



Annual Report

July 2015 – June 2016

Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc.

Traffic Light Box Project

Traffic Light Box (TLB) Project "Everyday Superheroes Speak Out Against Sexual Violence"

A group of young women were supported by Zig Zag to produce a striking artistic statement in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley to raise awareness about sexual violence. This award winning work created by young women encourages us all to be everyday superheroes. The work is displayed on a Traffic Light Box on the corner of Brunswick Street and Ivory Street in the Valley. It shows strong images and words as a lasting way to help everyday people be proactive in stopping sexual violence, to know prevention is everyone's business.

"We have used bold lines, colours and words to inform everyone of their power to make a change to the ideas and opinions in society towards sexual violence".

The women hope their art can be an ongoing prompt to taking action to stop violence against women. Young women are the most likely group in our community to experience sexual violence with approximately 47% of all recorded assault crimes being against young women under the age of 25 years. Young women involved in the project felt strongly that this needs to change:

"Coming together with other sexual violence survivors and doing something really positive was a cool way of promoting change..."

Interested community members engaged with young women as they painted:

"... many people passing by showed interest in our display. The majority of them were unaware of the impact sexual violence is having on women..."

HUGE CONGRATULATIONS go to the young women as they were awarded the winners of the 'Best Organisation' category of the 2015 Brisbane City Council ARTFORCE Awards!

"When the job was completed we felt as though we had run a marathon; the design was so bold and brave, and it evoked a sense of empowerment between us young women."

The young women are keen to see a community response continue. They would love people to visit the box and then share their impressions on the Zig Zag Facebook page; or to take 'selfies' and spread the word by posting '#zztraffilightbox'.



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



Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre is funded by



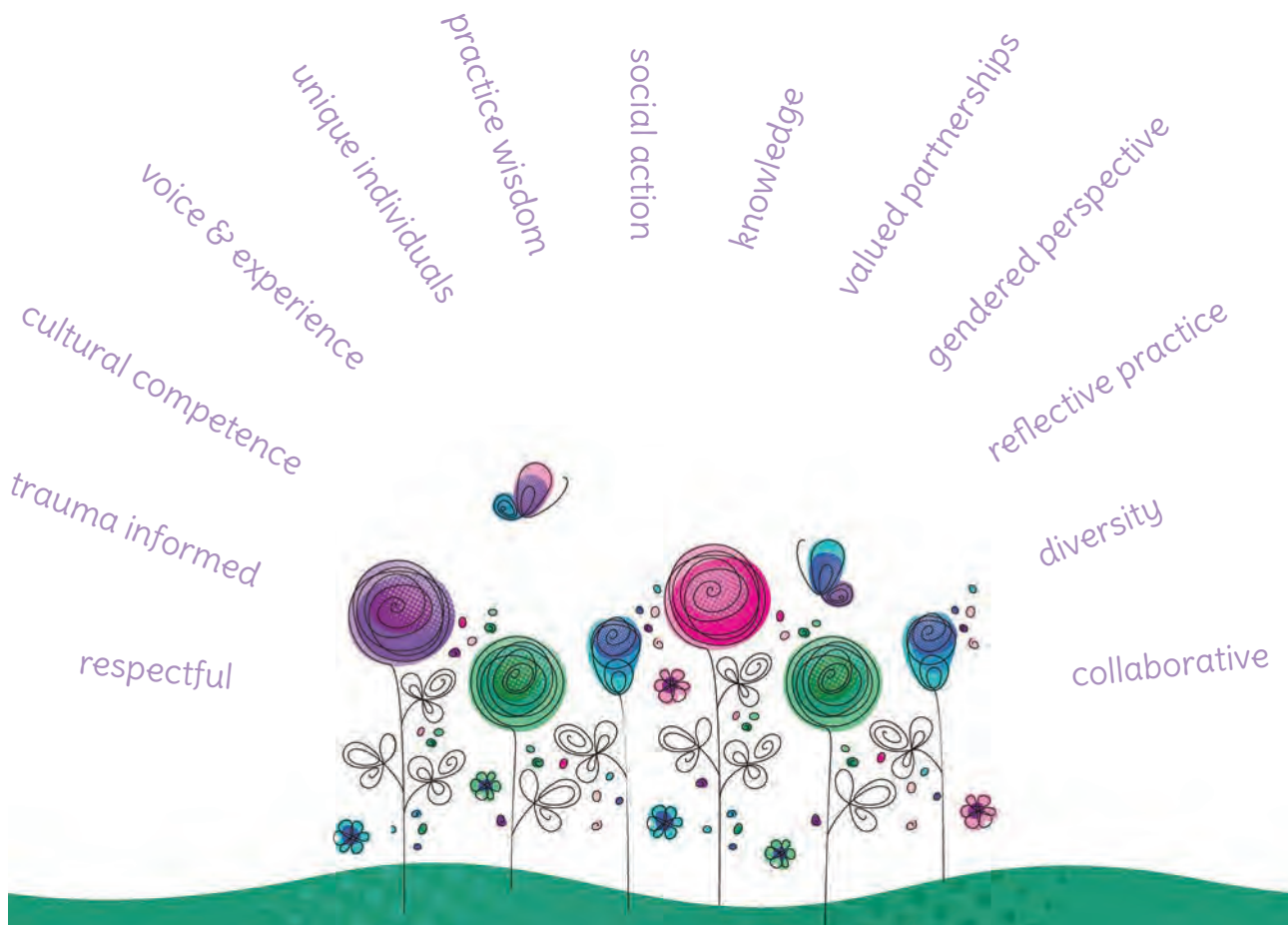
“A place of healing, support and social action
for young women”



Philosophy

Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc provides a place of healing, support, 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 promotes safety and 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

Being a part of an exemplary organisation like Zig Zag and working with amazing, skilled and dedicated women on the Management Committee is very rewarding.

This year has been a challenging but very rewarding year for Zig Zag and on behalf of the Management Committee I would like to extend our appreciation to our funders the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, and the Department of Housing and Public Works for their continued support.

During the year we were very pleased to be able to sign a five year funding agreement with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. In addition, we are very excited to share that we were successful in obtaining recurrent funding for the establishment of a NEW specialist Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service in the Inala and surrounding region following a successful tender that was prepared by our Manager and submitted by a Partner service in February 2016. For more details about this exciting NEW service please see pg. 6 of this Annual Report.

During this last year Zig Zag's committed team members also secured and/or successfully acquitted a number of small grants and funding support on top of our service agreements which allowed the organisation to continue to increase essential services to young women, that included:

- **An acquittal of \$31,691.82 Gambling Community Benefit Fund** granted in 2014-2015 being for computer upgrades and a new database for our Sexual Assault Program.
- **An acquittal of \$8,000 Lady Bowen Trust** granted in 2014-2015 being for essential household items, whitegoods, furniture and removalist costs for young women who are experiencing

homelessness as they transition to independent housing. This grant is also used to support young women's access to health care, child care and vocational study and training.

- **Continued expenditure of \$12,000 East Leagues Foundation Community Benefit Fund granted in 2014-2015 being for essential** household items, whitegoods, furniture and removalist costs for young women who are experiencing homelessness as they transition to independent housing.
- **Receipt of \$3,100 Street Smart Australia Community Grant** being for essential emergency relief / food vouchers for young women and young parenting women.
- **Receipt of \$9900 Brisbane City Council** for a project to engage young women from CaLD backgrounds in the development of a youth-specific, culturally relevant, community resource on issues relating to domestic and family violence and sexual violence and available support for young women in the Brisbane region.
- **Receipt of \$1,000 Zonta Club of Brisbane East** being for linen kits for young women and their children currently assisted in our supported accommodation program.

This fantastic work would not have been possible without Zig Zag's dedicated staff.

About this time last year the Management Committee enthusiastically appointed Stephanie Anne to the permanent position

of Manager after Christy McGuire formally resigned. We would like to thank Stephanie for her dedication and incredible hard work during the past year as Manager. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Christy for her commitment to Zig Zag and her outstanding management of the organisation over the past 8 years.

Our Sexual Assault and Housing Teams are commended and thanked for continuing to provide wonderful considered practice and tenancy support to the young women in need.

- Sexual Assault Team: Marisol Pacheco, Rosie Quinlan, Jane Hegerty and Amanda Dearden and relief workers Eliane Predomo and Anna Gilet.
- Housing Team: Lanora Jackson, Bess Douglas, Tina Louise and relief workers Shirley Pepler, Eddie Kempe, and Diane Carrick.

Our Centre Support Team has continued to provide excellent administration support essential to the organisation's successful operation. We thank: Ritu Shrestha, Susie Dennis and our locum Finance worker Liz MacDonald.

All the wonderful workers at Zig Zag add greatly to the organisation and we have been able to achieve amazing results despite the challenges as a result. The Management Committee sincerely thanks past, continuing and new staff for their commitment to young women and the organisation.

We look forward to the organisation continuing its incredibly important work with disadvantaged and marginalised young women well into the future.

Robyn Evans

[Chairperson]

Zig Zag



Treasurer's Report

I was pleased to be able to assist Zig Zag by fulfilling the Treasurer role in the Management Committee for part of this year.

Brad Harbourne was appointed as auditor by the Management Committee in October 2016 following the unexpected resignation of our previous auditor. The audited reports were promptly and accurately completed by our new auditor for the year 2015 - 2016.

Continued funding in 2015 - 2016 was granted by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for the Zig Zag Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program, whilst the Department of Housing and Public Works committed continued funding for the Zig Zag Housing/Homelessness Program.

The Housing Program was allocated funding of \$388,150 for the year which had a small loss of \$3,943. The Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program was allocated \$368,715 and also had a small loss of \$4,565.

Audited financials showed total revenue received by the organisation was \$917,103 which included, bank interest, all other donations and funding, accommodation/housing rental income, management fees, and membership fees in addition to the funding received from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and the Department of Housing and Public Works.

Expenditure was well managed however unexpected events did lead to a budget deficit of \$27,232 reported at the end of the year. This deficit was primarily due to substantive property damage and repairs within three of our CAP properties due to domestic and family violence experienced by young women tenants. Zig Zag have now included tenant damage in our property insurance to ensure that these costs can be claimed in future.

I am confident to report that Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre are in a sound financial position and are able to pay their debts as and when they fall due.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Committee members for the fantastic collaborative way in which the Committee is conducted and to all the Zig Zag workers for their contribution and dedication to the provision of quality services to young women and their children. Thank you in particular to our Manager, Stephanie Anne, our permanent Finance worker, Suzie Dennis, and our 6 month locum Finance worker, Liz MacDonald, for ensuring excellent financial management of the organisational funds received.

Amy Tidbold

[Treasurer]

Zig Zag



Zig Zag's New Program

We are very excited to announce that we were successful in obtaining recurrent funding for the establishment of a NEW Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service in the Inala and surrounding region.



Brisbane Southwest Support Sexual Violence Prevention

We are very excited to announce that we were successful in obtaining recurrent funding for the establishment of a NEW Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service in the Inala and surrounding region, the Brisbane Southwest Support Service, as a formal partnership of the following four specialist Services:

1. Women's Community Aid Association / Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre (WCAA/BRISSC);
2. Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS);
3. Murrigunyah Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Women (Murrigunyah); and
4. Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc.

In January 2016, the Minister for Communities, Child Safety, and Disability Services, and Violence Prevention Reform, the Honourable Shannon Fentiman, announced an open tender for five new regional specialist Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Services in Queensland. Zig Zag were instrumental in coordinating a formal partnership with WCAA/BRISSC, IWSS, and Murrigunyah to develop a tender for the Inala and surrounding region. Zig Zag prepared the tender on behalf of the

four Partner Services and it was submitted by Women's Community Aid Association in February 2016. We were successfully awarded recurrent funding for a five year term to operate as a formal partnership to establish a new, innovative Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service Model for the Inala and surrounding region that will provide contemporary, culturally specific, specialist services to young women, women, families and the wider community in responding to sexual violence.

The Brisbane Southwest Support Service commenced an establishment phase in April 2016 and began operation in June 2016 providing free, confidential, culturally appropriate services to women and young women who have experienced sexual violence, and their families residing in the Brisbane Southwest Region. We provide the following support services:

- Information, support and counselling following any form of sexual violence or abuse;
- Advocacy and information on reporting to the Police and navigating the legal system, including criminal justice proceedings;
- Therapeutic support groups and workshops for survivors of sexual violence;

- Information for supportive parents, families, partners, and allies;
- Community education and prevention activities; and
- Professional training for workers / services on best practice in responding to sexual violence.

If you are working with women who have been affected by sexual violence, child sexual abuse, intimate partner sexual violence or sexual harassment, then please let them know that they can access support through the Brisbane Southwest Support Service. We look forward to working in partnership with you as we work to prevent sexual and family violence in our communities. For further information, and to refer women to this service, or to request hard copies of our service brochure, please contact us.



Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program

The Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program strives to be flexible and responsive to the diverse needs and experiences of young women.

Staffing in our team

Marisol Pacheco (Senior Practitioner), Jane Hegerty (Community Education) and Rosie Quinlan (Group Worker) completed another year as permanent employees in the Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program this year. Throughout the year the Sexual Assault Team were joined by Anna Gilet and Eliane Predomo (relief workers), and Amanda Dearden (new Sexual Assault Counselling and Support Worker – Inala), who all undertook specific areas of work within the program. We would like to thank them for their valued contributions and support of young women survivors of sexual violence!!

Snapshot statistics

A snapshot of the work undertaken by the Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program at Zig Zag in 2015 - 2016:

♀ 2523 hours of specialist sexual assault counselling, support and advocacy were provided to 506 young women aged 12 – 25 years who have experienced sexual violence; and their parents, carers and supporters.

♀ 113 new referrals were received for specialist sexual assault counselling, support and advocacy during this year and 125 young women concluded their

access to counselling as a result of the majority of their identified needs being met.

- ♀ 55 new referrals were received directly from the Police Referral System an electronic referral system designed to assist the Queensland Police Service to make referrals to essential community services. SupportLink ceased operations for the Queensland Police Service in December 2015 and a new Referral Management Coordination System - Redbourne Group, began operations in January 2016 with a new agreement in place for referrals to Zig Zag. These referrals open an important opportunity to provide early intervention and support to young women following a disclosure of sexual assault to Police.

- ♀ 840 hours of community education sessions were provided to 2675 participants including young women, young men, and the wider community. These sessions focused on building participants' knowledge about sexual violence, consent, and healthy relationships, and their ability to respond to these issues.

Counselling, support and advocacy

The Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program continued to provide quality sexual assault counselling, support, and advocacy with young women aged 12-25 years who have experienced sexual violence at some time in their lives; in addition to brief counselling and support to mothers, carers, family members, and other supporters of young women.

The Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program strives to be flexible and responsive to the diverse needs and experiences of young women and offers outreach and/or telephone counselling to young women who cannot access Zig Zag premises at Camp Hill, Brisbane South or our outreach counselling venue at Zilmere Community Centre, Brisbane North. We also provide child care, transport, and other assistance

that supports young women's access to our services. Feedback from young women accessing counselling and support services at Zig Zag included:

"The counsellors are very helpful and have given me strategies to deal with life situations"

"I can talk about stuff I can't discuss anywhere else"

"I feel heard and know people outside my family believe and support me"

"I am more confident and aware of the changes in my life"

"I have less nightmares and panic attacks and more confidence...finding a safe place to talk and talking about issues at my own pace"

Introduction of new electronic database and computer systems

Zig Zag were the successful recipients of \$31,691.82 from the Gambling Community Benefit Funds in late June 2015, and during this financial period we were able to purchase essential new computer technology and a purpose-built, electronic database system for our specialist Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program that was designed by GeckoDB. The transition from paper to electronic client records commenced from January 2016 and involved training on the use of the database and duplication of statistics collection for the first quarter. The secure database is designed to significantly improve the collection & reporting of service data; management of confidential client information, and counselling and therapeutic group records.

Zig Zag has greatly benefited from the upgrade to our computer & database systems that has enabled more efficient & effective operations within the organisation and across Zig Zag's two specialist Service Programs. New computers and tablets have been installed and are operating effectively. The new portable tablets enable workers to provide appropriate and more accurate information to young women as required at

outreach locations across the wider Brisbane region. Further, the portable tablets have assisted Zig Zag staff in the provision of community education, and training and professional development activities undertaken with young women, secondary and tertiary education institutions, health services, and Government and non-Government organisations.

Therapeutic group work

In 2015 - 2016, the group work program has combined a closed therapeutic sexual assault support group and open one-off workshops for young women who have experienced sexual violence.

Therapeutic sexual assault support group

Anna Gilet returned to work with the Sexual Assault team in the role of group co-facilitator for the young women's therapeutic sexual assault support group. This 7 week closed support group commenced from the 13 August 2015 - 24 September 2015 and was successful in meeting the group objectives which were: to increase young women's understanding of sexual violence; to enhance young women's coping strategies and skills for managing the effects of sexual violence; and to reduce young women's isolation and increase connection with others. The therapeutic sexual assault support group included the following topics:

Week	Date	Topic/s
1	13th August	Saying Hello to the Group
2	20th August	Understanding Why Sexual Violence Happens & Exploring Coping Strategies
3	27th August	Perpetrator Tricks and Tactics & Young Women's Power and Resistance
4	3rd September	Understanding the Effects of Sexual Violence & the Neurobiology of Trauma
5	10th September	Exploring the Landscape of Emotions
6	17th September	Self-Worth & Self Compassion / Trust, Boundaries, & Relationships
7	24th September	Saying Goodbye to the Group & Hello to New Possibilities



One off workshops

In February - June 2016 Zig Zag facilitated five one-off, open workshops with young women using the following themes:

4 February - Colouring, clay and magic sand at Zillmere Community Centre

This workshop introduced simple activities which can be utilised by young women to manage the effects of trauma including distraction, stress reduction and mindfulness.... who knew this could be achieved by simply colouring in?!

8 March - International Women's Day Event

This workshop invited young women to get together to celebrate International Women's Day and have some fun in design and making STICKERS & BADGES to celebrate the many fantastic things women bring to the world.

15 April - Colouring, clay and magic sand at Zig Zag Camp Hill

This workshop introduced simple activities which can be utilised by young women to manage the effects of trauma including distraction, stress reduction and mindfulness.... who knew this could be achieved by simply colouring in?!

12 May - Nurture Day for Young Women in Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

Zig Zag facilitated a day to acknowledge that many young women have to deal with gender based violence in their lives, and they deserve to be safe and to be supported. This workshop focussed on young women having space to care for themselves and to be supported through activities such as massage, make-up sessions, and a shared lunch. Young women bonded throughout the day in a space that valued them and their strengths.

16 June - Distraction and connection with board games at Zig Zag Camp Hill

When was the last time you played a board game? This workshop provided an opportunity for young women to enjoy an afternoon of distraction, discussion, and connection with other young women.

Feedback from participants attending the workshops included:

"Thanks so much for an awesome group session"

'I am soooooo glad I came today, I had SO MUCH fun today"

"Mindfulness is easy and doesn't have to be boring"

"It is still fun to play with play doh!"

"It is OK to take some time out!"

"THANK YOU! It was really nice to meet some new people and just relax."



Reflections from this year's therapeutic group program confirmed that it is often easier for young women to attend one-off workshops rather than committing to a 6-8 week therapeutic support group program. One-off workshops are also useful for young women to attend as an entry point and introduction to Zig Zag services. The workshops are shorter and involve less intensive preparation and planning by workers than the 6-8 week therapeutic support group program. It also provides an opportunity for workers to run successful workshops more than once in different locations thus conserving resources. The plan for 2016-2017 is to continue with more one-off workshops until we have a cohort of young women who may be interested in undertaking a 6-8 week therapeutic support group.

Yeronga Young African Women's Groups

This year saw Zig Zag continue its key role in facilitating these groups with young African women at Yeronga State High School. This collaborative program has been a part of Zig Zag's work since 2007 and this year was once more a year full of great cross-organizational connections, and wonderful participation and energy from young women. These groups brought young women together to focus on topics such as identity, values, healthy relationships and rights. Young women described the group as 'happy', 'respectful', and 'helpful'. Feedback from participants included:

"The session I liked best was the session where I got to know more about Africa".

"We had fun and we learnt different things from visitors, teachers and friends (everyone)"

"This group was fun and teaches us a lot of lessons that we should know for our future."

As always Zig Zag would like to acknowledge the workers who join us in this work - the Multicultural Development Association (MDA) for their co-facilitation; and workers from the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, Queensland Program of

Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, Immigrant Women's Support Service, and the African Women's Leader's Group who all supported the groups in different ways. Finally, we acknowledge the staff of Yeronga State High School, who always make it so easy to work in the school, and explore responsive and creative opportunities for students to engage.

Community education and engagement

Zig Zag's work against sexual violence recognises the important role of prevention and awareness raising. We all have a part to play in challenging the attitudes and values that perpetuate violence against women; and we work alongside groups and community members to build knowledge in responding to sexual violence and to join with others whenever possible to take action to prevent sexual violence. Key community education and engagement work for 2015 - 2016 included:

- o **NAIDOC** (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) Family Fun Day – Zig Zag shared a stall with Bahloo Women's Youth Shelter once again this year. It was a great day of badge making, painting finger nails, and talking about Zig Zag's work with community members.
- o **Sexual Violence Awareness Month** (SVAM) – October 2015:
- ♀ **Traffic Light Box (TLB) Project** - [Report cover image]:

Two workshops were held to design and paint a traffic light box on the corner of Brunswick St and Ivory St, Fortitude Valley. The young women involved provided great energy, time and ideas to the whole project and created a striking image that challenges all who see it to think about what action they can take against sexual violence. They titled the work: "Everyday Superheroes Speak Out Against Sexual Violence". A wonderful bonus to this project came in February 2016 when the young women from

Zig Zag were awarded the winners of the 'Best Organisation' category of the 2015 Brisbane City Council ARTFORCE Awards!

- ♀ **SVAM Conference:** 'An Interagency Approach: Supporting Adults Who Have Experienced Recent Sexual Assault' – Zig Zag were an active member of the Planning Committee for this Conference and presented on the 'specialist services' panel.
- ♀ **SVAM Event: 'Beyond the Monster Myth'** – Zig Zag were a guest speaker at this event that was held at Parliamentary Annexe and hosted by Children by Choice.
- ♀ **Public Information displays** in Wynnum and Chermside City Council Libraries and Zillmere Neighbourhood Centre.
- ♀ **CDFVR Reader Vol 13, No 3:** 'Addressing the Silence on Sexual Violence: Why We Must Act Now' – Zig Zag's article was published and distributed.
- ♀ **Reclaim Activism Event:** Zig Zag had an information stall, nail painting and a display of Zig Zag's recent social action work on the Traffic Light Box. Staff also supported young women to participate at this event that was hosted by BRISSC at Kurilpa Hall.
- o **Brisbane City Council** – Zig Zag facilitated a collaborative workshop session on healthy relationships with young people on the Bayside.
- o **BABI Youth Service Get Set for Work Program** – Zig Zag facilitated a workshop session on consent, relationships, and sexual violence with a group of young women and young men.
- o **School / TAFE Sessions** and Info Stalls: Wavell Heights State High School – Health and Safety Expo; Forest Lake State High School – Mental Health Expo; Coorparoo State High School – Careers and Youth Support Expo; Balmoral State

High School – Love Bites Program; and Alexandra Hills TAFE – orientation day; in addition to Inala Youth Week.

- o **Young Women's Christmas Party:** included craft, henna tattoos and greatly appreciated present donations from Brisbane Girls Grammar School students.
- o **International Women's Day (IWD) – May 2016:**
 - ♀ Zig Zag presented information at an event held at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre.
 - ♀ UN Women International Women's Day Breakfast – Zig Zag supported a small group of young women to attend and experience this event. Tickets for the young women were financially supported by a local community member.
 - ♀ Contributed to BRISSC Treasure Hunt event for IWD.

Delivery of professional training

Training for professionals and students is another component of the work of the Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program at Zig Zag. Through sharing information and knowledge Zig Zag provides professional development to enhance the capacity of workers to respond to the issue of sexual violence within their workplace. In 2015 - 2016 Zig Zag delivered the following professional training:

- o **Northside Sexual Assault Action Network (NSAAN)** – Victim Assist Queensland Building Capacity Project – In July 2015, NSAAN was successful in acquiring funding for a project focused on building the capacity of generalist workers in the north of Brisbane to respond effectively to the issue of sexual violence. NSAAN contracted Zig Zag and the Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Centre (BRISSC) to deliver the training program from October 2015 – April 2016. The program comprised of 2 x 2 full days training in North Lakes and Nundah and 12 x 2 hour subsequent

reflective practice sessions held in Caboolture, Redcliffe, Michelton, and Nundah. A total of 104 Expressions of Interest were received from services for the training program with a maximum of 60 participants, highlighting the need for continued access to professional development and training on issues relating to responding to sexual violence. Participants indicated that they found both the training and reflective sessions highly beneficial and provided the following comments:

"Thank you, this is easily the best and most useful training I have attended in recent years. A good balance of information and practical application."

"Provided a framework which will guide my practice."

"Taken the "scare" factor out of sexual assault."

"Lots of good reflection and discussion, good mix of learning styles. Very supportive, flexible, non-judgemental facilitators."

The program was highly successful in utilising networks/resources present in the area and in providing a space where workers could build sustainable connections across the region. There was also great support for ongoing initiatives emerging as a result of this work.

- o **Central Qld University Interview** – Zig Zag prepared and provided a recorded interview for students enrolled in the Domestic and Family Violence Post-Graduate Course at Central Queensland University. The interview focused on social work practice on issues relating to intimate partner sexual violence support and prevention.
- o **North Brisbane Youth Interagency Meeting**– Zig Zag training presentation to youth workers on responding appropriately to disclosures of sexual violence.
- o **Legal Aid Queensland Presentation** – Zig Zag training presentation to

solicitors at Legal Aid Queensland on issues relating to sexual violence and improving responses to young women within the legal system, as part of 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women.

- o **Inala Worker Training**– Zig Zag facilitated a one day professional development training event to workers from a range of services in the Inala region on best practice responses to young women who are victims / survivors of sexual violence. All participants reported an increase in their knowledge and skills in responding to sexual violence. This professional development training event also provided an opportunity to promote Zig Zag's newly established Specialist Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service in the Inala region. Participant feedback was positive with comments including:

"Very informative and I am leaving with a better understanding of the topic."

"Warm facilitation style, interactive, well-structured and great group discussion and activities."

"Hearing young women's perspectives about what workers do that is and isn't helpful. Found the information regarding self-harm interesting and new ways of thinking about it will be useful in my practice"



"Great facilitators- thorough knowledge of the sector"

Zig Zag website and facebook page

- o This reporting year saw consistent use of our website with a total of 5785 unique visits. This equates to an average of 16 unique visits a day.
- o Our Facebook page has continued to be an important part of how we connect with young women and the broader community. The page is used to let people know of upcoming activities/workshops and to share information of relevance to young women, on topics relating to sexual violence and homelessness. Regular posts happen throughout the year, with particular input during special periods such as Sexual Violence Awareness Month, Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, International Women's Day, and 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women.

Networks

Active network involvement and systemic advocacy is regularly undertaken by the Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program to ensure young women's experiences appropriately inform policy, practice, data collection, and law reform. This work included active engagement in the following key networks:

- ♀ **Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN)**
- ♀ **North Side Sexual Assault Action Network (NSAAN)**
- ♀ **Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ)**

Other network participation included: Brisbane LGBTI Mental Health Network; Child and Youth Mental Health Professionals Network; Southside Mental Health Collaborative; VISION Network; Local Level Alliances (LLAs); Inala Youth Interagency; Brisbane South Youth Interagency; Young Migrant and Refugee (MHPN) Network; and the Community of Practice.

Professional development attended

In 2015 - 2016, workers in the Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program attended the following professional development activities:

- o One day training for First Aid Certificate including CPR for all staff.
- o One day training on 'Dual Diagnosis and Trauma' facilitated by the Australian College of Community Services and Drug Arm.
- o A half day training on 'Records, Subpoenas and Court Preparation' facilitated by Caxton Legal Service.
- o Three day Conference titled: 'Broken Structures, Broken Selves: Complex Trauma in the 21st Century. Addressing Complex Trauma in Children, Adolescent, Adults, Families and Society'.
- o One day forum on 'Respectful Relationships Education' organized by True Relationships and Reproductive Health.
- o One day training on 'Trauma and the Body: the Theory and Practice of Sensorimotor Psychotherapy' facilitated by the Australian Childhood Foundation.
- o Two day training on 'Acceptance and Commitment Therapy' facilitated by Russ Harris.
- o Three day 'Gestalt Art Therapy Camp' facilitated by the Gestalt Art Therapy Centre.
- o One day training on 'Applying CBT to Bipolar Disorder' facilitated by the Centre for Clinical Interventions.
- o One day workshop titled: 'Beyond Punishment – Empowering Victims' Voices' looking at the inclusion of victims' voices in criminal justice proceedings.
- o One day training on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people facilitated by Kurbingui.

Housing and Homelessness Support Program

Domestic and Family violence is still the main reason women seek assistance for homelessness and a high percentage need help due to a housing crisis.

Staffing in our team and a year of changes

This report period saw further staffing changes both in the Housing team and within the wider service. Housing team staff took leave for various reasons and part-time and locum workers were employed for essential leave relief. We value our work with young women and the flexibility of our workplace so the team worked hard to balance and sustain quality support to young women during this time. This helped to minimise the impact of staffing changes on young women accessing services within the Housing Program.

We would like to thank all the workers who contributed to supporting young women and accompanying children out of homelessness during the year: Bess Douglas, Shirley Peppler, Tina Louise, Lanora Jackson, Dianne Carrick, and Edwina Kempe. Bess Douglas has taken 12 months parental leave and this locum position has been filled by Shirley Peppler.

Effects of homelessness and the experiences of young women

We know homelessness for young women is under represented in statistics. Young women are often missing from homeless data collection due to choosing 'couch surfing' with family, friends and others over sleeping rough in public spaces. A large proportion of young women will spend 12 months couch surfing before accessing support through Specialist Homeless Services like Zig Zag.

There are obvious safety issues and concerns for women and children sleeping

rough. However couch surfing still places women at a greater risk of experiencing sexual violence, financial abuse, stress to source stable accommodation and associated needs of accompanying children, and relationship breakdowns. All of these factors add obvious complexities for young women and children already in crisis.

While couch surfers enjoy temporary shelter, there are negative consequences for women such as potential sexual exploitation just to keep a roof over their head.

We are privileged to share young women's journeys as they seek to obtain independent, secure housing and a supportive and safe environment for their children. The most common causes of homelessness identified by young women seeking housing support at Zig Zag continues to be domestic, family and sexual violence, family breakdown, cultural tension, limited family support, poverty, overcrowding and a lack of affordable housing.

The traumatic effects of these may contribute to complex mental health concerns that if unaddressed effect tenancy stability and potential eviction. Despite the effects of homelessness and the relating complex trauma, we are constantly inspired by the determination, resilience and strength of the young women we work with.

"I have been through two wars and seen members of my family and community killed, the past is on my mind often".

Young woman housed by Zig Zag.

Supported accommodation

Once again, the Housing team has continued to meet funding requirements in successfully managing 9 units total in Carina and Greenslopes. The aim of our short-medium term supported accommodation is to support young women between 16-25 years of age (and accompanying children) to exit from homelessness, develop tenancy skills, transition to long-term safe and stable housing and further develop life skills that assist to transition to adulthood.

We directly supported 25 young women and 31 accompanying children through our 9 supported accommodation properties.

Of these 25 young women we supported during the 2015-2016 period, 8 remained in Zig Zag housing while 16 young women were assisted to exit Zig Zag properties to secure, sustainable housing.

- 13 young women and 12 accompanying children exited into a long-term social housing properties.
- 1 young woman and 3 accompanying children exited to a community managed affordable housing option.
- 2 young women exited to live with family members.
- 1 young woman abandoned her tenancy without notice to an unknown accommodation option.

We were grateful for a high proportion of movement during the year with tenants moving out to longer term housing options which allowed more women to exit crisis and move into our supported accommodation. As you can imagine though, this also created substantial work for both the tenancy manager and the two housing support staff.

In our supported accommodation for this financial year, once again over 50% of young women were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, many coming from

refugee backgrounds (including women originally from Liberia, PNG, Kenya, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Uganda). This year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women increased to 36% of the young women accommodated in our housing.

It continues to be an ongoing priority for the team to address how Zig Zag's supported accommodation can be more accessible to women from all cultures and to make sure our service is culturally appropriate when responding to young women's needs.

Violence was a significant issue during the year, mainly from family, ex/partner and community. 'Disturbances of the peace' were reported by different tenants in both unit blocks. Significant repairs and maintenance were carried out following severe damage to three properties and some young women were relocated from one unit block to the other which helped resolve tenancy issues. The housing support team along with management are reviewing the risk assessments regarding domestic violence issues not only at the time of initial assessment but as an ongoing issue throughout tenancy and support.

Homelessness and housing support for young women

A large proportion of young women experiencing homelessness have experienced childhood trauma to some degree including physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse with any combination of these experiences, sometimes ongoing, often resulting in complex trauma and attachment issues into adulthood.

We know that childhood trauma, left unaddressed, can impair the cognitive and social/emotional development leading to low self-esteem, an impaired ability to form healthy, affective and trusting relationships with adults, disrupt the achievement of developmental milestones, affect parenting skills, impact on educational and work success, and lead to lifelong struggles with depression, anxiety, PTSD and other mental

health conditions and at times, increase the risk of substance misuse as a form of self-medication.

This highlights the complexities faced by young women moving beyond homelessness and counters the myth that homelessness is about sourcing a 'roof' to be able to exit homelessness and maintain future tenancies. It takes comprehensive guidance, support and access to information and multi-faceted resources to truly break the cycle of homelessness and transition to sustainable tenancies and adulthood. We find that the effects of complex trauma can play out for a young woman sustaining their tenancies:

- Low self-esteem and subsequent issues of managing relationships both personally and within a tenancy/visitor context;
- Managing powerlessness in relationships and culture hierarchy (often gendered), which impedes the ability to move violent and/or unwelcome visitors or family on;
- Vulnerability to ongoing sexual exploitation by ex-partners and/or friends/visitors; and
- Feelings of isolation and loneliness when home alone and settling in.

Being homeless has profound effects on young women's overall life and wellbeing. Our support work with young women is never just about housing and Zig Zag utilises a trauma-informed approach to assess support needs and provide a holistic response as directed by young women themselves. We continue to provide the following supports to our tenants, ex tenants, and young women who connect with Zig Zag housing program;

- Supporting women to secure and/or maintain stable and affordable long-term accommodation options;
- Tenancy skills development and information regarding RTA rights, lease responsibilities, neighbor expectations;

- Resourcing and informing young women on self-advocacy;
- Opportunities to further develop life skills that build on capacity and strengths, self-esteem and wellbeing;
- Linking women with essential support services in their communities; and
- Supporting women to achieve their personal goals through assisting with: enrollment in further education and training; seeking employment; building support networks; managing the effects of violence and trauma including mental health support; pregnancy and parenting support; and assisting women to create safety and stability in their lives.

We acknowledge that social, political, cultural and economic contexts limit young women's power, creating vulnerability and disadvantage. There are a range of structural factors that also contribute to young women's homelessness including poverty, social inequality, racism, discrimination and youth unemployment with young women also being less likely to have savings to draw on in case of an emergency. Young women generally have had less opportunity for further education and work experience, making it more difficult for them to gain employment and get access to affordable child care and as well private rental housing options that will secure long term stable and safe housing.

Our work practice and delivery is underpinned by the knowledge that supporting in a caring and non-judgmental way; assisting young women to build self confidence, advocate for their needs to be heard and/or met within limited 'systems'; and offering relevant emotional support where needed. This care shouldn't be underestimated as a significant contribution toward building resilience and developing wellbeing for the transition to adulthood and independence.

*"Becoming homeless was a big shock!
Something I thought I'd never have to face.
Thank goodness there are places like Zig Zag "*

Centre based support

Under our Centre Based Support funding we worked with 148 young women who included tenants exiting our supported accommodation to help maintain their long-term tenancy and further develop independent life skills, plus young women who presented as currently homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Queensland Homelessness Information Platform (QHIP) has now been operational for a few years and as the homelessness services common assessment tool and vacancy management system, aims to manage demand for housing and support by providing a consistent initial assessment and clear referral pathway to services.

QHIP was designed to ensure clients have easier access to services and also assists to limit the trauma associated with repeating their 'homelessness story'. Although this system is of benefit, relationship based referrals still seem to be prominent in the sector and inconsistencies of use and support levels continue. We continue to look forward to a review and strengthening of QHIP as we enter into the third year of its use across the state.

During the 2015-2016 financial year the **Housing team supported 148 young women** presenting with housing, information and homelessness support needs:

- **43** presentations by young women through QHIP with 83 Client assessments made (some young women were assessed multiple times as their presenting situation changed over time);
- **36** young women (with 36 accompanying children) were supported regularly for ongoing intensive support via our centre based support / outreach program. This work varied greatly in duration and type depending on the young woman's needs;

- **69** 'unassisted' contacts recorded which can entail sharing of information of Zig Zag or external services available and/ or a brief assessment of the presenting needs then information and referral pathways to relevant support services.

During the year we provided follow up phone support or face-to-face meetings to assess appropriate referrals for young women presenting on QHIP. As capacity allows, housing workers work more intensively with homeless young women who may face significant and complex barriers. This more intensive work often includes advocacy, outreach, warm referrals to support services and general emotional support.

Ex Tenants are offered intensive transitional support

The focus of the work with exiting tenants is to assist young women to transition seamlessly into long term housing. This can be ongoing support to sustain a tenancy which often includes early crisis intervention responses. Due to trusting relationships which are established, the Zig Zag support worker is often the first port of call when issues or questions arise. This often means a more intensive support period around the initial move period that tapers out as a woman settles in her new home and connects to the community and support networks around her.

Commonly we find we are called for support when a previous Zig Zag tenant is having tenancy difficulties and may be at risk of losing her housing. This support work usually involves advocacy based work and assisting to source relevant support needs as identified. Having the flexibility to support these women at fairly short notice and high intensity means women already in long term housing can maintain their tenancy and avoid re-entering into homelessness. Advocacy also includes arranging and attending meetings to 'mediate' and /or translate concerns and issues raised by young women especially from CALD backgrounds. We also assist to build confidence of young women to understand and navigate systems that will

further develop their skills for self-advocacy and transition to adulthood. This work requires a commitment to provide flexible service delivery, intensive support and sustained engagement, assertive follow up and outreach assistance to work alongside young women to improve their ability to sustain their tenancy and provide a safe and stable environment for accompanying children.

Practical and financial support for young women

We support young women to meet and connect with other young women by holding occasional events. This year the Housing team, alongside the Zig Zag Sexual Assault team, organized an End of Year Party in December, attended by young women and their children. Young women engaged with craft activities, nail and massage treatments, presents and enjoyed a great lunch spread.

This year we have regularly utilised the Givit website which has been invaluable in supplying items for young women and their children e.g. clothes, nappies, manchester and household set up needs. This service has also been useful in coordinating bigger donations of beds, computers and other household items for young women as they move into independent housing. Other direct donations were generously provided by many individuals and organisations, which included, but are not limited to:

- Zonta Brisbane East provided funds for manchester.
- Telstra cards were also received and donated safe mobile phones from WESNET were distributed to young women experiencing domestic and family violence and/or sexual violence.
- A number of large cartons of cereal were provided by Alexandra Hills State School.
- SORT Recycle provided furniture pieces made by people long term unemployed.
- A number of good hearted generous women from the community turned up

with multiple donations of baby and women clothes, toys, craft supplies and the odd furniture item. Further unsolicited donations included 6 new born baby 'Bubnests' from Hannah and whitegoods 'that appeared' from a Zig Zag management committee member.

A BIG THANKS to YOU ALL!

East's Leagues Foundation

We continued to utilise another generous grant from the East's Leagues Foundation received in 2015. This third grant directly funds young women as they are exiting our supported accommodation program. The grant can assist with removal costs and any household items required to support their transition to independent living.

Lady Bowen Trust

Similarly, we were very pleased to acquit a new grant from the Lady Bowen Trust received in 2015, which was set up to directly fund young women to achieve independent living. This grant was used to assist 18 young women and 22 accompanying children in moving costs, home set up, medical expenses and activities that assist women to move towards independence such as further education or training.

Without the assistance of these grants from East's Leagues Foundation and Lady Bowen Trust funds we would be unable to assist young women and accompanying children to arrange transportation of donated household furniture and personal belongings nor purchase essential whitegoods including fridge and washing machine that help setup a home. Young women often have limited to no support opportunities from family due to limited family capacity/resources, ongoing family conflict and trauma, and intergenerational poverty and disadvantage. When family relationships are healthy, this kind of support would naturally occur however when isolated from family or community, young women find it incredibly difficult to navigate these major events in life on their own and being able to navigate these events with support and financial

assistance increases a young woman's sense of wellbeing and capacity to transition to adulthood.

StreetSmart Australia

We were also very pleased to receive a fourth grant from StreetSmart Australia used to purchase essential emergency relief food vouchers for young women and their children. This grant was used for young women in need of basic assistance with food or baby needs, often during a crisis.

These grants make a huge difference in the lives of young women experiencing homelessness. Parenting and non-parenting young women often have very limited financial resources and may experience unexpected expenses and find themselves needing to access essential items such as groceries, medicines, go-cards, nappies, cleaning products etc. Emergency food vouchers can make a huge difference for a young woman to purchase food and other daily essential items including household setup needs such as cleaning products and kitchen items or assist with children's school needs or clothes etc. This brief intervention can fulfill an immediate financial crisis that then allows time and space for young women to make more considered financial management plans, away from crisis driven reactions, and to access alternate solutions for future situations.

Emergency relief is also a useful tool to provide an initial step in a support worker relationship which can facilitate a way to address more complex issues the young woman may be dealing with and which may be impacting on her financial situation generally (e.g. parenting and income issues, domestic violence, complex trauma, drug and alcohol, and mental health issues).

We extend our sincerest thanks to Easts Leagues Foundation, Lady Bowen Trust, StreetSmart Australia, Zonta and the generous unnamed public for your ongoing support.

"My family kicked me out because I was pregnant and I didn't follow cultural expectations... Having Zig Zag workers to talk with and help with practical life things is really helpful...They do an awesome job!"

Young Woman supported by Zig Zag

Networks and community education

At different times during the past year the Housing team have contributed to various networks and events and continue to build on these valued relationships:

- NAIDOC: Zig Zag shared a stall with Bahloo Women's Youth Shelter once again this year for the NAIDOC Family Fund Day at Musgrave Park
- Yarning Circle: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networking meet
- Brisbane Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support network
- Brisbane Youth Service Centre for Young Families – strengthen relationships that support opportunities to do collaborative support for parenting skills development.
- Save the Children – West End, school enrollment and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support links in Caboolture
- Carina Goodstart – relationship building to support young women enrolling children in local child care
- Camp Hill State Primary School-relationship building to support young women enrolling children in primary school

Professional development attended by the Housing team

As part of our ongoing professional development, team members attended various training events that were relevant to their work and the organisation. These included:

- One day training for First Aid Certificate including CPR for all staff.
- One day QHIP training update.

- One day training workshop on 'Unplanned Pregnancy' facilitated by Children by Choice.
- One day workshop titled: 'Life Story & Narrative Practice with Children, Adolescents and/or Adults with Problematic or Traumatic Childhoods'.
- One day workshop titled: 'Twenty Skills to Build Resilience - Working with Young People with Complex needs' facilitated by Dr. Michael Ungar.
- One day workshop titled: 'Domestic violence and working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities' facilitated by Jatinder Kaur.
- A half day workshop titled: 'Representing Your Organisation at QCAT' by Q Shelter.

We continue to value and strengthen our professional relationships with various homelessness and housing support services throughout Brisbane. We believe that fostering and nurturing these collaborative, client focused partnerships can only lead to better outcomes for young women and any accompanying children.

Zig Zag's integrated service delivery between our two Program areas ensures that we continue to advocate for improved responses to address the interconnection between homelessness and sexual violence as experienced by young women, in the hope to change policy and procedures that keep women and children safe and free from violence.

"I had been homeless and away from my family for a few years and I felt really lonely before I got in touch with Zig Zag. Then I felt like I got a 'family' in another way and got so much support I felt confident in myself that I can do things myself... They encouraged me a lot."

Young Woman supported by Zig Zag



Pamper Days and End of Year Celebrations at Zig Zag



A word from the Manager

There are increased need for specialist services for young women in Brisbane who are disadvantaged, marginalised and experiencing homelessness, domestic and sexual violence.

It has been a great year for Zig Zag as we have successfully negotiated and been awarded with increased security in our recurrent funding agreements with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) and the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) with five year or three year terms for all of our Programs. We were also successful in obtaining recurrent funding for the establishment of a NEW specialist Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Service in the Inala and surrounding region, officially named **Brisbane Southwest Support (BSwS)** service, following a successful tender that was submitted in February 2016. For more details about this exciting NEW service please see pg.5 of this Annual Report.

There have been multiple challenges in managing resources to meet the increased need for specialist services for young women in Brisbane who are marginalised, disadvantaged and experiencing homelessness and sexual violence. We have been fortunate to receive donations from members of the community and small grants that have enhanced our capacity to provide essential financial support and emergency relief to young women. Details of our supporters are listed in the Chairperson's Report.

Zig Zag has continued to be blessed to have an amazing team of workers who bring with them such a diverse range of knowledge and skills; and who are so committed to working alongside young women with compassion, respect, and a high level of reflective, ethical practice:

♀ A BIG thanks to workers in the Housing Program – Lanora, Tina, and Bess; and our awesome locum and relief workers, Shirley, Di and Eddie, for your amazing support work with young women; your energy and flexibility in managing complexity and crisis responses; and the fearless advocacy you undertake that is so essential for improving the outcomes for young women who are experiencing homelessness and facing multiple challenges in their journey towards independence and securing a safe and supportive environment for their children.

♀ A BIG thanks to workers in the Sexual Assault Program – Marisol, Rosie, Jane, and Amanda; and fantastic relief workers, Eliane and Anna, for the amazing therapeutic work you undertake with young women who have experienced sexual violence, and in the development of community responses for the prevention of all forms of violence against women. This is often challenging work that requires a high level of attention, reflection, and ability to support young women following their experiences of violence in managing the multiple effects of complex trauma; reconnecting and restoring a sense of autonomy and personal power; and assisting with advocacy as they may negotiate the inherent barriers to 'justice' within the criminal justice system.

♀ A BIG thanks also to the Centre Support Team – Ritu and Suzie; and our fabulous locum finance worker, Liz, for your incredible support and diligence in managing the huge volume of work that

goes on behind the scenes to enable an organisation to function efficiently and smoothly.

Thank you also to the wonderful women who work alongside me on Zig Zag's Management Committee. No community based organisation can function without a strong, committed and informed governance board and, for many consecutive years now, we have been incredibly fortunate in the women who have stepped forward to sit in these roles. A BIG thank you to Robyn Evans, Christine Grodd, Helen Hobbs, Amy Tidbold, Danieka Montague, Noelle Hudson, Pam Evans, Ashleigh Husband, Ketayoon Bhathena, Kathy Prentice, and Jennifer Newbould for your enormous contribution and support throughout the 2015-2016 financial year.

Thank you also to our Community Service Officers - Janelle Salmon at the DHPW, and to Arwen Lea, Kirri Demarco, and Deb Tokar from the DCCSDS, who have supported the work of Zig Zag through their roles as a link between Government funding and the services that are delivered to young women at Zig Zag. These relationships are important ones and Zig Zag looks forward to building on them in the coming year.

Zig Zag has greatly valued our continuing work within the **Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN)** during the course of this year. I have continued in the position of QSAN Secretariat for a third term and it has been another year of high level advocacy, lobbying, and development for the sector. I would like to extend my appreciation to all services for your continued support!

During this year, Zig Zag have also been actively involved in the Management Committee of **Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ)**. EVAWQ officially became a new Incorporated Association in October 2015 bringing together the Sexual Assault, Women's Health and Domestic and Family Violence Services under one umbrella. I would like to thank all members of the Management

Committee for their contributions and work in establishing this new Peak Body!

It is a huge privilege to manage and lead Zig Zag over this past year and I look forward to continuing to support and strengthen Zig Zag's work for years to come. I would like to pay my deepest respect to the many young women who access support at Zig Zag and who inspire us every day with their courage, resilience, strength, openness and humour.

Young women inform and provide us with valuable insights into how we can work together to end homelessness and all forms of violence against women!


Stephanie Anne

[Manager]

Zig Zag







You can support
the work of Zig Zag Young
Women's Resource Centre Inc
by making a tax deductible
online donation:

General appeal:

www.givenow.com.au/zigzagappeal1

Homelessness appeal:

www.givenow.com.au/zigzagappeal2

Thanks!

Young Women Rock!

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