



Newsletter Winter 2010/11

Greetings From Our National Co-ordinator!

It's hard to believe a whole year has passed since I joined YWCA Scotland. In that time, I've been inspired and supported by the creativity, enthusiasm and dedication of those involved in YWCA across Scotland and around the world.

Research shows that women and girls still face huge barriers to achieving their potential including the increase in gender stereotyping toys and products, media messages telling girls that appearance and sexuality are more important than personal or professional achievements and evidence that young women face increased risk of violence. Such studies underline the importance of building knowledge, skills and confidence to help young women and girls make positive, informed choices.

We are doing just that in our centres! In Kirkcaldy, young women are learning about healthy, economic food preparation, getting support with weight issues in pregnancy and gaining awareness of the risks of sexual and domestic violence. Young YWCA members in Livingston are delivering smoking prevention workshops to younger girls, producing a DVD on the dangers of substance

misuse and will soon be undertaking community research on the safety of women in pubs, clubs and bars.

We are also exploring new partnerships to work with young families in Edinburgh and provide awareness training on violence against women for organisations that work with young people across Scotland. We will be measuring the outcomes of these and all activities to demonstrate the difference made and ensure we are following best practice.

In common with most Scottish voluntary organisations, we are still unclear about funding available to support our work next year. However, YWCA Scotland is now in a stronger position to take advantage of funding opportunities that will arise in future.

I'd like to thank the Board, staff, volunteers, partners and members of YWCA Scotland for their on-going support during the past year and look forward to working together with them in the future. Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Peaceful and Prosperous New Year to you all.

-Kim Smith



Regional Training Institute Estonia 20th—22nd October 2010

By Kimberley Swan, YWCA Scotland Chair

I was asked a few months ago to not only attend the Regional Training Institute (RTI) Estonia in October but lead a delegation. I am at this moment in time the President of YWCA Scotland and the Vice-President of YWCA Great Britain. However, I had not represented the YWCA on an international trip never mind lead one!

However, my fears were short lived when I arrived in Tallinn Estonia. The delegation consisted of a staff member from YWCA Sheffield and 2 young women from different centres from YWCA England and Wales. All delegates were great company and each had a commitment to learn and take the most they could from this experience to help YWCA.

The RTI covered a wide range of topics with the main 3 of Sexual Rights and Health Rights (SRHR), HIV/AIDS and Violence Against Women (VAW) linking in to the 3 main themes at World Council



in Switzerland in 2011. These topics were discussed in depth and we broke into groups to learn and share experiences of the similar issues but also the differences affecting YWCAs IN Europe. It was a great privilege to be involved and to meet so many committed young women from all over Europe. We also developed our understanding of other important issues and training needs such as advocacy work, social media and communication plans.

I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at the RTI and would encourage all young women, staff and volunteers to apply for these opportunities. Experiences like the RTI increase awareness and knowledge of issues affecting the lives of young women, but will also increase your personal capacity and teach you so much!

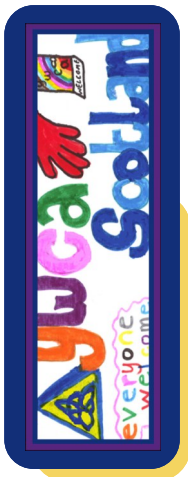
Bookmark Competition Results!

Back in September YWCA Scotland launched a competition to design a bookmark that would be used as a promotional gift by the organisation.

The competition received a positive response from the girls at the centres and we had plenty of wonderful designs to choose from! Kimberley Swan, YWCA Scotland Chair, judged the entries and awarded Kristie Berridge, aged 13 from Livingston, as the winner.

All of the girls will receive a certificate for their hard work, and Kristie will be presented with a framed copy of her winning entry at an event later this month.

We would like to say a big thanks to Kristie and all the girls for entering the competition – we feel very proud to have such talented individuals in the YWCA! Also, special thanks to Kimberley for taking the time to judge the competition.



Getting to Know the YWCA Board!

Here at National Office we thought it would be a really great idea for all our staff, members and supporters to get to know the members of our Board of Trustees a little better.

For our first instalment of 'Getting to Know the YWCA Board' we have chosen Gemma Statham, who was elected treasurer of YWCA Scotland at our Annual General Meeting in September.

Gemma has been a valued member of the board since September 2009.



Name: Gemma Statham

Age: 27

Location: Edinburgh

What did you want to be when you grew up?

When I was younger I always wanted to be an actress and really enjoyed appearing in lots of theatre productions while at school and university. Unfortunately, the world of work has brought an end to that!

What made you want to get involved with YWCA Scotland?

I was looking for an interest outside of my own life that allowed me to use my skills but also to learn new ones. I was attracted to the YWCA in particular because I agreed with its ethos and thought that the work it was doing with young women was (and is!) very much needed in Scotland.

What do you do in your life outside YWCA Scotland? (e.g. work, hobbies, family, interests, etc.)

I work as a solicitor and live in Edinburgh with my husband Andrew and two kittens called Lola and Poppy. In my spare time I like to see friends and family, go to the gym and do Pilates. I love travelling and exploring new places as much as possible. Last summer I went to America for a couple of weeks and have starting planning next year's summer holiday already! I also like watching films, live music and going to the theatre.

What do you like best about being involved in the Board?

Hearing about all of the new and exciting ideas people have for the YWCA and helping to put those into practice.

What do you like least about it?

Not having enough money to do all of the things we would like to.

What would you like to see different for young women and girls in Scotland in 10 years time?

I would like young women to feel that nothing in life can hold them back and that they can aspire to be anything they want to be. I hope that the gender inequality that unfortunately still exists in society is no longer there and that young women have some more positive role models - I feel quite depressed by the celebrity obsessed culture at the moment.



Understandably, the young women were quiet and nervous when they first began their presentation, so to ease everyone in Bill started off by showing some slides and getting the younger girls to fill out 'true or false' questionnaires. The young women soon started to relax. Rebecca took photos while the others helped the girls with their questionnaires. Next they each sat with a group of five girls and one girl from each group lay on the floor while another drew around her body and wrote on post-it notes the organs and areas of the body they thought would be affected by smoking.

Smoking Prevention Workshops

West Lothian Drugs and Alcohol Service provided two training sessions earlier in the year on smoking awareness, which four young women from YWCA Livingston attended. Future sessions were organised for November with plans for the girls who attended the original training events to deliver a workshop aimed at junior girls age 9 – 12yrs.

The first workshop took place on Thursday 25th November with 15 junior girls attending. The event was facilitated by three young women, Amy, Laura and Rebecca, who were supported by Smoking Prevention worker, Bill Logan.

It was wonderful to watch how the young women worked and interacted with the younger girls, answering their questions and really listening to them. Amy, Laura and Rebecca were very pleased that the girls were so enthusiastic about participating in the activities.

Bill Logan, Prevention Officer, said that it was a 'very good session—the young women facilitated very well and worked well together, which made the session successful. I would be delighted to support them in the future.'

The night was a great success and the young women and girls all enjoyed the experience and felt like they learned a lot—as did all the staff!

Kirkcaldy YOSCARS

Friday 19th November saw over 70 young people attend YWCA Kirkcaldy for the local YOSCARS (Youth Work Oscars!) event, which was organised to celebrate the achievements of young people who have taken part in youth work activities over the past year.

Two of our girls from the Girlz Outloud group volunteered to help with organising the event along with girls from the YMCA. They made a significant contribution by organising the invitations, programmes and on the night set up the hall and were on registration for everyone coming in. The event was a great success and particular thanks were given to the girls for their hard work, enthusiasm and tremendous efforts.

The original group of Girlz Outloud members received a certificate to recognise their efforts back in March when they organised a conference for 84 of their peers .



Breakfast Club – Round Two!



Following the success of the Breakfast Club that ran during the summer, we decided to hold it again for a new group of women in Kirkcaldy .

The new group started on Wednesday 3rd November with 13 women from across Kirkcaldy signing up. The purpose of the group is to teach basic cooking and preparation skills, the importance of nutrition (including hidden salt and sugar, saturated fats), how to get 5 –a-day and tips on eating a balanced diet.

There will also be time for the women to socialise, get to know each other and share ideas, which we realised in the last course was as important as gaining new skills. The new group is made up of women who come from a variety of cultures so we're hoping there'll be a good exchange of recipes!

We were successful in securing funding from Fife Council Community Based Adult Learning (CBAL) for the crèche costs and Fife Community Food Project for ingredient and food hygiene certificate costs. This group will finish on the 12th January with a new group of women set to start the course the week after.

YWCA of GB Conference, 19th – 20th November 2010

By Rachael O'Byrne, YWCA Development Worker

The YWCA of GB is the umbrella organisation of all the YWCAs throughout Great Britain.

The conference was the perfect opportunity for us to find out how we in Scotland fit into the bigger YWCA picture!

The conference brought together YWCA Scotland, YWCA England & Wales, the independent YWCAs including Glasgow & Sheffield, and joint YWCA/ YMCAs represented by Glenrothes. We were also joined by Keuna Diaho from World YWCA.

We arrived in Doncaster on the Friday night and took part in a 'getting to know each other' session, then learned about YWCA of GB. On Saturday, we took part in workshops which were based on the 3 themes of YWCA World Council 2011 – Violence Against Women, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health & Reproductive Rights. The workshops allowed us to gain information on each theme, and debate, discuss and share ideas.

There was 'networking' time on Saturday where we learnt about all the different work that the YWCAs do across Britain—featuring presentations by Livingston volunteers Ashley Geggan and Avis McDonald! We

then took part in the YWCA of GB business meeting which included the Constitutional review.

I think I speak on behalf of everyone when I say we met some great people, heard some really inspiring stories and it was overall a very useful, interesting and worthwhile weekend.

I stayed an extra night with the rest of the GB delegation for World Council 2011 to take part in the first of three training weekends in preparation for next year. The delegation is made up of 5 staff members and 3 young women from YWCAs across Britain, and this was our first meeting. It's really exciting to be part of the delegation and I'm looking forward to our next training weekend in February!

I'd also like to say thanks to Lillian from Doncaster YWCA and her staff who did a great job looking after us the whole weekend!



Case Study: Ashley Geggan

Ashley has been a member of the YWCA since she was 9 years old, and is still involved with the organisation 17 years later! She started out attending the Junior Girls Group in Livingston and has gone on to volunteer, set up her own groups, represent the YWCA at national events and speak to large groups of people about her journey with YWCA Scotland. We are all so proud of everything Ashley has achieved, and are pleased to be able to share her story! The following is an extract from Ashley's presentation at the YWCA GB Conference.

My Journey with the YWCA

By Ashley Geggan

I was very shy and withdrawn as a child and my mother decided that it would be beneficial for me to get involved with a local youth group, so I could make friends and take part in different activities. I began attending clubs every week at the YWCA in Livingston when I was 9 years old.

As I got older I began to help out at the Girls Clubs, became involved in fundraising and attended meetings. I have also been involved at a national level, unveiling the new logo for YWCA Scotland, and in 2003 taking part in a fashion show in Edinburgh with 'Y' members from all over Scotland to celebrate Positive Body Image for women of all shapes and sizes. I have really enjoyed meeting young women from other YWCAs as it makes me feel part of a larger organisation which has a real voice.

In 2004 I became a mum, and remained involved with the YWCA through the Young Mums group. I have found this to be very useful as we are all supportive of each other as first-time mums. We have a lot of activities in the group and have recently completed a 'Get Cooking' course which

taught us how to prepare healthy meals without them costing a fortune!

My son is now 6 years old and over the years I have remained a member and volunteer at the Mums Group. I have also set up many groups of my own in the centre, such as a driving theory course, a keep-fit club and a money-saving class.

I am now 26 and attending college to study social care, I aim to continue studying the subject at university in the future.

I really enjoy being part of the YWCA and feel that I have benefited greatly from being a member as it has kept me off the streets, given me many opportunities and allowed me to meet lots of new people. I feel that being involved in the YWCA has helped me to be more confident and able to do the things I want to do, and I am proud to be able to give something back by volunteering with the organisation.



YWCA Film Project 2011

Working in Partnership with West Lothian Youth Action and Firefly Arts

We are delighted to announce that a Film and Drama Project with young people to raise and address issues of alcohol misuse will be going ahead. We propose to run for 8 to 10 weeks from January to March 2011. The young people taking part will include 6 young women from the YWCA centre in Livingston and 4 young people from West Lothian Youth Action. They will have the opportunity to develop skills in drama and editing and take part in film workshops while exploring alcohol related issues that affect them, their peers and the wider community.

The completed film will be edited onto DVD format and the participants will discuss how this resource will be disseminated and screened at a meeting in December.

YWCA Scotland Visit YMCA Scotland

Staff from YWCA Scotland paid a visit to YMCA Scotland to recognise YMCA/YWCA World Week of Prayer on 15th November. This annual event is a tradition dating from 1904. The theme this year was “Women Creating a Safe World,” which will also be the focus of the World YWCA Council and International Women’s Summit to be held in Zurich, Switzerland, in July 2011.

During the visit, we explored together what “being safe” means to each of us and the challenges many young people face in staying safe from harm in communities around the world, and here in Scotland. We also reflected on the ways we can all contribute to creating a safer world, both personally and through the work of our organisations.

A big thanks to everyone at YMCA Scotland for hosting us, for the fellowship, sharing of ideas and the delicious scones!

Aberlour Childcare Trust – Going for A Christmas Number One!

One of YWCA Scotland’s partner organisations, Aberlour, which seeks to improve the lives of Scotland’s children and young people, is hoping to top the Christmas music charts with the Aberlour Choir’s single, “Where Will You Sleep This Christmas?”

The song features a performance from popular X Factor contestant, Gamu Nhengu, who has been involved in the Aberlour Choir and the charity for the past five years. The Zimbabwean born teenager from Clackmannanshire and her family are facing possible deportation due to a visa mix-up.

The song tells the story of a young person in care and Aberlour hope the single will both raise awareness of how their work benefits young people in Scotland and generate vital funds for developing more services.

For further information and to support the Gamu for No 1 campaign, visit www.aberlour.org.uk

Pink Stinks – The Campaign for Real Role Models

When sisters Abi and Emma Moore were worried about the influence of gender stereotyped toys and products on their children, they set up the Pink Stinks website. They have no problems with the colour pink. However, they do take issue with the promotion of products that send narrow, damaging messages about what it is to be a girl. Their aim is to influence marketers and the media to promote positive role models for girls (and boys.) The site includes a wealth of research on the issue and information on how to get involved in their campaigns. Visit www.pinkstinks.co.uk

aberlour choir

Featuring Gamu Nhengu

Where will you sleep this Christmas?



Scottish Charity No. SC020791 | Scottish Governance No. SC312912

The 104 Pairs of Shoes Exhibition

The 104 Pairs of Shoes exhibition was created by YWCA Scotland in 2002 as part of the 16 Days of Action event to illustrate the women who are killed every year through domestic violence.

'Very thoughtful and thought-provoking. We need to keep Domestic Abuse in the public eye, raise awareness and educate today's children about abuse that is still hidden'.

'It was very moving to see some of the shoes and become aware of the scale and horror of abuse to women in our land'.

The exhibition is available for groups to borrow for events from YWCA Scotland National Office—for more information please contact Adeline on: 0131 558 8000 or adeline@ywcascotland.org.



Coming up at YWCA Scotland...!

Be on the look-out for some exciting changes in the New Year that will improve how we engage with young women, girls and other supporters in the future.

We hope to be launching our new and improved membership scheme in early 2011. We are currently doing some research into what our members would like to see from our membership scheme – comment forms have been sent out and given out at the AGM, but if there are any members who have not received a form and would like a copy please contact Adeline at adeline@ywcascotland.org or feel free to put your comments directly in an email or letter to us.

We are also working on plans for a brand new website! We want to make our current website more up-to-date and user-friendly, and are busy working away on this in the hope of launching it in the first half of 2011

In addition to all of this we are currently researching social networking opportunities and aim to set up facebook and twitter pages that will be linked with our brand new website.

Make sure you're signed up for our eBulletin to stay up to date with all YWCA Scotland news! Contact us to get your name on the list.



YWCA England and Wales name change!

As of 1st December 2010 YWCA England and Wales has changed its operating name to **Platform 51**.

From Platform 51:

'51% of people are female [...] girls and women use us as a platform to have their say and a place from where they move into the next stage of their lives.'

'We will continue to be part of the World YWCA movement via our membership of YWCA GB and our legal name will remain YWCA England & Wales'.

For more information please visit: www.platform51.org or contact: pauline.simpson@ywca.org.uk

YWCA Scotland and other YWCAs that form part of YWCA of Great Britain will continue to operate with the YWCA name.

To find out more about YWCA Scotland or support our work please contact us at:

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