

## Everyone waits for something

Everyone waits for sentencing  
To find out when they're home  
Everyone waits for visits  
Rather than speaking on the phone

Everyone waits for social time  
To keep them feeling fine  
Everyone waits for something  
And something came in time

(by Rachel via the Prison Inreach Service)

## Inside this issue:

<b>Sexual Exploitation</b>	2
<b>Fire Safety</b>	2
<b>Women on Canvas</b>	3
<b>Coventry Fun Run</b>	4
<b>Fundraising</b>	4
<b>Our Thanks Go To...</b>	4

## Kairos Extends Its Mission

On Wednesday 5th June, Kairos WWT held an Extraordinary General Meeting to revise and refine our Mission Statement and Aims. Members of Kairos WWT participated in a full discussion regarding the work that we undertake and our increasing focus on the prevention strand of our mission. We wanted to reflect with more accuracy, our philosophy regarding sexual exploitation and ensure our language reflected the breadth of our services.

Research from women caught up in sex work reveals that over half (some figures suggest up to 75%) began their involvement in prostitution before their 18th birthday (Paying the Price: The Home Office, 2004).

Over the last 18 months, we have been developing our partnership with The Children's Society and responding to the need highlighted by Coventry City Council's Analysis of local support services to work in schools to help young people recognise

the signs of targeted exploitation.

This partnership has enhanced our understanding (see page 2) and the invaluable work we have undertaken with young people up to the age of 24 has shaped our vision for the future which has a strong emphasis on prevention.

Our revised Mission Statement and Aims:

### Mission Statement:

Kairos Women Working Together (WWT) believes in the value and dignity of all women. We aim to support, empower, and give a voice to women at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation, including those caught up in sex work and those aspiring to leave it. We work in Coventry by providing safe spaces, a listening ear and opportunities for change & growth.

### Aims:

To support and empower women at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation, including those caught up in sex work and those aspiring to leave it

To offer safe spaces for women

To offer a listening ear and to give a voice through advocacy

To create a wide range of opportunities for development, change and growth

To promote self-advocacy, self-care and independence

To facilitate access to other professional services



## Sexual Exploitation

At Kairos WWT we believe that someone can be a victim of sexual exploitation at any age. We view sex work as part of sexual exploitation and believe that the women we work with have limited choice and agency where involvement in prostitution is concerned.

Sexual exploitation is where someone is being forced or manipulated into sexual activity in exchange for something — money, gifts or accommodation or less tangible goods such as affection or status. The sexual activity and exchange may be seen as consensual but are based on imbalance of power which severely limits victim's options and agency.

The risk factors associated with sexual exploitation, including sex work, include substance abuse, poverty,

historical abuse, time spent in care, domestic violence, physical and emotional difficulties, poor educational attainment and family breakdown. In addition, research has highlighted links between being sexually exploited as a young person and being sexually exploited in adulthood. Victims of sexual abuse in childhood are 28 times more likely to be arrested for crimes associated with sex work in adulthood as non victims (Windom, 1995) and the average age for a young woman to become involved in sex work is just 12 years old (Home Office, 2004).

Unfortunately, this is a common experience for our service users. In our last

newsletter we included a piece entitled, "My Story: A Dark Place". Within this narrative, our service user speaks about being physically abused for years by her father, running away from home and being introduced to



exploitative adults by another young run away.

Kairos offers support to women who been subject to sexual exploitation, who are caught up in sex work and those who are at risk of exploitation. We aim to empower women and through our range of services, help women enjoy improved life choices and chances.

## Kairos's Very Own Fireman Sam!



In April and May, Andrew Wright from the West Midlands Fire Service joined Kairos to carry out Fire Safety Checks for our service users.

Andrew gave out fire safety advice, free smoke alarms and specialist equipment to those service users who have specific needs.

For service users who have

mobility difficulties or find it hard to wake up, Andrew ensured that this information was logged on the fire service database so that this information is know in the event of a fire.

We would like to thank Andrew and the West Midlands Fire Service for their continuing support.

## Women on Canvas

This month Kairos launched its annual project 'Women On Top' (WOT), a performing arts project run by Kairos in collaboration with Caste Away Arts, who work with marginalised groups. The WOT project offers a platform for women to express themselves through art, creative writing and performance, allowing them to find and sound their voice through artistic freedom and expression.

As in previous years women will be given the opportunity to write and perform their own monologues. From the 17<sup>th</sup> July, between 6-8pm at St Mary & St Benedicts Church and taking place each Wednesday throughout July and August, Coventry women are invited to attend workshops with Kairos volunteer Jen Bakewell and Caste Away Arts director Reena Jaisiah. Participants will be

encouraged to consider themselves and to articulate in their own voice their own unique identities; those aspects, experiences, thoughts and dreams that make them the, spirited, unique and strong women they are. The monologues will be performed by those women publicly later in the year and tickets can be purchased by the general public. Check out our website for further details in the coming weeks.

This year we have expanded WOT, adding a new project entitled 'Women on Canvas'. As the title suggests we are encouraging women to paint their self portraits onto large canvases. We hope these pieces will be inspired by positive affirmations, aspirations

and hope.

We've already begun the painting sessions. During WINGS and Evening Drop In sessions women have contributed by capturing a piece of themselves in painting. It's not an easy task, as we found out; all the staff have contributed a piece and believe me, being faced with a blank canvas, armed with nothing but your own thoughts and a paintbrush is a very intimidating thing. But the Kairos women have thrown themselves into the task with real passion and we are very proud of their achievements.

The finished canvases will be displayed publicly and we think viewers will also be proud of what the women have achieved and take inspiration from it. The details are not yet finalised so please see our website soon for further information on where the paintings will be displayed and come along to enjoy the exhibition.





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LOTTERY FUNDED

### Our Thanks

Our thanks go to the following people and organisations for their kind donations over the past few months: Stacey Mason, Wellspring Coffee Lounge, Anne Darnton, Jackie Capitani, all of you who kindly sponsored us to run miles at the Coventry Fun Run and our anonymous donors.

## Coventry "Fun" Run

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of June Kairos WWT completed a 5K Fun Run in Coventry's Memorial Park. We are pleased to inform our readers that all 10 members of #TeamKairos; a group comprising of staff, volunteers and trustees ran the whole distance (OK, we walked up 2 hills!) to blaze through the finish line at a very respectable time of 37 minutes!

We were overwhelmed by the amount of support we



received and are extremely proud to announce that so far our combined efforts have raised over £800! This far exceeds our original target of £500 and the total continues to rise!

Our campaigning, training and eventual sporting finale was all in aid of raising funds to enable Kairos WWT to continue the work we do in support of women at risk of, or subject to sexual exploitation.

Our sincere gratitude goes out to everyone who assisted in the event. Whether it was making the T-shirts, planning logistics, collecting sponsorship, giving sponsorship, making and collecting items for our stall, 'manning' the stall or running.

Our magnificent display of athleticism on the day was the result of a gruelling 8



week programme of rigorous training before the event. We would love to say that we breezed and that it was a mere walk in the park, but it's just not true! We described all details: the good, the bad and the downright embarrassing in blog form on our website. You can access all the details at [www.kairoswwt.org.uk/news](http://www.kairoswwt.org.uk/news).

We hope to make this an annual event... because that's how long it will take to recover!

*Thank you for supporting Team Kairos!*

## Putting the FUN in Fundraising!

If you are now in the mood for fundraising we have lots of exciting ways that you can get involved.

For the adventurous amongst you, on **August 24<sup>th</sup>**, we will be holding our first **sponsored sleep out** in the centre of Hillfields. We will sleep rough, with entertainment and snacks, till the sun comes up the following morning.

Research carried out by Kairos WWT in 2007 found that 70% of our service-users had experienced some type of housing difficulty; 25% of our service-users at that time had no fixed abode. The Sleep Out not only

provides an opportunity to raise money for Kairos WWT but also to gain a small insight into what it is like to have to sleep on the streets. **Why not join us?**



If you like an adrenaline rush why not hold your own sponsored event; jump from a plane, climb Kilimanjaro, or try something less life threatening like a run, walk or swim?

For those of you who love a girls night out, how about swapping this for a girls night in. Donate the money you save on drinks, dancing and taxis to an excellent cause.

If the Coventry Fun Run has inspired you to raise some cash, get in touch and we can set up sponsorship forms via our Big Give page and promote events.

Email the team at [admin@kairoswwt.org.uk](mailto:admin@kairoswwt.org.uk) or give us a call on 02476 559550 to get involved.

**WE NEED YOU!**