

INFORMATION FOR SEX WORKERS

RespectEd

November 2013

Issue 2

RESPECT AGM HELD IN CAIRNS
OCTOBER 2013



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From left: Respect's Treasurer Candi Forrest, Chairperson Jenny King, and Secretary Jackie Kneipp.

Voted in and welcomed as the Respect Inc. Executive Committee for 2013-2014.

Respect Inc.'s Annual General Meeting was held from the 30th of September until the 4th of October in Cairns at the Cairns Queenslander Apartments. This was as well as the Annual General Meeting, an opportunity for the staff, as a state-wide team, to be able to teach, learn, and develop all together. We got connected: We played games, hung out together and went out for a group meal. We aligned and lubed our internal workings with focus on keeping confidence, operating ethically and staying safe and healthy. We shared wisdom on developing sex worker community with focus on reaching out, social events and networking. We learned how to support the sex worker community we serve with resource development, peer educator training, harm minimisation, STI prevention, empowering the individuals of our community, working with male and trans* sex workers and for our management committee, recruiting and training on governance.

Overall, The Respect Round Table was a fantastic opportunity for the Management Committee and staff to be together to develop themselves and Respect Inc. as an organisation

It also created an excellent opportunity for some staff based in the south to visit the Cairns Sexual Health Clinic and for all staff to sit in on a presentation from a youth service YETI

NO BAD WHORES JUST BAD LAWS

STATE OF RESPECT- FROM THE STAFF

WHAT'S ON AT THE GOLD COAST

Hi Peers and Peeps,

It's been a busy three months on the Gold Coast since our last edition of Respect Ed and there is so much more to come in the lead up to Christmas.

The "New Worker Workshop's" held at our Southport office are up and running. The workshop provides an opportunity for you to sit down and discuss health, safety, legal and business matters in a confidential environment free from judgement. The workshops are held at 2:00pm on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 4 Bay Street, Southport or by appointment. RSVP's or private bookings can be made by texting 0401 969 223. New Workers who attend the office also receive a free "New Worker Sexual Health Pack" which includes great information and samples of the supplies we sell. So if you are a new worker or you know someone who is just starting out, these workshops could really help you start or structure your business.

Brothel outreach took place on 12 November 2013 and saw the staff from the Gold Coast Office and Diane from Miami Sexual Health Clinic attend Pentagon Grand, Secret Liaisons, Luv Asian, Silks on Upton and Utopia in Paradise. It was a great opportunity to meet some of the girls working at these establishments and give out some free supplies and treats in our Outreach Goody Bags. It was great to receive such a warm reception by all the management and staff. We hope to see more of the girls in our Gold Coast office over the coming months to take advantage of some of the services we are able to provide.

Planning is in full swing for this year's World Aids Day (WAD) festivities on the Coast. This year's event is to be held at Justin's Park in Burleigh Heads on Friday 29 November 2013 between 10am—2pm. We are looking to engage the community and promote awareness of this year's WAD theme: "Getting to zero: Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths". Anyone and everyone is invited to attend the event. Respect resources and information will be available and the Gold Coast Peer Educator will be on hand to chat with. There will be some great entertainment, free sausage sizzle and giveaways so make sure you drop down to show your support to the cause.

There have been a number of reports of assaults to sex workers on the Gold Coast over the past three months. Safety is a paramount concern for sex workers and something we at Respect take very seriously. In this edition of Respect Ed we share some great tips for staying safe on the job, so make sure you check out the article "Be Safe: Not Sorry!" If you are a survivor of a sexual assault or rape, know that our staff is on hand to provide assistance through our support, referral and advocacy services. We can help you navigate your op-

tions for reporting the incident or simply to provide support during the healing process. We understand that there may be a number of reasons why survivors may not want to make a formal report to the police. However, there are options to report anonymously through the "Alternative Reporting Options" service provided by the Queensland Police Service. This is a great service that can help survivors feel empowered by knowing that the information they possess and provide could be used to solve reported offences of a similar nature. Contact our Respect Offices if you would like help accessing this service.

Our Gold Coast Christmas Party is to be held at 4 Bay Street Southport on 17 December 2013 at 2pm. The theme of this year's party is "The 12 days of Sex-Mas". There will be snacks and soft drinks provided and you are welcome to BYO alcohol. There will be a short seminar presentation on "Using Effective Advertising to Grow Your Business" fun activities, a small lucky door prize and giveaways to all those that attend. The only non-peers guests that are attending the event are Robyn and Diane from Miami Sexual Health Clinic. So come and meet the team, mingle with peers, buy cheap supplies and be a part of something special.

Look forward to seeing you soon.

Jane (Gold Coast Peer Educator)

What is Happening In Brisbane

Respect Inc is so excited to announce that our new cars have just arrived. We will start to do out reach trips in Toowoomba and sunshine coast and also Bundaberg. If you are living in these areas please feel free to contact us to find out more information about where and when we will be in your area. When we do out reach we do carry a small amount of supplies and information with us. However if you need large amount of supplies and information please feel free to call us in advanced we will do our best to make sure you have the quantity you need. We also do private visits as well so if you are living in isolate areas and have difficult with transport please feel free to call us, we will come to your conformation location so you don't feel isolated. Remember that all our services are free of charge except the supplies. For further information please call us on 07 3835 1111 to speak to Joe or Annie. Or you can also visit our website

www.respectqld.org.au

Joe (Brisbane Peer Educator)

STATE OF RESPECT FROM THE STAFF

Male sex workers and sexual health.

In the recent weeks we hear a lot of the rise in STI rate among M2M (male having sex with male). Especially HIV is on the rise in QLD. Practising safer sex is everyone responsibility, please always use condoms and lubricant for anal and oral sex and dam for rimming. Queensland Health has shifted its focus to reduce the STI rate among M2M community .

At the moment M2M can access free and confidential STI testing points. Respect Inc encourages all M2M to take this opportunity to do your STI check, especially male sex workers must keep yourself safe from STI, please do regular STI checks to keep you and your clients health so you can all have healthy enjoyable life style.

Please contact Respect Inc to find out which is the free and confidential STI testing points. We can even help you to make the booking for your convenient. .

Joe (Brisbane Peer Educator)

What's on In Cairns

The Cairns office has recently been staffed by Anna one of our Management Committee members Tuesday to Friday 1pm-3pm. **THANKS ANNA!**

We would like to purvey our best wishes for Tabitha and her future endeavours. However, onwards and upwards

The Cairns Peer Educator position will hopefully be filled in the next few weeks and all systems will be ready to go.

Michele (Northern Regional Coordinator)

We would love to have your input into our newsletter. If you have any suggestions, news, stories or other contributions, please contact us at info@respectqld.org.au with "newsletter" in the subject line

Blast From the Past-

From Hookers Herald 1st of June 1989



FEATURES FROM THE STAFF

Culturally Diverse

Respect is a well established, respected outreach, contact and support centre for Queensland sex workers. While we already have many Asian members, unfortunately the reality is that there are still many other Asian sex workers who do not know of our existence. One recent example highlights this very well.

A few months ago I was introduced to a young Korean sex worker through a mutual friend. At first I didn't know she was a sex worker. I soon learnt that she had a drug problem that seriously affected her life and her health.

Due to her poor English language skills she found it very difficult to seek the appropriate health, information and counselling services. She was depressed and unable to effectively work and live in Australia.

She feared having to return to her native Korea where due to her drug use, she would most likely be quickly arrested and imprisoned. I have since referred her to our organisation to assist her in managing her situation but clearly, we at Respect need to do more to spread the word of our organisation and make our services more widely known and available and continually assess our exposure and relevance in the Sex Industry.

尊重是建立良好的，受人尊敬的宣傳，聯絡和支持中心，昆士蘭性工作者。雖然我們已經有許多亞洲的成員，不幸的是，現實情況是，仍有許多其他亞洲性工作者，誰不這樣做，現在我們的存在。最近的一個例子強調這非常好。幾個月前，我被介紹給一個年輕的韓國性工作者通過一個共同的朋友。起初我不知道她是一名性工作者。我很快了解到，她有一個毒品問題，嚴重影響了她的生活和她的健康。由於她那可憐的英語語言技能，她發現很難尋求適當的衛生，信息和諮詢服務

她沮喪，無法有效地工作和生活澳大利亞。她害怕回到她的家鄉韓國由於她使用藥物，她將最有可能被迅速逮捕和監禁。我既然提到她到我們的組織，以協助她管理她的情況，但顯然，我們在尊重需要做更多的傳播這個詞在我們的組織，使我們的服務更廣為人知，並提供不斷評估我們的曝光和相關性色情行業。

Monica (Bi-lingual Peer Educator)

Social Stigma and Sex Work

Shelly and Karen both love their jobs and meeting the physical needs of others, but often find themselves being asked to meet psychological and emotional needs also, which they find very satisfying as it allows them to make a positive difference in other peoples lives. Shelly is proud of her work and is quick to share, yet Karen leads a double life with two identities to ensure nobody in her private life discovers what she does for work. Why the difference? Shelly is a nurse and Karen is a sex worker, and there is something in their culture that has them relate to their professions completely differently, "social stigma"

Social stigma is a characteristic of a person has others think of them as having less value to society and is usually associated with a negative stereotype. Two thousand years ago, there is very little evidence of negative stereotypes for sex workers, so what happened?

- Ancient Near East 4th century, Emperor Constantine destroyed the goddess temples and replaced them with Christianity.
- Middle ages, practicing sex workers were banned from churches. Chastity was valued highly and sex workers by contrast promiscuous. Were seen as having a lower social status
- Late 15th century, Spread of syphilis and other STIs throughout Europe was associated with sex workers
- Urban middle ages, sex workers could not inherit property, defend themselves in court, or make accusations in court
- Early 16th century, sex workers were associated with disease spread, resulting in brothels being outlawed
- 19th century, France and UK pass the contagious diseases act, regulating sex work and subjecting workers to regular pelvic examinations.
- 1910-1915 Sex work outlawed in most US States due to the influence of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union
- Late 1980s US heavier penalties were delivered for knowingly HIV positive sex workers

Over the past 1000 years disease and religion had a strong impact on the sex worker stigma, stereotyping them as immoral and diseased, but do these factors still exist in modern Australia? In Australia sex workers use prophylactics and have levels of STIs similar to the general population and we are now three hundred years post age of enlightenment, so surely religion can't still have such a strong influence, can it? The stigma still appears to be with us, so what is maintaining it? What are the two most followed written guides of moral (right and wrong) behaviour today, religious texts and legislation telling us?

- In Queensland, it is said that a purpose of sex work regulation is to protect sex workers from exploitation. Are they saying that sex workers (predominantly women) are weak, uneducated, helpless victims, not able to make their own decisions and take control of their own lives and that for their own protection the State should take control, even at the cost of their rights and personal safety?
- In Queensland you can be permanently marked by official records as a law breaker or criminal because you collaborated with others for economic efficiency or personal safety, even when there is no victim. As a law breaker we attract even further stigma and are seen as dishonest, dangerous, lazy, stupid, and needing to be isolated from the rest of society.
- In Queensland, you can be prosecuted for assisting a sex worker in their business, and so can they. This is similar to the concept of aiding and abetting in serious crimes
- In Queensland legislation was recently amended to make it very clear that sex workers can be actively discriminated against for working in their profession in hotels, motels and other rented accommodation, despite the low environmental impact. No other legally operated profession in Queensland is explicitly exempted from protection from discrimination in the legislation. This sends a strong message that sex workers have such low social status that discrimination against them is sanctioned.
- Are religious texts regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the latest research findings and cultural shifts. Mostly not, as this would be seen to interfere with the purity of the text. We can probably assume that many carry a similar message to what they did pre-enlightenment. Chastity is still valued and promiscuity looked down upon.

So what, where's the harm? Stigma creates a social power imbalance, with the stigmatised dropping in social value relative to those who promote the negative stereotype. Many psychological studies will show that this results in chronic stress, shame, guilt and discrimination, leading to poorer health and poorer psychological outcomes. Generally stigmatised groups, not just sex workers, experience higher rates of chronic stress and social isolation related mental health issues and higher suicide rates than the general population.

In the opening story Karen was managing the effects of stigma by hiding a part of her life away from other parts. This may be the safest option to avoid some of the negative consequences of social stigma, but can one disclose and still be resilient to the effects of stigma? For those willing to risk consequences of outing themselves, there are some steps that can be taken to decrease the negative effects on yourself and reduce stigma in society.

- Develop or join accepting community. Sex worker support groups exist in many countries of the world and all States of Australia. Online communities have evolved and networks of sex worker friends regularly pop up.
- Do your research, talk to other sex workers, read credible evidence based studies and discover for yourself how false the negative stereotypes are. Take a look at the service you provide to your clients, think of the value you have added and the lives you have touched and changed in a positive way. Allow yourself to feel the pride.
- Break the stereotype. If the negative stereotype is immorality and disease, show that you care for your body, become health and fitness proud, get involved in benevolent community projects
- Fight for your rights. You are a human, with human rights. Don't stand for being disrespected by others because of your profession. Vote for policy that recognises your rights; lobby to remove legislation that perpetuates the stigma
- Promote an anti stigma message. There have been campaigns to reduce stigma in the areas of mental health and HIV. These can involve posters, internet, radio and television promotion to get the message across that the stigma involved is often based on a false negative stereotype. Look for opportunities to join in on or create similar campaigns for sex work

By being a sex worker, you face potential hostility, yet do it anyway. You offer an honest casual sex (and more) for cash service in a culture where casual sex often otherwise involves deception. If you are a woman, you operate in an industry where women usually out earn men, standing against other industries where women are often undervalued compared to men. You cater to the needs of clients, who due to their own stigmatised interests or social shyness often cannot find expression elsewhere.. I'm proud of you. Thank you for being a sex worker.

Annie (Southern Regional Coordinator)

We are launching our Agony Aunt section within our newsletter but we first need someone to have a whinge. So if you have a story to share that you want to tell our readers about, if you want some ideas about how to solve a problem or you just want to let off some steam and write to us and tell our readers about what is annoying you, please email info@respectqld.org.au and please put the subject of Agony Aunt.. Yours Truly- Agony Aunt

A few of the Respect crew at the Cairns Casino from the left: Joe, Monica, Michele, Annie and Candi



Health Tips and Tricks

Things to try if a condom breaks while you're bonking:

- Stop the service immediately. The penetrative partner needs to pull their penis out immediately.
- As the professional you're the expert, so you should keep hold of the base of the condom if it's still there to make sure the entire condom, or as much as possible, comes out.
- Ask your client to give you some space so that you're able to move around freely. While they're getting off you or moving away, take the time to take three deep breaths and clear your mind.
- Check in with your client to see if they are freaking out because you'll want to calm them down as soon as possible to stop them escalating.
- Tell your client to go to the bathroom and urinate if they can to clear their urethra (or vagina if your client is female) and have a shower to wash their genital area. If your client is a male and he's not circumcised, he should pay particular attention to underneath his foreskin. When they go into the bathroom, just be still if you need to and compose yourself.
- Put a towel on the floor, squat over the towel, bear down and squeeze your vaginal muscles or bear down on your anal muscles to try and push out any semen or pieces of condom that may have broken off inside you. Coughing and sneezing is also a good way to push things out of your vagina and butt.
- As gross as this sounds, get the broken condom and put it down flat on the towel and reassemble it to see if any of the condom has broken off and is still inside you. Sometimes condoms don't just split, they can break up into several pieces, so reassemble it like a jigsaw puzzle to make sure it's all out. If there is any broken condom inside you, or the condom has slipped off and you cannot squeeze it out, try and get to a doctor or sexual health service ASAP. Using your fingers to get a condom out should be your very last choice and you need to be REALLY careful not to scratch yourself if you decide to dig around inside your butt or vagina. If you do decide to use your fingers, try to put on a few sets of gloves so that your fingers aren't as scratchy, especially if you have long fingernails.

Continued p7

Health Tips and Tricks (from p6)

Dealing with your client

It's really a situation in which to remain calm and in control at all times, so don't panic. It's also one of the rare times where it's alright to turn to a client and say "Actually this is very scary for me too, so please have a shower while I look after myself and we can discuss this further when you get out". Always put yourself first if this ever happens to you, and when you're in control and comfortable explain to your client that Australian sex workers have the best sexual health of anyone in the

community and you have STI screening so the risks to them are very low.

You can also refer your client to a sexual health service for STI screening if he/she is concerned and would like to have a check-up. It's a good idea to explain the way they work and what he/she can expect if he/she chooses to go to one so that he/she feels more confident in doing it. Giving someone information makes them feel calmer and more in control.

Michele (Northern Regional Coordinator)

Industry Tips and Tricks

Personal Safety Tips and Tricks for Sex Workers - Be Safe; Not Sorry! – Part 1

Personal safety is a paramount concern for all sex workers. It is important that you are aware of the potential risks and take as many precautions as you can, to ensure you are safe while you are working. Your situation, who your clients are and where you work may influence what safety procedures you use whilst working. Below are some industry tips and tricks I thought about and used when working. The majority of the bookings I attended were outcalls to client's homes or to a hotel. Not all of the tips provided may apply to your own situation and they are certainly not intended to scare you. They are just some strategies I reminded myself of, when leaving for a booking or meeting a new client. My mantra was always **Be Safe: Not Sorry!** It never hurts to be prepared.

Making or Going to a Booking

- Try to verify the outcall address through Google or Google Earth and get a feel for the safety of the neighbourhood.
- Always be aware and in tune with your surroundings. If it is possible use a driver on outcalls.
- Don't rely on your client for transportation to and from your appointments. You don't want a stranger picking you up at your home, nor do you want to depend on him bringing you home if things don't work out.
- If you drive yourself, let your message taker know where you are going and how long you expect to be there before you leave home.
- Let the client know, or give them the impression that there is someone (driver) waiting outside for you, even if you are not using a driver.

Don't book calls with any clients who insist that you do NOT use a driver.

If you are going to a client's private home or hotel, do a drive-by first to check for signs that "something might not be right." For example, is the house dark, empty, or abandoned? Are there several cars in the driveway indicating others are there? Do you hear loud music coming from the house indicating a party is going on? Can you see more than one person in or around the house, or anyone sitting in cars parked near the house? If you feel something is wrong call the client to discuss your concerns and if you don't get answers that satisfy you then cancel the booking. When you arrive, take the time to text your message taker to let them know that you arrived safely and the outcall location looks okay.

If the customer is at a hotel and you are to meet them at their room, get their real name and room number, then later call the hotel desk asking for them by their real name to verify they are a registered guest. If the hotel doesn't have their name registered, they're not checked in yet, or they gave you a fake name. Either way, RED FLAG!

Regardless of your skills and experience, who your clients are and where you work, there will always be potential risks and steps you can take to minimise them. The most important safety tip you can use is to **TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!!** There is often only a brief moment where you can decide to listen to your gut and act. Don't let that moment pass you by. If your instincts are telling you something is wrong, listen to them as they are probably right.

*If you have any safety tips and tricks you like to use, please share them with us to be included in our follow up article "Be A ware and be Prepared At a booking" to be published in the February Edition of Respect Ed! Until then **Be Safe: Not Sorry!***

Jane (Gold Coast Peer Educator)

What's Happening In Townsville

Townsville has had a busy quarter preparing for the AGM and Round Table for Cairns, The poster project is in it's final stages, nearly ready for production.

There are less workers from interstate enquiring about working in Central and North Qld.

Some workers have utilised the Sex Worker Police Liaison Officer at the Townsville City Branch and have been treated with courtesy and respect when lodging complaints.

The Townsville office will be having a Xmas party this year... STAY TUNED.

To all of the readers have a safe and prosperous Xmas and New Years, best wishes from the 'Ville.

Michele (Northern Regional Coordinator)

Key Contacts

Respect Inc.

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Annie mob 0451 149 782, src@respectqld.org.au
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Monica mob 0432 367 598 monica@respectqld.org.au
 (Can speak Chinese/中國)

Government

Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA), 07 3858 9500,
<http://www.pla.qld.gov.au/>
 Prostitution Enforcement Task Force, (PETF), 07 3426
 1888, <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/>

Other Sex Worker Organisations

Scarlet Alliance, Australia & TAS 02 9690 0551
<http://www.scarletalliance.org.au>
 S.W.O.P., NSW, 02 9206 2166, <http://www.swop.org.au>
 RhED, VIC, 3 9534 8166, <http://www.sexworker.org.au/>
 S.W.O.P., ACT, , <http://www.aidsaction.org.au/swop>
 S.I.N., SA, 08 83517626, <http://www.sin.org.au/>
 Magenta, WA, 08 9328 1387,
<http://www.magenta.org.au>
 S.W.O.P., NT, 08 8944 7777,
<http://www.ntahc.org.au/programs/sex-worker-outreach-program>
 NZPC, NZ, (+644) 382 8791, <http://www.nzpc.org.nz>

Sexual Health Clinics

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/help/>
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/panic.asp>



<http://endhiv.qld.gov.au/>