

## **Changes to Liquor Laws Essential**

**By Children's Commissioner Dr John Angus**



Alcohol is the drug of choice for many New Zealanders and as a result, excessive drinking is the cause of harm to many children and young people. Evidence clearly shows that alcohol abuse by their parents and other adults is associated with and sometimes a cause of physical, sexual and psychological abuse of children and young people and neglect of their needs.

Neglect includes things such as a lack of supervision when children are left alone while parents are drinking; failure to keep children safe from unintentional injuries and deaths; leaving or putting children in unsafe situations such as driving while drunk with children in the car; and failure to ensure that children are prepared for their own day because parents are too hung over. Such neglect is a serious and not always well-recognised effect of alcohol abuse.

Young people are more vulnerable than adults to the effects of alcohol and in New Zealand there are a lot of under-18s drinking. Some young people's drinking practices, including regular excessive drinking sessions, can have long-term effects on their physical and mental health.

Given the harm to children and young people associated with excessive drinking, I have made a submission to the Law Commission on the reform of New Zealand's liquor laws. My office is one of many organisations that have highlighted to the Law Commission, the need to introduce policies and practices that focus on changing behaviours. Limiting access to alcohol, including increasing to 20 the age restriction for off licence purchasing, is one measure

that could go some way towards minimising harm to children and young people.

Splitting the age for sales – leaving the minimum purchase age at on-licenses at 18 years, and increasing the minimum purchase age at off-licences to 20 years – should help reduce the supply of alcohol to people under 18. This still allows 18 and 19 year olds the freedom to drink at licensed premises where there are responsible service practices, and penalties if there aren't.

Other recommendations to reduce excessive drinking include setting a minimum price for alcohol to control discounting; restricting or preventing the clustering of off-licence liquor outlets, especially in more vulnerable and/or deprived communities; restriction of hours that off-licence premises can sell alcohol; and increasing tax on alcohol.

The availability of cheap alcohol, including where 'price wars' exist between competing liquor outlets, is contributing to alcohol related harm, especially to young people. There is also a link between the density of outlets in a community or neighbourhood and the rates of maltreatment of children and young people residing in those communities. Since deregulation under the 1989 Act, the number of liquor licences has more than doubled from 6295 in 1990 to 14,183 in June 2009. New Zealanders spend an estimated \$85 million a week on alcoholic beverages. This equates to \$4-\$5 billion a year. More emphasis needs to be placed on treatment options for parents, using the care of children as a compulsion or inducement to enter and stay in treatment and change behaviour.

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## FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER-

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei,  
Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri, Greetings

SSPA has just completed a Strategic Planning exercise to consider where we want the organisation to be in three year's time. SSPA has grown from an organisation with 105 members formed by volunteers 10 years ago to a current membership of approximately 260. 39 members provide foster or residential care as Section 396 providers and the remainder are Section 403 providing community services.

2010 marks the tenth year of Social Service Providers Aotearoa as a Government funded umbrella group and this milestone provided SSPA with an ideal opportunity to -

- Reflect on the progress made in the past ten years
- Reconsider our vision, mission and purpose
- Plan for future opportunities having regard to the current political and economic environment
- Consider possible challenges or threats that may arise in the future

SSPA considered future planning alongside the environment in which we are operating — currently and potentially in the future -

- Change of government and policies
- The economic downturn
- Huge pressures on government funding
- Reduction in philanthropic giving
- Changes/increased demand for services of member organisations

SSPA re-affirmed its commitment first and foremost to the membership of the organisation and to continue to press for healthy collaboration at all levels..

This commitment will continue to ensure that we-

- Advocate and support our membership wherever possible
- Provide information on Government policy development as it evolves
- Continue to organise Regional Meetings to maintain a co-ordinated view of regional issues and to provide information and opportunities for discussion and collaboration
- Continue to provide Best Practice Seminars nationwide - jointly with other organisations
- Hold an Annual Conference where members have an opportunity to network as well as take advantage of learning opportunities
- Keep in touch with our membership through the quarterly Newsletter, News Flash and Talking Back Surveys

SSPA's full strategic plan can be viewed on our website [www.sspa.org.nz](http://www.sspa.org.nz)

Jocelyn Wilson

## NOTICES

Social Service Providers Aotearoa are pleased to announce their Annual Conference will be held this year at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch on 2nd and 3rd September. The conference theme is Connecting Up - Social Services for our time.

Details and updates will be available on the website [www.sspa.org.nz](http://www.sspa.org.nz)

Professional Supervision Conference 2010 - to be held at the Centra Hotel, Mangere, Auckland from 30 April — 1 May 2010

Theme is — Common threads, different patterns  
For more information contact the Conference convener [barbara.a.burt@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.a.burt@gmail.com).

NZ Aotearoa Adolescent Health and Development (NZA AHD) conference Involve 2010 - Connect: Together we are Stronger to be held at the Aotea Centre, Auckland 17-19 November  
Contact person Trina King - e mail [involve@nzaahd.org.nz](mailto:involve@nzaahd.org.nz)

Volunteering NZ 2010 - Volunteer Awareness Week 20 — 26 June 2010  
Theme - Volunteering Across the Generations. More information available from [ed@volunteering.org.nz](mailto:ed@volunteering.org.nz)

NZ Council of Social Services Conference 2010 will be held in Dunedin from 17 — 19 November  
The Theme is: Coming of Age Reaching sustainability  
For more information contact [nzcoss@nzcoss.org.nz](mailto:nzcoss@nzcoss.org.nz)

## Whanau Ora - What's it all about?

Minister Tariana Turia established a Taskforce on Whanau-centred initiatives in order to develop a new approach for the design and delivery of government funded services and initiatives to whanau — one that places whanau at the centre and builds on the strengths and capabilities already present in whanau. The Minister believes that a new approach will lead to better outcomes for whanau, and better value for the related investment made by the Government.

Members of the Taskforce comprised -

- Professor Mason Durie (Chair)
- Rob Cooper - Chief Executive of Ngati Hine Health Trust
- Suzanne Snively - a partner of Pricewaterhouse Coopers
- Di Grennell - Executive Director of Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium
- Nancy Tuaine - Manager of the Whanganui Maori Trust Board

Underpinning the concept of Whanau Ora is a belief that too much of the way health and other social services are delivered through mainstream providers is focused too narrowly on treating the symptoms of a problem, rather than the problem itself.

The Taskforce recognised that while government funded services and initiatives are significant, whanau, hapu and iwi also have critical and distinct roles to play in facilitating whanau ora. These roles, relationships and responsibilities are based on whakapapa and Maori connectivity and lie outside government. Whanau-centred approaches by government agencies should be responsive and flexible enough to align with and support whanau, hapu and iwi aspirations

The Taskforce considered that Whanau Ora will have succeeded when whanau are -

- Self-managing
- Living healthy lifestyles
- Participating fully in society
- Are economically secure
- Involved in wealth creation,
- Cohesive, resilient and nurturing

The Whanau Ora Taskforce Report was handed over to Minister Turia on 11 February but the report has been kept under wraps until National has finished negotiations over the policy with the Maori Party. A high powered

group of Ministers has been formed to consider the Whanau Ora policy comprising the Prime Minister, Mr Key, Finance Minister Bill English, Justice Minister, Simon Power, Social Development Minister Paula Bennett Education Minister Anne Tolley and Health Minister Tony Ryall who is leading the group.

In recent weeks the core rationale behind the task force “to develop a whanau-centred approach to Maori wellbeing” appears to have undergone radical revision. Controversy continues over whether the scheme is only for Maori or for all struggling families. The Prime Minister in recent weeks has reiterated “that the Maori Party’s Whanau Ora Programme will be for all New Zealanders - Whanau Ora has become about every family in need — not just Maori”

Rumours have been circulating that billions of dollars are about to be carved out of the centrally administered welfare and health systems and handed to iwi and other community-based Maori organisations to look after their own. It appears that money for Whanau Ora is likely to be announced at the May budget but Minister Turia has said “I don’t think in a recession we’re going to get a billion dollars”.

Tony Ryall says that although he cannot reveal budget secrets, what the Government is planning amounts to major change in social service provision — “it’s going to be one of the biggest innovations in social services “ He says that there are several options under consideration, but there is an acceptance that the status quo is not an option. He is of the view that “What we’ve been doing for the last 10-15 years simply hasn’t been working. We’ve been throwing tens if not hundreds of millions at social services and we’ve still got families who are disconnected, struggling, and careering down the track towards a whole lot of problems” In his view “Whanau Ora is really about how you integrate all that effort to make sure you’re dealing with at risk families and I don’t think the solution is a government department delivering a service”

According to Minister Turia, ultimately the success of Whanau Ora will be judged on results. The Government has already engaged an economist to work out how to measure those outcomes.

**The 2010 budget will be delivered by the Prime Minister on May 20th**

**Agency Profile**  
**By**  
**Lesley Ison, Services**  
**Development Manager**



**shine\* - Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday, has grown from a merger between Preventing Violence in the Home and Safer Families; and our new name reflects our positive message of hope for a safer New Zealand.**

Family violence is a huge issue for this country with many intricacies and appropriate, professional responses. shine\* training is a part of a comprehensive and integrated package of shine\* services that help keep women and their children safe in their homes.

shine\* is pleased to be able to provide training to professionals in the sector and for anyone who comes into contact with family violence. A one-day introductory training workshop is offered three times a year and shine\* can also tailor training to meet the specific needs of different organisations. Recently shine\* delivered a very successful two day training for SSPA members in Auckland. Participants came from a wide variety of organisations, from independent counsellors, Ministry of Justice, Catholic and Family Services, Women's Refuge and Living Without Violence, to name just a few.

The training was dynamic with large and small group discussions and activities which encouraged participation which was very well received. Because of the huge success of the training, further discussions are being held with SSPA to repeat this course throughout 2010.

shine\* has also just launched a pilot project called First Response in collaboration with Child Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police, with the support of the Ministry of Social Development. This new programme aims to reduce the country's shocking rate of child abuse.

First Response will provide a pathway for client contact with our team of advocates and with other agencies as required. For some, it will be appropriate to receive assistance from shine\* services such as safe@home or the Child Crisis Team. The shine\* Child Crisis Team helps over 200 children each year. A large percentage of family violence incidents are witnessed by children. Even when children are not being directly physically abused, they may be seriously emotionally and psychologically damaged, and the ongoing effects can be reduced by timely support and information.

safe@home is an award-winning service which operates in the Western Suburbs of Auckland City, providing free personal and home security for high risk victims of family violence. Resources available include replacing glass panelled doors with solid doors, installing house alarms, smoke alarms and security lights, and other safety measures as needed. safe@home ensures mothers and children who reassessed as suitable for this service can remain in their own home and not go through the disruption of having to move to another property or go into refuge, to become safer. When refuge is needed, shine\* has a safe house, and through our national Helpline 0508 DVHELP (0508 384 357), also refers to other refuges throughout New Zealand.

**Family violence sometimes seems an overwhelming issue, but through our integrated and well thought out provision of services shine\* aims to offer a light at the end of the tunnel.**

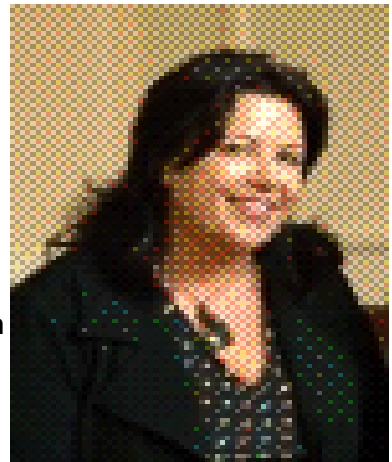
**shine\* provides a:**

- **Free National Helpline to assist callers with a range of professional support services including risk assessment, safety planning, information, advocacy and referrals**
- **24 Hour professional crisis and advocacy support for child and adult victims of domestic violence**
- **Refuge accommodation on the North Shore, Auckland**
- **Child Crisis Team - for children distressed by witnessing violence in their homes**
- **No Excuses - a stopping violence programme to help educate men who use abusive and violent behaviour**
- **Local inter-agency network coordination to ensure our services work together to keep people safe**
- **Safe @ Home programme - to secure the homes of victims with replacement solid wood doors, window locks, security lighting and silent, personal alarms**
- **Domestic violence awareness and professional training programmes - for volunteers, tertiary students, professionals (i.e. police, social workers, health professionals, teachers etc) and community groups**
- **Workplace Trust & Support – programme that shows how to positively address workplace bullying and domestic violence in the workplace**

## **From the Minister's Desk.....**

**Paula Bennett says we need to make at-risk children a priority.**

**The shameful statistics have got to change.**



It's been a busy month with visits to youth programmes around the country. It's always great to see what our young people are up to and to meet the adults who work with them; challenging them, encouraging them and supporting them. Children's day was a real highlight and I really enjoyed joining celebrations in my electorate of Waitakere and in Wellington. It was great to see families out and enjoying time with their kids and a range of organisations like Barnardos really go all out to push the message of how important that quality time is. It's a message, borne out of a very simple truth – children are important, they are special and they should be treasured, protected and nurtured.

Which brings me to another passion of mine; one that I raised this month to get some debate around a shameful record New Zealand holds of child abuse, neglect and homicide. I'm passionate about effecting change in this area; we cannot continue to let children slip through the gaps and end up as sad footnotes in shocking newspaper articles, relegated forever to being a horror statistic.

Over the last year, there were close to 20,000 substantiated findings of abuse reported to Child Youth and Family. Between 2002 and 2006, 38 children were killed by people they knew, loved and trusted. I know and you know this has to stop. It is unacceptable that our youngest, most vulnerable children are being treated quite frankly, like dogs. For some the only respite from a life of misery is a tortured, early death.

So I called a group of experts together to identify what's wrong with our systems and come up with practical recommendations to plug the gaps our babies are falling through. I released the findings this month and it provoked a robust debate. The recommendations included some shamefully simple solutions to holes that shouldn't exist. The Experts' Forum said there is no formal mechanism for sharing data between agencies like police, Child Youth and Family and healthcare providers. When information is shared, it's often ad hoc. In fact sometimes it comes down to someone like a concerned nurse recognising a child

who's been treated for serious injury before and alerting the doctor.

**We can do better than that.**

The Forum also found the Privacy Act is a barrier to getting vital information from one agency to another. I'd be interested to hear feedback from the social sector on this – do you find it is a barrier? What concerns you about the way it is used? How would you feel about the Act being modified to allow more sharing of information about vulnerable children and families. One of the recommendations that created some controversy was the idea of keeping an 'open file' on a parent whose child has died of abuse or neglect. So that, in the event more children are born to that parent, a red flag is raised. There is a concern about tagging parents for life. But is that outweighed by the benefit of being able to get in early and provide the right supports to the family when a subsequent child is born?

Another recommendation is to prioritise mental health treatment to parents of young children. Currently when someone with mental health issues is added to the queue for treatment, whether they have small children isn't considered. I know there are people reading this who will have strong opinions about the subject; some of you may have felt powerless or frustrated by the system or lack of coherent processes for dealing with vulnerable children. Many of you are just tired of dealing with and reading about the sad, hopelessly short lives of children like Delcelia Whittaker, Nia Glassie and the Kahui twins.

The issue of child abuse and neglect is not new and this is certainly not the first time Government has looked at it. But I do believe now is the time to act. Now is the time to create a specific focus on vulnerable children from every agency they might come into contact with. We need to dismantle the barriers that stop these agencies working together and we need to make at-risk children a priority.

**The shameful statistics have got to change.**



## National Degrees One Step Closer

### The ITO is closer to having New Zealand's first two national degrees available for students in 2010.

The unit standards to support the National Bachelor of Youth Development were sent to NZQA in September after being signed off by the industry reference group – representatives of key NGOs and youth work organisations. The unit standards for the National Degree in Social Work have been signed off by the industry reference group and were forwarded for approval in early December.

#### National Bachelor of Youth Development

Since youth work is about developing the strengths of young people so that they are able to fulfil their potential, the national degree in youth work will be called the National Bachelor of Youth Development.

The unit standards for this degree are structured as performance outcomes which will drive the curriculum and assessment design.

Rory Truell, ITO Chief Executive, says the national degree will be a first of its kind. "We are very excited about this degree. Youth development is an emerging field and we have supported that by developing a robust and structured training for it," he says.

Project Leader, Amanda Torr, says, the degree programme will produce graduates of a consistent standard. "The level the students need to meet to pass each component is spelt out in the unit standards so each student is achieving the same thing," she says.

"The assessments for the unit standards will also be moderated by peer providers with input from the ITO, creating a collaborative partnership approach," she adds.

#### National Bachelor of Social Work

Work has also been progressing on the development of the social work unit standards and national degree. The draft unit standards were signed off by industry reference group for review at the end of October and sent to NZQA in early December.

"We were thrilled with the response we have had from

the social work profession," Amanda says. "We have engaged with a wide range of organisations including ANZASW, Jigsaw, Barnardos, the Salvation Army, District Health Boards, Iwi providers, MSD and education providers to name just a few. The suggestions for change have been refinements that can only improve the final product and this reflects the robust processes we have used in the degree developments". The ITO will forward the social work unit standards to NZQA for registration in early December.

#### Curriculum development

Curriculum development for both degrees is underway with the ITO delivery partner – Wellington Institute of Technology (Weltec). For more information on the degree development process please contact Dr Amanda Torr, Project Leader [amanda.torr@socialservicesito.org.nz](mailto:amanda.torr@socialservicesito.org.nz)

### NGO Study Awards Update for 2010

150 applications were received in the latest round of NGO Study Awards with 61 awards granted for 2010. The number of people applying for an award increased by 20 this year and both the number of applications and the quality of them were up this year.

#### Counting the new awards, there will be 180 students studying under the scheme in 2010

The NGO Social Work Awards aim to improve the capability of social workers working for families in community organisations by assisting them to study for a qualification is social work that meets the Social Workers Registration Board educational requirements. Since the programme began four years ago 150 students have graduated under the programme.

Applications will be invited for the 2010 application round in August/September 2010 for the 2011 academic year. Information is available on the FACS website <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/working-with-us/index.html>

## **Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers ANZASW Paper Based Initial Competency Assessment**

SSPA members may be interested to know that ANZASW has recently announced that a paper based Competency Assessment process for initial competency assessments for social workers holding a SWRB recognised qualification is available to all eligible applicants. The competency service is available to both ANZASW provisional members and non-members who hold a SWRB recognised qualification. You can check the status of your qualification by going to <http://www.swrb.org.nz/NARecQuals.html>

The introduction of a paper based initial competency assessment provides social workers with a range of choices for their impertinency assessment process. Importantly the initial paper based process provides qualified social workers with a robust assessment model at an affordable price. The ANZASW paper based assessment process has been accepted by the SWRB for registration purposes.

ANZASW has been providing paper based recertification since 1994. The methodology has proven to be a robust mechanism for assessing competency. Over the last 15 years. ANASW assessors and members who have participated in Panels have developed considerable expertise in reviewing and assessing portfolios.

For the paper based process applicants will be required to submit a competency portfolio and references for assessment by the Panel but will not have to attend a face-to-face panel. Applicants are able to opt for a face-to-face competency assessment at an additional cost if this is the preferred option. In exceptional circumstances assessed on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Executive Director, applicants may be

considered for a face-to-face assessment at the paper based fee. For applicants who do not hold a SWRB recognised qualification a face-to-face competency assessment will continue to be required. This option will also be available to both provisional members and non members. Tangata Whenua members are able to select the Niho Taniwha process in which case the panel is made of Tangata Whenua peers.

The paper based portfolios will be assessed by a Competency Assessor and a panel of two social work peers using the same process as is currently used in the ANZASW competency recertification process. Application for Competency Assessment are able to be made on line using the e-form. Signed hard copies of the following forms will still be required before the process can commence in order to assess 'fit and proper'

- ANZASW Declaration Form
- Consent to Disclosure Information
- Consent to Disclosure of information

Once an applicant has been determined to be a 'fit and proper' person to practice social work they will receive

- A hard copy competency pack
- An electronic Competency Pack with MS Word copies of all templates and a PDF version of the ANZASW Competency hand-book

Once these have been completed, they are returned to ANZASW National Office where they are checked for completeness then forwarded to an Assessor who will convene a Panel. Contact Lucy Sandford-Reed , Ph 03 3586921 for more information or e mail [lucysandford-reed@anzasw.org.nz](mailto:lucysandford-reed@anzasw.org.nz)

<b>Scale of Fees</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
Paper Based initial Assessment for Applicants with SWRB recognised qualifications	\$225.00 includes 1 year's membership	\$250.00
Optional Face-to Face initial assessment for applicants with SWRB recognised qualifications	\$350.00	\$400.00
Recertification	No cost provided membership is maintained for 5 years	\$150.00
Initial competency Assessment for applicants without a SWRB recognised qualification	\$350.00	\$400.00

## Worrying Changes by ACC

The NGO Sector specialising in providing services to those affected by Sexual Abuse have been reeling from the shock of far reaching changes to the way that ACC now deals with claims. The National Network representing this sector (TOAH – NNEST) has worked tirelessly to represent the needs of service users to Government however despite two years of active participation in the work of the Sexual Violence Taskforce they were taken by surprise when ACC decided, seemingly unilaterally, that far greater limitations were to be placed on the acceptance of claims.

A working party to develop a pathway to address the needs of sexually abused young people commenced its task in December. We hope this will lead to a more inclusive outcome.

Specialist sexual abuse services have struggled under many years of under funding and this challenge is likely to lead to extreme financial pressure for some. If ACC is no longer going to address this area of need as fully as it has in the past then other Government Departments will need to step into the gap. It seems that a comprehensive approach from Health, MSD and Justice is in order.

Whilst attempting to work with the new ACC demands, the sector is very concerned that many sexually abused people including children will potentially no longer receive ACC's support to recover. All of the relevant professional bodies have united in their concern and protests have been lodged nationwide however there has been little change to ACC's new Pathway for sexually abused adults

Research evidences the poorer outcomes for traumatised people who do not receive support to recover. Sexual Abuse has not lessened in our country but sadly the number of victims seeking help has as many perceive the help is no longer available or affordable

**Maggy Tai Rakena**

**Has your service been affected by these ACC changes? Please direct any feedback to Maggy Tai Rakena, Ph 03 3554414**

**Postscript: Reprinted from the Dominion Post 10 March 2010**

Administrative changes to the processing of sexual; abuse claims has led to a dramatic drop in the number of approved for counselling Labour MP Lynne Pillay said yesterday.

Just 32 cases had been approved for counselling in the first two months of this year, compared to 472 in January and February 2009

Another 112 applicants this year had their cases for ACC support declined and 'hundreds of people are languishing in no-man's-land waiting for their claims to be processed.

ACC Minister Nick Smith has promised to hold a six-monthly review of the changes, but this has yet to take place.

The Government has said the changes were not cost-cutting measures introduced by them, but were recommended by clinicians as part of better practice.

**Maggy Tai Rakena**

**Children's Commissioner - Continued from Page 1**

It is important that when the Government comes to consider changes to liquor licensing that they are aware of the social costs of this readily available drug. From my perspective, the harm done to children and young people is reason enough for New Zealanders to reflect on their drinking practices and be encouraged to make changes