

Specialised in supporting women, children & young people
in Caithness & Sutherland to stay safe from domestic abuse

CASWA

Caithness and Sutherland Women's Aid

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SPOTLIGHT ON CASWA

37 Referrals
April-June 2022



73 women
currently
receiving support



60 children &
young people
currently receiving
support



Some of the feedback from our
families who received
tickets to attend the circus from
Circus Montini:

*"We absolutely loved it,
thank you so much"*

*"It was really good, we would
never have been able to go
without your help"*

*"It was fantastic we all
really enjoyed it. Thank you
for the tickets"*

*"The children absolutely loved
the circus"*



*"And just as the phoenix
rose from the ashes,
she too will rise."*

*Returning from the flames,
clothed in nothing but her
strength more beautiful than
ever before!"*

CASWA's phoenix, given
her wings at the We Want
Festival in Thurso! We
asked people to decorate a
feather by writing on it
what they want to see
change for women and
girls. It goes without
saying that CASWA's list of
things we want to change
is a long list....!!!

Box of Gratitude

At the end of May, CASWA's Manager of 9 years, Kate, left the post of Manager. As a team, we are so grateful to Kate for all she has done and achieved as CASWA's manager! Our deputy manager, Emma, is covering the position until our new Manager starts. We'll be introducing our new Manager in the next newsletter! But for now we'd like to say **THANK YOU, Kate!**



We'd like to say **thank you to the Castle of Mey and the Princes Trust**. To mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, CASWA, alongside three other local organisations, were invited by the Castle of Mey and the Princes Trust to a celebratory afternoon tea at the Granary Lodge in recognition of our work, particularly during the pandemic. Donna, Lynsay and Emma were the three lucky members of our team who enjoyed a lovely afternoon at the Castle of Mey at the start of June. Not only did they enjoy a beautiful afternoon tea, they received goodie bags to take home!

We'd like to say a **huge thank you to St. Finnbarr's Charities Shop** in Dornoch! In June, they donated an amazing £1000 to CASWA! St. Finnbarr's has been an amazing support to CASWA over the years and we thank them for their continued support! Next time you're in Dornoch, pop in!

CASWA was contacted by Circus Montini who generously offered some family tickets free of charge for their recent shows in Golspie, Wick, Thurso & Dornoch! We were delighted to receive them on behalf of the families we support, this gave them the fantastic opportunity to attend the circus and watch the thrilling acrobatic spectacular! **Thank you to Circus Montini on behalf of our families!**



"SUPPORT WITH CASWA CAN BE DONE IN MANY SETTINGS, NOT JUST WITHIN FOUR WALLS!"



Paddleboarding:

In June, some of our Sutherland-based women joined **Sutherland Girls on Boards** for a taster paddle boarding session! The aim of Sutherland Girls of Boards is to get girls & woman out on paddle boards to learn to trust their bodies & build confidence while learning a new skill. Our women's group had a brilliant time on the water and some are keen to try paddle boarding again!



Summer Solstice Outing with Highland Culture Collective (HCC):

In June, we enjoyed a lovely summer solstice outing at Dunnet Beach with a group of women being supported by CASWA. This was run by HCC who are running therapeutic groups for CASWA based on the natural calendar and how this relates to us as people and our individual journeys.

The outing involved using our surroundings and environment as our inspiration and starting point for reflection and writing activities charting the seasons & their impact on us, noticing and responding through a variety of means in a creative and reflective way. One woman spoke of how the last time she had been on Dunnet Beach was many, many years ago. Her life is so much different now and she had forgotten how calming and revitalised she felt walking along the beach and spoke about moving forward with peace of mind, acceptance and freedom. She had forgotten how much she loved the sound of the waves, children laughing, the feeling of sand on her skin and the wind in her hair. She told us she will try and get to the beach more often.



Now that community events are up and running again, we recently purchased some **new** promotional and fundraising materials for CASWA. These were designed in house by our creative team and we were delighted to have some community involvement via our social media pages to help us pick out quotes for our tote bags! Our new tote bags and postcards had their first outing at the We Want Festival in Thurso in April - we were delighted with the response!



"Let's talk bags. Specifically, support bags! Our CYP Team are rarely seen without out "Mary Poppins"-style bags (containing all sorts of things for support and arts and crafts!). Every item has been researched and mindfully chosen based on how we, as a domestic abuse specialist can use the item to help support the children and young people we work with."

Children & Young People's Service

Promoting the CYP Service: Did you know we have a Children & Young People's (CYP) Service? We're often told that people don't know or don't realise that CASWA has a dedicated service for children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse within their family or their own relationships. In June, to help raise some awareness of the CYP Service and the work that we do, our team took over CASWA's social media account! We're a small team of four domestic abuse specialists who are passionate about supporting and advocating for CYP and pride ourselves in delivering a service that is CYP-led and -centred!

See one of the posts from our social media takeover opposite & read more about our service here: <https://www.caswa.org.uk/blog/did-you-know-about-our-children-and-young-peoples-service>

Getting Together in the Easter Holidays - Highland Culture Collective (HCC):

In the Easter holidays we worked with Cat & Sinead from the HCC to deliver a day of creativity and connection with a group of young people supported by our service. We created a table setting for our tasty lunch - using collage to create placemats and had a go at printmaking to decorate a tablecloth! It was great to be able to get a group of young people together again and this is something we're looking forward to doing more of during the Summer holidays.

The young people told us while they felt a bit nervous about coming to the group initially, they really enjoyed the opportunity to do something different and meet other young people. They felt relaxed in the session and really enjoyed their time being creative! As one young person put it:

"Creativity is like sunshine"



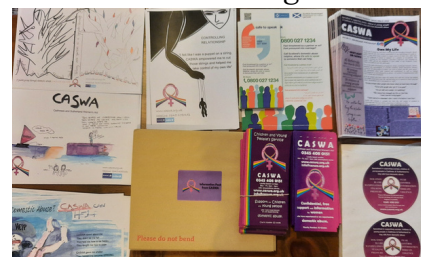
What's In Our Support Bags...



AWARENESS RAISING, EDUCATION & PREVENTION



Sutherland Presbytery - In June, our deputy manager, Emma, and team leader, Donna attended a meeting of the Sutherland Presbytery. We were delighted to learn about the Church of Scotland's Violence Against Women Charter and Sutherland Presbytery's plans to embed this charter within churches across Sutherland. We delivered a brief **awareness session** at the meeting to raise awareness of domestic abuse and CASWA. We followed up this session with **information packs** (see picture opposite) for each congregation containing CASWA leaflets, posters and stickers, the Scottish Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline leaflets and posters, details of other specialised agencies, further information and guidance as well as details about training and awareness sessions. More information about the charter can be found on the Church of Scotland website: www.churchofscotland.org.uk



We Want Festival - We were delighted to be asked by Thurso Community Development Trust and local health campaigner, Kirsteen Campbell to be part of the first health festival in Scotland for women, trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people and the men who support them which took place during the last week of April. We delivered a creative session for young people where we used vision boards to talk about what it means to feel and be empowered in our lives. We also attended the festival day itself - we brought our new tote bags along (see below) and asked people to help us to create wings for our phoenix to help her fly by writing on a feather what they would like to see change for women and girls. Our deputy manager, Emma, also wrote a blog post to contribute to the festival's blogpost series. It can be read here: <https://www.thursocdt.co.uk/blog/we-wantwomen-children-and-young-people-to-be-safe>

What we've been watching, reading and listening to...



In My Skin - BBC I-Player. This 10 episode BBC drama follows Bethan, a 16 year old high school student from Wales, as she navigates a difficult family- and home-life and attempts to conceal this from those around her. The series provides a powerful insight into what life can be like for young people growing up in difficult circumstances.

The Body Keeps The Score - Bessel Van Der Kolk. An absolutely fascinating read which takes you on a journey through the eyes of people who have experienced trauma or those who have helped people recover. It helps you as a reader see how trauma and the body is connected and learn about the physiology and science of trauma, people's experience of trauma and ways that a person might recover from it. The three main things that resonated for me:

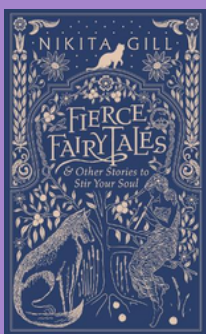
1. For real change to take place, the body needs to learn that the danger has passed and to live in the reality of the present.
2. Being traumatised is not just an issue of being stuck in the past; it is just as much a problem of not being fully alive in the present.
3. Nobody can "treat" a war, or abuse, rape, molestation, or any other horrendous event, for that matter; what has happened cannot be undone. But what can be dealt with are the imprints of the trauma on the body, mind, and soul.

The book is written by a Dutch born psychiatrist, educator and author with over thirty years of experience working with people who have experienced trauma.

Fix the System, Not the Women - Laura Bates (audiobook). Bates' work is well known in the field. Her work started with the Everyday Sexism Project, a project which collated "everyday" experiences of sexism that women & girls face. In her latest book, Bates reflects on the complex, entrenched systems that women & girls are born into & live within throughout their lives. Bates has written a number of books and has featured on many podcasts. Most recently (3rd June) on Jameela Jamil's I Weigh podcast.

"Nothing will change until we acknowledge that the problem is not with women!" - Laura Bates.

FEMINIST CORNER



my
BODY
my
RULES



WOMEN'S RIGHTS
ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!

"I am not free while any
woman is unfree, even
when her shackles are
very different from
my own"

- Audre Lorde -

Men's Mental Health Week

took place in the middle of June. Many people think that feminism doesn't concern itself with men. This isn't the case. During men's mental health week we highlighted the role that toxic masculinity plays in harming boys and men.

Boys and men have a right to live in a world where they are allowed to feel and are not confined by limited definitions of masculinity.

We love this comic by Luke Humphris which illustrates exactly what is meant by the term "toxic masculinity" and how it impacts on boys & men:

<https://thenib.com/toxic-masculinity/>



It is okay not to be okay.

Book Recommendation: Fierce Fairytales by Nikita Gill - An empowering, feminist re-telling of well known childhood fairy tales. "Gives Once Upon a Time a much-needed modern makeover!"

Best suited to a young adult/adult audience.

CUT OUT & KEEP

Some bits and pieces for a scrapbook, your journal, a vision board, your wall, etc

Spread your
wings...
...Be Free...



GIRLS JUST
WANNA HAVE
FUNDAMENTAL
HUMAN RIGHTS

GIVE IT A GO...

5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1

LOOKING FOR SOME CREATIVE IDEAS FOR SUMMER?

Looking for some creative ideas this Summer? Back in 2020 our team created a wee project called Therapeutic Thursdays where they took time out every Thursday over 6 weeks to try something new - have a look at the blog post for some ideas and give it a go!

<https://www.caswa.org.uk/blog/therapeutic-thursdays>

ENJOY THE OUTDOORS

Aren't we lucky in Caithness and Sutherland to be surrounded by some great outdoor spaces...? As you'll have seen from our newsletter, we've been outdoors a lot the past few months - why not give the outdoors a go this Summer? Try something new, re-visit an outdoor space you haven't been in years, spend some time in nature quietly sitting watching the sunset! Fingers crossed for some good weather!!!

A favourite Summer bake shared by one of our team - we're all looking forward to giving this one a go!

Zesty Lemon Tray Bake

This is one of the easiest and most successful tray bakes I have ever made. I love it and it has never failed.

Recipe credit: <https://mrsdarlingtons.com/>

- Ingredients -

- 225g / 8oz softend butter
- 225g / 8oz caster sugar
- 275g / 10oz self-raising flour
- 2 level teaspoons of baking powder
- 4 large eggs
- 4 tablespoons milk
- Finely grated zest of 2 lemons
- For the icing:
- 280g/10oz icing sugar
- The juice of a lemon

Feeling a bit stressed, anxious, overwhelmed or just not yourself?

Give this exercise a go!

Use all five of your senses to ground yourself.

Take a deep breath

5 things you can SEE

4 things you can HEAR

3 things you can TOUCH

2 things you can SMELL

1 thing you can TASTE

Take a deep breath.

If you're struggling with any of the senses - e.g. can't smell anything, use your imagination!

- Method -

Measure all the ingredients for the tray bake into a large bowl and beat until well blended.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared backing tin (grease a 30 x 23cm (12 x 9 in) traybake or roasting tin then line the base with baking parchment.)

Level the top very gently with the back of a spatula. Bake in the pre-heated oven (160 degs/fan 140/gas 3) for 35-40 minutes or until the cake has shrunk from the sides of the tin and springs back when pressed in the centre with your fingertips.

Leave to cool in the tin.

In the meantime, to make the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl, add the lemon juice and mix until the icing is smooth and has a spreading consistency. Add a little more lemon juice if it's too thick or a little more icing sugar if it's a little too runny.

Pour the icing over the cake, spread it quickly! Cut into pieces and enjoy!