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| Speak Up November 18th | |
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| Male | This programme was first broadcast on Canterbury’s community access radio station Plains FM 96.9 and was made with the assistance of New Zealand on Air. |
| Female | Coming up next conversations on race relations and human rights with “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, here on Plains FM. |
| Sally | E ngā mana,  E ngā reo,  E ngā hau e whā  Tēnā koutou katoa  Nau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”.    Join the New Zealand Human Rights Commission as it engages in conversations around race and diversity in our country. Tune in as our guests “Speak Up”, sharing their unique and powerful experiences and opinions... May you also be inspired to “Speak Up” when the moment is right.  Kia ora and welcome to “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia” here on Plains FM 96.9. I’m Sally Carlton your host from the Human Rights Commission here in Christchurch. Today we’re going to be talking about domestic violence, particular any intersects between domestic violence and ethnicity and this is all in aid of the fact that on the 25th of November it’s the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. We’ve got some great guests in the studio here today: we’ve got Senior Constable Andrea Trenchard from the New Zealand Police, Ambika Kohli from Shakti Women’s Refuge and Maria RaRatuva from Pacific Women’s Watch. And if you could all just introduce yourselves please, tell us a little bit about your work and any other details you think might be interesting or relevant. |
| Ambika | OK if I start? Hello listeners this is Ambika and I work at Shakti Women’s Refuge and I’m in administration and Community Development Coordinator. So just to tell you briefly that Shakti is a women’s organisation which works with women from Middle Eastern, Asian, African background who are going through domestic violence. And apart from this job profile, I’m also doing a PhD, about to finish soonish and my area of research as well is about women cultural issues, cultural diversity, how do women negotiate within the patriarchal structure. So a lot to do with women and children, so pretty much it goes with my job as well. |
| Sally | Nice intersect there. |
| Andrea | Hi listeners, my name is Andrea, I’m a policewoman, I’ve been in the police for 24 years and been involved in the Family Violence Team for four years. My role right at the moment is Family Violence Coordinator so I look at all the domestic incidents that the police have attended within the week and then I take 15 of those families to a round table where we work with other agencies to help our clients move forward and be safe. |
| Sally | How do you select those 15 families? |
| Andrea | Normally it’s the high risk families, the people that need the most assistance that we can help, most of the times would be the offender has been arrested, a lot of times the victim or more often than not the woman won’t make a complaint and so the offender is not arrested but we still like to work with the family and try and make it safe for them and move forward for them and the children. |
| Sally | This might seem like quite a basic question but if the woman hasn’t made a complaint, how do you know which families….? |
| Andrea | A lot of people will not make a complaint to take a complaint to Court - they don’t want the offender to be charged - but they’ll still tell us about what’s happened. Until we get a signed statement and evidence we can’t take anything to Court but we’ll still work with the families in exactly the same way as what we would if we had an offender as well. |
| Sally | Could you just talk us briefly through what that process might look like? |
| Andrea | Making a complaint and going to Court? |
| Sally | Or more the process that you would talk them through. |
| Andrea | So from the original incident? |
| Sally | Yes. |
| Andrea | A police car would attend and they would take a report which comes back to me, they would also do some safety planning at the address to make sure that the victim is safe. There’s a couple of different ways that we can make somebody safe immediately and that’s normally to remove the offender from the address, we can do that by arrest, we can also do that now by using a PSO which is a Police Safety Order and we can remove an offender from an address for up to five days which leaves the person at risk at the home without the person that is the risk. So we can do that if the person who has been served the PSO comes back within those five days or up to five days then it’s a breach and we would put them then to Court.  The police at the time of the incident do a lot of safety planning and they try and eliminate the risk of further offending. We also would call Refuge immediately if that’s what the women would like or the person at risk would like so there’s a lot of support around. By the time the report arrives at my desk the next morning somebody from one of our teams would also contact that woman so there’s lots of follow up. If you’ve got children, CYF [Child, Youth and Family] would be involved but only to help you to make sure that the risk is eliminated, the risks… Trying to decrease the risk and to make sure that you’re protective of your children. So we’re there to help you. |
| Sally | Thanks Andrea. |
| Mere | Oh hi everyone, bula! I’m Mere RaRatuva and a member of the Pacific Women’s Watch based in Auckland and I moved here to Christchurch in January and I joined YWCA here. |
| Sally | Which is what sorry? |
| Mere | YWCA Christchurch. |
| Sally | If you could just tell us what that means though. |
| Mere | Oh well I’m on the board. |
| Sally | No sorry, what does it mean though, YWCA, for people who don’t know. |
| Mere | Young Women’s Christian Association. So my interest in domestic violence is really in terms of services for women and support systems for women and building resilience whether it’s at the individual level or at the family level, getting everyone together and building resilience around them and also in terms of community awareness, education for both parents I think, in terms of keeping everyone safe so that’s probably in the area of wellbeing. |
| Sally | Perfect that’s great. I guess the first question for all of you is what is domestic violence? Do we have a legal definition for it or are there other definitions that people use? |
| Ambika | I think when you say legal definition… If we go, like, the legal thing, of course there would be… And lawyers can tell you much better the actual definition but if you talk, like, in popular sense, how do we understand it and how it actually operates outside the legal book like rather than going word by word it pretty much means the violence that happens within the domestic sphere. I’ve also heard that even if violence happens between two flatmates and they’re sharing the same household, that can, under certain circumstances, fall under domestic violence. |
| Andrea | Yes it does. So to me, a domestic relationship you are a spouse or a partner, a family member, share a home or in a close relationship. The violence, domestic violence is violence against a person by another person who is in a domestic relationship, it can be physical, sexual or psychological. Psychological meaning intimidation, harassment, threatening to damage property, things like that. That’s all part of family violence as a definition. |
| Mere | I think for the Women’s Movement it can be problematic to categorise violence in terms of family because for women it’s really about men’s violence against women. So in the context of family violence we can talk about intimate partner violence or as you were saying Ambika, two flatmates. In terms of domestic violence, the sphere of the domestic is not necessarily confined to the home space, it can shift, it could be in the car, it could be at a public event between the two people who are living. |
| Andrea | That’s dead right, often in the community. |
| Mere | That’s right. So I think that broad understanding or… we need to broaden that sphere of the… |
| Ambika | The scope of the… |
| Mere | Yes, the scope. |
| Sally | Yes it’s interesting isn’t it because when you think of domestic violence you think, well maybe that’s within the home, but what you’re talking about is it can actually be… |
| Mere | Yes you still get into personal relationships and it could be by someone or between people who are de facto relationships, someone who has left the relationships and is an ex-partner who has come in and engaged in that violence relationship or abusive relationship. |
| Andrea | We do put that under domestic violence, we also put domestic violence under our children seeing mum and dad in a violent… |
| Mere | Yes that’s important as well. |
| Andrea | It is very, very important. |
| Mere | Oh that’s good. |
| Andrea | And that we do need to realise that there’s a lot… we often would go to a domestic where mum and dad have had a big fight, mum’s been assaulted badly or dad has been assaulted badly and the children are sitting there watching telly as if it’s quite normal. |
| Mere | Or hearing. |
| Andrea | That’s right and they have normalised it. For us that’s a huge concern and that’s one of our red flags. |
| Ambika | And also I wanted to add one thing: Like, when we’re talking about happening within domestic sphere people when they are, say for example I’ll say at the home… We also experience at Shakti that sometimes violence can happen even in long distance relationships like say for instance they’re not living together. They’re not even in the same country but they could be threatening somebody. Say for instance the woman is here, the man is overseas and he might call her and say oh I’m going to kill your family back at home here and then there’s nothing much the New Zealand Police can actually do about it. This is quite dynamic and that is where the challenges come. How you can actually deal with such issues? So domestic violence I think… rather than just saying this is the definition, it becomes actually quite difficult because it can happen in so many dynamic ways and in each case is so unique and different and challenging. |
| Andrea | So it’s not just an assault, it’s not a black eye and a broken bone. |
| Ambika | Exactly. |
| Andrea | It’s psychological and that’s a huge part of it, yes, you’re right and social media has changed a lot of violence, domestic violence because the old Facebook and Snapchat and also those modern things nowadays are bringing a new aspect to our violence within the family violence. |
| Sally | That might be a good point. Sorry guys to interrupt such a dynamic discussion but a good point to have our first song which is by Leonard Dembo, Shiri Yakangwara. |
|  | **MUSIC BY LEONARD DEMBO – SHIRI YAKANGWARA** |
| Sally | Welcome back to “Speak Up – Kōrerotia,” here on Plain’s FM, 96.9. I’m your host Sally Carlton and we’re speaking on domestic violence and its intersect with ethnicity and we’ve got Andrea from the Police, Ambika from Shakti and Mere from Pacific Women’s Watch. We’re going to start thinking now about what is the scope of the problem of domestic violence in New Zealand and Andrea’s going to start us off with some statistics which might put the scope into scale. |
| Andrea | Hello listeners. Sadly New Zealand has the highest reported rate of intimate partner violence in the world so we’re the leaders there and I think that’s a real shame. In 2014 - so that’s last year - 100,000 family violence incidents were reported to the police. That means we attended a family violence incident every 5 and a half minutes every day. Only 20% to 25% of all family violence is reported, so we’re only going to a quarter of what there really is out there. Thinking of all the police jobs in a day, 41% of the policeman’s time will be taken up with family violence. $1.4 billion of Government money every year is spent responding to family violence and sexual violence. 14 women, 7 men and 8 children on average are killed every year through family violence here in New Zealand. 63% of incidents that we go have children present at the domestic incident that we attend so it means that 63%, we have kiddies watching or present. During 2014, so last year, there were 146,657 notifications which is a report that has gone to CYF in relation to the care of children from family violence. 14% of children report being hit or physically harmed at home on purpose by an adult. 20% of girls, 9% boys report unwanted sexual touching or forced to do sexual things.  So our statistics are really high in New Zealand. Earthquakes… Did they make a difference with family violence? I think they did because people were really stressed after the earthquakes, it was a terribly stressful time. We also had a lot of people coming in for the rebuild and some of those people had domestic issues in their own locations and have brought those to us as well and I think isolation has caused an increase. Have we seen a decrease in the last year or so? Maybe we have from the earthquake related stuff, I mean after the earthquakes there was huge stresses as we all know. |
| Mere | And people moved away as well. |
| Andrea | A lot of people did, a lot of people did move away but they’ve replaced with other workers and that sort of thing but I think it did increase it. Ethnicities… I think it is changing here in Christchurch. |
| Ambika | Especially with the rebuild process, now we have got more immigrant communities here. |
| Andrea | We do, yes. I think isolation is a huge factor for them too and culture and religion as well. We are doing training with different cultures which is great; one of our drivers in policing, policing excellence for the next five years is families and diversity with other ethnicities. We want to improve our response to those people that are coming into our country and helping with us, so that’s one of our drivers of crime. |
| Ambika | I just want to add into what you said that not all incidents are reported, they’re pretty much like the tip of the iceberg and especially if I talk about our ethnic communities, Middle Eastern, Asian, Africa, most of our women are isolated, they can’t speak proper English, come of them can’t speak English at all, they have limited English skills, they do not know about their legal rights because from the countries where they come from domestic violence is such a private matter you do not take it out and especially to the police because police in these countries are often quite corrupted and women are so scared of approaching the police.  So mcuh of the time that’s where they contact us because they don’t want to go to the police first of all, they do not want to charge the offender. And the other thing is, they do not have any trust in police and then moreover hardly any language skills, isolated and then so many other things… Oh if you do that, I will do this to you, you’re all sitting here on my visa and if take off my sponsorship then your children will stay in New Zealand and you will be sent off. So, so many things. |
| Andrea | And we have a lot… I’ve worked with Shakti with a couple of women, a lady that I worked with when I was working on the team and that was one of the things that her partner said, I’m your sponsor so you will do… When we removed him, he was arrested and I went into the home and there was some potatoes and a loaf of bread and I took her food the next day and I gave her a cell phone so that we could contact her and she could contact us because he had taken her cell phone from her and he’d really isolated her. And the thought of being sent back to her country with her girls was enormous.  That is not a barrier and we can help. The Police Family Violence teams don’t wear uniform, we sneak along in plain clothes so you wouldn’t know that we were policemen until we flash our badge at you. And we’re here to help you and yes, it is very frightening coming forward for anybody- be it a New Zealander or someone visiting, a new New Zealander - but very different to deal with and I’d just like to put it out there that our teams and the police, that’s our professional way to move forward with families, we want to work with you and you’re not the only one with a problem. It’s OK to ask for help. |
| Mere | So with police role, with Pasifika communities here, how would you address a Pasifika person? |
| Andrea | We have some Pasifika police officers, I’ve recently just dealt with an assault case with a young person and we have used some of our Pasifika staff who have come on board with us. |
| Mere | Would you work with the Public Trust? They have a home base service. |
| Andrea | The Pacific Trust? |
| Mere | Yes. But not a refuge or… |
| Andrea | No they don’t have a refuge at the moment but they do have social workers and I have met them so we work with the community. |
| Sally | Is Shakti the only women’s refuge particularly for women of a particular ethnicity? |
| Ambika | Yes. |
| Mere | Yes but there are others. |
| Ambika | Middle Eastern, Asian, African but that is where our culture competency is and that is what we are basically trained for. So say for instance, I speak Punjabi, my other colleagues speak Mandarin and Japanese and we have got a pool of volunteers who speak different languages and as I put it earlier many of our women cannot speak proper English or they have very limited English skills and especially if they are from some parts of India like Punjab or from China then their English skills are actually very limited, they can just call and then can say Chinese or somebody can speak Chinese, that’s the only English they could speak and somehow they manage to get our number and they get in touch with us and that is why we are… Our staff is very multicultural, we speak different languages and that is where our culturally competency for, that is what we are trained for. So we work with Middle Eastern, Asian, African women but say for instance if a woman from mainstream call us it’s not that we are going to say, oh sorry we can’t do… We will actually refer her to the mainstream Women’s Refuge and would give her the number and how can she contact them so it’s not like if somebody will contact us we say no, no, no it’s just like we will make a referral. |
| Mere | Because here you have Aviva and West Refuge for anyone who wants to access that service. |
| Ambika | And also the Māori Women’s Refuge. |
| Andrea | Yes we do. |
| Mere | And you work closely with them? |
| Andrea | We work with all of them, we work with all the refuges, we do. We also have our team that works with the Māori Ethnic and Pacific team. Li’Ying is Chinese so she works with those folk, we have Phil of course who comes from the African states and then we have some Māori Iwi Liaison Officers as well. So we are covered. And we have some Pacific staff that work on the groups so we are covered with I hope, most people and you’d be surprised how many… I lived in Thailand for 12 months as a student so I’m not fluent anymore so there’s lots of… |
| Mere | Challenges. |
| Andrea | Yes. |
| Ambika | Because not having proper skill of that language where you’re living in. |
| Sally | Especially for such a sensitive issue I imagine, language must be key. You also mentioned cultural competencies, it’d be great if you could talk a little bit to that… It’s different to language but how is it different? |
| Ambika | So I’ve pretty much touched on it but I will actually expand on it. Like, say for example one of the things I mentioned of the language thing but when we talk about cultural competency I will say the issues that we deal with in our community are very different from the mainstream. Often in our communities we get those cases where girls - it happens with boys as well but because Shakti’s expertise is in dealing with women - we got girls as young as like 14, 15 or are forced to get married without their wish. There have been cases which are also in the media where a girl was 17 years old and as you all know that in New Zealand you can get married with parental consent once you are 16 plus and once you are 18 then you can make your own decision. So what the parents did was that they signed on behalf of the girl but actually she wasn’t willing to get married. So this was one of the examples that happened and also before I expand, I also think sometimes that if you are needing some consent for something it means you are being considered as a child. So if you need consent to get married at the age of 16, I question is it really an adult marriage or is it a child marriage because you need a consent? So this is something maybe the legal system that needs to be reviewed and then of course that’s not my job but that’s one of the suggestions.  In other cases we have say for instance with dowry so it’s more prevalent among the Indian subcontinent like Pakistan, Bangladesh and India where what happens is the bride family is expected to give lots of material assets in terms of car, money, property and if they fail to give it - it’s not happening in every house but still it’s common - and if they fail to give then they could be killed. So say for example in India, according to the 2012 Indian Crime Statistics - and again not every case is reported - one dowry death happens in every 90 minutes. It means a woman is killed because she didn’t bring sufficient dowry in India every 90 minutes, that’s a huge number and that’s only the tip of the iceberg and when people come here, it’s not only a positive things that they bring with them, they bring some of the flaws as well of their culture and these are the things… Like, say for example in Auckland a couple of years back, a woman was forced to drink a drain cleaner, an Indian woman because of course she didn’t bring sufficient dowry and then she had to… I think she has lost her voice forever because the windpipe or something got burned, so these kinds of challenges, these are just to touch one or two few things that are different from the mainstream and another culture competency.  We understand these things, how it can be fatal if a woman come and say oh… You know, my parents are forcing me and then if I give her an option or a suggestion of course they have to make their own decision something like, oh you can actually sit with your parents and talk about it, they need to understand you have your own life – that thing won’t work, because if you don’t take appropriate actions, how you say, appropriate steps for her safety she might go back and then she might get killed the very same day because things are very different now because it’s more collective rather than individual. So these are some of the things I can say when we talk about cultural competency. |
| Sally | Some really good examples there. I think we might continue with this cultural discussion after this song which is ‘Free Bird’ by Lynyrd Skynyrd. |
|  | **MUSIC BY LYNYRD SKYNYRD – FREE BIRD** |
| Sally | Welcome back to “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. We’re talking about domestic violence and ethnicity and we’ve been talking about cultural competency, what does that mean and particularly in this context and I think we’ll just pick up the conversation where we left off because it was really riveting. So just opening the floor: How does this problem get managed? What are the problems? |
| Mere | OK. I think with Pacific communities there are diverse issues there. Probably in terms of cultural… I suppose there are different challenges for those who still have a strong link with the communities, demands perhaps on the family to adhere to certain cultural activities where the man is considered… I mean this is a notion, I’m not saying the only notion or model of a marriage if we’re talking about a marriage or relationship, the man rules the home and the woman submits to the man and also we… There are different versions of it. I suppose with some certain communities or certain marriages perhaps or families, they have…. It’s not only the family or the couple, you have the wider community who has a strong influence and strong say in how they live their lifestyle. And for example the church is quite a strong influence on how they live their lifestyle, it’s often said it’s a public information that the church has certain demands financial and time on people and that puts pressure on the couple, on the man and the woman. So those are some of the things and also in terms of the wider community, you know you have your nuclear family here in New Zealand and you also have your extended family. I am very particular about using that category ‘extended family’ because I think it’s important to know clearly and identify your nuclear family, your immediate family, who are you first responsible for and your extended family, relatives but sometimes I think… This, it could be universal as well, in the Pacific community there’s a tendency to put everyone together in the same basket… You know… My family, my immediate family includes… Has a tendency to include the wider community and it gets complicated and creates stress because your resources that are available to you or that you are able to put together, it just grows thin, too thin, spreads too thin. |
| Andrea | And often they’re sending money home, we see that a lot. |
| Mere | It is a good thing in itself but in terms of managing and I think it’s a good thing and be bold about it, it’s a good thing and I mean that to identify your nuclear, your family, what does family really mean to one? So that’s some of the challenges I think that needs to be considered in terms of service provision whether it’s policing or social intervention, even government policy but by saying that I don’t mean that we do not… We ignore or we excuse domestic violence in whatever shape or form, no, it’s to do with trying to understand the problem situation and we can address domestic violence in any shape or form. Whether I think even with Pasifika community - it might be as well for the Middle Eastern, African communities - domestic violence is associated with shame and disgrace and on the other side, honour, the family name. But I think that shouldn’t downplay how we address or intervene in that situation but perhaps consider ways that it’s perhaps culturally appropriate to deal with the situation. |
| Sally | We do hear often about culture being used as an excuse, don’t we? |
| Mere | Yes. |
| Andrea | Yes. Religion and culture. |
| Mere | Yes but that’s an interesting… If I may just… That religion issue, because interestingly in the Christian… In the churches, one of the things that is taught in the churches, it’s biblical is to do with the husband, it’s a scripture that calls the husband to love their wives and the next scripture to that is the wives to submit to their husband and I’ve always…for me I read that differently and with confidence because it’s about the wife submitting to the love, the husband, that love, not to domestic violence, not to be used. No it’s the wife submit to that love and the wife can really…you know make time and find the time and take that role to always make the husband accountable to that love, to that position and role of loving. So in the churches… I like to put this challenge to the church and the teaching of the gospel, that relationship of love, it’s always been about that in the church. |
| Ambika | I just wanted to say when you asked about the culture – no excuse for abuse, Shakti, the amnesty, ‘It’s not OK’ campaign we launched our booklet called ‘Culture, No Excuse For Abuse’ and we just pretty much focused on that you cannot use cultural practices as an umbrella to practice violence under the name of it. Whenever this topic I comes up, I always say there’s a very thin line between cultural practices and cultural violence. Like, often people would say for instance, oh it’s part of our culture. Actually it’s not! Becauses say for instance if you talk about dowry, when it actually started traditionally, historically, it was because at that time women were usually not allowed to inherit parental property so when they got married they got a certain amount of money for their future security which was supposed to be with them. But with time it changed and because once you are married you go to the husband’s family, they started controlling all resources and things changed. It has never been part of our culture, first of all. Secondly it’s illegal in India under the Dowry Prohibition Act so people might say, oh we do that in India but actually, it’s illegal to both ask for dowry and give dowry, both things are illegal but people do it and they say, oh we are giving to our daughters, it’s more like a gift. But if you start forcing the women to bring it then it becomes violence and it is illegal in India. But people will come and they will say it’s part of our culture and majority will believe it because of course they don’t know what’s happening in your country was the law. And same with other issues like female genital mutilation or forced marriages, underage marriages.  In these countries where it’s happening - maybe in most of the countries - they have a law against all these things but then there’s a different thing like having a law in the book and implementing it and often, like you talked about honour and everything, and when we talk about collective values where it’s not about only individual thing, the honour is also collective, the family name is also collective so sometimes the violence against a person is not actually carried by the family but by other members of community because they think, oh this person has bought shame to our community and so these things happen here. So when we have women, we have to be very careful to send them back to their community because sometimes they might not have real threat from only their family but also from other community members who are not in any kind of blood relationship with them, the collective idea of honour, the collective idea of controlling somebody’s sexuality, somebody’s life choices, that actually operates and then the whole thing comes… There’s a very thin line between cultural violence and cultural practice and yes, we need to be culturally sensitive but we should not allow anyone to practice these things under the umbrella of culture. So that is something very important to look at. |
| Sally | That’s a great point to finish up this third section and when we come back we’ll be thinking about what’s being done to try and address some of these issues and so time for a song now and the song is ‘Hey Mami’ by Sylvan Esso. |
|  | **MUSIC BY SYLVAN ESSO – HEY MAMI** |
| Sally | Nau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. We’re speaking with Andrea Trenchard from the Police, Ambika Kohli from Shakti and Mere Ratuva from Pacific Women’s Watch about domestic violence and ethnicity and we’re going to focus now on what’s being done about it.  And this is part of the problem I think, it’s quite a hidden problem despite the fact that it’s so widespread; despite the fact that we’ve heard those statistics it still remains quite hidden. So what messages are out there and how are these messages being disseminated? |
| Andrea | I think we need to go back to the saying “It’s OK to ask for help”, a problem shared is an easier way to solve a problem, families, friends, the wider community, we all have really an obligation I think to come forward and help somebody that’s in a domestic violence relationship. There are lots of places you can go to help, yes the police is one and we can put you into contact with refuges, church groups, there’s a lot of agencies out there that can help. We want everyone to live in respectful relationships and happy families and not to condone violence towards women and children and to men as well. |
| Sally | How about in terms of these ethnicity- or national group-specific messages and for example, I mean the church is a good way of reaching Pacific communities, is it a way that these anti-domestic violence messages might get disseminated as well? |
| Mere | It can be done but I’m not sure whether the church is.... whether that is directly part of their programme or on their programme, domestic violence agenda but for example here in Canterbury we have the Pacific Trust that provides services for that Pacific community here and it’s a home base one, the social workers, they provide that whether it’s parenting supporting. |
| Andrea | Pepi programme, yes they do. |
| Mere | Yes, social support and so on and you also have community education activities where people can access and so on. And to mention also the refuges around New Zealand, I don’t think you have one specifically for Pasifika here but the refuges here are open to all here in Canterbury but in Auckland they have one or two for Pasifika women. And you have the police. I’ve noticed that when you deal even the 0800 number the first thing they say is if it’s an emergency call the police and I’ve always wondered hmmm... that’s the system, you call the police first but it’s good that you have a section where you cater for people... callouts that are domestic violence oriented. |
| Sally | And I’ve noticed... We’ve spoken about ‘It’s not OK’ - and there’s a website you can go to if you’re interested - and I notice Andrea, you’re wearing your white ribbon. So the campaigns around domestic violence and there’s two of them ‘It’s Not OK’ and White Ribbon Day, what’s their role? Do they work? Do you think the message is getting out there? |
| Andrea | It’s changing from ‘It’s Not OK’ because some people just thought it’s not OK and they stopped it at there, we actually wanted it to be not OK and to seek help for people so the motto has now changed, it’s now ‘It’s OK to ask for help’ and we’re hoping that will enable people to take that next step and to ask for help. White Ribbon Day is coming up and that’s on the 25th of November, we are having an event in the Cathedral Square from 12.30 to 1.30, wear your vest, high-viz vest but it’s when we come together and think about all the victims and think about domestic violence. The aim of White Ribbon is to eliminate men’s violence towards women by encouraging men to take ownership of this really important issue and model good behaviours that can change attitudes and behaviours and this came about in 1991 in Canada following a brutal mass shooting of 15 female students so men have got together and realised that that’s not OK and they want to make a difference. So it’s a big celebration for us, is White Ribbon, there’s huge effect on children through intergenerational harm and learnt and observed behaviours from family violence. We want to stop those learnt behaviours and we really need early intervention. And that’s where it comes from the public to intervene and get help for those families. |
| Mere | Women’s organisations, because I think they’ve been the forerunners and pushers of the anti-violence campaign. |
| Andrea | At the end of the day we want to make New Zealand safe, one of the safest countries in the world because sadly we’re at the other end at the moment, we want everyone to have a right to be safe and to feel safe in their homes and in their families. |
| Sally | You touched on, I think, a point that is critical: the role of men and men taking ownership of anti-violence and I’ve seen the billboards, grey tinted, strong men and men have to take notice of this and take ownership of it and again, I guess, there are ethnic or cultural practices that probably come into play around the man being the head of the household, those sorts of things. Have you seen any evidence of that? |
| Ambika | Can you come back I didn’t understand your question. |
| Sally | Men taking part in anti-violence campaigns. |
| Ambika | There are a few in the community who are very active and who would be there to help and I know some of the cases where people had been in abuse themselves and say for instance one of them who Google it once and then he realised that he was an abuser and he changed but it would be like 1 in 1000 so it’s not very easy or common thing especially when you have an upper hand in society, it’s more about power and control, so you don’t lose your power. But it doesn’t mean that everybody is bad or everybody is like that, there are a few people who are active, who are there to support and things are changing - I think too slow - but what I have seen is, so say for instance, if there’s a guy whose mother was a single mother, he has seen his mother going through all these things, often they become very sensitive about these things that they do not have to hurt a woman and for them they have only seen their mother making all the important decisions and for them, nothing like feminism or something, these kind of words to categories somebody in a derogatory manner exists because in fact this is what they know and this is what they have seen that how their mother has gone through and has faced those challenges. Like, say for instance when we do our appeal week days and if we are say for instance, sitting with a donation bucket in a mall people would come, they would give $50, $10, $20 and they will say when I was a child I was there with my mum, you guys are really doing a great job. These things you get to see in your everyday life so of course things are changing. We can’t say that these campaigns or rallies or parades have got no impact; they have, but it’s more on the micro-level, it might be.... |
| Mere | Oh very minimal. |
| Andrea | I think it is. |
| Mere | We have heard that statistics speak for itself, it’s still a big issue in itself here in New Zealand, and even most of the anti-violence campaigners from Women’s Refuge New Zealand and those who work in that area are still insisting that there needs to be more discussion even on the part of the government in terms of laws, legislation, Court procedures and so on to make it safe for women, those who have been affected by violence and sexual violence, those things. And also resources, this cost cutting is just an ongoing thing, depriving women particularly those who have been trained to be interventionists in this area and depriving women to be able to access these services. |
| Sally | So we’re almost out of time, any final comments? |
| Ambika | It’s everybody’s duty to make our community, our families safer, make sure our children are safe, our community members are safe and we have to work together because if you look at the history - and even today, I think - violence has been part of the human species always and this is what makes it very challenging. And to make sure that people are entitled to perform their responsibilities and they remain safe, that’s the most important thing, that’s what I would like to say. |
| Andrea | The message I want to say is stand up against violence, don’t be afraid to ring the police even if you are unsure. |
| Sally | And what number would they call? |
| Andrea | 111. Ring 111. If it’s not a 111 call we’ll still help you put you through to the right number but if it’s urgent and you want emergency then 111 is the number to ring. This month the police have an operation called Operation Bright Hope and it’s focused on family violence. Police will be out and about visiting homes and malls and through the city giving out white ribbons so that’s our focus this month to help with our family violence, to help people at risk and to see if we can eliminate some of the offences that are going on and make our families safe. |
| Sally | How about for Shakti? |
| Ambika | Ok so you can call us on 0800 742 584, this is 24/7 crisis line number and for Christchurch Monday to Friday 9-3 it’s 389 2028. |
| Sally | Thanks and just add to that the Women’s Refuge in Christchurch is 0800 733 843. Any last words from you, Mere? |
| Mere | Yes I just want to encourage women all around New Zealand to be bold. Your wellbeing and your life is very, very important and don’t be afraid to… If you’re going through something, domestic violence in whatever shape or form, talk to someone, ring the police or one of the refuges numbers, talk to someone about it, it’s very, very important to do that. |
| Andrea | And you can ring a police station and ask to speak to the Family Violence Team and one of my team members will speak with you and guide you to put you through to someone that can assist you. |
| Sally | It’s good to know all these supports are out there. We’re out of time for today, most unfortunately, it’s been a very enlightening and quite emotional discussion, a huge thank you very much for coming in and sharing your experiences with us.  Just a shout out to the listeners: Next month we’ll be talking about migrants in the rebuild so tune in on the 16th of December or the 20th of December.  And also an upcoming notice: the 3rd of December is the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and the Earthquake Disability Leadership Group combined with the CUBE and CCS Disability Action, they’re all combining forces to create a huge mural that’s going to be unveiled at 10.00am on the 3rd of December, corner of Antiqua Street and Balfore Terrace and Nicky Wagner, Minister for Disability Affairs is going to be unveiling the mural and this mural celebrates the theme, “Inclusion matters, Access for All in Christchurch.” So if you can, get on down and check it out. See you next time. |