



# CRDVS Gains an Art Therapist

# Newsletter

Issue 12, October 2010

Hi! My Name Is **MaRtA** I am the new Children and Youth Counselor at Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service. I am an Art Therapist and have worked in Sydney in the Domestic Violence sector for 8 years.

### What is art therapy?

Art therapy is an unconscious form of therapy that bypasses the powerful and rational brain and goes directly to the healing power of the heart. Through the creation of spontaneous images or objects, the unconscious surfaces and is made conscious, visually available for the rational mind to look at.

For children the act of creating artwork comes very naturally. For adults, this process can often cause stress as many individuals feel they are not artists. But art therapy is not about creating a pretty picture, rather it's about banging into clay, collage, doodling, making stick figures or just letting your arm intuitively pick colours and paint designs.

Once trust is formed between the therapist and the individual seeking therapy, the ability to create images begins to flow, the fear of judgment begins to dissipate and the blocked emotions, forgotten memories and life stories surface. For many, trauma occurred before the ability to understand the complexities of language, though the world was understood visually through mental images, which we then stored in our bodies. Without language it is difficult to express the meaning in these stored images, but unconsciously our thoughts come through in the symbolic language of dreams, paintings and drawings.

It is through this process that we can acknowledge our fears and hurts, reorganize them and heal by turning them into our strengths and potentials; the very things that make us the unique individuals that we are.

### Art Therapy With Children

For children, art therapy is play. This comes naturally to them. From the child's intrauterine environment through infancy, the world is experienced through the senses. The baby records, assimilates and communicates information based on what it hears, sees, touches, smells and feels from the environment. The information learned during these early years about attachment, safety, belonging and loss can have a profound effect on the development of the person and how he or she relates to the world as an adult. Art therapy can access this sensual world of images, sounds, smells and textures. Art therapy goes to the recorded

### Inside this issue:

Introducing Marta	1- 2
Donate Now	3
Gold Coast Marathon	4
The Wheelbarrow Race	4
Accredited Training	5
A Learners Perspective	6
16 Days of Activism	6
Seniors Legal and Support Service	7
Contact Information	8



## CRDVS Gains an Art Therapist

pre-verbal history in each of us, a place that is not easily accessed by verbal therapies, especially for children as their language ability is still in development.

Through the ages of approximately 2 to 7 years, children are learning the cultural symbols of communication: graphic and verbal. Developmentally, the progression of the graphic image proceeds in a similar sequence to that of verbal acquisition. This information can aid the art therapist in a developmental assessment of the child. Children learn, understand, integrate new experiences and try out new ideas through the process of play. This process gives the art therapist a window into the child's world, giving opportunity to help in the healing process.

### Art Therapy With Youth

To better understand the use of art therapy with an adolescent, it is important to understand the basic developmental process of adolescence. At puberty, the adolescent not only experiences physical changes, but intrapsychic changes occur as well. Turning away from the protective nest of parental attachments, with no substitute attachments in place; compounded by a confusion about their sexual feelings, the adolescent can feel self absorbed and isolated. Their concern now becomes their perception of themselves and how they appear to others. This struggle of identity and self-expression is often accomplished through experimentation and rebelliousness. They test themselves and others in an attempt to discover who they are individually and where they fit in society.

With this constant introspective attention to self and the adolescent's need for self expression and creativity, art therapy is in a unique position of encouraging communication, as the adolescent's developmentally appropriate defenses can often block insight-oriented verbal psychotherapy. With their propensity to creative ways of exploring and experimenting with identity concerns, creativity can be viewed as a requisite for emotional maturation. For an adolescent who may need extra support in this process, art therapy can be an excellent potential healing agent.



5 yr old boy



16 yr old girl

*Marta is also a talented Artist and has put her gift to good use in the Child Counselling room. The two wall mural, aspects of which can be seen below, took her 1 week to complete.*





## Donate Now

The Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service Inc (CRDVS) began its life back in 1987 when it grew from a local, grass roots group called the Domestic Violence Action Group (DVAG). This group was made up of passionate people who volunteered their time to look at the issue of domestic violence in the Cairns area. The Service went on to become incorporated in September 2000 and consists of a volunteer management committee and eight staff members.

The vision of CRDVS is to help our community live happier and healthier lives by challenging the social structures that maintain domestic and family violence and by providing a comprehensive and client centred quality service to all vulnerable clients.

In 2009, the CRDVS provided crisis support and on-going counselling to 1,764 people affected by domestic and family violence and our child counsellor provided counselling and support to 87 children.

The demand for services from people affected by domestic violence continues to increase and the need to raise additional revenue to meet those demands is paramount. The CRDVS is collecting funds through campaigns as detailed on pg 4 and the gift fund. This enables us to help adults and their children escaping domestic violence with financial and material assistance.

The Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service Gift Fund is a practical response assisting adults and their children dealing with an immediate crisis situation in a way that maintains the dignity of the individual and encourages self reliance.

The funds will be used to offer emergency financial and/or material assistance to those with limited or no income. Assistance can include (but is not limited to) food vouchers, cost of public transport, healthcare costs including prescriptions, clothing and household goods, repairing damage to property or upgrading property security and payment of animal kennelling for those requiring entry to a domestic violence refuge or alternative safe accommodation that cannot take family pets.

Your donation now can make a huge difference and it is tax deductible!

- \$12 donations will provide one night's kenneling for a cat at the RSPCA
- \$15 donations will provide one night's kenneling for a dog at the RSPCA
- \$25 donations allow a person to pay for their medical prescription
- \$50 donations provide a food voucher

Donations may be made through

[www.givenow.com.au/dvcairns](http://www.givenow.com.au/dvcairns)

Or sent to:

Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service  
PO Box 12103, Cairns DC  
Qld 4870



CRDVS Manager, Amanda Lee Ross, on completing the Gold Coast Marathon in support of CRDVS clients

## Gold Coast Marathon

On the 4th of July 2010, Amanda Lee-Ross, Manager of our service took part in the 32nd Gold Coast Airport Marathon. It was Amanda's first attempt at the 42 kilometre race and she not only completed the course in 4 hours 15 minutes but she raised funds for the service too.

Although Amanda has been running since her mid-twenties, the furthest she had ever run before was a half marathon.

Amanda started her training in late January and ran 4 times a week, running her longest distances on Sundays. She even managed to carry on training when the sudden death of her brother meant she had to return to the UK in late March. "One day I was running in 28 degree heat with humidity and the next it was 8 degrees with a bitter easterly wind and jet lag. I no longer have any cold weather running gear so people must have thought me very strange when they saw me running in shorts with black tights underneath them, woolly gloves and a borrowed anorak!" she said.

"I know my brother thought I was mad to run a marathon, but I also know that he would have been really proud of me too, so I wanted to do it for him and to raise money for the service" she said. Amanda raised over \$2000 for the service from supporters who believed she could finish the race.

"For those of you who donated or sponsored me, a big THANK YOU! You don't know how much it meant to me, when I was pounding the street on my long runs (3 hours) and I didn't think I could keep going, that I knew someone else out there believed I could do this and had offered me their support" Amanda said.

## The Wheelbarrow Race

May 14th to 16th saw the annual 150km Great Wheelbarrow Race from Mareeba to Chillagoe and this year Robyn Campman took part as a solo runner. Robyn raised funds for our service and also for the Tableland Women's Centre in Atherton.

Every step to Chillagoe was dedicated to Robyn's sister, Pauline Austin, and niece, Kelly Morris, who were allegedly murdered in 2009 by Pauline's ex-partner. Robyn was determined to finish the race and hoped that she inspired other victims of domestic violence to speak out.

Robyn began training in January, running 10km every second day and working up to 25km every weekend with her trainer and race supporter, Sandro Soncin. The training obviously paid off as Robyn came in first in her category.

Desley and Noel Fisher from Austart Homes started the donations rolling with \$500 to this worthy cause and the donations continued to flood in, including \$1,395 from Ergon Energy. Robyn has raised over \$9,000 for the two services to share which was handed over to the service on 23rd June at a ceremony in Mareeba.



## Accredited Training

CRDVS is pleased to announce it has recently partnered with the TAVAN (Training Against Violence, Abuse, Neglect) Institute. The TAVAN Institute is an RTO founded by Betty Taylor and Dr Brian Sullivan to provide specialized training to professionals whose work with victims and/or perpetrators of domestic and family violence whether directly or indirectly. CRDVS feels that the TAVAN Institute shares our values, vision and professionalism.

While CRDVS has been running a variety of one day workshops and modules in the area of Domestic and Family Violence for a number of years partnering with the TAVAN Institute has enabled us to offer nationally accredited training in the form of Responding to Domestic and Family Violence 30692QLD.

The course is designed for people already working in a context where they come into contact with women and children subjected to domestic and family violence. It is also suitable for workers who want to develop their skills and knowledge in the areas of domestic and family violence.

The course was developed through an extensive state-wide consultation process and funded with assistance from the Queensland Government's Office for Women, Department of Communities, and Central Queensland University.

The aim of the course is to ensure that both government and non-government agencies are providing a coordinated and consistent response to Domestic and Family Violence. With so many myths and misconceptions about Domestic and Family Violence present in our society it is easy for well intending but uninformed workers to do more harm.

It consists of three units of competency, all of which must be completed or Recognised Prior Learning needs to be proved to complete the qualification.

Unit 1 CHCDFV301A: Recognise and Respond Appropriately to Domestic and Family Violence gives participants the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of D&FV, awareness of its effects, the skills to respond confidently and appropriately and provide relevant and timely information and referral. This first course was recently held at Rydges Esplanade Resort, Cairns. It was well received and one participant's perspective can be found on page 6 of this newsletter.

Unit 2 DFVR1A: Referring Appropriately and Effectively in Response to Domestic and Family Violence covers skills and knowledge required identify risk indicators, develop safety plans, follow appropriate referral processes and provides networking and interagency coordination to respond to D&FV. This second unit is due to be held 18<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> October

Unit 3 DFVR2A: Reflecting on Work Practice when Responding to D&FV identifies skills and knowledge required to recognize and respond to family Violence, the impact of values and attitudes upon work practise, indicators of stress and vicarious trauma and selfcare support strategies when working with clients experiencing Domestic and Family Violence. This unit is due to be held 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> November.

All participants also receive learning guides for each of the units. These guides provide assessment activities, further readings, practice tips, reflection exercises and additional resources. There is a particular emphasis throughout the Learner Guides on issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities, culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities, and rural and regional communities.

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## A Learner's Perspective

Hello, my name is Helena and I am currently in training with the CRDVS in the position of a Family Violence Support Worker. For the past 7 months I was assigned to CRDVS on work placement through Act for Kids. During this time I have completed a Cert III & Cert IV in Community Services Work. I recently attended the Cert IV accredited course: Recognise and Respond Appropriately To Domestic and Family Violence over three consecutive days in early September. I was asked to write a few lines about the accredited course from a learner's perspective.

The course was facilitated by Amanda Lee-Ross and was attended by 18 participants from various organisations. It was a diverse and interesting group of people who brought years of life and work experience to the course. I especially found it interesting to see and hear workers within the sector share their different experiences and knowledge when dealing with the various issues that Domestic Violence presents.

Amanda guided the group over the three days through several activities that were designed to cover the required assessments. One of the activities that was part of the assessment process was the dreaded role play. The group was asked to break off into smaller groups of 3 where we each took turns to act out the victim, the counsellor and the observer. This was to demonstrate how as workers we need to recognise the presenting issues and signs of domestic violence through the victims body language and the tone of the conversation.

We were introduced to guest speakers from relevant services within Cairns that worked with victims of Domestic Violence. We saw documentaries of families, friends, workers and victims that had been impacted by Domestic Violence and the effects it has had on them.

We were shown how to question the media's reporting of Domestic Violence. We were challenged on how we think about Domestic Violence, introduced to the concept of Pre-Dominant Aggressor, and looked at where a society's beliefs stem from historically.

The course offered an intensity that provoked an emotional reaction to the subject of Domestic and Family Violence that was undeniable.

Overall the three day workshop was most informative and sparked a new outlook on Domestic Violence not only from a learner's perspective but from a victim's perspective.

## 16 Days of Activism

16 days of Activism is an international campaign to bring about an end to Violence Against Women. It starts November 25<sup>th</sup> with International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and White Ribbon Day which encourages men to speak out, and take an active role in preventing violence. It then finishes up on December 10<sup>th</sup> with International Human Rights Day, symbolically linking Violence against women with the violation of Human Rights

The 16 Days Campaign has been used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by:

- raising awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue at the local, national, regional and international levels
- strengthening local work around violence against women
- establishing a clear link between local and international work to end violence against women
- providing a forum in which organizers can develop and share new and effective strategies
- demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world organizing against violence against women
- creating tools to pressure governments to implement promises made to eliminate violence against women

This year organisations across Queensland will be participating in Thursday in Black as part of Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network's (QDVSN) campaign. On November 25<sup>th</sup> people are asked to dress in black and wear their white ribbon to mark the start of this important campaign.



# Seniors Legal and Support Service

## What is elder abuse and financial exploitation?

*Elder abuse* is any act within a relationship of trust which results in harm to an older person. *Financial exploitation* can include illegal or improper use or misappropriation of a person's property or finances, forced changes to a will or other legal documents, denying someone the right to access and control of their personal funds and unfair or fraudulent practices relating to accommodation services.

## What is the Seniors Legal and Support Service?

The Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) is a specialist service operated by the Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc. Funding is provided by the Queensland Department of Communities. The SLASS in Cairns is staffed by a solicitor (Skye Engwerda) and social worker (Alexis Martin), who provide free legal advice and support to seniors who are at risk of and/or experiencing elder abuse or financial exploitation. Our aim is to provide a holistic service tailored to individual needs, with recognition given to the social issues that often underlie legal problems and concerns. Unfortunately, seniors are often exploited by friends and family members whom they care about; in some cases, the exploitation is carried out by service providers who are entrusted to provide care and support. In many cases, seniors are not aware that there is legal assistance available to them.

A case study example:

*Jan wanted to live with her daughter, Linda. Jan and Linda agreed that Jan should pay for modifications to Linda's property to make it comfortable for Jan to live there. The agreement was not in writing. Jan put all of her money into building a granny flat on Linda's property.*

*After moving into the granny flat, Jan found that she and Linda could not get along and disagreements became a problem. Now Linda has told Jan to leave.*

- *When money is paid by one person living in another person's house for renovations building a granny flat, or upkeep, there may be a creation of a legal 'interest' in the property.*
- *When things go wrong, this sort of interest can be very difficult to prove. If it can be proven, this interest can sometimes mean that the person who has paid the money will be entitled to a share of the property.*
- *For Jan, establishing her interest would be simple if she had her name on the title of the property. This is easy to do if there is agreement from the person who is already the registered owner.*
- *However, now that disagreements have started, Linda is not likely to agree to register Jan as an owner. Because Jan is not a registered owner, she will now need to see a lawyer and she may need to take costly legal action to prove that she has an unregistered interest.*

Acknowledgement: Article provided courtesy of Caxton Legal Centre Inc.

## How to contact SLASS:

Face-to-face services are available in Cairns on a weekly basis and on a monthly basis in Atherton, Mareeba, Innisfail and Yarrabah. SLASS also provides a free phone advice service on 1800 650 931 for those who may not be able to attend in-person.

The Service is located at Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc, First Floor Main Street Arcade, 85 Lake Street, Cairns, 4870. To make an appointment at the SLASS office or one of our outreach locations, call 1800 650 931 or 4031 7179.





# Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service

## Services We Provide

**Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service provides confidential and free services for family members suffering from domestic violence. There are many issues that you can discuss with our staff members such as:**

- Information about your rights and the rights of your children
- Steps that may help you to protect yourself from further domestic violence
- Information and assistance in making an application for a Domestic Violence Protection Order
- Support services that are available through our organisation, including Court support
- Counselling for you or your children to overcome the effects of domestic violence

Our Domestic Violence Workers can also refer you to other support services for financial assistance, crisis accommodation, relationship counselling, legal advice on matters of family law, parenting education and many other issues.

One member of our team is a Child Counsellor, who can provide face to face counselling for children and young people aged 4 to 16 years who are affected by domestic violence.

We can also provide information about programs for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Our service regularly conducts and participates in workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures and training sessions in Cairns and surrounding areas. If you are not sure that we can help with your needs, then please telephone on (07) 4033 6100 and ask us.

**We're open Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm**



Phone: (07) 4033 6100



Email: [office@dvcairns.org](mailto:office@dvcairns.org)



Fax: (07) 4033 5863



CRDVS, PO Box 12103, Cairns 4870



Room 19  
600 Bruce  
Highway  
Woree 4868  
(Behind Calanna  
Pharmacy)



## Useful contacts

### Telephone Contact Numbers

**If you're in immediate danger call the POLICE 000**

If you want to access safe accommodation (refuge for women and children who are in danger), or you need help and support dealing with a violent relationship you can call **dvconnect**, the Queensland 24hr domestic and family violence telephone service on:

**1800 811 811**

**Cairns Police 4030 7000**

**Lifeline Telephone Counselling  
13 11 14**

#### Alternatives to Violence

A 12 week education course for men  
4050 4955

#### Go Forward For Men

A service for men to help men overcome domestic and family violence behaviours  
1300 364 277

**dvconnect Men's Information Line  
1800 600 636**

### We're on the Web

[www.dvcairns.org](http://www.dvcairns.org)

Would you like to subscribe to receive forthcoming issues of the CRDVS newsletter?

Have you an interesting article about domestic or family violence you'd like to contribute to the next issue of this newsletter?

Please let us know by contacting Bernadette at CRDVS — Tel: (07) 4033 6100

**Look out for the  
next issue in  
April 2011**

### Websites with information about domestic and family violence

[www.noviolence.com.au](http://www.noviolence.com.au)

[www.dvirc.org.au](http://www.dvirc.org.au)

[www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au](http://www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au)

[www.ofw.facs.gov.au](http://www.ofw.facs.gov.au)

[www.communities.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention) [www.ntv.net.au](http://www.ntv.net.au)