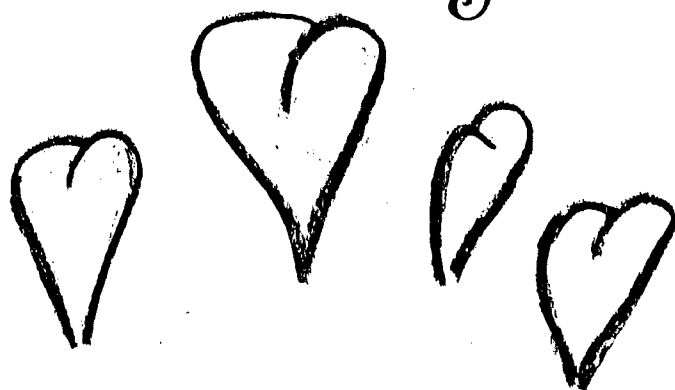


BERYL
WOMEN'S
REFUGE



ANNUAL GENERAL
REPORT

1997-1998

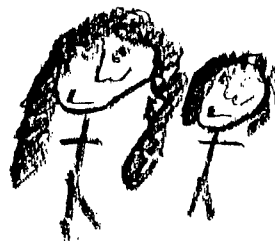


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MISSION STATEMENT

Beryl Women's Refuge recognises that violence against women and children is prevalent in our society and believes it be be intolerable. Injustices such as sexism, racism, economic inequality and homophobia, etc. contribute to families living in crisis. To redress this Beryl Women's Refuge is committed to providing a professional and accountable service that is based in justice and equality; recognising and fostering cultural diversity within the service and the broader community. We work towards this through empowering women and children with care, respect and acceptance.

SERVICE REPORT 1997-98

Staff

The restructuring process which has seen the service move away from a collective structure where all workers had the same duties is now complete. Whilst still utilising collective principles, we have incorporated into the management structure a co-ordinator and an administrative worker. Unfortunately, in 1997-98 we had some difficulties finding an appropriate person to fill the position of co-ordinator. Our current administrative worker, Sharon Williams, was employed in July 1997, and she brings extensive professionalism and expertise to the service.

This financial year unfortunately saw the departure of our much-valued relief workers, Shona Chapman, Penny Coventry, Olga Correa, and Krishna Sudhana, and one of our relief workers obtained permanent work with us, Maria-Eleni Alessandre. We were also very sad to Grace Coe take a year's leave without pay. We welcome Dorothy Charles who is filling Grace's position. We also thank Kestrel McEune for her valuable work as contract Children's Support Worker, and we welcome Margie Coe back from maternity leave.

We also thank those people who contribute to the general upkeep of our premises: Lanceine Walford our popular cleaner, Jill Christie our hardworking gardener, and Linda Hayden our resourceful maintenance worker.

We also saw some changes to our Extended Collective, the management committee of Beryl Women's Refuge. We thank Sarah Khalidi for her valuable input, and we welcome two new

additions, Sabine Zanker, and Alison Rodway. Sabine has been instrumental in the selection processes involved in employing a co-ordinator, and Alison contributed many hours of her expertise in the preparation of our Evaluation of the 1996-97 Management Plan, and the 1997-98 Management Plan. We also thank Mirtha Abello for her continuing input both as an Extended Collective Member, and as our book-keeper. Mirtha has successfully facilitated the service's transition to computerised accounting.

Client Services

Beryl Women's Refuge continues to offer a wide range of services to women and children from domestic violence situations, such as supported accommodation, crisis counselling, referral and advocacy, court support, therapeutic workshops, follow-up, and outreach. This financial year has seen the service further formalise its case management approach to client service delivery. By the end of June 1998, 85% of all families coming to the service had a case plan. The remaining 15% who did not have a case plan were those who only stayed in the service for a very short period of time (ie. under one week). We are continuing to fine-tune our case management approach to children.

We have continued to run workshops for both our women and children clients as well as ex-clients, including a puppet workshop, an 8 week therapeutic workshop for children covering such issues as self-esteem, feelings, and conflict resolution, and a 6 week art therapy workshop for women which was also attended by a member of the general community. Feedback on these workshops has been positive, and we continue to implement innovative approaches to working with women and children from domestic violence backgrounds.

We have also engaged in various projects in upgrading the service's premises. We have an large new shadecloth covering the children's sandpit, and a substantial area of the backyard which provides much needed protection in the summer months. The 2 houses also have bright new curtains which have certainly contributed to a more welcoming atmosphere. Further such projects have been planned for the following financial year, such as painting, and re-carpeting.

Highlights of 1997-98

One of the highlights of the year was the Community Arts Project art exhibition, "Crying Out Loud" which was organised by one of Beryl's support workers, Judy Hammond. With help from the rest of the team, Judy put in a major effort to bring this exhibition together. The exhibition displayed women's and children's art work which had been done during the course of the service's client workshops, and also involved extensive client participation in its organisation.

EXAMPLE OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SUPPORT & OUTCOMES

The following are characteristic examples of support provided to an individual family, and of client family outcomes. To protect client confidentiality, these are composite profiles representing some typical kinds of support provided and outcomes achieved.

Support Provided

- Assistance to obtain Domestic Violence Order
- Exploration of housing options
- Assistance and advocacy provided to obtain Social Security benefits
- Assistance and advocacy provided to apply for government housing, eg. writing and obtaining support letters and other necessary documentation, accompanied to housing interview
- Referral to Child At Risk Assessment Unit for trauma-related symptoms of children
- Assistance provided to write job applications
- Facilitated client workshops which both mother and children attended
- Crisis counselling
- Referral to legal aid
- Assistance provided for criminal compensation claim
- Assistance in enrolling and taking children to school
- Referral to Women's Health Service

Individual Family Outcomes

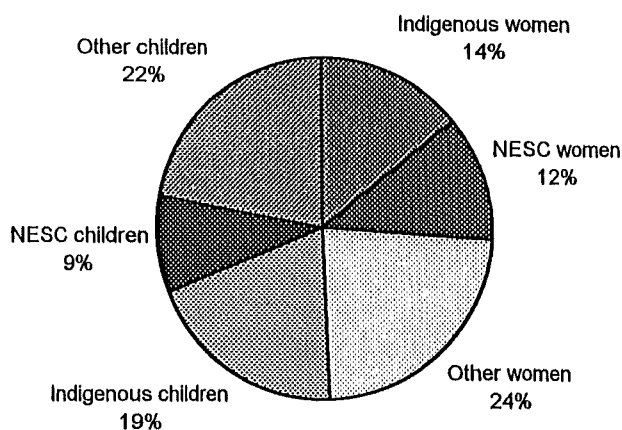
- Domestic Violence Order obtained
- Assessment and counselling provided to mother and children by Child At Risk Assessment Unit
- Received government housing on priority basis
- Obtained part time employment
- Participation by mother and children in client workshops, art work displayed in art exhibition
- Successful criminal compensation claim

SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

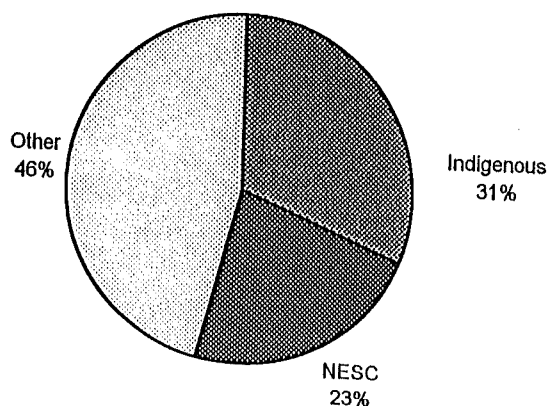
These service demographics are drawn from the agency's own data and not from the Agency Reports of the National Data Collection Agency. The data from the latter does not accurately reflect service demographics. We believe this was due to confusion over our agency code. This problem has been rectified for the following financial year.

During the year we had 63 families come to our service, with a total of 183 clients. Following are charts depicting data according to percentage of women and children clients, client cultural background, where clients were referred from, length of stay at the service, and destination upon leaving the service.

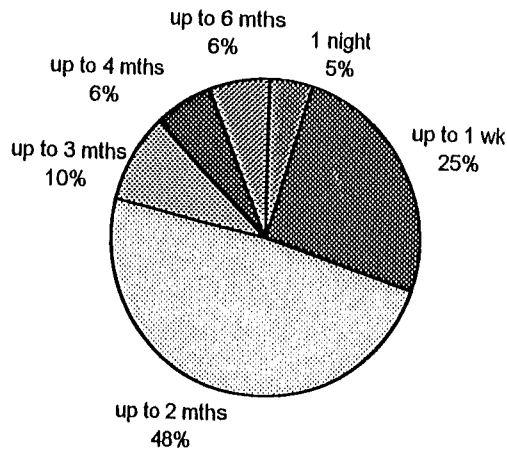
Percentage of Women & Children



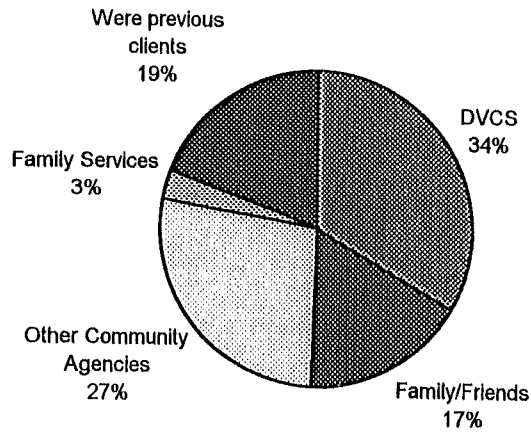
Cultural Background of Families



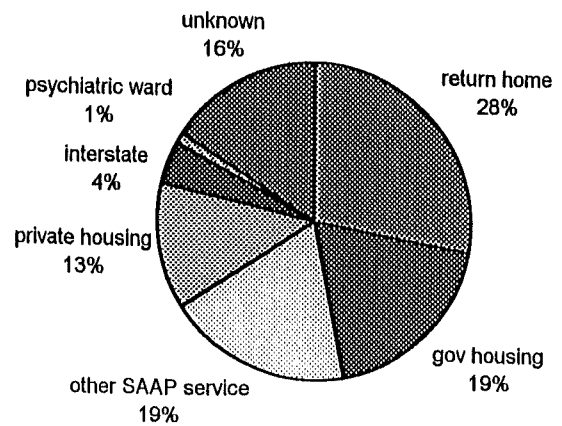
Length of Stay



Referral Sources



Destination on Leaving Refuge



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

We attended a variety of community forums in order to facilitate client access to a range of appropriate, best practice information, advocacy, support and education opportunities. Staff have made time in their busy days to ensure that Beryl Women's Refuge has been represented at the following community forums:

- Domestic Violence Interagency Meetings
- Koori Women's Services Meetings
- SAAP Program Forum
- Telling the stories - Honour the Grief
- Beryl display stall at National Sorry Day celebrations
- Kate Carnell's President's Luncheon: Women's Policy in the A.C.T.
- Community consultation on National Clearing House on Domestic Violence
- ACTCOSS Quality of Life Focus Group
- Healthpact Forum Mental Health and Wellbeing
- High Needs Research Project
- SAAP 3 Evaluation
- DVPC – Program Management Group
- Program Advisory Committee
- Emergency meeting for housing associations, housing coops, and crisis accommodation services regarding Residential Tenancies Act.
- National WESNET Conference
- Reclaim the Night
- ACTCOSS Tax Reform Seminar
- SAAP Client Survey Project

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to the ongoing training and development of our workforce aimed at the provision of high quality services for our client group. In keep with this commitment we have offered staff a range of training options, detailed below, enhance and consolidate their skills:

MONTH	WORKSHOP	NO. OF WORKERS
July 1997	Play Therapy with Children	1
August 1997	Orientation to the Alcohol And Other Drugs Field	1
August 1997	Working with Children In Crisis	2
September 1997	Counselling Children: A Solution-Focussed Approach	1
October 1997	Counselling Children, Adolescents and Families: A Solution-Focussed Approach	1
October 1997	Workplace Relations	2
October 1997	Charities and Performance Measurement	2
November 1997	General Information on Immigration Policy	3
November 1997	Gestalt Therapy with Children	1

February 1998	WIREDDD (Women's Information and Resources On Drugs and Dependency) Drugs & Alcohol	all
February 1998	Women and Chemical Dependency	1
February 1998	Narrative Therapy Level 1 Intensive Training	2
Term 1 1998	Mind Your Own Business	2
March 1998	Blood Born Viruses	1
April 1998	Mandatory Reporting	4
April 1998	Child Protection and Mental Health	1
April 1998	Prevention of Violence Against Women & Children	1
May 1998	Maximising Parent Strengths	1
May 1998	Child Protection and And the Family	1
May 1998	Writing Affidavits and Giving Evidence	1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the following people who contributed to the well-being of the women and children who come to Beryl Women's Refuge.

- Pat and Olive from St Vincent De Paul for their generosity of spirit.
- Antionette Harmer for her clinical supervision.
- Glen the Community Services Officer from the Department of Social Security.