



Ode Cologne
The news journal of WIPAN



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Advancing the human rights of women in the criminal justice system.

WELCOME to the 17th edition of the WIPAN e-news bulletin

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INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS DAY (IVD)

Held each year on December 5th, WIPAN celebrated this years IVD at the end of year dinner with all WIPAN mentors receiving a certificate of appreciation from WIPAN with our heartfelt thanks for the invaluable contribution that volunteers make to WIPAN. The ongoing work of WIPAN and our Mentoring Program would not be possible without the commitment of our volunteers.

Volunteering is an essential part of a socially inclusive society in which all people feel valued and have opportunities to fully participate in their community. In particular, volunteer mentoring is a hugely successful method adopted by WIPAN in addressing the social exclusion experienced so widely amongst women in the criminal justice system. THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

THE WIPAN END OF YEAR PARTY

WIPAN celebrated another great year in fabulous style with a sumptuous dinner party at Thai Pathong in Newtown. Nearly 30 mentors and mentees braved the cold wet Sydney summer to share stories, meet new staff and have a catch up with old friends.

Thank you to all that donated gifts

Thank you to everyone that donated gifts for the 'pamper' packs for the women in the mentoring program. Thirty overflowing packs filled with pretty, smelly and some practical items were distributed at their end of year dinner and were greatly appreciated by all.

THE WIPAN MENTORING PROGRAM

Tara has jumped into her role as the WIPAN Mentoring coordinator by setting targets to have all mentees matched with a WIPAN mentor by the end of February. A tall ask when the flow of referrals is now constant! Over the past few weeks we've received 8 new women into the program, all have been interviewed and assessed and will be matched with a WIPAN mentor in the next few weeks.

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM - WIPAN WEBSITE

WIPAN mentors and members now have their own online discussion forum on the WIPAN website. Mentors have a virtual meeting space to discuss issues, share ideas and offer support. This is a great space to also link other mentors to events or share information. Tara has been posting a list of free events that might be a shared activity for mentors and mentees. We all love free! To register for the online forum please visit the home page of the WIPAN website.

MONTHLY TRAINING/MEETINGS FOR WIPAN MENTORS

Exciting guest speakers are booked for this years WIPAN monthly mentor meetings, held on the 3rd Thursday of every month at Petersham TAFE. February's guest speaker is the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) manager, Kylie Tattersal. Kylie will be speaking about sex work and the issues that street based sex workers face in regard to the law, criminality, the police and human rights. These meetings provide ongoing training and information for the mentors and a chance to debrief.

NO EXIT INTO HOMELESSNESS - Update on Policy Discussion Paper

In October last year WIPAN released a consultation paper on housing and support needs of women leaving prison, 'No exit into homelessness â€" still a dream?' The aim of the discussion paper included 'seeking input from the community sector'. During October and November meetings were held with community housing managers, homeless services, consumers and post release service representatives. Thank you to all that gave their time to talk to us or sent us information and references. This helped WIPAN gain a better understanding of the pressures on the community sector, gaps in service provision and coordination issues from a community perspective. Over the next month, this information gathered will be collated and analysed. Draft recommendations will then be drafted and put back to those we consulted for comment. It is hoped that the final document will be a useful resource for the community sector to use in their advocacy, capacity building and planning of services to meet the needs of women exiting prison.

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD FINALIST WRITES ABOUT WOMEN IN PRISON

Journalist, Inga Ting was a finalist in the Australian Human Rights Award category for Print and Online Media for her article: Mental health behind bars: why women prisoners are set up to fail, published in Crikey. WIPAN congratulates all award finalists and winners. Adele Horin won the print award for her articles about people living with a disability in licensed boarding houses: The sad truth behind closed doors.

SERVICE OF THE MONTH - MUDGIN GAL WOMENS CENTRE. "Sharing Womens Strength Creates a Safer Future"

- Mudgin-Gal means 'women's place'.
- Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal organisation is a Redfern based service run by Aboriginal women, for Aboriginal women.
- It offers a safe haven and active support for women, girls and their young families through a its unique peer to peer service.
- Mudgin-Gal's day-to-day operations are a welcoming presence as a drop-in centre and source of positive cultural and social networking.
- Dedicated programs include: in-home family support; provision of expert referral for accommodation, legal and medical support and court support and post-release services.
- Mudgin-Gal plays a vital role as a leader in the community.
- Through the growing suite of award-winning mentoring and education programs run through its 'Healthy Family Circle' program, developed in partnership with Relationships Australia, Mudgin-Gal is empowering women and young girls with the self esteem, confidence and life skills needed to become role models for their own children, families and community.
- Mudgin-Gal has gained national recognition when its 'Black Out Violence' campaign won the Violence Against Women Prevention Award in 2004 and with Mudgin Gal trainers and ambassadors has since been rolled out to communities in regional NSW.
- The program has been cited by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission as a best practice model for addressing violence in urban Aboriginal communities.
- By building strength from within, it is Mudgin-Gal's vision to help shape a community that lives with hope, pride and self sufficiency; a community in which every member has the same chance of achieving his or her dreams as any other Australian.
- Contact: REDFERN FOUNDATION PO Box 906 Potts Point NSW 1335

CONTACT WIPAN

For further information about WIPAN including our executive members, general members, our funding bodies, strategic plan or WIPAN's vision & aims, please contact us.

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