

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

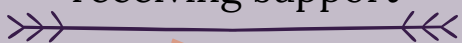
47 Referrals
October-December 2022



70
women currently
receiving support



62
children & young people
currently
receiving support



CASWA's Call to Men

This year our activism for 16 days - the international period of activism against gender-based violence and abuse - aimed to involve men! We put out a call to local men and groups of men to take a stand against gender-based violence and abuse...and we were absolutely blown away with the response and support! We invited men and groups of men to meet with us to have a conversation about gender-based violence and abuse and introduce them to the White Ribbon Scotland pledge. White Ribbon Scotland is the Scottish branch of an international movement to involve men in addressing gender-based violence and abuse. Responsibility is generally placed in women's hands, but the White Ribbon movement recognises that men too have a role to play in addressing violence and abuse against women and they can and should take a stand.

We really valued the respectful response from local men who got involved in our activism. Men are welcome allies and this was a great opportunity to engage and include men in the conversation.

To read more about this project that featured as part of our 2022 activism for 16 days and why it was such an important piece of work, visit our blog [here](#).

Visit the White Ribbon Scotland website [here](#).



MEN WORKING
TO END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN

Box of Gratitude

Thurso's 999 Services & Royal British Legion Charity Football Match 2022 - We were delighted to be one of many beneficiaries of funds raised at the local charity football match against the Ranger Legends earlier in the year. We were very grateful to receive £700 which will go towards our group work program for women supported by our service. We would like to say a **huge THANK YOU to everyone involved in the Thurso 999 Services & Royal Legion Charity Football match!**



THANK YOU

MFR Cash for Kids - Every year, the Mission Christmas Appeal blows us away! For as long as we can remember, families supported by CASWA who find themselves in need of a helping hand at Christmas are supported by this appeal. This year CASWA made applications for over 50 children and young people and each and every application was fulfilled. This appeal is always an incredibly heart-warming end to the working year for our team as we deliver the sacks of gifts to families in readiness for Christmas. Our families are always so grateful and similarly blown away by the generosity of this appeal. We would like to say a **HUGE thank you to MFR Cash for Kids, their volunteers and the community** for supporting this campaign!

KWICK Deliveries - Another **big thank you goes to Gary from KWICK Deliveries** who takes our sacks of gifts north from Inverness from the MFR Cash for Kids Mission Christmas Appeal free of charge. Like the appeal itself, Gary has supported us in this way for many, many years and we are extremely grateful for his kindness at such a busy time of year!

A Massive thank you to the **Highland Christian Church Thurso!** Every year the congregation donates items to CASWA, the last few years this has been toiletries and gifts sets and everyday items. This year we were also delighted to receive a £500 donation from a member of the congregation. This will be incredibly helpful for our families struggling in the current economic climate. **We are grateful for the ongoing support that they give CASWA yearly, it makes a massive difference to the women and families we support.**

Women's Service

A New Resource for our Support Toolkit: In October we worked with Donna Booth from Vitality to put together some mindfulness and meditation workshops that our service users can access at any time. This was done using zoom and the workshops were recorded so that we could then send them to our service users if they were interested in this. There were 3 in total on an introduction to mindfulness, managing emotions and self-care and lastly, sleep.

This has been a great resource for women who may not have had the chance to try this and to be guided in such a supportive way. Here's what some of the women who are supported by CASWA and tried out these new resources told us:

"This has made such a difference in helping me to switch off from worrying and tossing and turning at night and fall asleep."

"I was telling my teenage daughter about this and how it's helping me and she asked if she could do it with me. We love it. If I'm stressing about something she will tell me to go and meditate mum! Never thought I would do anything like this!"

Highland Culture Collective: In November we were invited to attend a preview evening at Inverness Creative Academy of ATTEND - an exhibition showcasing the work of Highland Culture Collective artists in residence Catriona Meighan and Hector MacInnes. CASWA were fortunate enough to be part of this exciting project and artists Catriona Meighan and Sinead Hargan ran sessions with our women's team and women supported by our service over the year. Some of the work created within and from these sessions was on display at the exhibition.



"The course and my warrior sisters are helping so much"

We'll be running our third Own My Life course this Spring in Caithness. To find out more about Own My Life, have a read of the blog on our website by clicking [here](#).

In celebration of our volunteer, Annie: We were delighted that our dedicated volunteer, Annie MacDonald received the recognition that she deserves at the **VOSCARS!** In November, Voluntary Groups Sutherland hosted a special awards ceremony to recognise the many volunteers who support organisations and communities across Sutherland. We were so delighted that our volunteer, Annie, who created and delivers our sister project, The Gift Project, was awarded a VOSCAR. Annie has shown a great deal of dedication to the project and compassion for women, children & young people who have experienced domestic abuse. We would like to say a huge thank you to Annie - she is so valued and appreciated by our team and is very deserving of the recognition and the award that she has received. More information about the project can be found on [this blog post](#) on our website. The Gift Project can also be found and followed on Facebook [@thegiftprojectsutherland](#)



Feedback from pupils in response to our Schools Tour:

"Other pupils should see this so they know the difference between a healthy and toxic relationship"

"It needs to be heard & talked about"

"Boys need to actually think about this"

"It helped bring these issues to life"

Children & Young People's Service

Schools Tour - At the end of November we continued our schools tour with Breeze Productions. S4-S6 pupils from Dornoch Academy and Kinlochbervie High School had the opportunity to see a performance about one woman's experience of domestic abuse and then spend time with our team exploring the facts and myths surrounding gender-based violence and abuse. In September we also visited Farr, Wick and Golspie High Schools. Our schools tour was funded by the Highland Violence Against Women Partnership and was a great opportunity for our specialists to educate and discuss the reality of, and facts surrounding, violence and abuse against women.

A creative October - Over the holidays in October we arranged some creative group work opportunities for children and young people supported by our service. We worked with Lisa from Haven House Art in Caithness who delivered a painting lesson with beautiful results for some of our primary-aged children - see the photos below. We're a creative team ourselves, so we arranged a second session for some of the young people supported by our service - a messy, creative session with lots of opportunity for mess, fun and creativity!



AWARENESS RAISING, EDUCATION & PREVENTION

16 Days - October to December is always a busy very time in our annual calendar for awareness raising, education and prevention work as we prepare for and deliver activism for 16 days. It is the international period for activism against gender-based violence and abuse and a great opportunity for us to undertake activism at a local level.

This year, our **Book Fairy Project** returned for it's second year. Our fairies popped on their wings again and distributed women-centred and feminist literature throughout Caithness and Sutherland over 16 days. Literature featured this year was recommended by the CASWA team and the community. We were blown away as we were supported to deliver this project by donations of books from the Dornoch Bookshop and our community. Read more about the project and the books featured over on our blog [here](#).

We also worked in partnership with the **Highland Violence Against Women Partnership, University of the Highlands and Islands, RASASH and other partners** to deliver two events - a daytime event for students and an evening event for the community - during 16 days. The event featured performances and information stands to raise awareness of gender-based violence and abuse. The events were a great success and we were delighted to have so much support from the local community and to receive great feedback!

The performance and poetry were wonderful ways of conveying emotions and feelings and situations which are often very hard to articulate"

What we've been reading & watching...

READING - Some of our team enjoy the Happiful Magazine, this is a free resource available on their website - <https://happiful.com/> or Via their mobile App. They also offer podcasts on a variety of subjects.

WATCHING - Sticking with our theme of self-care some of us have been following Meditation videos from a YouTube channel Great Meditation - <https://www.youtube.com/@GreatMeditation/featured> they offer guided videos for beginners with short sessions of 5 minutes to much longer sessions depending on your needs.

Do you know about...North Highland Women's Wellbeing Hub (NHWWH)...?

NHWWH is a not for profit community organisation run by local volunteers, Kirsteen, Rebecca & Claire, who have lived experience. Their goal is to work closely with lots of specialists, organisations and support networks across Scotland to provide the most up to date information and campaign to help improve care for every woman in the North Highlands. They will be hosting a Women's Wellness Festival at Lyth Arts Centre in Caithness on the 18th & 19th March. Find out more and keep up to date by visiting their website: www.northhighlandwwh.com and/or following the hub on Facebook @NorthHighlandWomensWellnessHub



NHWWH
North Highland Women's Wellbeing Hub

FEMINIST CORNER

Tackling Period Poverty In Highland

Did you know that The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 aims to tackle period poverty, promote period dignity, and break the stigma surrounding periods in Scotland? Highland Council aim to ensure that period products are freely available across Highland and that this work will be carried out in a way that respects the dignity of anyone who needs to access products. Free period products are now available from collection points across Highland or by a home delivery service and have been supplied in schools in Highland since 2018/19. To find out more about how and where to access free period products, including ordering some for home delivery, visit the Highland Council page [here](#).

END PERIOD POVERTY



Write to End Violence Against Women Awards

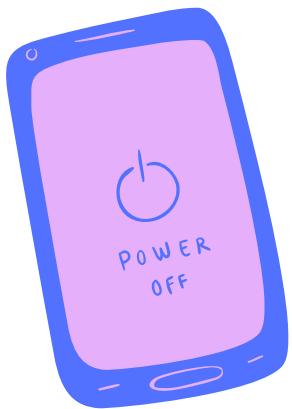
Zero Tolerance, a Scottish charity working to end men's violence against women by promoting gender equality and challenging the attitudes that normalise violence and abuse, recently published winners from their Write to End Violence Against Women Awards. These awards recognise, celebrate and reward journalists, writers, and content creators across the UK who raise awareness of gender inequality and Violence Against Women and Girls. These awards are so important because how we speak and write about violence and abuse matters! The awards also features a wooden spoon category which highlights poorly written pieces which reinforce victim-blaming narratives and beliefs and actively shapes the attitudes and behaviours of society as a whole. Read the winning pieces [here](#)

Zero Tolerance have also published useful media guidance for those writing about violence and abuse against women and girls - a really helpful resource and reference point which can be read [here](#) over on their website.



CUT OUT & KEEP

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



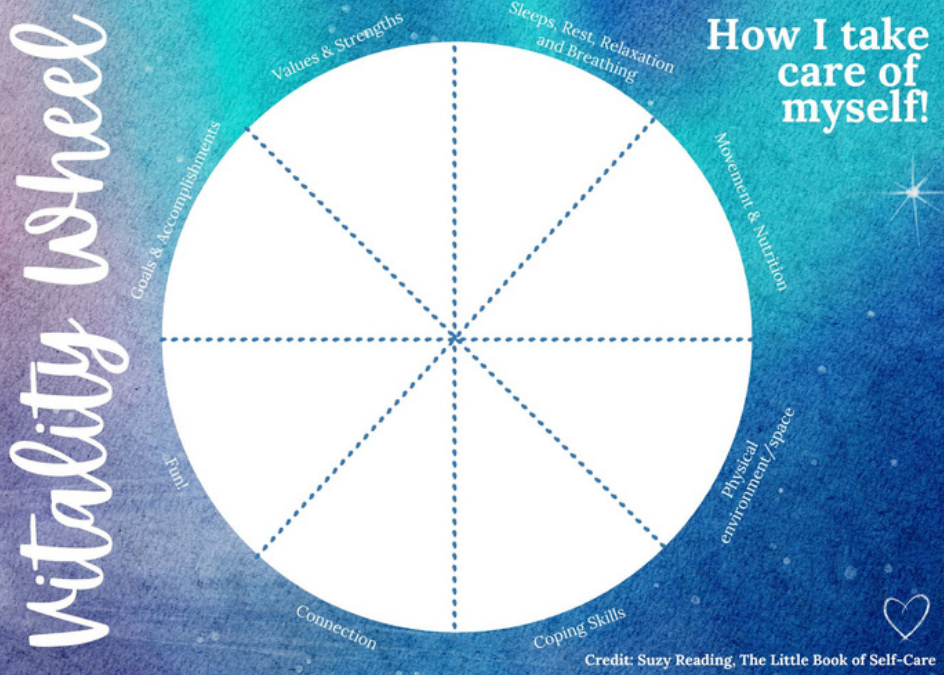
Mental health matters

Be Gentle With Yourself



GIVE IT A GO...

Here at CASWA we don't start the year with resolutions, we start it with self-care. Looking after ourselves is extremely important for our health and wellbeing and for the whole of January, CASWA's social media focused on self-care. Why not give some new self-care ideas a go to star the year?



A great activity for promoting self-care is Psychologist Suzy Reading's Vitality Wheel. It contains eight key areas which are important and can help to promote our wellbeing. Why not give it a go...grab yourself a scrap of paper, draw a big circle (it doesn't have to be perfectly round) and divide it in to eight sections (just like the picture opposite). For each section write one of the titles of each of the eight ways we can look after ourselves:

1. Sleep, Rest, Relaxation & Breathing,
2. Movement & Nutrition
3. Physical Environment (Space and Nature),
4. Coping Skills,
5. Connection,
6. Fun,
7. Goals & Accomplishments,
8. Values & Strengths

Then start decorating, writing and popping ideas on your wheel. Have a think and write down some ideas that might be helpful for you to promote your wellbeing and take care of yourself. If that feels too overwhelming to start with, just focus on one area.

SELF CARE

PHYSICAL

- SLEEP
- STRETCH
- WALKING
- PHYSICAL RELEASE
- HEALTHY FOOD
- YOGA
- REST

EMOTIONAL

- STRESS MANAGEMENT
- EMOTIONAL MATURITY
- FORGIVENESS
- COMPASSION
- KINDNESS

SOCIAL

- BOUNDARIES
- SUPPORT SYSTEMS
- COMMUNICATION
- TIME SPENT WITH LOVED ONES
- ASKING FOR HELP

SPIRITUAL

- TIME ALONE
- MEDITATION
- YOGA
- CONNECTION
- NATURE
- JOURNALING

WORK

- TIME MANAGEMENT
- WORK BOUNDARIES
- POSITIVE WORKPLACE

SELF-CARE MENU

- take a few deep breaths 5 MINS
- stretch your body 5 MINS
- listen to your favourite song 5 MINS
- meditate on your purpose 15 MINS
- read a chapter of a book 15 MINS
- journal out your thoughts 15 MINS
- take a walk outside 30 MINS
- get crafty 30 MINS
- cook a new recipe 30 MINS