



Zonta District 16 Advocacy Report November 2015

Zonta Says No

The Wellington Club held the Annual Politicians Debate in collaboration with NCW (National Council of Women Wellington), and Graduate Women Wellington. The topic for this year's debate was *Productivity Gains from Workplace Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence*. This paper also formed the basis of the, *Violence Against Women is a Workplace Issue "Toolkit"*, I put together for all the Clubs to use. We received good press coverage for the Debate, including an article in the ZI Newsletter, with some senior Government ministers attending. <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HLw1507/S00130.htm>

Amy Adams the current Justice Minister, recently called for submissions for a Bill on, *Strengthening NZ's Legislative Response to Family Violence*. Two Clubs, Mana and Rotorua, made individual submissions and I did one on behalf of D16 via the National Council of Women NZ (NCWNZ).

Clubs continue with local activity such as, Thames Valley's *Aroha (love) in Action – Violence Free Thames*, campaign. Rotorua is working with sexual violence spokesperson Louise Nicholas on *Rape Prevention Education*. Hamilton-Waikato has helped to refurbish a room for victims of sexual abuse and provided ear-phones for children so they don't have to hear adults being interviewed. Tauranga continues to support Shakti who provides safe-houses for migrant women.

Zonta District 16 announced Lesley Elliot as our Woman of the Biennium at the Conference. Lesley is responsible for the Sophie Elliot Foundation who runs the "Loves Me Not" programme in secondary schools. This programme is designed to help young people identify unhealthy (violent or abusive) relationships.

A National March is planned for November 28th when all Clubs can participate in an awareness campaign for *Zonta Says No*.

The "Toolkit" I mentioned earlier has been designed for Clubs to use with employers and/or HR Professionals and the PowerPoint presentation outlines why violence against women is a

workplace issue. This covers loss of productivity, case studies on health and safety and diversity policies, and the effects on co-workers in the workplace. (I have attached the zipped file for you). These documents are also available on the D16 Website under “resources”.

We continue to work on the Violence Against Women section of the CEDAW country report.

Women’s Empowerment Principles

Zonta D16 has just been accepted as a partner alongside The Human Rights Commission, The EEO commission, UN women and BPW in furthering the goals of the WEP’s in New Zealand. The Hamilton-Waikato Club previously had a member on this committee and suggested we should have a national representative. Governor Janette Irvine has been following this up personally and we have just been advised the committee has altered their constitution so we can join.

Parental Leave Submission

We have just completed a D16 Submission on the revised Parental Leave Bill which aims to increase parental leave to 26 weeks by 2018. We canvassed all the D16 Clubs for feedback on this submission and we had a majority in support of it, the Mana Club also made their own submission. D16 Advocacy committee members, Dr Judy Whitcombe and Helen Bowie wrote these submissions.

Collaborations

- Ministry for Women - some members attended the Ministry’s Suffrage Day Event and there is a Caucus meeting planned for 15th December which we have been invited to.
- NZ Girl Guides – “Take Back the Night” event
- *26 for Babies* organisation on the Parental Leave Bill.
- I have been invited to the launch of the NCWNZ “White Paper”: *Enabling women’s potential – the social, economic and ethical imperative*, which we contributed to earlier this year.
- UN Women – the WEP’s

D16 Conference

I ran an Advocacy Workshop at the Conference. With about 40 participants in attendance, it was great to see the level of interest from members and we had some good discussions about advocacy. I have attached a copy of my presentation for your information.

Christine Cook
Advocacy Chair Zonta D16