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**Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre  
Inc.**



**ANNUAL REPORT 2010**

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**Acknowledgement of traditional owners.** Staff and management of Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre respectfully acknowledge Australia's Indigenous people as its traditional owners. We acknowledge and honour local Aboriginal elders, past and present, for their role as the original custodians of the Brisbane region.

Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc. receives recurrent funding from:



Funded by





## Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre

“A place of healing, support and social action for young women”

### Zig Zag PHILOSOPHY

Zig Zag provides a place of healing, support, and social action and change for young women aged 12-25 years. As a feminist service, we are committed to working alongside young women and acknowledging their expertise in their own lives. We acknowledge that social, political, cultural and economic contexts limit young women's power, creating vulnerability and disadvantage. In particular, Zig Zag provides services to young women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and young women who are survivors of sexual violence.

Zig Zag recognises the diversity amongst young women, staff and management committee and values the unique experience, knowledge and skills each woman contributes. We work in a way that is collaborative, inclusive, supportive and respectful. Zig Zag is committed to ethical practice and a process of continuous reflection and development that is informed by young women, practice wisdom and shared knowledge.



## Chairperson's Report for 2010

After three years in this position Zig Zag still never ceases to amaze me. Staff remain passionate about social justice issues that exist purely with being born female while the young womyn who access the service continue to bring so much life and knowledge into the organisation. This year has seen some apprehension still with Queensland Health struggling to come to a decision around funding for our sexual assault program which has been in existence for 16 years. With the threat of losing this program or needing to change the way we deliver this unique service, staff carried on with quality support in the face of uncertainty. This all while collaborating with 12 other organisations across Queensland such as Sisters Inside, BRISSC and Migrant Women's Emergency Support Service to devise an extensive look into the Queensland Health's proposed 'hub' model of service delivery and the current holistic response to sexual assault. The result was 25 recommendations put forward to Queensland Health in The Right to Choose report which was launched in September at parliament house alongside Limiting Choices; Critical Analysis of Proposed Hub Model.

The organisation breathed a sigh of relief when we found out Queensland Health will continue their funding to the existing sexual assault service for another 12 months which not only means we can continue providing this holistic service, even if for just another year.

On the management committee, we welcomed Carla De Simone and Katie McDonald, and thank Jodie Cowie for her brief stint.

There was movement within the housing staff with Anne Castles taking unpaid leave and Bess Hopgood stepping into her role for 12 months, Kelly Maddock stepping up to Talei Rice's position while she stepped into Neti Read's role and Amelia joining both the housing and sexual assault teams as a student. In the sexual Assault team, Cynthia's locum position finished and Glenys and Beata both undertook some relief work for the team. In the centre support team, while Wayan Melvin was on maternity leave, Sonja Moore-Carter took on her role and Yasmine Haines stepped into this role while Sonja took some leave.

So with hope and enthusiasm, we look forward to what this year will throw at us. The management committee would like to sincerely thank the staff for all their hard work and flexibility, the young womyn for the wisdom and spark they bring into the organisation, and to all our supporters for your ongoing encouragement and collaboration.

Thank you.

Lani Pereira, November 2010.



## Treasurer's Report for 2010

The 2009/10 financial year has been without significant change despite the prospective changes to the sexual assault sector. Zig Zag recently received notification that funding for the sexual assault services will be extended to December 2011(?) which is wonderful news for both staff and the young women we assist.

The financial results for 2009/10 were steady. Total revenue was \$603,730. This is broken down into funding from the Department of Communities of \$316,652 and Queensland Health funding of \$287,078. The staff and Management Committee thank these government departments for their continued support of our vital services for young women.

Donations of \$4,700.56 were received in 2009/10 financial year and an additional \$342.76 in membership fees. A grant from Jupiter's casino was also received for \$30,783.64 and was fully expended for a new computer and telephone system for the Zig Zag office.

The profit after tax for the 2009/10 financial year was \$5,171.79. This resulted in total retained earnings to the association of \$108,612.50 at the end of the period. As such I am pleased to report that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due – refer consolidated financial reports for detailed information.

I would like to personally thank staff and committee members for their dedication and service and I look forward to another rewarding year.

Julie Phillipp, November 2010



# Report from the Zig Zag Housing Team

## Staffing in the Zig Zag Housing Program

The year has seen some role swapping and changing in the Housing Team. After doing a fantastic job in the support worker role (while Neti was on leave) Talei has resumed her position as the Tenancy Manager. Anne left for a year of leave, and we welcomed Bess into the support worker role. As we welcomed Neti back into the team we said goodbye to Kelly. We were lucky to have Amelia De Campo as a student with us last year also.

## Housing Support

The Housing Service has continued to offer quality accommodation and support to young women and their children. We continue to manage 5 units of accommodation at Carina and 4 units at Greenslopes. In addition, we continued to work with The Department of Housing (DOH) to utilise the Youth Head-lease (Same House, Different landlord) Program.

Our team continues to provide the following services to our tenants and some ex tenants;

- Supporting women to secure stable long-term accommodation
- Linking women with other services in their communities
- Supporting women to achieve their goals including undertaking education; finding employment; building support networks; pregnancy and parenting support

We support our tenants to meet and socialise with other young women by holding regular events. This year we held a pamper day; a weaving workshop; a movie day to see Alice in Wonderland; a trip to Alma Park Zoo and a trip to the circus.

During the period July 1 2009 and June 30 2010 we supported **45** young women and **18** children. This figure is comprised of;

- **21** young women and **18** children have been housed in our accommodation;
- **5** young women and **3** accompanying children who transitioned from our CAP properties into our Same House Different Landlord Scheme. These women then become tenants of DOH after a 6 month period.

**31** young women were supported with general counselling and/or housing help (this includes **7** ex-tenants with ongoing support)

In the near future an MOU with BRIC Housing will be finalized which will allow Zig Zag to continue to make direct referrals for young women into community housing.

## General Counselling & Housing Help

In the past year we have made **126** appointments with young women for either Counselling or Housing Help and **90** of those appointments were kept. Despite the ongoing need for these services the team decided in July 2010 that we will no longer provide general counselling. This comes about due to the impact of the SACS award raise which is not being fully funded. As some team members have reduced their hours to compensate for this, the team has had to reprioritize their workloads. Our team currently offers a reduced Housing Help service and continues to provide support to ex tenants.

## Issues for young women



Young women continue to request housing mainly due to family breakdown (especially relating to pregnancy), experiencing violence in relationships, affordability issues, and overcrowding. In this financial year we have had **446** requests for accommodation from young women, their families, and workers.

### **Networks & Community Education**

At different times during the past year the housing team have participated in and contributed to various networks, including:

- **YANQ:** Anne held the position of ordinary member and then treasurer on the Youth Affairs Network Queensland Management Committee. Kelly and Bess attended the Multicultural Youth Network which is hosted by Youth Affairs Network Queensland.
- **QYHC:** All team members have been involved in housing groups hosted by Queensland Youth Housing Coalition. Bess and Kelly attended the Young Women's Housing Group and Talei attended the SAAP working party. We continue to be impressed by the energy and amazement of Maria Leebeck. Thanks for everything Maria!
- **ASHRAM** (Agencies Supporting Housing for Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Migrants), Talei started attending these meetings however the meetings got moved to the same day and time as the housing team meeting she has stopped attending. Members of the housing team attend ASHRAM forums when they can.
- **CEO Challenge:** Talei attended the CEO challenge AGM. The team was happy to receive children's Christmas presents from our CEO Challenge partner, Underwood Mail Centre.
- **QCOSS:** Bess, Kelly and Talei have participated in the MultiCultural Housing forum and Youth forum. Anne, Christy, Kelly and Talei have all attended the SAAP Networking Strategy. These meetings are held quarterly and provide the team with information with changes in the housing sector.
- **Othila's:** Bess, Kelly and Talei all participated in the Residential Tenancies Authority reference group. Bess and Kelly participated in the working group for the 'Out of the Garage' project which culminated in a stall where staff members from the Body Shop at Carindale donated their time and products to pamper young women.
- **Women's Ethic Network (WEN):** hosted by Ethnic Communities Council Queensland (ECCQ) Amelia, Bess, Kelly and Talei have all attended these forums to listen to guest speakers discuss settlement issues for young CALD women.
- **Ethnic Communities Council Queensland (ECCQ):** The housing team attended the Strengthening Tenancies for CALD Communities consultation and launch.
- **NAIDOC:** The housing team womaned a stall with the sexual assault team for the NAIDOC Festival at Musgrave Park. Anne and Talei represented the housing team at a NAIDOC morning tea at held Bahloo which also fa farewell to Lily who was manager there for a very long time.
- **Department of Communities Housing and Homelessness:** Christy, Kelly and Talei attended the OASIS training seminar to learn about the new reporting program. Christy and Talei attended the information forum on transitional housing to learn about changes to the Same House Difference Landlord program.
- **Young Parents Program:** Anne, Bess, Kelly and Talei attended the AGM as well as several screen printing workshops around International Women's Day and Reclaim the Night. We also attended both young mum's groups to talk about housing and our general counselling programs.
- **The Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT):** Bess attended the AGM.
- Talei attended the African Young Women's Group at Yeronga High School with Jane.



- A big thank you to Abby Hills at Brisbane Girls Grammar School for organising Christmas presents for young women and to our CEO Challenge Partner, Underwood Mail Centre.

**Feedback from Young Women in Zig Zag Housing: What did you like best?**

*"The support and help with the day to day stuff"*

*"Help finding a house and I liked my support worker"*

*"Keep doing a good job, it's really appreciated"*

*"They helped me a lot, and look after us. I love them! Thanks for all the support"*

*"I enjoyed the activities that we did together. Most of all the support from the team in getting my life back on track!"*

*"Thank you very much for everything that you guys did for me. I wish there were more services like you guys for young women. I will be forever grateful!"*



## Report from the Zig Zag Sexual Assault Team

### **Staffing in the Zig Zag Sexual Assault Program**

During the year of 2009-10 things continued to be busy and challenging for the sexual assault team. Erica Fernandez, Jane Hegerty and Adela Brent are the permanent workers in the sexual assault. Erica returned to the organisation (from long-service leave) in mid-July, enabling the team to benefit from a stable core work team. It was wonderful to welcome Erica back and to hear of time away in South America.

In addition to the experience and energy of these three workers the team gratefully acknowledges the contributions of three generous locum workers – Cynthia Dunn who finished a locum with us in July; and Beata Ostapiej-Piatkowski and Glenys Gibson, both of whom spent significant time working alongside the team in 2010. The contribution of these workers was very helpful for the team in managing the ever-present waiting list.

### **Counselling, Support and Advocacy**

The Sexual Assault Team has continued to provide face to face sexual assault counselling to young women between the ages of 12 and 25. A number of counselling sessions also continued to be offered to supportive mothers of survivors. Some outreach was done to women who could not access ZigZag premises. We also provided some sessions over the phone to women who lived too far away.

#### **What young women tell us about their experience of Counselling... Their words:**

*“ Zig Zag has been so great for me to deal with the abuse in many ways... it's great to feel understood.”*

*“I love coming to Zig Zag. It helps me realise I am not so alone in the world.”*

*“It lets you feel safe.”*

*“I feel the most comfortable in a long time.”*

*“It's really good to have time to deal with my problems and for someone to listen and give helpful info.”*

*“... I feel welcomed and really comfortable. I am so grateful I have a chance to come here.”*

*“You all do a fantastic job.”*

#### **Themes that emerged in support this year:**

- Women accessing the criminal justice system and their experiences of it.
- Accessing mental health units at hospitals and how they were treated affected their emotional well-being.
- Young women not feeling able to get understanding from friends at school.
- The overwhelming experience of the perpetrator being known by the young woman in some capacity.



- Dealing with eating issues and self-harm.
- Dealing with relationships after the abuse.

**Seeking Feedback from Young Women.** The Sexual Assault team continued to provide a range of avenues for feedback on the support it provided:

- A focussed 6-week period of evaluation
- Individual counsellors continued to evaluate their sessions with clients;
- Support group participants were provided with evaluation forms at the end of the group;
- Any groups/training undertaken also included an evaluation process at the end.

Evaluations are used to improve the way we deliver services to young women and the general community. Zig Zag keeps a suggestion box in the reception area of the office so that women and their supporters can give written, (and anonymous) feedback on their experience when accessing the organization.

### **Access and Equity**

The sexual assault team endeavours to be aware of groups of young women who are significantly marginalised and who may find it difficult to access support at Zig Zag. The team was particularly aware of two groupings which we considered important to focus on - Indigenous young women and young women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. The team undertook a number of strategies/events during this period to help build relationships with various groups in the community, creating opportunities for mutual learning and building options for young women. Activities we instigated or participated in included:

- Agency visit to Murrigunyah (Indigenous Sexual Assault Service) – workers shared ideas on ways to work with indigenous women.
- Attending Queensland Programme of Assistance to Survivors of Torture & Trauma AGM (9 Nov)
- Attending the Centre Against Sexual Violence & Murrigunyah's Candle lighting ceremony (5 Oct)
- External Agencies Mtg Yeronga (2<sup>nd</sup> Dec) – these meetings focus on the need of CALD young people.
- Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) AGM
- Zig Zag Open Days (14 & 21 Oct) – Had 2 days where other organizations from the community (focusing on indigenous and CALD organizations) were invited to visit Zig Zag and talk with workers.

### **Group Work**

- **Young Women's Sexual Assault Support Group:** This financial year, we run two support groups for young women survivors of sexual violence. A group program was offered at the end of 2009. A number of 6 women attended. It was co-facilitated by two sexual assault workers. The women had a pre-group interview with the aim of meeting the facilitators beforehand and explore what they wanted to do in the group sessions. The content of the group was planned based on this. Art therapy was the main medium used in this group. At the end of the group, participants were given evaluation forms. Some of their comments included: "I enjoyed art therapy. It was less threatening and fun"; "it was good to realize that I am not alone"; "I learned a lot from the others". This group was offered after hours to give women who studied and worked the opportunity to access it. The other group program was offered in the beginning of 2010. A number of 5 women attended but, for reasons beyond our control, some women had to leave the group and only 2 women stayed. We decided to offer 3 more sessions to these women as they were very committed. The issues we have explored in the groups include:



putting violence against women in social context; misconceptions; dealing with overwhelming emotions; self-care; relationship issues; self-concept; dealing with memories

- **Mothers' Support Group:** This group met once a month the past financial year. A number of 5 women have been attending. It was co-facilitated by two sexual assault workers. As new mothers joined the group this year, we reviewed the group guidelines and clarified the aim. Mothers have been talking about different issues including responding to disclosure; common reactions and feelings; their experiences with the police and the criminal justice system; how to support their children; how to cope; the behaviour of sex offenders; possible production of pamphlet for mothers. This is an on-going group and mothers have expressed their commitment to attend the next financial year. Mothers also said that this is the only group they have found in the community.
- **Reclaim the Night:** An RTN afternoon session was planned for October 2009. Two women attended. They made badges and stickers for the RTN festival. This session was facilitated by a sexual assault worker and a housing worker. The team supported a number of young women to attend Reclaim the Night (RTN).

### **Resource Development and Distribution**

Zig Zag continued its production of resources for the community – young women, workers, and supporters of survivors. Zig Zag believes that having young women focussed resources better enables both young women and their supporters to respond to the presence of sexual violence in their lives. Zig Zag's experience has found too that our written resources area an additional way for us to share our knowledge of young women with other workers, particularly those in regional areas or who do generalist work.

During our Annual General Meeting in October this year we launched the third edition of Connecting the Threads. This publication is a resource for generalist workers who support young survivors of sexual violence. Development of the resource involved consultation with many people in the community including police and legal services, and other services focused on special needs groups. This resource was promoted through various networks and on the Zig Zag website.

Overall, this year saw an increase in requests for Zig Zag resources with more than 400 copies of resources sent to people as far afield as Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory. Resource distribution included:

- ❖ *Lighting the Path – Reflection on Counselling and Sexual Assault.* A compilation of practice reflections from a range of workers from around Australia. (30 Copies distributed.)
- ❖ *Working with Young Women Who Self Harm – A Resource for Workers.* (38 Copies distributed.)
- ❖ *Healing is Possible.* A primary resource that Zig Zag distributes to young women and which is available English, Serbian and Spanish. (205 Copies distributed.)
- ❖ *Pandora's Box.* A booklet containing the words and thoughts of survivors and their supporters. (95 Copies distributed.)
- ❖ *Connecting the Threads.* A resource aimed at generalist workers. This publication explores the meaning of sexual violence and provides skills and tools for workers to use with survivors of this violence. (39 Copies distributed.)

### **Community Education and Professional Training**

Zig Zag is committed to using its knowledge and expertise to share information and build awareness within our community. We regularly engage with schools and community groups to talk with students and workers about issues connected to sexual violence. Sessions we facilitate range from quite informal conversations to structured presentations. Often there are interactive components built into sessions as well, to enable lively discussion and learning. Zig Zag believes



that opportunities to engage with community on a range of levels are critical to challenging the presence of sexual violence in our homes, neighbourhoods, and society in general.

**Formal training and education sessions** for workers and students:

- Immigrant Women's Support Service – training on Self-Harm & Suicide;
- Year 11 Students Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE - Education session with year 11 students focusing on “Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships”.
- University of Queensland Final Year Social Work students Professional Development Day – Spoke about the context of community based work and work at Zig Zag.
- Wynnum State High School – information session with small group of students around Zig Zag's work.
- Community Fundraising event - Workers spoke to a group of community women who gathered at the Caxton Hotel at Spring Hill, for a fundraiser to benefit Zig Zag.
- University of Queensland 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students - Workshop with new university students exploring issues around consent. Zig Zag invited other sexual assault services to co-facilitate this workshop and collaborated with the Women's Worker at the University Union to organize the afternoon.
- Queensland Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline Workers – Training on “Working with Self Harm”;
- School Based Youth Health Nurses, Guidance Officers and others who work in the school system attended training offered by Zig Zag – “Working with Young Women & Sexual Violence”;
- Unaccompanied Minors' Programme (Mercy Family Services) – “Working with young People from CALD backgrounds in the area of sexual violence”. Training and dialogue with workers.

**Yeronga Young African Women's Group.** This group has emerged primarily through collaboration between Zig Zag and Yeronga State High School, with a number of other community organisations also involved. The group has been running since 2007. The focus of the group is supporting young women from African backgrounds with the challenge they face as they transition into Australian culture. The group explores areas such as:

- o Cultural context – changes in coming to Australia, values, practices, rights;
- o Sense of self – how young women make sense of who they are;
- o Relationships – healthy/unhealthy, violence;
- o Journeying into womanhood – body changes and the choices that come with this;
- o Looking after yourself – physical and mental health.

During the last year this group has been run twice - at the end of 2009 and in the first half of 2010. In 2009, the group started in mid-July and ran for an 8 week period. There were generally 18-20 young women involved in each session. For the 2010 group a different format was trialled, with the young women having the chance to have 2 days off-campus as well as 2 one hour sessions at school. The numbers were reduced for the 2010 group as well, with two groups running consecutively and not having 9-10 young women in each group. Some of the common feedback from young women in these groups included:

- o “The session I liked best was about relationships because:
  - it taught me about good/safe relationships;
  - it can help me as a teenager when I face difficult things”
- o “I would really love to be in it again as I enjoyed it so much and it taught me a lot of things about girls”
- o “Common words the young women used to describe their experience of being in the group included: interesting, happy, good, and fun”

Our thanks go to all the workers from other organisations who contributed their time and ideas to



the running of these groups including staff from: Yeronga State High School, (particularly Frances Orford); Othilas Young Women's Housing and Support Service; Sexual Health Services Biala/Sexual Health Program Griffith University; Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ), Harmony Place, Immigrant Women's Support Service, Queensland Programme for Survivors of Torture and Trauma and the Multicultural Development Association.

For the group that met in 2010 we would also like to gratefully acknowledge the valued input of a number of women in the community who have come from African backgrounds and eagerly gave up their time to contribute their reflections and ideas to the process.

**Community Engagement & Awareness Raising.** Whenever it can the sexual assault team welcomes the opportunity to meet with other workers and the community to discuss issues around sexual violence. This year some of the opportunities for this to happen included:

- **NAIDOC** (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) Day (July 10) – held store with Zig Zag housing workers & Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors' Support Centre at Musgrave Park in Brisbane. Members of the community were able to get information on a range of topics connected to sexual violence as well as contribute to a 'sea of hands' collage.
- **White Ribbon Day** (25<sup>th</sup> Nov) - displayed information at Zig Zag's office and provided ribbons for young women to take.
- **Zig Zag 21<sup>st</sup>/AGM** celebration – used this occasion to talk about Zig Zag's work and to connect with various groups/individuals in the community through advertising the event and talks on the evening (an evening where over 60 people attended from a range of positions in the community).
- **Zig Zag Open Days** – The whole team at Zig Zag organized to have two open days in the organisation this year, focussed on connecting with workers from Indigenous services and services that work with young women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. The Sexual Assault team assisted in the planning of these days and used the days themselves as a place to talk about the work we do and to connect with workers who support young women from these cultural groupings.
- **Article on Self Harm:** Zig Zag contributed an article on self-harm for an upcoming publication of a 'Teen Magazine' aimed at year 8 students that is being produced by the Eating Disorders Association Resource Centre.
- **Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre Open Day (February):** two workers attended this day and spoke with women in prison (young women themselves and supporters of young women) about support options for young women.
- **International Women's Day – "Out of the Garage Festival" (March):** Zig Zag workers attended this day focused on young women, holding a stall and being involved in a panel activity. Zig Zag liaised with the Body Shop to have their workers present in our stall to offer information and treatments for young women.
- **International Women's Day – Unifem Breakfast (March):** Workers from Zig Zag held one of the many stalls at this highly recognized and regular event, and engaged with the public about issues of concern to young women.
- **Brisbane State High School Year 10 Health Expo:** Workers held a stall at this expo, distributed information and chatted with young people about issues of sexual violence.
- **SBS Consultation:** A member of the team had discussions with an SBS researcher looking at self harm, so that the insight from our work with young women and self-harm could help inform the development of a program looking into the issue.

**Reclaim the Night 2009.** (Annual rally and march to raise awareness of sexual violence against women and children). The Zig Zag team participated in the planning meetings and the implementation of the annual Reclaim the Night (RTN) March and Rally in Brisbane, as well as the



fundraising event associated with RTN. RTN is a major community awareness raising event associated with sexual violence.

**Zig Zag Website.** Zig Zag continues to use its website as an avenue for public education and information distribution. We also use the site to let young women know of upcoming groups and events. In January 2010 we started using a programme to view the usage of the site. During the 6 month period of the year that this programme was functioning we found the following: there was an average of 10 visitors to the Zig Zag website each day; and that during this six month period there were 1847 visits recorded to the website. Whilst this does not identify who each visitor is and what information each visitor takes away, the number of visits indicates that many people are accessing this site, enabling them to get information on young women's issues and sexual violence.

**Contribution to the 'The Right to Choose'.** The team took time this year to join with other community based organisations in developing a report that considers ways forward for best practice in responding to sexual violence in Queensland. The report, "The Right to Choose", is a culmination of input to discussion, ideas and evidence, involving all of the 20 community based sexual assault organisations in Queensland.

**Involvement in the Sexual Assault Sector.** During the past year Zig Zag has maintained its keen involvement in the Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN). This network continues to provide a valuable forum for workers to connect with others around sector wide challenges as well as information on practice training and ideas. This year saw two of the team travel to Townsville for one of bi-annual face-to-face meetings of this network.



# Report from the Zig Zag Centre Support Team

## **Staffing in the Centre Support Team**

Our valued Administration Worker Wayan took maternity leave this year, having a lovely baby boy, Oliver. Wayan was missed by staff but was very competently relieved by Sonja Moore-Carter whose energy and skills were greatly valued. Lynette Smee continued in her position as Finance Worker and Christy continued on in the Coordinators role. A big thank you to Talei Rice and Erica Fernandez who stepped up into the Coordinator's role to relieve Christy while she took some extended leave.

## **Funding**

A most appreciative thank-you goes out to Zig Zag's two primary funders. The Department of Communities provides operational funding and the housing infrastructure for the Zig Zag Housing Program and Queensland Health funds the Zig Zag Sexual Assault Program. In addition Zig Zag would like to thank both Department of Communities and Queensland Health for their contribution of additional funds to cover additional wage costs following the introduction of the Queensland Community Services and crisis Assistance Award. This commitment from the State government continues to provide improvements to the working conditions of community services, and reflects a genuine commitment to recognizing and valuing the work that is undertaken by the community sector across Queensland. Zig Zag has instigated the wages increases and, although funding increases haven't quite matched the costs causing some budgeting and structuring challenges, the service is overjoyed to be participating in a change process that is able to offer hard-working and professional staff employment conditions that better reflect the demands and complexities of their roles. Most importantly, the implications for disadvantaged young women are also significant as this initiative ensures that Zig Zag is better able to attract and retain highly skilled, experienced and committed workers.

The amalgamation of Queensland Housing into the Department of Communities has had a significant positive impact on the ground, for us as a funded service with greatly improved administrative functions for our CAP and Same House/Different Landlord programs, and for young homeless women with service responses that are more streamlined and supportive. To this end, a formal thank you is extended to Sharon Fabien from Housing and Homelessness for her support with the Same House/Different Landlord Scheme and also to Clea-Marie Thorne and the staff at Brisbane South Area Office for their understanding of the issues facing homeless young women in Brisbane.

Queensland Health's on-going review of sexual assault service delivery around the State has continued to impact at Zig Zag with funding uncertainty being a theme throughout the year. Although it isn't clear how the review is progressing it is understood that a more coordinated and integrated response to those who have experienced recent sexual assault is being planned. The service has high hopes for the future of sexual assault services in the wider Brisbane region and continues to lobby to ensure that specialist services for young women, and services for survivors of historical sexual assault, will continue into the future. Zig Zag is appreciative of the support that the sector has received from individual community members and from the broader service sector with regards to this issue.

## **Other important contributions to the work of Zig Zag:**

- **Donations.** Zig Zag would like to thank those that have provided donations to the service during the 09/10 financial year. Barbara Ashby and Tiffany Skinner both contributed financially to the organization, as did other anonymous contributors either directly or through the 'Our Community' website. This kind of support is an invaluable resource to Zig Zag – providing the organization with additional funds from which we can draw on to support young women in ways additional to the parameters set out in our government funding agreements. It is also wonderful to know that our work is supported and valued by the broader community.



In addition to financial contributions, practical material support was also provided through donations of food, clothing and furniture. Julia Trevean donated high quality baby furniture; the Hepatitis C council has donated women's sanitary products and other similar items; the students of Brisbane Girls Grammar have provided Christmas hamper gifts for young women accessing Zig Zag; St Vincent de Paul have provided baby food and other baby items; Berlinda Hair Salon contributed knitted blankets; East Brisbane Community Centre donated baby clothing; Mary and Martha's refuge provided quality children's toys and books. These donations have provided valuable resources that have supported young women in our housing to set up in long-term stable accommodation.

- **Charity's Angels.** In July 2009, a group of women in the community - Pamela Doherty, Niamh Mahoney, Jessica Pelly & Alexis Rooney approached Zig Zag to enquire how they could support our work with young homeless women and young women who have experienced sexual assault. This group of committed community women held a very successful fund-raising event and raised over \$4000 to support the young women accessing Zig Zag services. Zig Zag uses these funds for direct material support for young women accessing our services and we are extremely grateful to these four women for offering their skills, time and resources.
- **BRIC.** During 09/10 Zig Zag was engaged in negotiations with BRIC Housing in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding a prioritization of long-term community housing for young women exiting our medium term accommodation. We extend our appreciation to Wendy and the other staff at BRIC for undertaking this process and look forward to an on-going collaborative relationship with BRIC.
- **Camp Hill Medical Centre.** For many years now the Camp Hill Medical Centre, our local general practice, has offered young women accessing our service a bulk-billing service. This is an invaluable resource for many of the young women accessing our service and we are extremely appreciative of the contribution made by doctors at the Centre to the community of young women in South East Brisbane.
- **'Transition to Independent Living Allowance' (TILA).** This is a federal funding scheme that supports young people on to set themselves up in accommodation through offering small grants for such items as computers, fridges and washing machines. A big thanks goes out to Southern Youth and Family Services in Wollongong for administering this program.
- **'No Interest Loan Scheme' (NILS) and the National Australia Bank.** Through a collaboration with Good Sheppard and the National Australia Bank Zig Zag has been fortunate enough to be successful in the initiation of scheme whereby young women accessing services at Zig Zag will be able to access interest-free microfinance. This program was initiated during the 09/10 financial year and will be up and running in late 2010. At last year's AGM, Zig Zag members supported changes to the constitution to facilitate the implementation of a No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) program. In March 2010 the Zig Zag Management Committee formally agreed to the terms and conditions set out by NAB. Christy attended comprehensive NILS Loan Worker Training in February 2010 and a revised version of the NILS training was delivered to the rest of staff at the beginning of June in preparation for the roll out of the program. Zig Zag staff and Management Committee would like to acknowledge Anne Murphy, NILS Community Development Worker and Karen Denham, NILS Queensland State Coordinator for their continued support throughout the year. Zig Zag also extends a heartfelt thank you to National Australia Bank, Good Sheppard and Community Qld for their ongoing support of this scheme.

### **Policy and Systems Development**

The Zig Zag centre support team recognises that robust policy and systems are a vitally important part of maintaining an organisational structure that can adequately support the service delivery and accountability functions of the organisation. While Zig Zag has a comprehensive Policy Manual to reflect this, it is an on-



going challenge to the team to ensure that policy, procedures and systems are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to meet the changing needs of the service. During 09/10, Zig Zag has continued to work on meeting the Standards for Community Services, coming out of the Queensland Compact, and is well on track to meeting the Standards by January 2011. During this year a number of organisational policies were reviewed and updated, including the Decision-Making and Accountability Policy, Staff Induction Manual, Duty of Care Policy, Staff Supervision and Support Policy, Decision Making and Accountability Policy, Student Placement Policy and Procedures, Grievance and Disciplinary Policy, Policy Register for Staff and Management Committee, Induction Register for Staff and Management Committee, Induction Package for New Workers, Staff Code of Conduct, and Staff Induction and Probation.

### **Networking and Collaboration**

Along with workers from both of the service teams, Centre Support staff have participated in numerous networks and collaborative processes. Zig Zag greatly values the relationships that it has with services around Brisbane and the State. These relationships are vitally important to continued delivery of high quality services to young women, and the contribution of workers and professionals from both the government and non-government sectors play an important role in an integrated response to the needs of young homeless women and young women who have experienced sexual assault. The Centre Support team has participated in a number of formal networking opportunities including:

- Queensland Sexual Assault Network
- Feminist Management Network.
- Youth Accommodation Coordinators Network and relevant forums
- SAAP Networking Strategy meetings and forums
- 'No Interest Loan Scheme' (NILS) network meetings
- Attendance at the QCOSS, Women's House, Young Parent's Program and QYHC Annual General Meetings.
- Internal agency visit with a number of services including Anglican Women's Hostel, Carina Youth Agency, Griffith Student social work, Spiritus AMEND Program, Centrelink Stones Corner, Child Safety- Alderley, Social Work student doing placement at Redlands Hospital and Young Mothers for Young Women.

In addition to this, throughout the year Zig Zag worked with a number of sexual assault services around Brisbane and the State in the initiation and development of the 'Right to Choose' report. This was an incredibly fruitful collaborative effort. A special thank you to Suzi Quixley for her consultancy skills in undertaking this piece of work and producing a high quality and professional report that represents the views and contributions of the community-based sexual assault sector. We at Zig Zag are aware that there are enormous changes in store for the service and the sector in the near future and have continued to provide high quality support services in spite of this uncertainty. I remain hopeful that a united and strong sexual assault sector will continue to work collaboratively with Queensland Health to meet the recommendations of their review process.

### **Zig Zag Library**

Roma Kumar has continued her essential work in the Zig Zag library. The Zig Zag library has continued to grow throughout the 09/10 financial year with dozens of new books and journals catalogued. There are now over 1500 catalogued records in the Zig Zag library, and the resource continues to be accessed by young women and workers alike. Roma also continued with her practice of providing library orientation to all new staff and students in the service. This is a very useful process as it shows staff how to access relevant resources, how to facilitate memberships and loans, and how to promote the use of the library to service users.

### **Human Resource Management**

Along with accountability, and supporting and resourcing the management committee, looking after and supporting staff in their diverse roles remains one of the primary functions of the Centre Support team. The



women who work at Zig Zag (both paid and voluntary) are our most important and valued resource. Zig Zag provides monthly internal supervision and de-briefing to direct service delivery staff, monthly external clinical supervision, bi-monthly team supervision, as well as offering training and professional development opportunities to all staff. All staff attended in-service fire safety training and training on the use of child restraints in cars provided by Kids Safe Queensland, and Housing and Sexual Assault Program staff attended in-service training on Grief and Loss with Susan de Campo.

Professional development in the Housing team included:

- Working with Professional Interpreters (ECCQ)
- Self-care (Career Keys)
- Unplanned Pregnancy Options (Children by Choice)
- Introduction to Feminist Support Work (Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre)
- Sustaining Strong and Health Teams (Health and Community Services Workforce Council)
- Random Acts of Counselling (P & P Consultancy)
- Understanding Disruptive Behaviour Disorders (P & P Consultancy)
- Beyond CBT: working with children who are difficult to engage in therapy (Talera Centre)
- Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (Russ Harris).

Professional development in the Sexual Assault team included:

- Various Narrative Therapy Trainings:
  - o Narrative therapy (Counselling Academy)
  - o An Introduction to Narrative Practice (Beth Tinning in Townsville)
  - o Narrative Ways of Working (including Mindfulness & Buddhist principles) (
- Various Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Trainings:
  - o ACT skill development (Russ Harris)
  - o ACT with adolescents (Russ Harris)
  - o Introduction to ACT (Russ Harris)
  - o ACT with Relationships
  - o ACT – Skills Practice
- Trauma and Recovery – Janina Fisher
- Beyond Survival – Dr. Daniel Siegel
- Sand Therapy Skills – Margaret Watts
- Boundary Setting for Carers of People with Mental Health Issues (ARAFMI)
- “Love Bites” Programme Training – for working in schools around sexual violence and domestic violence.
- First Aid Training to keep the team all current.
- Queensland Health Sexual Assault Training
- Complex Trauma - QLD Counsellors Association
- Writers Workshop - Jeremiah Abrams
- Healing Broken Bonds - Delphi Centre
- The Neurobiology of Childhood Trauma and Attachment (Childhood Foundation)

Professional development in the Centre Support team included:

- Supervision Skills for Managers (Health and Community Services Workforce Council)
- Community Sector Industrial Relations training on award modernization in Queensland (Jobs Australia)
- Workplace Health and Safety Representative Training (Worksafe Queensland)



## A Word from the Coordinator

In short... thank you, thank you thank you!! Thanks first of all to the young women who access Zig Zag for inspiring us all with their strength, resilience and capacity for change and growth. Once again, it has been such a pleasure this year to work with all of the staff and management committee at Zig Zag. I feel blessed to have such a committed and present management committee – providing me with considered advice and sustained support in my position, and excellent governance to the organization. A special thanks to Deborah Aldridge as Vice-Chair for excellent community governance and management advice; to Carla de Simone as general member and for her continued moral support; to Christine Grodd as general member and member of the Policy Sub-committee for her attention to detail and absolutely consistent availability; to Katie McDonald as general member for her consistency and reliability; to Lani Pereira as Chair for her attention to respectful practice on all levels in the organisation; to Julie Phillip as Treasurer for being on the ball in HRM and financial matters and always being available for cheque signing and pay approval; and to Teresa Stewart-Hunter for her unswerving commitment to all of the ‘tasky’ duties of Secretary. The management committee of Zig Zag fulfill their duties and obligations reliably, consistently and to a high standard. Having a strong, committed and stable governance structure is so important to community organizations and these women behind the scenes who have given their time and resources voluntarily play a central, and often unrecognized, role in the provision of services to young women in the wider Brisbane region.

I also feel extremely fortunate to continue to work in the organization with a team of amazing women. The Centre Support team are truly wonderful women to work with on a daily basis. Thanks to Lynette for her warmth and moral support and consistent reminders to me to delegate; to Sonja for her energy, laughs and most-excellent systems development; to Wayan for her gentleness and integrity; and to Roma for her consistent and on-going commitment to Zig Zag after so many years service. Thanks also to all of the staff who worked in the Housing team this year for making my supervisory role so easy! Thanks to Anne for her creativity and commitment to social justice; to Bess for her gentle and measured approach to team and direct work; to Kelly for her hard work; to Neti for her relaxed and positive approach to even difficult issues and for coming back if only for a little while; to Talei for relieving the Coordinators position and for balancing task and process so well. Thanks also to the staff of the sexual assault team for sticking with Zig Zag in the face of on-going funding insecurity. To Adela for her reliability and consistency; to Erica for her compassion and firm and passionate commitment to good practice and young women survivors; and to Jane for her consistent commitment to process.

A big thank you to Amelia de Campo, who completed her final social work placement at Zig Zag, for doing the job of two paid workers during this time! I look forward to seeing you around the women’s sector in the future. Thanks also for those workers that completed relief work at Zig Zag including Cynthia Dunn, Glenys Gibson, Yasmin Haines and Beata Ostapiej-Piatkowski – it was lovely to have your presence in the organisation.

Finally, I would like to thank workers across a number of sectors for their professional and personal support. Thanks for Amanda at ISIS and the other participants of the Feminist Management Network; to the staff at Immigrant Women’s Support Service, BRISSC and other sexual assault services around Queensland; to Jill and staff at Othila’s, Tanya at North West Youth Accommodation and Maria at Queensland Youth Housing Coalition. I am extremely grateful for all of your support.

Christy McGuire