Restoring Soul: sexual violence research complete

The feeling that their ‘soul had been stolen’ is how survivors of sexual violence described the experience to researchers who have just completed a two-year project.

The project was led by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the New Zealand Police. The Crime and Justice Research Centre at Victoria University of Wellington was contracted to conduct the research.

MWA Chief Executive Shenagh Gleisner said the research was an important piece of work.

‘There has been little research on sexual violence in New Zealand since the 1980s, particularly for policy purposes. The researchers on the project engaged with a wide range of individuals and agencies from across New Zealand, and this has resulted in new, comprehensive and robust evidence that could be used to significantly improve the safety and well-being of adult victim/survivors of sexual abuse.

‘The Ministry will be releasing the five research reports over the next three weeks. Once the reports are on our website in October we will email Pānui readers and there will be more details in the December issue. We are keen that the work is widely debated and are sure Pānui readers will wish to do so.’

Restoring Soul focuses on ‘what works’ for adult survivors of sexual violence.

1. The pathways study provides in-depth information on the types of support and interventions that helped survivors move from crisis towards recovery. It involved face-to-face interviews with 58 survivors and 17 self-complete questionnaires. The study focuses on their experiences with informal support systems (e.g. family, friends and whānau), formal support systems (e.g. counselling, medical services, victim services), and the criminal justice system.

2. The environmental scan provides information on organisational and contextual factors that influenced system and agency responses to survivors. Tailored surveys were completed by 458 criminal justice personnel and community agencies that respond to survivors across New Zealand.

3. The attrition study is the first New Zealand study of its kind. It presents a statistical analysis of attrition and conviction rates, and factors associated with case outcomes for 1,955 police files coded as sexual violation of an adult. It includes all such offences recorded by New Zealand Police between July 2005 and December 2007.

4. The literature review looks at New Zealand and international literature dealing with the types of services and principles of service delivery that are recognised as good practice for medical, mental health, criminal justice, and community support systems that deal with adult survivors of sexual violence. It provides a basis for assessing the applicability of different practices for the New Zealand context.

A key priority for the Ministry is ensuring that women are healthy, resilient, and safe. Reducing the incidence and impact of sexual violence is critical in achieving this goal. More information can be obtained from the Research Manager, Dr Denise Lievore lievore@mwa.govt.nz or Project Co-ordinator, Nicole Benkert benkert@mwa.govt.nz

1 ‘Sexual violence’ (or sexual assault) is a broad term that covers a continuum of behaviours. The project focused on sexual offences at the more serious end of the continuum (rape and unlawful sexual connection).

2 For this project, adult was defined as a person aged 16 years or older at the time of the assault.
FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Thank you

On our recent series of regional meetings, it was a pleasure, and a real privilege, for Sonya Rimene and me to talk with such diverse groups of women. We had 52 meetings in all including some large open public meetings, and some smaller group meetings and hui.

Our purpose was threefold: to check in with the concerns and ideas of women in communities; to receive feedback on the priorities that the Ministry is currently working on and refresh our work programme in line with what women want to see change. We also wanted to talk about how we maintain the momentum now that the Action Plan is nearing the end of its five years.

There was overwhelming support for the three big priorities...'

Women did not ask for another ‘Action Plan’ itself; what they do want are improvements they can see and feel, on the big issues facing them.

There was overwhelming support for the three big priorities that have developed out of the Action Plan and are being promoted by the Minister of Women’s Affairs: reducing violence against women, especially sexual violence; addressing the gender pay gap; and increasing women in leadership. These are all deeply embedded and longstanding problems, requiring generational attitude and behaviour changes. No easy wins here! It was helpful to have it affirmed that these are the areas that women still think are crucial. They require action from everyone, not just central government.

We received helpful and practical suggestions that we have been able to incorporate into our work programme. Let me give you some very brief examples – the special challenges that migrant and ethnic women face with violence; building young women’s confidence for relating to others in a healthy way; career pathways for women in low-paid work; the culture of alcohol use amongst girls; and supporting Māori women into governance roles.

However, some of the most useful discussions we had will influence our overall thinking about our work – for example, the valuing of caring by fathers as well as mothers, the underlying assumption that working full-time is the only way to get ahead and the importance of a broader definition of leadership. Thank you for these and many other ‘mindset’ challenges. One of the treasures of these meetings is that they bring a fresh perspective for us. Deepening our understanding of the realities of community networking helps us interact in numerous debates and forums here in Wellington where we can continually raise the realities of lives of women.

As I explained at the meetings, we cannot take on all the individual suggestions into our work programme, but we have raised many of your issues with the relevant agencies, e.g.:

• the emerging problems for women with gambling
• the problem of debt stopping women accessing services they need
• formal and informal caring availability and support
• more support for young and first-time mums
• the barriers to employment for women with disabilities
• more flexibility in early childhood education policies and services.

Many of you have contacted us directly, and we have responded. For others, we are following up on specific meetings or opportunities to continue the discussions.

We will soon be putting up on our website a fuller summary of matters raised. At the end of the year we will be finalising the report on the completion of the Action Plan and clarifying how the ongoing progress for women on the priorities can be tracked. Women will need to be working on and watching developments for some time to come yet – the challenges faced are as urgent as they have ever been!

Thank you for terrific conversations and great ideas. The members of the policy team who accompanied us have so often since said that meeting you all was most valuable. Sonya and I agree. Thank you again.

Shenagh Gleisner
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Staying safe, bouncing back: resilience in young people

One in five female school-aged students and one in twenty male school-aged students had experienced one or more episodes of unwanted sexual behaviour from another person, a survey conducted in New Zealand in 2007 found.¹

While some young people may bounce back from these experiences, others may suffer disruptions to development such as poor sexual, physical and mental health; problems with interpersonal relationships; increased sexually transmitted infections, and unwanted teenage pregnancy.

A key priority for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs is a reduction in the incidence and impact of violence against women and to see all women as healthy, empowered, resilient, and safe. As part of the Ministry’s priority on preventing sexual violence, we identified a need to better understand young peoples’ experiences of pressure and coercion.

To that end, we have embarked on a new research project aimed at understanding what supports resilience among young people – and young Māori specifically. This is a one-year project (2009/10) supported by the government’s Cross-Departmental Research Pool.

Healthy relationships are central to health and well-being. Adolescence is a critical time for exploring and setting boundaries in relationships, and it is also a time of risk-taking. Skill development relating to social resistance skills and effective communication are essential elements of healthy youth development. This project seeks to look specifically at the experiences of young Māori, and explore ways to promote resilience and healthy relationships.

Senior policy analyst at the Ministry, Bernadette Consedine, says international research² has shown that in studies of resilience, culturally specific factors are not sufficiently accounted for.

‘This project seeks to consider what resilience means for young Māori, what factors promote the most successful outcomes, and what culturally distinct factors may be relevant. Successful coping and resilience does not look the same everywhere; understanding resilience in context is crucial.’

The key objectives of the research are:

- To find out what is known in New Zealand, particularly Māori perspectives, and internationally, that can inform our understanding on this topic.
- To find an appropriate methodology for conducting research with young Māori.
- To test this methodology with young Māori.

Bernadette says the Ministry is committed to a Māori-centred research approach.

‘To effectively consider the experiences of Māori, the Ministry considers that the research must be developed from a Māori worldview – ‘Te Ao Māori’ – and developed using kaupapa Māori research methodologies.

‘An example of what this means is when we consider the development of a literature review. Given that Māori have such strong oral histories and cultural traditions of knowledge transmission through pepeha, waiata, pūrākau and mōteatea (for example), this must be taken into account when collecting a ‘literature review’. It therefore means that a literature review, in this context, might better be referred to as the gathering of a body of knowledge that is of value to the kaupapa of the project.’

The results of the project will be publicly available in mid-2010. We will have updates on the work in Pānui.

¹ Youth ’07 The Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand: Initial Findings (December 2008).
Māori women were an under-utilised talent pool that could make the difference to the performance of business.

Some of the ‘points of difference’ discussed include:

- An intergenerational focus and long-term strategic thinking, as Māori are involved for life.
- Personal commitment to the organisation.
- Vested interest in the success of the industry and the communities, shareholders, and stakeholders that it supports.
- Links to large, sometimes forgotten or ‘invisible’ sectors of the economy – in 2005/06, the total value of Māori-owned commercial assets was estimated to be worth $16.5 billion.
- Experience with values-based organisations.

The participants also discussed practical advice for current and potential women directors, such as how to get on a board, planning a career in governance, how to be an effective director, and how emerging Māori women directors could be helped in their governance development.
Pay gap work looks at graduates

One of the Minister of Women’s Affairs’ priorities is that ‘women have the opportunity to develop and use their talents’. Paying women what they are worth and not discriminating on the basis of gender is fundamental to achieving this goal.

Current statistics indicate that five years after leaving tertiary education the annual incomes of male and female students diverge by around 17 percent, on average.

Pay and employment equity reviews that were undertaken in the public sector indicated that, in some agencies, different starting salaries and terms and conditions were being offered to some staff on the basis of gender. Women were starting at a lower average position in the range for the same jobs, with average gaps of 3-5 percent.

Investigating what is driving the differences in post graduate incomes is an economic issue as much as a gender issue and, as the principal investor in tertiary education, the government has an interest in ensuring it is getting the best possible returns from its investment. Under-utilising the skills of female graduates will not achieve this.

MWA is undertaking a project aimed at exploring in more detail the size of the gap in incomes between male and female graduates. MWA principal policy analyst Caroline Boyd says the analysis to identify the size of the income difference will be carried out using the Linked Employer Employee Data (LEED) produced by the Department of Statistics.

‘The LEED dataset is based on student loans data that is matched with data from Inland Revenue once a student leaves tertiary education and begins working. The dataset allows us to explore differences in income by gender and by field of study. It also allows us to differentiate between students leaving with level 1 to 7 qualifications (certificate and diploma level qualifications) and level 7 and above (bachelors and higher level degrees).

‘While field of study is, in some cases extremely broad, it nevertheless provides us with some insight into what is happening to male and female students studying within the same fields once they leave tertiary study. It will also provide us with information regarding the differences in incomes between fields of study as well as the number of male and female students graduating within each field of study.’

Caroline says if the gender pay gap is to be reduced, women starting out with the same qualifications as men need to understand the value of those qualifications and be prepared to drive a harder bargain in negotiating with employers.

‘While there are clear limitations with regard to what the data can tell us, given we do not know what occupation the individuals have entered or what their hours of work are, the findings will provide a basis for further exploring what is driving these income differences and what, if anything, government might want to do about them.’

The Ministry will disseminate the findings from this project as widely as possible.

The Ministry was delighted to host Arni Hole, Director General of Norway’s Ministry of Children and Gender Equality, in early September. It was a flying visit – just a day and a half – but we packed her time full of workshops and meetings, including one with the Ministers of Women’s Affairs and Labour.

There were many interesting insights for us – there were three that stand out and it may be worth your finding out more about them for discussion in your communities.

• Arni talked strongly about the need for men to participate in the discussions about gender equality, and urged us to read her Ministry’s white paper on men, male roles, and gender equality. She particularly challenged us to examine our own stereotypes of ourselves as women. (The white paper can be seen at www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Topics/Equality/men-and-gender-equality/men-and-gender-equality.html?id=547951).

• She also talked about how the requirement for private sector boards to have a gender balance of between 40 and 60 percent had led to the potential skills of women ‘suddenly becoming visible’.

• We heard also how parental leave that is dedicated for use only by fathers had achieved a major shift in Norwegian society, with important consequences for attachment of children to their fathers and a reduction in family violence.

Despite similarities between Norway and New Zealand in terms of population size and spread of population, there are also many differences. Arni was not necessarily suggesting we adopt the Norwegian practices, but she thought that more conversations about the conditions that led to some of these policies would be helpful. We agree, let us all talk further about what we have learned, and especially involve young women and men.

Have a look at this article at www.ilo.org/public/english/anniversary/90th/download/events/singapore/slide2.pdf and please contact us if you would like more information mwa@mwa.govt.nz
Women on the Move

Former leading netball figure Waimarama Taumaunu and former Olympian Katie Sadlier have been appointed to the board of Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC).

Lyn Provost has been appointed Controller and Auditor-General and starts her new role on 5 October.

Paula Snowden took over the role of Chief Executive of The Quit Group in August.

Denise Bovaird, a former President of the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants, and Joan Harnett-Kindley, have been appointed to the Real Estate Agents Authority. The Authority replaces the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand as the oversight body for the industry.

Director Susan Begg has been appointed to the Commerce Commission.

Arts and heritage advocate Anne Rush has been appointed to the Arts Council of New Zealand.

Erana Walker will travel to Copenhagen in November to represent New Zealand at the United Nations Youth Meeting on Climate Change.

Director Patsy Reddy has been appointed chair of the New Zealand Film Commission and Rhiannon Evans, has been appointed to the board.

General Manager for Planning and Funding for Nelson Marlborough District Health Board Dr Sharon Kletchko has been reappointed to the Standards Council. She is now deputy chair of the Council.

Mihiteria King (Te Rarawa, Ngāti Pikiao) was recently elected chair of the Psychotherapy Board of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Anti-violence movement for youth by youth

Fifteen-year old Johny O’Donnell was unhappy about young people he knew getting ‘a real beating’ at home, so he decided to do something about it.

The Nelson College student joined forces with two male friends to set up the SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) movement, which is based on the values of peace and non-violence for rangatahi. Johny is the Chairperson of the SAVE Committee and he says the movement has spread quickly.

‘When we started in April this year, it was mainly in the Nelson-Tasman area but now it has reached a national scale. Students in high schools and colleges around New Zealand are starting their own groups. We are for youth by youth.’

Johny says young people who were experiencing violence in their families did not know where to go for help.

‘They are more comfortable talking to us. Sometimes they just drop hints. When someone comes to us, we look at where we can send them for help. It may just be a matter of giving them the Youthline number so they can talk to someone. We are also asked by some agencies working with young people for our advice.’

SAVE produces posters and pocket cards with service provider contact details on them and distributes them in schools and at youth events. Johny says they are also invited into schools to speak to students.

SAVE is working with the local Te Rito network on activities for White Ribbon Day on 25 November. They will be handing out white ribbons at the local AMP show and the Nelson College First XV rugby team will have their photo taken wearing white ribbons for publication in the newspaper. www.savemovement.org

White Ribbon Day (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) was started by a men’s movement in Canada in 1991 and is held every year on 25 November. The Ministry of Women’s Affairs is represented on the national committee that organises the annual White Ribbon Day campaign in New Zealand.

www.whiteribbon.org.nz
The clothes make a difference

Dress to Success was one organisation MWA encountered during our recent regional meetings. Each year, Dress for Success helps around 1,400 New Zealand women who are looking for a job by providing free clothing and advice.

The non-profit organisation offers the service to women in need who are preparing for a job interview and, says the executive manager of Wellington Dress for Success, Carolyn Crutch, it can transform lives.

‘We want women who are entering or returning to the workforce to have confidence in themselves. We help set them on a path to self-sufficiency by offering them a ‘hand up not a hand out’. Once we have ‘dressed’ clients, the smiles on their faces are unbelievable.’

Carolyn says that clients cannot just walk in off the street; they must be referred by an agency registered with Dress for Success and be on a low income, or receiving assistance such as the unemployment benefit or a training benefit.

Clients leave Dress for Success interview-ready with a couple of pairs of skirts or trousers, shoes, shirts, a jacket, a coat, a handbag, makeup, and jewellery. When they get the job, they come back for a second dressing and take away a second outfit so they can ‘mix and match’. The clothing is all theirs to keep and their appreciation is evident by the many thank you notes the team at Dress for Success receive.

There are two paid staff running Wellington Dress for Success, and a volunteer co-ordinator organises the approximately 40 volunteers who perform tasks ranging from dressing clients to ironing clothes to fundraising. Dress for Success is also in Northland, Auckland, Hamilton, and Christchurch.

From former clients:

‘When I walked away from Dress for Success I felt incredible, uplifted and couldn’t believe that I got all this for free.’

‘Dress for Success makes you realise; hey there is light in the darkness, there is hope and it can happen.’

Wellington Executive Manager, Carolyn Crutch

Dress for Success:

- Founded in New York in 1997
- Has served almost 450,000 women around the world
- Started off as an organisation that provided suits to disadvantaged women returning to or entering the workforce
- Has more than 90 affiliates in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Poland and the West Indies.

For more information go to www.dressforsuccess.org

Sara, a Dress for Success client, tries on some earrings
IN BRIEF

Equal Pay Day
Women in Australia – on average – earn approximately 17 percent less than men in full-time weekly earnings. Equal Pay Day is held on a date that is calculated by counting the number of extra days many women have to work after the end of the financial year to earn the same as men. The date this year was 1 September, five days later than last year as the pay gap has widened.

Equal Pay Day is an initiative of the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) and is aimed at raising awareness of pay equity issues among business and the wider community, and to offer practical advice and solutions on how to address the gender pay gap. For more information go to www.eowa.gov.au

Support for Muslim women
A new online directory brings together 26 Muslim women’s organisations in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch.

The Muslim Women’s Directory was launched in August by the Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) and is the result of a collaborative effort between OEA and the Islamic Women’s Council of New Zealand. The directory is available at www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz

New international body to promote women
The United Nations General Assembly has approved a resolution to create a single UN body to promote the advancement of women. The resolution means the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) will be merged.

Sexuality education in schools
A new Family Planning resource, The Sexuality Road – Discovering Me, is aimed at teachers of young people in years 5 to 8. It provides them with an age-appropriate complete programme of 10 lessons and evaluations per year.

Sexuality Education is one of the seven key areas of learning in Health and Physical Education. In the September 2007 issue of Pānui we wrote about the results of a review of the quality of sexuality education in 100 New Zealand schools. The review was conducted by the Education Review Office and commissioned by MWA and the Ministries of Health and Education. It found that students attending schools that provide effective sexuality education programmes are highly motivated to learn and they value the programmes.

The new resource can be ordered from Family Planning www.familyplanning.org.nz

Legal help for pregnant teenagers
The Wellington Community Law Centre has recently released a new booklet, Legal Information for Pregnant Teenagers.

Although mainly written for pregnant teenagers and their family/whānau, the booklet provides legal information for all pregnant women and their families on topics such as guardianship, adoption, abortion, employment, education, and financial issues.

The WCLC also publishes a legal resource for survivors of sexual violence, the Rape Survivors Legal Guide.

Go to www.communitylaw.org.nz or tel: 04 499 2928.

New report on family violence
The Families Commission has brought all New Zealand’s family violence statistics together into one report to establish a baseline against which future trends can be measured.

The Family Violence Statistics Report contains the relevant data from the government and non-government agencies that deal directly with the victims and perpetrators of family violence. It does not come with an analysis or recommendations. The data in the Report cover the four years up to the end of 2006 – before the launch of the ‘It’s not OK’ campaign.

See the report at www.nzfamilies.org.nz/

116 years since women won right to vote
New Zealand women were granted the vote on 19 September 1893.

This success came at the end of an enormous struggle by suffragists in New Zealand, led by Kate Sheppard. 31,872 signatures were collected during a seven year campaign, which culminated in the 1893 petition for the enfranchisement of women being presented to Parliament in a wheelbarrow. It was the largest petition ever gathered in Australasia.