



## **Advancing the human rights of women caught up in the criminal justice system.**

WELCOME to the 6th edition of the WIPAN e-news bulletin

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### **PRISONER POETRY**

#### **The Theatre of Lies By Bindi 2010**

Little balloon,  
Rolling around.  
So happy that –  
A dealer I found.

First shot – all warmth  
and smiles and sighs.  
Act one committed,  
In our theatre of lies.

Just one shot,  
That's all I need.  
I won't fall victim,  
To the call of greed.

But slowly, slowly,  
More lies they come,  
Anything to get,  
To the dealers run.

Shot after shot,  
Lie after lie.  
Ridiculous acts,  
Of crime you'll try.

Spiraling chaos,  
Heroin habit.  
Always feeding,  
The thirsty jack rabbit.

One shot it takes,  
For an addict to fall.

Until one shot too many,  
Final curtain call.

Thank you to Bindi, a wonderful poem from a vivacious and intelligent young woman.

## **COMMUNITY REFERRAL SURVEY**

Several weeks ago WIPAN circulated an Evaluation Survey to a select group of organisations that work with women prisoners/ex-prisoners and with whom we have visited face-to-face. The purpose of this was to gain insight into the communities understanding of WIPAN and our mentoring program and to streamline our referral process. Given that the survey was anonymous, we would like to publicly thank all of those organisations that took the time to participate in the survey, particularly for their generosity in sharing their knowledge. This information is incredibly valuable to us and will help to shape our organisational approach in the future.

If there are any organisations servicing women exiting prison that would like to refer their client to [WIPAN for a MENTOR](#) please download a copy of our [referral form](#) and fax it to us on (02) 8011 0690. Alternatively you may call us on (02) 8011 0692 or email Samantha [mentoring@wipan.net.au](mailto:mentoring@wipan.net.au)

## **1st YEAR of WIPAN FUNDING for PILOT PROGRAM COMPLETED!**

WIPAN would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the [NSW Office for Women's Policy](#) for their generous funding of our pilot project over the past year (2009-10). This has been a very exciting time for us as an organisation, establishing ourselves in the not for profit community sector. During this time we were able to employ our Programs Coordinator, develop the policy, procedural and administrative components of the organisation, establish a supportive network amongst various other community organisations, develop a strong working relationship with various government departments, begin our mentoring program and increase our memberships. Most importantly though, we have had the opportunity to meet with numerous women caught up in the criminal justice system, to listen and learn from their lived experience.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING for 2011**

The WIPAN Executive Committee, staff and members recently held a special meeting to discuss and develop our strategic plan for the coming 12 months. Outcomes from the meeting; WIPAN will endeavour to have a strong focus on the expansion of our mentoring program; engage in systemic advocacy and policy reform and aim to highlight issues relating to the victimisation of women prisoners. All of us at WIPAN feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to support many women prisoners/ex-prisoners throughout 2009-2010 and are extremely excited in our commitment to support many more in the coming year.

## **SERVICE OF THE MONTH: CRC Targeted Housing and Support Service - THaSS**

The [Community Restorative Centre](#) (CRC) has initiated their THaSS project - **Targeted Housing and Support Service** - in Western Sydney. The Targeted Housing Support Project is a partnership between [Corrective Services NSW](#) (CSNSW), [Housing NSW](#), [Department of Health, Community Services, Aging, Disability and Home Care](#), with Corrective Services NSW as the lead agency.

THaSS is being piloted for the first three years to work with female ex-prisoners. The objective of the project is to achieve a reduction in the rates of homelessness and a reduction in rates of re-offending. THaSS workers will assist clients to integrate back into the community by organising stable, comfortable and secure housing with sustained support services that specifically address their social and criminogenic needs.

The project will focus on female ex-prisoners on release who have children and/or complex needs such as intellectual disabilities, low cognitive functioning, substance abuse and/or mental health issues. The target group will be restricted to sentenced prisoners just prior to and after release. A major goal is to prevent exits into rough sleeping or transient, unsuitable accommodation. THaSS currently have 50% of their referrals for Indigenous women but this may vary over time.

For further information on the THaSS project please call Craig Mitchell, [Community Restorative Centre](#) on (02) 8838 3820.

## **BOOK DONATIONS**

WIPAN are still collecting books, of all descriptions, from within the community to distribute in

women prison libraries across NSW. If you would like to donate books to this cause, please contact Samantha, the WIPAN Program Coordinator on (02) 8011 0692.

## **MEMBERSHIPS**

We are continually calling for greater engagement from within the community, in the way of membership. Membership entitles the members to play an active role in the continued growth and future development of WIPAN as an organisation. WIPAN value being a grassroots organisation and as such are always eager to have more members on board who are able to support us in any way they can. We are very proud of our growing number of members, and encourage anyone who is interested in supporting women in, or exiting prison, to become a member and attend our monthly meeting to share and contribute their knowledge and/or experience. There are no pre-requisites for becoming a member, we welcome all women, and believe that all women, irrespective of their background and cultural beliefs are valuable and have something worthwhile to share.

For prospective and to-be-renewed memberships please submit an application via our [website](#) or alternatively download a [membership form](#) and post it in with the small fee to WIPAN, PO Box 345, Broadway NSW 2007.

Thank you to those WIPAN supporters, new and old, who have already submitted their membership renewal. A special thank you to the recent memberships we have received from women currently held in prison and who have voiced their excitement, at the future possibility of engaging WIPAN in person, upon their release.

## **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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