Edinburgh Childrens Fund
- MVA Children In Need
- Camera Obscura
- Loanhead Leisure Centre
- Storehouse Church, Dalkeith
- Bonnyrigg Primary School
- Taylor Wimpey East Scotland
- Lawfield Primary School, Dalkeith
- Strathesk Primary School, Penicuik
- Marks & Spencer
- AEGON
- Standard Life
- Our Lady of Consolation, Bonnyrigg
- St Matthew's Church, Rosewell
- St Margaret's Church, Gorebridge
- North Kirk Church, Penicuik
- National Childbirth Trust - Esk Valley Branch
- South Kirk, Penicuik
- Glencorse Church, Penicuik
- Howgate Church, Penicuik
- St Mungo's, Penicuik
- Sacred Heart, Penicuik
- Dynamic Earth
- Appin Equestrian Centre
- St Vincent de Paul (St David's, Dalkeith).
- Curves, Dalkeith
- Santander Bank, Dalkeith

Thanks to all the individuals who made contributions throughout the year.

