



*tasmania's gender, sexuality and intersex
status support and education service*

Building individual resilience, community capacity
and a more just society

wordsOut winter 2013

Thank you Working It Out members. You supported many events and projects last financial year including:

- Exploring Gender and Sexual Diversity Tour 2012 and 2013 in NZ
- A great Social Work Student Placement
- The launch of the Be Proud Tasmania Report
- Visits to Tasmania by Lynne Hillier from the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society and Barry Taylor Senior Project Officer for the Mental Health project MindOut from the National LGBTI Health Alliance
- Our grand IDAHO celebration for International Day Against Homophobia
- The announcement of the winners of the work place Dorothies Awards
- Our partnership with Relationships Australia on a suicide prevention project

The Department of Education Strategic Working Group

In late 2012 the Department of Education Strategic Working Group (including Regional Managers, Catholic Education, the AEU and the Anti Discrimination Commissioner, Rodney Croome, Julian Punch and Susan Ditter and chaired by the Secretary of Education) released a significant document for all schools and colleges. *Guidelines for Diversity in Schools and Colleges* explains the duty and significance of inclusive practice in all schools and provides information, resources and legislative requirements in one document. WIO is using the guidelines in the advanced training package *Champions for Change* to create a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students and staff. If you would like to read a copy of the guidelines go to

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Guidelines-for-Supporting-Sexual-and-Gender-Diversity-in-Schools-and-Colleges.pdf>

Another great Social Work Student Placement in 2012

From July to November 2012 Social Work student Natasha Veenstra joined the WIO team for her final year placement. It was a joy to have her working with us and she did an outstanding job of bringing fellow students in to hear about Working It Out. In her time at WIO Natasha developed a two-hour training session specifically for social work students.

Exploring Gender and Sexual Diversity Tour in Tasmania in 2012

This year's tour included three events, a screening of **Intersexion**, Mani's latest documentary and winner of best New Zealand documentary and best editing in Documentary Edge film festival 2012, the two hour workshops which include Mani and Sharon's stories and thirdly "Breaking the Code of Silence" forums which are a joint project between CORES Australia (Community Response to Eliminating Suicide) and Working It Out.

Personal experiences are a very effective tool to assist people and communities to examine their attitudes, and this is particularly noticeable in rural and remote areas. Through Sharon's networks and hard work she achieved outstanding community input and partnerships to support the EDSG project from year to year. The tour included Launceston, Smithton, Burnie, Hobart, Glenorchy, Kingston, Devonport, Queenstown, Sheffield and Scottsdale.

One participant commented that she attended the workshop in Smithton last year and said *"I have a bi-sexual daughter and until I attended your session,*

I didn't understand her and we didn't get along as a family. It has changed our whole family's relationship because I have also been able to help the rest of her family to understand. Thank you

EDSG has been developed to include both sexuality and gender and create a better understanding of both of these issues.

Today I had the privilege to meet two people who told their narrative about their lives. At the end of it I was moved, I felt embarrassed, humbled, inspired and most of all ashamed. We as a society need to move to where we can embrace the differences in people and if we see people for people without gender then we will have stopped homophobia etc. We need to be ready to provide care for all LGBTI people with the upmost respect and dignity.

Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy takes another step

Working It Out (WIO) was approached by Relationships Australia Tasmania (RA Tas) to act as a consultant to deliver a series of activities to advance the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010-2014 including the development of a suicide prevention action plan for Tasmania's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Intersex communities. RA was funded to contract a LGBTI Suicide prevention project officer.

WIO participated in the staff selection and recruitment process, provides office space and administrative support at the WIO offices and supports the Project Officer by giving advice, input and guidance in relation to the development and implementation of the LGBTI Action Plan

We have also assisted with the promotion of the project, and facilitating effective communication with the LGBTI community. Finally WIO welcomed assisting with the establishment and support of the LGBTI Working Group, established to oversee the development of the LGBTI Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

WIO developed a training program for RA staff in the South and delivered training to staff in the north in 2011 and 10 staff in the south 2012.

The LGBTI Suicide Prevention Project Officer, Virginia Bashford, with support of WIO staff, has collaborated to provide consultations with the LGBTI communities across Tasmania. Three LGBTI regional working groups have been formed and partnerships developed with Police, Health, Justice, Office of Anti

Discrimination Commissioner, Children and Youth, Mental Health, Community Sector organisations, Education and other local LGBTI organisations. The LGBTI Suicide Prevention Community Action Plan was appropriately launched on IDAHO Day.

WIO Educator Counsellor Sharon Jones participates in work exchange with NZ

This year WIO and ITANZ supported an exchange program where Mani came to Tasmania and worked for two weeks with me, and I went to New Zealand and we did our first road trip there. It was a great opportunity to broaden my professional learning on an international level. Mani wasn't sure that my Aussie humor would work in New Zealand but of course they loved it!!!!

When I tell people that I was the first female shearer in Australia the guys ask *How many can you shear?* I tell them that I shored my 200 at Mole Creek in one day. In New Zealand, like Australia, country men put out their hand and say *Anybody that can shear 200 sheep a day is ok with me.* The old country handshake is a great tool anywhere.

When Mani first started this work ten years ago organisations were interested but had little demand in their day-to-day practice. That situation has changed dramatically with organisations and agencies right across the board all having a significant increase in clients seeking their assistance and support. Most professionals reported to us that they feel inadequately trained or resourced to deal with diverse sexuality and gender work in an appropriate manner. We found New Zealand to be similar to Tasmania.

This road trip on the North Island provided the opportunity to take our work out into the community to places and centres that do not normally receive education and development training. Many organisations and individuals partnered with us and worked very hard to help us achieve a successful road trip. We received incredibly enthusiastic feedback, with a wide range of people stressing how urgently needed this type of information, support and training is. Some quotes from participants sum it up.

Stories are the most powerful tools for teaching.

Valuing and incorporating personal narratives is useful when educating others.

What a treat it is to be in your company once more. It is such rich and rewarding work riding this diversity train. Thanks for all that you do to challenge, empower and inspire people and to make this world a better place.

*The **Breaking the Code of Silence** forum was one of the most powerful events that I have attended. The diversity, the trust, the sharing and the caring was*

powerful and amazing to be part of. Where I felt the GLBTIQ were all represented and so united in their care (and it felt like love to me) for each other. This is where real change occurs within our communities and makes us truly, a community.”



What's new in the library?

As a member of Working It Out you can access our library. If you have any books that you think would like to move to Working It Out we will always adopt your much-loved lesbian and gay fiction, trans DVDs and Bi mags.

New books this year include:

- 'Teen Queeries' by Gaye Dell and Lucas Dell – an open conversation between a gay teen and his mum.
- 'Born this way' – Real Stories of Growing Up Gay

Agfest 2013

Sharon Jones staffed the WIO table in the Rural Support Network tent at Agfest this year. This was a three-day commitment and an excellent networking opportunity with other service providers and a very big gathering of the broader community. Sharon's farming background comes to the fore at this event of course.

Be Proud Tasmania or BPT

In 2011 WIO began a project with TasCAHRD and the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group to research and record incidents of discrimination and prejudice experienced by people based on gender identity and or sexual orientation.

The report was launched at a morning tea at parliament house on March 27th. Andrew Badcock spoke of his experiences as a young gay man in Tasmania.



Andrew asked: Why is there such disconnect from reporting to officials and posting to Facebook? For me it's safer – there's no consequence, unlike reporting this stranger and them getting revenge, it's easier because I don't have to worry about the police not taking me seriously, and I know I will have support from my friends. It also means an outlet instead of letting this build on my mind, because there doesn't seem to be many options left.

Andrew Badcock

The Police Commissioner, Darren Hine acknowledged the importance of the findings of the report and of training for police officers:

The Champions for Change training package will be delivered to police officers across the state this year. The package is designed to create a greater understanding and cultural awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual,

transgender and intersex people and to begin developing strategies for eliminating prejudice and discrimination. The Commissioner announced the establishment of a Strategic Working Group. The Anti Discrimination Commissioner, Robin Banks will be a member of the Working group.

In her speech Minister Cassy O’Conner noted that the BPT Report gives some insight into how people with diverse sexualities tailor their behaviour to suit the environment.

Minister O’Connor said:

This can include avoiding situations where they feel they are likely to experience prejudice or discrimination and feeling unable to express affection publicly to their partner. This is unacceptable. The Be Proud Tasmania report makes six recommendations based on the findings of the research. The findings and subsequent recommendations will be used as a tool for the Government in developing future policies and priorities.

The recommendations include the need to increase the cultural competency of a range of government and non-government service providers when responding to our sexually diverse communities.



Andrew Badcock, Police Commissioner, Darren Hine, Rodney Croome, Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Robin Banks Shaun Staunton and Susan Ditter

Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Robin Banks noted a concern—that the Tasmania Together target of reduced complaints of discrimination and explained that while achieving such a target this may reflect reduction in discrimination in Tasmania, however it could just as easily reflect simply reduced reporting for a range of reasons.

The report reminds us that:

Vulnerable communities, and 'at risk' individuals are less likely to report incidents of civil or criminal victimisation, which results in a significant under-reporting in official figures. These communities and individuals are more likely to report their experiences—at least, in the first instance—to community organisations.¹

Robin Banks acknowledged that:

those with responsibility for protective laws, like anti-discrimination law and criminal codes, need to ensure that we find ways to encourage not only those directly affected by potential breaches of the law to report, but also those in community organisations and family and friends to report. We need to create accessible, aware and responsive systems that make reporting easy and, where possible, risk free.

Health In Difference (HiD) Conference in Melbourne

Working It Out staff recently attended the 8th National LGBTI Health Conference (Our Bodies. Our Minds) held in Melbourne 18-20 April. Approximately 300 delegates including people from overseas and interstate with many New Zealanders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Health in difference is Australia's premier conference on the health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and other sexuality, sex and gender diverse (LGBTI) people. The conference brings together community organisations, health practitioners, researchers, academics, policy makers, advocates, community members and others who are interested in improving the mental, physical and emotional health of LGBTI people.

¹ Be Proud Tasmania Report

WIO was involved in the presentation of 2 workshops, “Be Proud Tasmania” and “A collaborative approach to LGBTI suicide prevention in Tasmania”. Both workshops were well attended and received great feedback. Susan opened the conference as Chair and Tasmanian Director of the Board of the National LGBTI Health Alliance and did a fantastic job.

There were too many workshops to choose from!! There were many streams running concurrently and they included Ageing and Aged Care, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Doing LGBTI Health Differently, Intersex, Trans and Gender Diversity, Cultural Determinates of Health and Wellbeing and Families and Young People. We all attempted to attend different streams and sessions so we could get as much information on as many topics as possible, and it was exhausting!

There were so many inspirational speakers. Peter Hyndal from A Gender Agenda spoke about trans issues and received a standing ovation, Barry Taylor for the National LGBTI Health Alliance on Suicide Prevention and Mental health, Roz Ward from Safe Schools Coalition gave a great presentation on Managing Transition At School, Simon Crouch from the University of Melbourne presented early results of the ACHES research “The Australian Study of Child Health In Same-Sex Families” which should keep the critics quiet.

Much networking, resource collecting and information sharing was squeezed into the 3 days. The conference was an incredible display of diversity, creativity, education, research and passion from LGBTI people and service providers alike. The WIO team have much to reflect and draw upon for energy and inspiration. When is the next one??

Who will be the winner of the 4th Unifying Voice Award? You will find out at this year's Artfully Queer Exhibition brought to you by the ever fabulous TasPride

Opening night is Friday 13th September. Do not miss it!!

The Launceston Safer Communities Partnership



The Executive Officer, Susan Ditter and Learning Services North General Manager Laurie Andrew signing the Launceston Safer Communities Partnership.

On the second of May Launceston City Council hosted the signing of a significant partnership for community safety. The Launceston Safer Communities Partnership is committed to addressing community safety issues as they relate to the greater Launceston area. The group is represented by local and state government departments, community based organisations and the business sector. Sharon Jones the Educator Counsellor in the North and North West represents WIO on this committee.

Working It Out 2013 AGM

The AGM this year will be held on Saturday September 21st at 11am. All members will be notified by letter and invited to attend.

Our Social Work Student Placement in 2013

Sam Peek has joined us this year and her work with us will include observation and participation in training, and research.

The 2nd IDAHO celebration for International Day Against Homophobia



The **International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia** (IDAHOBIT) is an annual event celebrated on May 17 each year. The main purpose of IDAHOBIT is to raise awareness, which in turn provides an opportunity to take action and engage in dialogue with the media, policymakers, public opinion, and wider community. On May 17th WIO, Tasmania's gender and sexuality support and education service held its second breakfast to celebrate IDAHO – International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

The breakfast celebrated a united voice for inclusion, participation and diversity and an end to discrimination for transgender, intersex, bisexual, gay and lesbian people. The breakfast brought together individuals, organisations, service providers and government to show their support for this important event.

At the breakfast the Minister for Workplace Relations, David O'Byrne, announced the winners of the Dorothies Awards in the workplace.

The award in the boutique category went to Hobart Women's Health Centre. Glynis Flower, Executive Officer of HWHC said:

Hobart Women's Health Centre was very proud to be awarded the 2013 Dorothies Award for inclusive service delivery by a boutique organisation, to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people at the recent IDAHO breakfast (we love to be described as boutique!). We were especially pleased that our role as an employer was part of the consideration for the award.



The winners of the Dorothies for inclusive work place practices were announced at this year's IDAHO breakfast.

HWHC operates by women for all women and we value diversity. We also pride ourselves in offering a flexible workplace, which recognises the complexities of women's lives, their families, their interests and their passions.

We would like to thank Working It Out for giving us the opportunity to be part of The Dorothies awards. We are pleased to work cooperatively Susan and her team to promote understanding around LGBTI issues. Our framed award has pride of place in the reception area and is an important visual statement of our welcome.

The judging panel comprised Shaun Staunton, Martine Delaney and Paul Levit.

Of the award winners Martine said:

Despite some real improvements in the level of inclusiveness for lesbian, gay, bisexual and sex and gender diverse (LGB&SGD) Tasmanians, there remains much to be done to overcome still-high levels of hate and discrimination. To achieve this, Tasmanian businesses and organisations could well take some lessons from the recipients of this year's Dorothies!

Unlike the Centre, Glenview is relatively new to the process of addressing the needs of L G B & S G D clients. However, its efforts and commitment in this area are clearly demonstrated by both policy development and serious staff/resource allocation to training and practice support. Glenview is a very deserving recipient of the "Large organisation" Dorothy Award and, arguably, at the forefront of aged care service delivery to LGB&SGD communities in Australia.



Glynis Flower, Executive Officer of Hobart Women’s Health Centre receives a Dorothies workplace award from the Minister for Workplace Relations David O’Byrne.

Shaun Staunton, CEO of TasCAHRD said

With more and more evidence showing the physical and emotional impacts of prejudice and discrimination for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other gender diverse people, the Tasmanian Council on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases welcomes organisations in Tasmania striving to create supportive and safe environments for their LGBTI clients. We know that supportive service provider environments facilitate more open communication between services and their clients, allowing for more targeted and better quality care, and ultimately, better outcomes for people. TasCAHRD is particularly concerned about the impacts for LGBTI community members who are required to go “back into the closet” as they age and are required to access higher levels of care than they have previously. Seeing service providers working to support this section of our community is particularly gratifying.



The Minister for Workplace Relations, David O'Byrne presenting a Dorothies Award to Lucy Oflaherty, CEO of Glenview Community Services Inc.

Lucy Oflaherty, CEO of Glenview Community Services Inc. said *We were delighted to receive the Dorothies Award as provider of aged care as this allows us to celebrate the lives of our staff, residents and clients in the community*

Following the presentation of the 2013 awards Dr Lynne Hillier spoke about her research with young same sex attracted and gender questioning (SSAGQ) young people from 1998 through to 2010. Through the words of the young people she consulted Dr Hillier talked of the very simple steps that create very significant change in the lives of SSAGQ young people at school. Dr Hillier then announced that the Dorothies in 2014 would focus on the school environment.



The Minister for Workplace Relations David O'Byrne. and Dr Lynne Hillier at the IDAHO breakfast

What else is happening?

At a Government level.

We have already mentioned the Department of Education LGBTI Strategic Working Group and what has been achieved in education.

There is a newly formed Tasmania Police LGBTI Strategic Working Group brought together by the Police Commissioner and the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner will also sit on this working group.

Further to this there is a Department of Health and Human Services LGBTI Reference Group and a Whole of Government Reference Group.

Within community services we have talked about the need for an up to date web site, central base to provide regular updates on the work and outcomes of the above groups to store relevant LGBTI Government and non-government documents and the achievements, projects and training provided by LGBTI organisations and services.

WIO has provided training this year to:

- Ulverstone High School Staff
- School Psychologists in the North
- Final Year Social Work Students in all three regions
- 5 sessions with Police Officers in the South
- Masonic Homes
- Relationships Australia Tasmania
- A Session at the Tasmania Suicide Prevention Forum
- Whanganui Women's Network
- Rainbow Youth Partnership, Auckland
- Aged Care Cert 3 students Tasmanian Polytechnic Smithton
- Aged Care Cert 3 students Tasmanian Polytechnic Devonport
- Aged Care Cert 3 students Tasmanian Polytechnic Burnie
- Parkside
- Red Cross Workers
- A youth shelter

And numerous information sessions across the state.

Working It Out delivers four programs

Direct Support

Building individual resilience and pride in self-identity

Strengthening and re-negotiating relationships

Challenging existing systems

Managing services e.g. medical, education

Supporting and creating safe environments

Out in schools

Providing individual support to students, education programs for students and both cultural awareness training and professional learning programs for teachers. We also offer information sessions for parents

Out in the work place

Offering cultural awareness and professional development programs to private, public and community sectors

Out in the community

Offering advocacy through events, website, newsletter and resources.

Becoming a Board Member.

WIO is presently seeking expressions of interest from people with the necessary skills and knowledge to join the Board

We are looking for people who

- are a unifying voice effectively representing broader interests of the LGBTI Tasmanians
- have expertise, skills and connections that can assist in the governance of a community based state-wide service;
- have perspectives and experience that will assist WIO to work effectively across government and non-government sectors, the broader community and the diversity of LGBTI communities; and
- have sufficient time to invest in WIO.

If you are interested in our work and would like to support the organisation through Board membership contact Susan Ditter Executive Officer on 6231 1200 or exec@workingitout.org.au

Training News

Demand for our 2-hour introductory session and our advanced training program are growing. We are also providing briefings at staff meetings about the work of WIO and the needs of LGBTI Tasmanians.

WIO is the identified trainer for Tasmania Police and has coordinated and delivered training to both Police recruits and LGBTI Liaison Officers since 1998.

Working It Out is very pleased to announce that our educators are delivering advanced LGBTI cultural awareness training to police this year. This is very timely given the recent comments included in the Tasmanian Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Community Action Plan and Background Paper: Suicide Prevention and the findings of the Be Proud Tasmania Report.

The Champions for Change (C4C) training package is specifically designed to create a greater understanding and of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, to recognise the barriers to accessing services and to develop strategies for eliminating prejudice and discrimination towards LGBTI communities and individuals.

Trials of Champions for Change were held at Wynyard High School with Department of Education staff and in Hobart with Police Officers.

The aims of the training are to help participants to understand sexual, sex and gender diversity and to understand the experiences of being LGBTI in rural and urban Tasmania.

The training was also developed so that participants

- develop skills to recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination based on sexuality and gender identity.;
- develop strategies to address prejudice and discrimination based on sexuality and gender identity;
- and to enable people to identify and challenge prejudice and discrimination in organisational and interpersonal settings

The program is interactive focussing on open discussion and includes trained panel speakers who tell of their own experiences as LGBTI community members. This is part of the session that receives the most positive feedback.

Those who have completed the training have said:

It was very engaging

The trainers had wealth of knowledge

I liked the interactive activities

It was well organised, kept moving, covered a wide range of areas

All the activities were appropriate and engaging

The discussion generated was very interesting

I liked the small size of the group

Openness of people taking session

We do, however, continue to hear from people who feel the training we provide is not relevant to their work and this provides a challenge for us as trainers. It is our role to create an understanding of the importance of inclusive service delivery and that lack of inclusive service creates barriers and prevents access to schooling, medical care, social opportunities and the justice system.

OUTspace –a partnership between Working It Out and headspace Hobart. It's a diverse sex, sexuality and gender diverse social support group sex, for young people (16-25). OUTspace meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at headspace. The group is open and ongoing, and welcomes sex, sexuality and gender diverse young people and their friends and supporters.

Please contact Sue at Working It Out (6231 1200) or Aimee at headspace (6231 2927) for more information.



WIO LGBTI Life Award

2013 is the first year of the WIO LGBTI Life Award: recognising the work of a mainstream mental health organisation to ensure that LGBTI people with mental health issues are able to properly access their service.

"Same-sex attraction, gender dysphoria and intersex conditions are not themselves risk factors for mental health problems, but they may make people more vulnerable to negative experiences and discrimination. Discrimination is a significant issue that results in conflicted familial and other social relationships and diminished emotional and practical support. These issues are exacerbated when LGBTI people accessing mental health services have negative experiences arising from actual or perceived institutionalised discrimination or from a lack of resources and understanding of LGBTI-specific issues in the mental health sector."

The award was presented on May 17th, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia at the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Community Network Forum by Rodney Croome.

Rodney said *For the Mental Health Council of Tasmania to receive this award it would be enough that it has raised awareness about the link between prejudice and poor mental health outcomes. But it has gone further than this. It has advocated and lobbied for LGBTI law reforms like marriage equality on the basis that removing legal discrimination has a direct impact on improving mental health outcomes.*



Rodney Croome and Darren Carr CEO Mental Health Council Tasmania

Are you a member of Working It Out?

If you are this is a very friendly reminder that its time to renew your membership and if you are yet to join what a great time to do it. As a membership based organisation we rely on your support and networks to promote our role and the work that we do.

Southern Office

39 Burnett St North Hobart 03 6231 1200

Susan Ditter Executive Officer

Carolyn Hay Educator/Counsellor

Don Pitcher Educator/Counsellor

Sue Newman Educator and Office Manager

North West Office

Burnie Community Health Centre 11 Jones St Burnie 03 6432 3643

Sharon Jones Educator/Counsellor

Northern Office

45 Canning St Launceston 03 6334 4013

Sharon Jones Educator/Counsellor

WIO provides support groups including Allsorts for young people under 26
Gender Identity support and discussion and Rainbow Groups for 18yrs +
If you are interested or there is another support group you think is needed please ring us or text on 6231 1200 or 0438 346 122

Coming Up:

Artfully Queer Art Exhibition at Moonah Arts Centre opening on September 13th and
TasPride Festival from 1st to 9th November.