

## RASAC VOICE - STAFF

Hello, I'm Andrea, it is almost a year since I took up my post as a Therapeutic Support Worker here at RASAC. I had wanted to work with RASAC for a long time because I recognise it plays so many vital roles both in the local community and in the wider Scottish community, as well as offering direct support to so many women and young people who have experienced sexual violence.

After arriving here I was able to complete the Rape Crisis Training that is a requirement for all RASAC employees and volunteers. This is an intensive training programme that covers many different aspects of our work, including trauma-based support, confidentiality and challenging the gender stereotypes that persist in our society which perpetuate gender-based violence.

Since then I have been fortunate enough to be able to offer support to and work with some of the most strong and amazing women and young people I have ever met.

Most people who arrive at the centre say how warm and welcoming it feels and I remember how I was so impressed by the lengths that the team have gone to make everyone feel safe and included. Even after being here a year, I am still so grateful for the cosy, comfortable feel I get when I go to work; especially on days like today when the weather can't decide between freezing rain, sleet or both! I look forward to my next year here working with so many brilliant, informed, kind and very patient colleagues, as well as the inspirational women and young people I work with.

## We need YOU!

Feedback is so important to us. It is what makes us improve our services and ensure that they reflect what survivors need and want in Perth and Kinross.

- What do you think of our services?
- Is there something you'd like to see more of?
- Do you have any ideas about our service development?
- What can we do better?

Send us an email, call us, speak to your support worker, or use our feedback forms in the waiting room. Remember you shape the service we provide. And if you think we are doing a good job, tell us that too!

## IF YOU ARE FEELING UNWELL!

Please note: If you have an appointment or meeting at the Centre and have been sick we respectfully ask if you could wait 48 hours after you have last been sick before coming to the Centre. Also if you are unwell for any reason we would ask you to cancel your appointment, we appreciate that you may want to see or speak to your support worker and your support worker would be more than happy to offer you a telephone appointment instead.



March 2020

# Newsletter

Over 10 years of working with women and young people in Perth & Kinross

## BREAKING NEWS

For many years Sanitary Products in Scotland have been taxed as a 'Luxury Product', after years of campaigning...

The Scottish Government have just endorsed **Free Sanitary Products** on a universal basis for all who need them! **People Power!**

(more info to come)

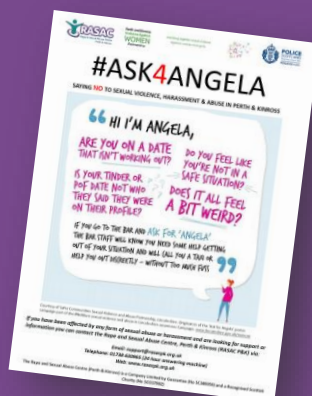


## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE...

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|--|---|
| 1. <b>RASAC Spotlight</b><br>-Pet Therapy  | 3. <b>Self Help Section</b><br>-Mobile Apps                 |
| 2. <b>RASAC News</b><br>-Youth Ambassadors in the Community<br>-School & College Workshops<br>-Contributing to consultations<br>-Reclaim the Night 2019<br>-Ask Angela | 4. <b>RASAC Voice</b><br>-Youth Ambassador<br>-RASAC Staff  |
|  | 5. <b>Other News</b><br>-If you are unwell<br>-We need you! |

## Ask Angela

'Ask Angela' is a successful campaign, originating from Lincolnshire's Safer Communities Sexual Violence and Abuse Partnership. The campaign raises awareness about sexual harassment and educates bar staff about how to support someone who is feeling uncomfortable with an individual in their premises. In partnership with Police Scotland, RASAC P&K will be distributing the posters around Perth & Kinross's pubs and clubs in order to encourage people to seek assistance if they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation. This work is a result of 2 local pubs approaching police and requesting the posters, having seen them already rolled out across Dundee & Angus. They've just gone to print so look out for them soon - we'd welcome any feedback that you have!



## SURVIVORS VOICES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### Period Poverty

We got involved in the Scottish Parliament Outreach Committee discussion on Period Poverty. RASAC and survivor feedback made a difference with Free Sanitary Products in Scotland being put into place in the near future! People Power!

### Tayside Mental Health Services

Thank you to everyone who consulted on last year's Inquiry into Tayside Mental Health Services. The Inquiry is now published and can be found here: <https://independentinquiry.org/>

## RASAC Spotlight RASAC SUPPORT PET

Did you know that there is scientific evidence that interacting with calm animals can provide a range of benefits! Physically being around a calm animal or pet can; lower blood pressure; with the body releasing an endorphin called oxytocin which calms and soothes; interactions have even been proven to reduce pain; and in some people all of this means that some medications can be reduced.

Pets can be so beneficial to mental health as well, including; reducing depression, loneliness, anxiety, and boredom; increasing and encouraging communication, socialisation and motivation. And depending on what type of pet you have they can increase your exercise, help you lose weight and get some fresh air!

At RASAC we don't have the space for a therapy cat or dog but we do have space for a rabbit! Come and meet Finn! He is a lovely wee fluffy rabbit (mini Lop) called Finn who visits us 2-3 days per week (you can see his large pen in our waiting room). Finn is very friendly and loves cuddles and is able to go into one to one support sessions after the completion of a short declaration form. Rabbits can be a particularly good support pet as they are very calm and love to be cuddled, petted and some love being brushed. They are sociable animals so enjoy being with people and getting attention.

If you don't like animals or are worried about the idea of seeing Finn, you don't need to see him. We can make sure you don't visit the waiting room when you come to RASAC. It is your choice.

Feedback from survivors who have had Finn visit them in Support has already shown good benefits; one individual said that she "found it really helpful and enjoyed petting the rabbit, finding it really comforting."

If you are interested in knowing more about Rabbits here are a couple of good websites to get you started;  
<https://bunnylady.com/category/facts/>  
<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/rabbits>



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Women working  
towards freedom from  
rape and sexual abuse

Charity Reg No; SC037982  
Reg Co No; SC389959





## WORKSHOPS IN SCHOOLS, THE COMMUNITY AND COLLEGE

### Schools

In the last 3 months RASAC Youth Initiative has delivered 170 workshops to 1950 school pupils in the Community School of Auchterarder, Blairgowrie High School, Perth Grammar, Perth High School, Perth Academy, Kinross High School and Crieff High School as well as Morrison's Academy

### Perth College University of the Highlands and Islands

We delivered a workshop focusing on gender stereotypes and inequality to two separate groups of engineering students at PUHI. The students engaged well in the discussion and activities in the sessions providing positive feedback at the end of the session

### Princes Trust Group

We delivered an informal session focusing on 'what is sexual violence' to young people who were participating in a Princes Trust programme based at the YMCA. The young people participated well in the session and were willing to share their views interact with the activities.

*'I think it is good to learn about this stuff cause if it happens to you know who to speak to.'*

## RASAC Voice - Youth Ambassadors

During the last 3 months we have had 5 new young people join the Youth Ambassadors Project with a total of 15 young people attending our Youth Ambassador meetings in our centre in Perth and Kinross. They have participated in training, events, national research projects, evaluations and supporting our Prevention Team delivering workshops and sessions to young people and parents/carers in Perth and Kinross.

Following delivery of sexual violence prevention sessions at Breadalbane Academy 4 of our Youth Ambassadors have participated in 2 Youth Ambassador sessions at lunchtime within the school contributing to the 83 hours in voluntary work to RASAC. Four Youth Ambassadors have also achieved 100 hour Scottish Government Volunteering awards – Congratulations, as well as a Big Thanks to all the Youth Ambassadors.

*"I am no longer able to take part in the YAs as I now study and live elsewhere. The past two and a half years have been incredible and I am so grateful for the opportunities I have been given. I will still never forget everything I got from youth ambassadors. It really changed my life and I know I've made some really good friends and become a better person in so many ways. I will never ever forget my time with you all and I owe a lot to you guys. Thank you again for such an amazing opportunity over the years and I wish everyone the best in the future." (A YA who has now left school)"*

*'Being a YA has helped me access various opportunities and has helped me on my road to becoming a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament.'*

## Conversation Café Feedback

On Wednesday 26th February we held one of our regular conversation cafés with survivors to see if they had any ideas about groups which they would like to see happening at RASAC.

The women who attended were full of great ideas and had a few suggestions such as mindfulness - relating to the seasons, creative writing, gardening, wellbeing and many more. We will now create a questionnaire regarding which groups are most popular and the days that would suit them best to attend, with new group starting soon!



## Reclaim the Night 2019

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to support this year's Reclaim the Night as part of the 16 Days of Action to End Violence Against Women. It was rather wet and windy but we still had a great turn out which highlights the commitment that so many make to saying NO to any form of gender based violence. We are about to start planning Reclaim 2021 and would welcome any ideas or thoughts you have. We'll be creating a poll on Facebook soon so look out for that!

*"Despite the weather, it's been great. This just gets better and better every year".*

*"I think we've been really lucky with the turnout, it was great to see everyone out there marching"*



**JOIN US NEXT YEAR! THE MORE OF US THERE ARE THE LOUDER OUR VOICE IS!**

## Self Help Section - Wellbeing Apps

There are many apps available for many different purposes. With more of our staff, volunteers and survivors using apps for wellbeing we thought we would share some with you. Please note that some of these apps and Podcasts are free, some are free with in app purchases and some have costs to download. We do not officially endorse any of these apps but these have been used by staff and survivors and have had good feedback. Let us know if you use any apps that you find useful so that we can share with others...

### Apps

**MeeTwo** – This is an online community that provides a secure, safe forum for teenagers wanting to discuss anything that is affecting their lives. The advice and information will be from other teenagers and experts and can be on anything from friendships to exam stress, self-harming or any other issue that you are facing.



**Woebot** – This is an app, for those 18 and over, that has been designed to help with anxiety and depression. Woebot asks you questions and based on your response, it will ask you how you feel and what is happening in your life and then gives you options. These include giving you exercises to develop new skills that can help you deal with certain things in your life.



**Buddhify** - The central idea in buddhify is that you don't have to find time for meditation, instead it comes to you. The meditations are categorised by what you're doing or how you're feeling, lasting between 4-30 mins.



### Pod Casts

**TED Talks** - Want TED Talks on the go? Every weekday, this feed brings you our latest talks in audio format. Hear thought-provoking ideas on every subject imaginable. Check out:

- Poet Shane Koyczan "To This Day," his spoken-word poem about bullying
- Amy Cuddy – 'Your body Language may shape who you are' her talk on how standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don't feel confident, can boost feelings of confidence



**'The Calmer You'** Pod Cast – Great talks about wellbeing and mental health. Check out;

- More Confidence in 8 Steps (episode 86)
- Wellbeing on a budget (episode 64)

