



**Shine submission on the Auckland Plan  
May 2011**

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## Shine submission on the Auckland Plan - May 2011

Shine (Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday), based in Auckland City, is the largest domestic violence specialist agency in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This submission will focus on two of the internationally accepted objectives for spatial planning:

- Improving the quality of life for everyone
- Enhancing socio-economic well-being

This submission is supported by the Auckland Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children. This group was developed in 2006 to strategise and work towards achieving the ultimate goal of safety for women and children in Auckland.

### **Members:**

- Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP
- Auckland Women's Centre
- Blow the Whistle on Domestic Violence
- Homeworks Trust
- Inner City Women's Group
- Mental Health Foundation
- Mt Albert Psychological Services Ltd
- SHINE Safer Homes in NZ Everyday
- Supportline Women's Refuge
- Women's Health Action Trust

### **1. Vision**

The discussion document asks 'what sort of city do we want to create, live in and leave to our children?' The answer is simple – a city where there is no violence against women and children. Violence against women and children is preventable. The 20 year Auckland Plan is focused on *aspiration* and *delivery*, therefore we recommend that one of the goals for the Auckland Plan should be *eradicating violence against women and children*.

We would like to envision an Auckland made up of gender-equitable, safe, diverse and inclusive communities. We would welcome an opportunity to meet with members of Auckland Council to discuss the issues highlighted in this submission.

## **2. Introduction**<sup>1</sup>

We live in a country where hundreds of thousands of women and girls have experienced domestic violence, sexual violence, child sexual abuse, stalking and sexual harassment; often by the men closest to them, intimate partners, family members, neighbours and work colleagues.

These are women and girls we know- she could be your daughter, your sister, your mother, your partner, your friend, your neighbour, your work colleague.

Frequently when we think about violence we associate it with physical violence, but violence is much more than this, violence denies women and girls their most fundamental human rights:

- their right to life
- to liberty
- to bodily integrity
- to freedom of movement and dignity of the person

This is essentially about *quality of life*.

## **3. How does this involve Auckland Council and the Auckland Plan?**

Violence against women (VAW) constrains women's choices and behaviour and impacts on their ability to:

- participate fully in public life
- go out at night
- use public transport
- enjoy public parks and open spaces

There are links between VAW and:

- sporting events
- the commercial sex trade
- the sexualisation of women and girls in the media
- women's fear of crime<sup>2</sup>

One of the worst harms of domestic violence is not the physical assaults but the cumulative violations of a woman's personhood – her liberty and autonomy. It is important that we consider domestic violence as a crime against a person's self-determination. We need to consider the socio-political harms of domestic violence, as well as the physical and psychological; to look at whose life has been made smaller.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This submission has drawn on the frameworks recommended in Coy, M., Lovett, J., Kelly, L. (2008) *Realising Rights, Fulfilling Obligations: A Template for an Integrated Strategy on Violence Against Women for the UK*. London: End Violence Against Women

<sup>2</sup>The Macro Auckland report highlights that "ethnicity, gender and income influence feelings of safety, with women, Asian Aucklanders and those on lower household incomes more likely to feel unsafe."

<sup>3</sup>Stark, E., (2009) Rethinking Coercive Control. *Violence Against Women*, 15 1509-1525

This requires a focus on not just what abusive men have done to their partners, but what these women have been prevented from doing for themselves.

Women experiencing domestic violence can face:

- A loss of self-confidence as an individual and as a parent
- Isolation from family, friends and their communities
- Few opportunities to participate in regular activities, such as on-going education or volunteering
- A loss of wages due to being unable to work because of the impact of the abuse or from being prevented from working by their abusive partner

#### **4. Violence against women: the reality**

Prevalence of intimate partner violence for Auckland women<sup>4</sup>

- **33%** have experienced at least one act of physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime
- **18.9%** have reported experiencing severe intimate partner violence over their lifetime
- Annually **5.7%** will experience physical and/or sexual abuse by a partner or ex partner

**9%** of Auckland women have experienced sexual violence (including rape) by non-partners during their lifetime.<sup>5</sup>

**23.5%** of Auckland women have reported a history of child sexual abuse (CSA)<sup>6,7</sup>

- The median age of victims at the time of the first sexual abuse was 9 years
- In 50% of cases abuse occurred on multiple occasions
- Maori women reported higher rates of abuse than European and other ethnic groups
- In the majority of cases perpetrators were male family members
- The study also found that victims of CSA are twice as likely as non-victims to experience later intimate partner or other violence

The cost of child sexual abuse in New Zealand was estimated to be \$2.6 billion per year.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>A population-based cluster-sampling scheme was used, with face-to-face interviews with one randomly selected woman (aged 18-64) from each household. The researchers spoke with 1436 Auckland women; of these women 1309 had partners over their life time. Fanslow J., and Robinson E. (2004) Violence against women in New Zealand: prevalence and health consequences. *The New Zealand Medical Journal* Vol 117 No 1206

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. For more research on sexual violence in Auckland please see *Preventing Sexual Violence – A vision for Auckland / Tamaki Makaurau* <http://www.sexualabusehelp.org.nz/helpresearch.htm>

<sup>6</sup> "Before the age of 15, do you remember if anyone in your family ever touched you sexually, or made you do something sexual that you didn't want to do?"

<sup>7</sup>Fanslow, J. L., Robinson, E. M., Crengle, S., Perese, L. (2007) The prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) reported by a cross-sectional sample of New Zealand women. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31, 935-945

<sup>8</sup> These costs included costs to individuals (including out-of-pocket expenses for the survivor, the offender and their families) and the costs paid on behalf of the survivor and offender, including health, welfare and legal costs. Julich, S. J. (2004) Exploring the costs of child sexual abuse: Aotearoa, New Zealand. Paper presented at The 3rd Biennial Conference of Australian and New Zealand Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (April 14-17), Auckland. <http://www.arcsmanawatu.org.nz/index.php/research-and-statistics>

91% of sexual offences are not reported to the Police.<sup>9</sup>

Sexual violence has been correlated with almost every indicator of deprivation and poor health and other social problems including increased smoking, drug and alcohol overuse, relationship breakdowns, truancy, teenage pregnancy, the ability to parent well and suicidality.<sup>10</sup>

In 'It's not OK' campaign research on gender-roles and the family<sup>11</sup>

- 35% of respondents agreed that the "man as the leader in the family should be honoured"
- 19% agreed that "it's the woman's duty to meet her man's sexual needs"
- 7% agreed that the "man should make decisions about any money coming in the household"

Violence against women is one of the biggest issues affecting Auckland women's quality of life. There are many overlaps between the types of violence against women and between violence against women and other social issues. The social and economic costs of violence against women are enormous and affect the whole of society.

In order for Auckland Council to achieve its goals of providing a sustainable lifestyle with high and rising quality of life for all Aucklanders and ensuring that Auckland is a safe city of diverse, dynamic, secure and accessible communities; the Council must take a strategic leadership role in addressing violence against women and children.

## **5. No current perspective on violence against women**

The current problem nationally and regionally is that there is no coherent **perspective** on violence against women.<sup>12</sup> The New Zealand government family violence initiatives have been characterized by gender neutrality. The Taskforce for Violence in Families programme for action plans have lacked an acknowledgement of gender based violence and hence the links to the wider violence against women agenda have not been made (i.e. to sexual violence). In general the current government approach to address family violence fails to recognise it as a gender equality issue. VAW is a serious human rights abuse, **recognised as a cause and consequence of women's inequality**.

What is required is the development and implementation of an integrated strategy on VAW. This strategy needs to be based on the foundations of gender equality and human rights. There is the need for regional and national VAW strategies which are informed by both the

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<sup>9</sup>New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey, 2006

<sup>10</sup>*Te Toiora Mata Tauherenga*, Report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence, MOJ, 2009. Pg 3 <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/supporting-victims/enhancing-victims-rights-review/taskforce-for-action-on-sexual-violence/policy-and-consultation/taskforce-for-action-on-sexual-violence/documents/tasv-report-full>.

<sup>11</sup>The face-to-face survey was conducted between May and August 2008 by Research International Ltd. The total weighted sample size for the survey was 2,444 people aged 18 years and above, with an overall weighted response rate of 57 %. McLaren, F. (2010) Attitudes, Values and Beliefs about Violence within Families: 2008 Survey findings. Prepared for Centre for Social Research and Evaluation Te Pokapū Rangahau Arotake Hapori

<sup>12</sup> *Realising Rights, Fulfilling Obligations: A Template for an Integrated Strategy on Violence against Women for the UK*.

top down (institutional leadership and accountability) and also the bottom up- active participation and ownership of the plan from the community sector.

Auckland has the largest population in the country. Historically when family violence initiatives have been developed in smaller cities, and then transposed to larger more diverse communities they do not work so well. The opportunity with the Auckland Plan is to ensure that VAW is integrated into the goals for Auckland. This proposed Auckland VAW strategy would not duplicate current effective work (i.e in the NGO sector), but provide a collaborative strategic framework under which existing work would sit.

The VAW sector is small, fragmented and significantly underfunded. Most grants are for one year, and there is frequently no continuation funding. This creates fragility and a lack of sustainability in an already dedicated but overburdened workforce. There is also the challenge that many victims are highly vulnerable and there are no quick fixes.

Auckland Council in partnership with central government and government agencies has a key part to play in policy, prevention, protection, and provision to women and children experiencing violence, their whanau and their communities.

The Auckland Plan is suggesting that the Council have child/youth impact reports for all Council activities; we support the Council's aim of building the interests, rights and well-being of children and young people into all of Council's activities, and agree that this is a foundation for future successes.

We also recommend that Auckland Council commits to undertaking a violence against women impact report. This would assist with the Council developing a perspective on VAW, and assessing how the Council's activities and partnerships are contributing to eliminating violence against women. It would also establish a baseline for the Council to measure its progress against.

#### Violence against women impact report questions

1. Does Auckland Council have a definition of violence against women as agreed by the NZ government in the Beijing Declaration?
2. What objectives does Auckland Council have with regard to violence against women and how is it measuring its progress against them?
3. Has Auckland Council developed a plan for combating violence against women? Is the Council intending to develop a plan of action, over what timeframe?
4. What does Auckland Council do to prevent and eliminate violence against women?
5. How is violence against women addressed in the equalities work of Auckland Council and bodies undertaking work on behalf of Auckland Council?
6. How does Auckland Council assess the ways in which violence against women impacts on its services and has it commissioned research to inform the development of this work?
7. How does Auckland Council set standards on the provision of services associated with violence against women, including commissioned/funded services? Does Auckland Council recognise and actively promote the role played by women only services in this area?

8. What evidence is there of improvement in the extent, quality of, and access to services overseen by Auckland Council relating to violence against women and the outcomes associated with such interventions?
9. How does Auckland Council ensure that women facing additional barriers are able to access services?
10. What evidence can Auckland Council provide of the violence against women agenda being mainstreamed into Council's current policy priorities?
11. What budget lines are attached to Auckland Council initiatives on violence against women and what investment, training and development is associated with them?
12. What successes and innovation has Auckland Council created in addressing violence against women in the past year?<sup>13</sup>

Completing this initial Violence against Women impact report will assist the Council in identifying *How can we address community safety and security concerns*<sup>14</sup>? And how the Council can provide leadership to ensure *families feel safe in their homes and in their neighbourhoods*<sup>15</sup>

Women who experience disability and violence are significantly disadvantaged "as women, as people who experience disability, and as targets of violence."<sup>16</sup> This is because of the intersectionality of gender-based violence and disability-based violence.

*How is Auckland Council planning to make Auckland safer and accessible for disabled women experiencing abuse?*

Refugee and migrant women experiencing abuse can face additional barriers in a mainstream culture that can be hostile to both immigrants and their cultures. In the *Learning from Tragedy* report almost one-third of the perpetrators and victims of couple-related homicide were born outside of New Zealand. This raises questions about the service provision for these women and how culturally responsive current interventions are.

*How is Auckland Council going to make Auckland safer and responsive to the needs of refugee and migrant women experiencing abuse?*

Any VAW strategic plan needs to be underpinned by the Treaty of Waitangi and focus on the impact of colonisation on Maori and the many problems that Maori now face, in part as a result of colonisation, including violence against Maori women and children.<sup>17</sup> Similarly any strategic VAW plan must be developed in partnership with Maori women to ensure the shape with which the initiatives take address the specific needs of Maori and Maori aspirations and priorities.

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<sup>13</sup> These questions have been taken from the Making the Grade? 2007 score card. End Violence Against Women (2007) *Making the Grade? 2007: The third annual independent analysis of UK government initiatives on violence against women*. London: End Violence Against Women Coalition

<sup>14</sup> The Auckland Plan Discussion Document , Question 8

<sup>15</sup> The Auckland Plan Discussion Document pg 63

<sup>16</sup> Domestic Violence and Disabled People' brochure produced by the Mental Health Foundation of NZ, WAVES and Shine (2011) pg 3 <http://www.areyouok.org.nz/publications.php>

<sup>17</sup> Contesse ,J., Fenrich, J., (2008) "It's not OK": *New Zealand Efforts to Eliminate Violence Against Women*. New York: Leitner Centre for International Law and Justice <http://www.leitnercenter.org/programs/2008new/>

## **6. People and Quality of Life**

### **6.1 Proposed strategic priority 1: Putting children & young people first**

“In hard times, the poorest children should be the first to be protected, not the last to be considered. A child only has one chance to develop normally in mind and in body. And it is the primary responsibility of government to protect that chance – in good times and in bad.”<sup>18</sup>The UNICEF *The children left behind* report states that whether a child falls unnecessarily behind or not depends, in the first instance, on whether that child is part of a well-functioning family with an adequate income from employment. It goes on to say that children who fall behind begin to do so in the very earliest stages of their lives. This is why early intervention is so vital.

It quotes the Nobel laureate and University of Chicago economist James Heckman “Investing in disadvantaged young children is a rare public policy initiative that promotes fairness and social justice and at the same time promotes productivity in the economy and in society at large. Early interventions targeted toward disadvantaged children have much higher returns than later interventions such as reduced pupil teacher ratios, public job training, convict rehabilitation programs, tuition subsidies, or expenditure on police.”<sup>19</sup>

One of the ways which government can invest in disadvantaged children is high quality early childhood education and care. This, the report outlines, can help to reduce bottom-end inequality because it is the disadvantaged child who stands to gain the most. The danger is that it is the more educated parents and higher-income families that generally are most aware of and able to pay for high-quality child care. In contrast, it is in the poorest and less educated families where the pressures for the earliest possible return to work are felt most acutely and where resources for high-quality child care are least likely to be available. What is required is are specific policies to ensure the availability and affordability of high-quality early childhood services for all children.

We support the proposed target of a minimum of 80% participation in early childhood education Auckland wide within 3 years, but we strongly recommend that there is also a target which measures the availability of high quality child care.

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<sup>18</sup>*The children left behind: A league table of inequality in child well-being in the world's richest countries.* Unicef 2010, pg 21.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, pg 27.

## 6.2 Primary prevention

### Auckland plan questions

Question 2-*How can we make Auckland become more child-friendly, enabling children to reach their full potential? How do we make Auckland a city that young people are proud to live in?*

We would recommend also asking the question *How do we make Auckland a city that is safe for young people to live in?*

Question 3-*Should the role and services of Auckland schools be widened to become community hubs- parent, whanau, family, village centres- with social services and community groups associated with children and young people's needs attached? What should Council do differently if our schools were to become community hubs?*

There are two main routes which primary prevention activities are often directed:

- through public education campaigns that reach out to everyone; and
- through work in schools that attempts to challenge negative attitudes early on

The problem is that neither of these activities tends to occur systematically or long term and VAW work in schools is not part of the core curriculum. Attitudes that condone, ignore, or even encourage violence against women often start in childhood and must be addressed systematically in schools curriculum.

In order for children and young people to reach their full potential it is vital that we provide them with the skills, role models and support to choose positive, respectful behaviours and engage in equitable relationships.<sup>20</sup>

While we support schools becoming community hubs, and we would recommend that these community hubs develop education programmes on all forms of violence against women, it is vital that all schools have the infrastructure in place to respond to child protection concerns. Schools need to have a child protection policy, designated child protection staff and provide ongoing child protection training to staff. A crucial part of this training is professionals knowing what to do and how to respond if a child discloses abuse.

Nationally there needs to be an amendment to the Education statute, so that Education has a statutory responsibility for child protection. In-order to keep children safe professionals need to have legislated child protection responsibilities which explicitly state what they must do if they are concerned about a child or young person, and what their role is in keeping children safe from harm. There are currently no legislated child protection responsibilities for education professionals in New Zealand.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Victorian Government (2010) *A Right to Respect: Victoria's plan to prevent violence against women 2010-2020*. Melbourne:Victorian Government.

<sup>21</sup> This is point is supported in principle by the Auckland Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children, but requires further discussion in the group.

Programmes aimed at building skills in the development of respectful relationships, and which help students recognise and respond to violent behaviour also need to take place in polytechnics and universities, youth transitions and youth work settings, as well as specialist education settings.<sup>22</sup>

As long as societal attitudes which support or are conducive to violence against women remain etched in our community's collective memory, violence against women will continue. Preventative work is needed to change people's attitudes, but ultimately, to challenge and change their behaviour. We risk undermining the work with abusive men if we ignore gender based expectations and male socialisation.

A key part of any VAW plan is engaging men and boys in gender equality work. If the problem lies with male behaviour then men and boys need to be involved. Men and boys are often seen as perpetrators of violence including violence against women, against other men, and against themselves. A VAW approach is vital as it calls into question the socialisation of boys and men, how gender norms shape their own health and development.<sup>23</sup> A VAW plan does not just focus on supporting and empowering women, and directing resources to women and girls, but rather it focuses on what changes need to occur on an individual, relationship, community, institutional and societal level to promote positive changes in women's lives and relationships.

### **6.3 Gender equality**

"Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities should not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration- recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a "women's issue" but should fully engage men as well as women."<sup>24</sup>

With the help of the 'It's not OK' campaign society is more willing to discuss family violence than it was say 10 years ago. The 'It's not OK' campaign surveys of people's attitudes toward family violence show that people nominally reject it. However, if you dig a bit deeper there are some very worrying attitudes. These attitudes include for example, a belief that "man as the leader in the family should be honoured" and that "it's the woman's duty to meet her man's sexual needs." Many men also believe that they are not responsible for caring for children or doing domestic chores; this results in an increased and unequal workload for women and girls. The reality is that men and women are unequal in the context of intimate relations, households, workplaces, communities and indeed in society as a whole.

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<sup>22</sup>Victorian Government (2010) *A Right to Respect: Victoria's plan to prevent violence against women 2010-2020*.

<sup>23</sup> UNFPA & Promundo (2010) *Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: a global tool kit for action*. Brazil:UNFPA & Promundo

<sup>24</sup>UNFPA & Promundo (2010) *Engaging men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: a global tool kit for action*. Pg 13

The gender related attitudes expressed by men and boys directly affect the health and well-being of women and girls. That is why public campaigns and education programmes must challenge gender norms if we are to make a real change in societal attitudes re VAW. The gender programming continuum is a useful way of considering to what degree programmes address, or fail to address, gender related norms.<sup>25</sup>

The gender programming continuum is comprised of four categories.

**1. Gender exploitative programmes**-use and reinforce gender inequalities in the pursuit of health and demographic goals. This is a negative level of programming that should be avoided.

**2. Gender neutral programmes** - distinguish little between the needs of men and women, neither reinforcing nor questioning gender roles.

**3. Gender sensitive programmes**- recognize the specific needs and realities of men and women based on the social construction of gender roles but do not necessarily seek to change or influence gender roles and relations.

**4. Gender transformative programmes** seek to transform gender relations through critical reflection and the questioning of individual attitudes, institutional practices and broader social norms that create and reinforce gender inequalities and vulnerabilities.

Evidence indicates that gender transformative programmes are the most effective and are therefore presented as the gold standard for work with men and boys.

Gender transformative programming generally entails moving beyond the individual level to also address the interpersonal, social-cultural, structural and community factors that influence, gender related attitudes and behaviours.

Why gender transformative programming is so important is that it seeks to address the contextual influences on male behaviours rather than just a specific behaviour itself. An example of a gender transformative programme would be group workshops with young men that are designed to promote critical reflections about gender and socialisation while at the same time, undertaking a media campaign designed to transform how their parents, peers and others in the community also perceive gendered social norms.

Ending gender-based violence will involve changing cultural concepts about masculinity. We recommend that any Auckland Council VAW initiatives work from a **gender transformative perspective**.

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<sup>25</sup>This is adapted from work by Geeta Rao Gupta, and reproduced in *Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: a global tool kit for action*. Pg 14

## **7. Proposed strategic priority 2: Reducing inequalities**

### **Auckland Plan action areas:**

- Poverty
- Discrimination
- Housing
- Healthy lifestyle

Violence against women is marked by structural inequality. Colonisation, racism, poverty, disability, heterosexism and gender inequality intersect and impact on people's experiences of abuse, their well-being and socio-economic status.

### **7.1 Poverty**

Poverty increases women's vulnerability to violence and violence may make women poor. Economic well-being affects social outcomes such as health, safety, education and housing.

In NZ women are more than one and a half times more likely than men to live in a household with a total annual income of \$30 000 or less. The median annual income for women of \$19,100 falls more than a third (39 percent) behind the \$31,500 for men. Three quarters of people with an income over \$75,000 are men.<sup>26</sup> Hence it is women (and their children) who disproportionately experience the effects of poverty.

Women are not a homogenous group and single (older and younger), indigenous, refugee and migrant and women with disabilities have increased risk of poverty. The *Learning from Tragedy*<sup>27</sup> report evidences that the more deprived the neighbourhood, the greater the number of cases where a man murdered his partner or ex-partner.

This highlights the intersectionality of domestic violence and poverty. It is important to consider the various ways in which both the social control of male abuse of women and state control via welfare policies intersect in individual women's and their families lives. Such a focus is crucial to implementing effective strategies to enable poor women to leave both violence and poverty.

The current legal aid review is concerning. The proposals sketch a picture where safety and justice will be something which women and children will have to pay for, and if they cannot afford the cost then they will remain at risk. This is counter to the government's obligations under international human rights law (i.e. CEDAW, CRC) and New Zealand Domestic Violence legislation. The state has a duty to protect those experiencing domestic violence. The cost of protection orders will result in increasing inequality.

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<sup>26</sup> Human Rights Commission (2010). Human Rights and Women: draft for discussion.

[http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc\\_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/05-Mar-2010\\_17-24-06\\_HRC\\_Womens\\_Issues\\_for\\_web.pdf](http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/05-Mar-2010_17-24-06_HRC_Womens_Issues_for_web.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Martin, J., and Pritchard. R (April 2010) Learning from Tragedy: Homicide within Families in New Zealand 2002-2006, Working paper prepared for the Centre for Social Research and Development. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development. <http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/learning-from-tragedy/learning-from-tragedy-homicide-within-families-in-new-zealand-2002-2006.doc>

## **7.2 Discrimination**

In the public sector the 2010 Census of Women's Participation notes that although women make up 59 per cent of public servants, they represent only 17.6 per cent of chief executives and they experience a gender pay gap where women earn 15.4 per cent less than men.<sup>28</sup>

The paradox for Auckland women is though they may have more qualifications and experience than their male colleagues they are still being paid less. Saliently few women occupy positions of governance and leadership in the business sector.

Aotearoa New Zealand made a promise internationally of 50% gender parity in government appointed bodies by 2010. This promise has not been met; rather it has now slipped to an 8.5% gap.

Dr McGregor Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner – New Zealand Human Rights Commission states that it is vital that young women are active in speaking up about female unemployment as well as youth unemployment. She notes that youth unemployment “which is particularly high for Maori and Pacific women among 15-19 year olds, is hugely demoralising and a waste of potential talent.”<sup>29</sup>

Dr McGregor says that for those young women that do get work, from their first day at work they will be getting anything up to several thousand dollars a year less as a starting salary than an equivalent male, despite their often considerable academic achievements.

*Question 4- What do you think the Council's role should be in helping to improve the potential for Aucklanders to gain employment and increase income levels?*

Initiatives such as the Training Incentive Allowance provided the opportunity for women to retrain for higher skilled work, which results in better pay. Such initiatives are vital. The disestablishment of such initiatives contributes to limited options for women trapped in low paid jobs. The Council needs to address the accessibility of further education for women on limited means, if they are to support Aucklanders gaining employment which lifts them out of poverty.

This gender pay gap raises questions about the value of women's work. We often talk about closing the wage gap between Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand; what about focusing on closing the gender pay gap? This is something which the Council could focus on in its services.

## **7.3 Housing**

The Macro Auckland report highlights that the “main cause of homelessness for women in Auckland is leaving situations of domestic violence and relationships”. All too often escaping family violence is also a common pathway into homelessness for many young people.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.hrc.co.nz/news-and-issues/women/census-of-womens-participation-records-backward-slide/>

<sup>29</sup> Quoted from <http://www.hrc.co.nz/news-and-issues/women/young-women-key-to-future-of-gender-equality/>

Relationship breakdown can be a pathway into homelessness for both men and women however men frequently leave relationships because of their substance misuse, gambling problems or violent behaviour; whereas women (of all ages) flee men's abusive behaviour.<sup>30</sup> Women are also more likely to “experience involuntary sex, physical or sexual violence, unmet health needs, a sense of insecurity and fear, cycles of repeated homelessness *after* initially experiencing domestic abuse”.<sup>31</sup>

It is important to consider that women's homelessness is often ‘hidden homelessness’. Rough sleeping is usually hidden for women. It is an extremely unsafe activity for women to sleep rough and is fundamentally different to the way men sleep rough. Couch surfing is another form of hidden homelessness that women frequently engage in, it is not uncommon for women to be expected to ‘exchange’ sex in return for a night on a couch.

We support the proposed targets of

- Increase supply of housing within 10 years
- 20% reduction in household crowding within 10 years
- reduction in percentage paying more than 30% income on housing

We recommend that the needs of women (and their children) who are experiencing domestic violence and gender based violence need to be explicitly addressed within Auckland Housing Strategies.

#### **7.4 Healthy lifestyle**

Inequalities in health arise because of inequalities in society.

Women have a higher prevalence of anxiety disorder (19% versus 11%), major depression (7% versus 4%), post-traumatic stress disorders (4% versus 2%), and eating disorders (.6% versus .3%) than men.<sup>32</sup> In terms of suicidal behaviour, men are more likely to die by suicide, but women are more likely to attempt to lose their lives. Women have higher rates of mental unwellness for several reasons - poverty, discrimination and social disadvantage, social isolation, lower paid less stable jobs with less status, the double work load of work and home including the care of children, and widespread gender based violence, with the severity and length of exposure to violence being highly predictive of the severity of mental health outcomes.<sup>33</sup>

In the 2003 VicHealth Burden of Disease Study they demonstrate that intimate partner violence is all too common, has severe and persistent effects on women’s physical and mental health and carries with it an enormous cost in terms of premature death and

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<sup>30</sup> Cramer, H, and Carter, M. (2002) Homelessness: what's gender got to do with it? Edited by Shelter. UK. London.

<sup>31</sup> Radley A., Hodgetts, D., & Cullen, A. (2006). Fear, romance and transience in the lives of homeless women. *Journal of Social and Cultural Geography*, 7(3), 437-461. Quoted from p. 438

<sup>32</sup> MA Oakley Browne, JE Wells, KM Scott (eds) 2006 *Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

<sup>33</sup> World Health Organisation (undated) *Gender Disparities in Mental Health USA*: Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence pg 2-3. from [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/media/en/242.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/media/en/242.pdf)

disability. Intimate partner violence is responsible for more ill health and premature death in Victorian women aged between 15-45 than any other of the well-known risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity and smoking.<sup>34</sup> This study evidences why it is vital that we treat violence against women as a health issue.

### **8. Strategic Priority area 3: Connecting communities**

The discussion document states that socio-economic polarisation of communities is increasing, especially since the economic recession of 2008/09, and that without intervention, intergenerational hardship and disadvantage – the rich and poor gap – will increase.

#### **Auckland Plan action areas:**

- Connecting communities
  - Socially
  - Physically
  - Culturally
  - Economically
- Supporting diversity
- Settlement support programmes
- People with disabilities

In their book *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett saliently evidence that in almost every index of quality of life, or wellness, or deprivation, there is a gradient showing a strong correlation between a country's level of economic inequality and its social outcomes. Of all crimes, those involving violence are most closely related to high levels of inequality.

The impact of valuing growth above equality in rich societies is all too evident. Their book is a warning about the devastating impact of inequality on relationships, communities and society. Inequality causes shorter, unhealthier and unhappier lives; it increases the rate of teenage pregnancy, violence, obesity, imprisonment and addiction.

We support the Council's aims of connecting communities; however the community cohesion agenda needs to include a gender perspective, and needs to integrate violence against women initiatives in any plans.

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<sup>34</sup> VicHealth. (2004). The health costs of violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence - A summary of findings. (p. 40). Carlton South: Vic Health, Victoria State Government & Department of Human Services. <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Resource-Centre/Publications-and-Resources/Freedom-from-violence/The-Health-Costs-of-Violence.aspx>

## **9. Summary**

It is important to consider how different parts of people identities, for example their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age and intergenerational histories, intersect in multiple (and sometimes conflicting) ways to advantage and/or disadvantage them in our communities and society. As the MacroAuckland report states, “Auckland is a great place to live and work, but it is not great all the time and **it is not great for everyone.**”<sup>35</sup>

The Human Rights Commission has identified “**Poverty for women, violence against women and female representation in public life**”<sup>36</sup> as the three immediate challenges for New Zealand.

Women and girls make up half the Auckland population but in society they are in an inferior position because they lack real economic, social or political power. We need to remember that **changes in women’s circumstances and possibilities can produce positive changes throughout social, economic and political life.**<sup>37</sup> These are of benefit to all Aucklanders.

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<sup>35</sup> Schwarz D., and Crothers C , (2011) *Macro Auckland: Informing and Inspiring Generosity Summary Report* . Auckland Communities Foundation.pg 6.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted from the Human Rights Commission website, Media Release 5.3.2010 <http://www.hrc.co.nz/news-and-issues/women/commission-seeks-public-feedback-on-status-of-womens-rights/>

<sup>37</sup> Steiner, H., & Alston, P. (Eds.). (2000). *International Human Rights in Context: Law, politics, morals*. New York, Oxford University Press Inc.