

**SOUTH EASTERN CENTRE  
AGAINST SEXUAL  
ASSUALT**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2004-2005**

## Manager's review

The past year has been one of many changes for SECASA. There have been changes in staffing, changes in the locations of our services and wider changes in the way services are delivered in the Southern Metropolitan Region. Throughout all these changes SECASA continued to provide a high quality accessible service across the whole region. Workers demonstrated their commitment to SECASA's clients by offering an increasing range of specialist services and working with dedication and energy to bring about individual and wider change.

The services in the Southern Metropolitan Region have continued to operate out of Cranbourne, Dandenong, Frankston, St Kilda, Clayton and East Bentleigh. The location of the Cranbourne service has changed from the Southern Health Cranbourne Integrated Care Centre to the City of Casey Family Resource Centre. In addition, we have co located with the City of Casey in Berwick at the Rossmoyne Family Resource Centre. An additional service has commenced in St Kilda at the Access Health Centre operated by the Salvation Army with a monthly service at the specialist Magistrate Court dealing with sex workers.

The Pratt Foundation has again generously funded two workers in the Southern Sexual Abuse Counselling Prevention Program to attend the Gall Ryan training program in Denver Colorado on Treatment of Sexually Abusive Youth A Goal Oriented Approach.

The Statewide Steering Committees to Reduce Sexual Assault and Family Violence have continued to meet throughout 2004-2005. The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence was instrumental in the Victoria Police developing the Police Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence and the success of a budget bid leading to \$35.1 million being allocated for the development of family violence services over the next 4 years.

This development has led to SECASA considering its position in relation to the provision of counselling services for victims of family violence in addition to the after hours family violence service already provided.

SECASA continued its involvement with UNICEF Child Protection Branch Hanoi, Vietnam with one worker visiting twice over the past 12 months to work in the Hai Phong area on the issue of Children in Conflict with the Law. The agency also commenced its second year of representing Victoria on the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence and continued its monthly attendance at the Peak Body CASA Forum meetings.

A new statewide program was commenced to provide treatment for young people aged 12-17 with an intellectual disability who exhibit sexually aggressive behaviour.

There have been a number of staff changes with 3 workers leaving to work in a new unit established by the Victoria Police. One worker is on maternity leave. A new position was created in conjunction with the Social Work Department called the Child At Risk Social Worker based across The Angela Taylor Child Protection Unit, the Emergency Department and the paediatric wards.

During all the hard work and challenges the staff have continued to be a source of inspiration. The counselor/ advocates have provided training to professionals and the community while juggling the demands of 24 hour service delivery. The Office Managers have maintained their sense of balance and humour and contributed to the smooth running of the organization. Everyone at SECASA has continued to create a supportive, pleasant environment within which to work for which I thank them all wholeheartedly.

## Service history

The Sexual Assault Centre was originally set up at the Queen Victoria Medical Centre, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, in 1977. This was the first Centre to provide services to victim/survivors of sexual assault in Melbourne. In 1987 the Centre moved with the Queen Victoria Medical Centre to the new premises of Monash Medical Centre in Clayton.

From 1987 until 1993 the Centre was known as the Monash Sexual Assault Centre and was situated within the Social Work Department at Monash Medical Centre, Clayton. In February 1993 it moved to separate premises adjoining Monash Medical Centre's Moorabbin Campus and changed its name to the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA).

The Honourable Minister for Health, Mrs. Marie Tehan, officially opened the new premises on October 8th 1993.

Whilst having the administrative centre on the Moorabbin Campus of MMC, the Centre operates out of 6 other permanent locations and provides a visiting service in several others.

## Services provided

SECASA provides services within the Southern Metropolitan Region to children and adults, both female and male, who have been sexually assaulted. The Centre also works with non-offending family members, partners, caregivers and support workers.

The Southern Metropolitan Region encompasses the south-east suburbs of Melbourne and covers the Mornington Peninsula, Westernport and the Dandenong, Berwick, Cranbourne and Pakenham growth corridors.

The Southern Sexual Abuse and Counselling Prevention Program is a service for adolescent sex offenders and their families which commenced in 2001 as part of SECASA's preventative work.

A new statewide program Sexual Assault and Intellectual Disability (SAID) commenced in early 2005 offering a service for 12-17 year-olds with sexually abusive behaviours and an intellectual disability.

The Department of Human Services Protective Services refer their clientèle for a range of specialist services including assessment and treatment.

Respect, Protect, Connect and Feeling Safe Together are programs conducted in Secondary and Primary Schools throughout the entire region.

The Angela Taylor Child Protection Unit operates with 'wider boundaries than the Southern Metropolitan Region providing a service for all children who live south of the Yarra. Children living north of the Yarra attend the Royal Children's Hospital Gatehouse Centre.

There is a Joint legal service, which is 9 years old, provided by the Springvale Monash Legal Service and SECASA for clients who live within the region.

SECASA provides an after hours service for victims of family violence to discuss their options with a counsellor.

Finally, professional and community education is provided throughout the region.

## Locations

SECASA is auspiced by Southern Health. Counselling is provided in a variety of settings. The Centre's administration and some counselling services are based in a house on the grounds of the Moorabbin Campus of Monash Medical Centre in Centre Road, East Bentleigh. Workers also operate in permanent locations in Frankston, Clayton, Berwick, St Kilda, Dandenong and Cranbourne.

The Frankston service is co located with a General Practice in the centre of Frankston. Dandenong has five workers located at the Visy Cares Centre. The Cranbourne and Berwick workers are located at the City of Casey Cranbourne and Berwick Family Resource Centres and the St Kilda workers at the Salvation Army Bridge Project and Access Health in Grey Street.

A worker is provided to attend the Specialist Sex Workers' Court at the Melbourne Magistrate Court once a month.

SECASA is committed to providing an accessible service. The service will continue to locate workers out in the region with Moorabbin serving as an administrative base.

The range of services provided by SECASA encompasses:

- 24 hour crisis counselling and medical care
- Crisis counselling (short term)
- Supportive counselling (medium term/long term)
- Movement therapy
- After Hours Family Violence Counselling Service
- Adolescent sexually abusive behaviour treatment program
- Medical follow-up
- Groups for adult survivors, children, adolescents and non-offending parents, partners and caregivers
- Psychological assessments for criminal injuries claims
- Legal service for criminal injuries claims
- Legal/advocacy
- Reports for courts and tribunals
- Interpreter services
- Secondary consultation
- Community education
- Professional training
- Student supervision
- Research

## **Mission statement**

To reduce, and ultimately eliminate, sexual assault through individual and social change.

## **Aims**

SECASA aims to provide

- A comprehensive service which responds to the needs of those who have been sexually assaulted, including crisis care, counselling, medical care and advocacy
- Information and education to raise community awareness of the nature and incidence of sexual assault
- Awareness and prevention focussed programs

## Services

### After hours sexual assault service

SECASA provides a 24-hour crisis care service from the Crisis Care Unit within the Emergency Department at Monash Medical Centre, Clayton. This service helps victim/survivors during the initial crisis following a recent sexual assault. Counsellors provide support, information and advocacy enabling those using the service to make informed choices in relation to reporting to Police, legal action and medical care.

Follow-up counselling is offered at a convenient site either at East Bentleigh, Clayton, Frankston, Dandenong, St Kilda, Berwick or Cranbourne as well as a number of locations catering for clients with special needs.

From 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005, 318 people aged seventeen years and over attended the Crisis Care Unit.

### After hours family violence service

From 1st February 1999 SECASA was funded to provide an enhanced after hours service for victims of family violence. This service is provided to single women, women with children and same sex couples. Several services cooperate to provide this service: SECASA, Hanover South Eastern Crisis Accommodation, Hanover Southern, the Women's Service Alliance and WAYSS. SECASA provides the after hours counseling and referral. Hanover South Eastern Crisis Accommodation Service and Hanover Southern provide motel accommodation for people needing emergency accommodation overnight and assist along with WAYSS with a range of support services at 9.00 a.m. the next business day.

Follow-up counselling is not usually provided by SECASA.

From 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005, 31 women and their children attended for after hours assistance.

### The Angela Taylor Child Protection Unit

The Angela Taylor Child Protection Unit provides a medical service for all physically and sexually abused children who live south of the Yarra. The other half of the state has a service provided by the Gatehouse Centre at the Royal Children's Hospital. During business hours paediatric forensic medicals are conducted in sessions run by paediatricians and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine. After hours medicals are provided either by the after-hours Doctors' roster for sexual assault cases or the Emergency Department Paediatric Registrar for physical abuse cases.

A new full-time Child At Risk social work position is attached to the Unit providing counselling and coordination of the service. This is a new position which operates across The Angela Taylor Child Protection Unit, the Emergency Department and the paediatric wards. After hours the initial telephone contact is undertaken by the Sexual Assault Crisis Line Against Sexual Assault and the SECASA on-call worker.

The Unit has provided training for postgraduate nursing students, fifth year medical students and each year's intake of paediatric registrars at Monash Medical Centre.

The Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation has continued to support the Unit both financially and in spirit.

From 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005, 311 children were seen in the Unit.

## **Counselling**

SECASA provides free, medium to longterm, confidential counselling to adults/children, male and female victims of both recent and past sexual assault. Counselling and support is also available to non-offending parents, partners, caregivers and support workers. Some home visits are undertaken and residents of the Queen Elizabeth Residential Complex receive a twenty-four hour response to a request for counselling.

From 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005 there were 6768 counselling sessions. There were 853 new contacts with the Agency. Of the new registrations 431 were adult females and 244 were females under 18. A total of 91 adult males were seen and another 87 clients under the age of 18.

## **Telephone counselling and information service**

A worker is on duty from 9.00 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. each week day to provide telephone counselling, case consultation and an information and referral service for victim/survivors, their partners, close friends, family members and other agencies.

After hours, at weekends and on Public Holidays a service is provided by the statewide Sexual Assault Crisis Line.

From 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005 there were 4189 calls dealt with by the Duty Workers. There were also 422 secondary consultations with regional agencies, professionals and the Department of Human Services.

## **Southern sexual abuse counselling & prevention program**

The Southern Sexual Abuse Counselling and Prevention Program (SSACPP) was a joint initiative between The Children's Protection Society and SECASA. It commenced operation on June 12, 2001 at the Visy Cares Centre in Dandenong and was officially launched on 26th February 2002.

This service is available for young people between the ages of 10- 17 who exhibit sexually abusive behaviours and reside in the Southern Metropolitan Region. The aim of the program is to assist young people to take responsibility for and to learn to manage their sexually abusive behaviours.

Services provided include:

- Individual risk and need assessment
- Family counseling
- Individual counseling
- Groupwork
- Secondary consultations
- Community and professional education

### **Sexual assault, intellectual disability program (SAID)**

During the latter part of the 2004-5 financial year, SECASA management set out on a new program initiative to provide a much needed state-wide service. The SAID program (Sexual Assault, Intellectual Disability) provides assessment and counselling for borderline- intellect and intellectually-disabled adolescents aged 12-17 engaging in sexually abusive behaviours. There are two workers in the program. The initiative has received strong support from the sex offender treatment provider community, and particularly from Statewide Forensic Service, who have delivered ongoing training and supervision.

The SAID program aims to provide a service to 14 young people at any given time. Currently 10 adolescents are involved with the program, which is based at Moorabbin in the Northern Annexe. The SAID program offers assessment of intellectual capacity and assessment of sexual knowledge to determine whether the young person is engaging in sexually abusive behaviours. It also offers a risk and needs assessment. Group and family counselling, as well as secondary consulting is also offered.

### **Group work**

In 2004/2005 SECASA facilitated a range of groups. These included

- Dance Therapy Workshops
- Sexuality Workshops
- Mosaic Group - Arts Access Partnership
- Non offending Parents/Carers Group
- STEP Group - children 8-12
- Adult Female Survivors of Childhood Sexual Assault
- Adult Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Assault

## Work in schools

### *Secondary Schools Anti Violence Workshops Respect, Protect, Connect*

This program is a joint venture between Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) and SECASA. It has been funded for the past seven years by the Department of Human Services. The project provided 199 workshops to schools in the Southern Region with 6238 participants in years 7-12. These workshops were conducted as single sex sessions using peer educators and an adult facilitator.

Respect Protect Connect is a secondary school-based program that is jointly run with Women's Health in the South East (WHISE). It uses peer educators typically aged 19-25 to deliver workshops to young people focusing on violence prevention and healthy relationships.

This year saw Nolan Alles moving on after 4 years as the coordinator of RPC. He is replaced by Chris Mitchell, who was a member of the volunteer peer educator team for 3 years. A number of new initiatives have been spearheaded this year+ADs- these include a Young People's Forum held at Eumemmering Secondary College (Gleneagles Campus), and an integration program for students in The Pines area, of North Frankston, in collaboration with one secondary and two primary schools. Three extended Young Men's Programs have been run in partnership with the City of Kingston, while RPC has also participated in a number of Safe Party Days run by the City of Casey.

### *Primary Schools Protective Behaviours Workshops Feeling Safe Together*

The Feeling Safe Together program utilizes the successful skills for safety from protective education programs that were in existence in the 1980's, both in Australia and overseas. SECASA has enhanced these with material strategic to the current needs and personal/social difficulties facing Victorian children, their families and teachers today.

## Website

The SECASA website went on line in 1999. It was officially launched by the then Minister for Women's Affairs, The Honourable Sherryl Garbutt in 2000. Since this date the website has been continually improved and extended.

This past year has been a busy one for the website. Currently the site is attracting 11 000 unique visitors per month.

We have begun a process of providing the most popular information on the website in PDF format for people to download and print. Three welfare students on placement assisted in updating the articles and book databases.

Email requests for assistance have been received from a number of interstate and overseas people ranging from university professors, researchers and a range of health and welfare professionals. In addition a number of organizations have requested use of the site to publicise public consultations and surveys.

Two new sections are being developed. The Cafe is a section specifically for survivors writings, artwork and feedback. It is a place for survivors to communicate about their healing journey or experiences. The art gallery allows the display of artwork from SECASA groups held during the year.

## Professional education

Professional education is an important activity for SECASA. During 2004/2005 the agency maintained its commitment to this activity and provided training and information within the hospital and region.

Regular talks were given to the Emergency Department nurses, residents and paediatric registrars at Monash Medical Centre, Clayton and Emergency Department staff at Frankston and Dandenong Hospitals.

SECASA participated in the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Units training courses at the Police Academy and provided secondary consultations to a wide range of local agencies.

Information and education were provided at workshops for the following organisations:

- Dandenong Neighbourhood House
- Bayside Council
- Haileybury College
- Holmesglen TAFE
- Pendap
- Monash University Social Work Students
- DHS Dandenong Child Protection
- Department of Human Services Head Office Protective Staff
- Sacred Heart Mission
- Bay Quilters
- Springvale Legal Service
- Frankston General Practitioners
- Windana
- Moorabbin Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit and Criminal Investigation Unit
- The Alfred Hospital Emergency Department staff
- Scotch College
- Queen Elizabeth Centre
- Chisholm TAFE
- Victorian College for the Deaf
- Bentleigh/Bayside Community Health Service
- Victoria Clinic
- VOTA
- Out The Door
- Home Based Carers
- Melbourne Licensing Accord
- Victoria Police Detective Training
- Oz Child
- Kingsley Park Primary School
- Prahran City Mission

## Community education

Community Information Sessions are run regularly at Moorabbin, Frankston, Cranbourne and Dandenong. Biannual information sessions continue to be conducted for the Frankston, Dandenong, Cheltenham and Box Hill offices of the Department of Human Services and the Frankston, Dandenong, Moorabbin, Blackburn, Melbourne and Knox offices of the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Units.

The Centre was also involved in Community Safety Week, the Gay Pride March and the Midsumma Festival providing publicity for the service in the gay and lesbian communities.

During 2004/2005 the agency was involved in public education forums and information days for

- Moorabbin/Bentleigh Rotary
- Eumemmering Secondary College
- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program
- Wellsprings
- HIM Young Men's Health Day Bayside City Council
- Hampton Secondary College
- Mentone Girls College
- Strathcona Secondary College
- Pride March
- Midsumma Carnival
- Sacred Heart Boys
- Bentleigh/Bayside Community Health Centre
- Crime Prevention Month Launch
- Same Sex Attracted Youth Monash University
- Cranbourne Secondary College
- Mentone Secondary College
- Inner South Community Health Service
- Child Protection Week

## **Projects**

### **DVD For Deaf Community**

The DVD was prepared by Tim O'Leary with assistance from signers Tamara Doyle Bates and Ross Onley Zerkel. The impetus for the DVD came from the Stop Violence Against Deaf Working Group who were keen to have a visual resource for deaf people who were victims of sexual assault and teacher workers and care givers working with the deaf. The DVD was launched on 25th August 2004.

### **City of Casey Mosaic Group**

The mosaic group project held at Rossmoyne Family Resource Centre was an initiative which grew out of collaboration between Arts Access, City of Casey and SECASA. It ran out of the Rossmoyne Centre from 22.4.05-1.7.05. Participation was open to any woman associated with SECASA and provided women with an opportunity to explore their own creativity.

The project was facilitated by professional artist Anne Riggs and support artist Barbara Boetker along with facilitation support provided by SECASA workers Robyn Breheny and Colleen Cahill.

The mosaics were framed, mounted on the walls at the Rossmoyne Family Resource Centre and launched in a ceremony attended by a number of City of Casey officials.

### **Unite and Inspire**

An inspiring group of young people called Unite and Inspire organized a fund raising ball for SECASA on Friday 22nd April 2005 at Leonda on the Yarra.

Unite and Inspire was founded in May 2004 by Simon Ngu to take on the challenge to stand up against the continued occurrence of sexual assault and provide a voice for those who remain silent. The ball was a huge success and the funds were donated to SECASA's primary school program 'Feeling Safe Together'. This is a preventative educational program for schools designed to empower school children. The fund raiser featured guest speakers and entertainment.

### **AASW special interest group**

SECASA started an AASW Special Interest Group on 6 June 2005 for Working with Victims of Sexual Assault. It meets monthly and has, as its first task, started preparing a Statewide Training Calendar for 2005. This calendar is intended to document all training in the state related to sexual assault and working with victims of sexual assault.

### **Springvale Monash legal service/SECASA joint legal service**

This service has now been in operation for nine years. It provides a quality legal service for SECASA clients. The Clinic provides assistance in relation to the following:

- Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal
- Appeals to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal
- Action Against Religious Bodies
- Civil Actions Against Offenders where appropriate
- Family Law and Wills issues related to sexual assault
- Liaison with Medical Practitioners Board
- Assistance with Complaints to the Health Service Commission
- Sexual assault In a therapeutic relationship
- Advocacy/support for complainants required to give evidence in criminal proceedings
- Family violence issues and Intervention Orders arising from sexual assault
- Workplace pressure to provide sexual services
- General advocacy in relation to the above with Housing Authorities, Police, Department of Social Security, Department of Human Services and Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Law Institute

The Clinic maintained this focus when the Bracks amendments to the Criminal Injuries Legislation brought pain and suffering back as a category from 1st January 2001 in relation to compensation for victims of sexual assault.

## Meeting representation

- Frankston Paediatrics Meeting
- Dandenong Paediatrics Meeting
- Southern Health Child Maltreatment Meeting
- Westernport Family Violence Network
- Peninsula Counsellors Network
- SECASA/Police Liaison Meeting
- Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault Forum
- National Association of Sexual Assault Services
- Southern Region Domestic Violence SAAP Forum
- South Eastern Migrant Women's Health Network
- Dandenong and Springvale Youth Network
- Cardinia Shire Youth Services Network
- Dandenong Regional Welfare Group and Springvale Workers' Coalition
- VRAS/CASA Forum Liaison
- Cranbourne and District Community Service Group
- Advisory Group Health Services for Abused Children in Victoria
- Cardinia Shire Services Network
- Glen Eira Youth Services Network Peninsula Information Support Group
- North Casey Network
- Primary Care Partnerships Glen Eira
- Peninsula, Greater Dandenong
- Women's Health in the South East Management Committee
- Peninsula Indigenous Action Group Visy Cares Tenants Meeting
- Victorian Institute of Forensic Services/CASA Forum Liaison Meeting
- Casey Youth Services Network
- Mornington Peninsula Network Against Family Violence
- Vic Safe Committee
- Southern Collective Against Violence and Abuse
- Westernport Counsellors Group
- Statewide Steering Committee To Reduce Family Violence
- Statewide Steering Committee To Reduce Sexual Assault
- Same Sex Attracted Youth Workers Network Rainbow Group
- Health Services for Abused Victorian Children
- Offender Programs Managers' Unite and Inspire
- Victorian Offender Treatment Association
- Take 2 Regional Advisory Group Violence Against Women.
- Community Attitudes Project. Vic Health
- DHS Vulnerable Children Advisory Committee
- Inner/Middle South Crisis Protection Framework
- Child Protection Reference Group

## **Advisory committee**

- Frankston SOCA Unit
- Bentleigh Bayside Community Health Service
- Southern Health Aboriginal Liaison Office
- Women's Health in the South East
- Visy Cares Centre
- Monash University Social Work Department
- Peninsula Health Care Network Mental
- Frankston Community Health Centre
- RhEd Inner South Community Health Centre
- Dandenong SOCA Unit
- Community Representative
- Monash Division of General Practice
- Peninsula Community Legal Centre
- Department of Human Services
- Department Human Services
- Joint Legal Clinic
- PENDAP
- Southern Community Mental Health
- Peninsula Youth & Family Services