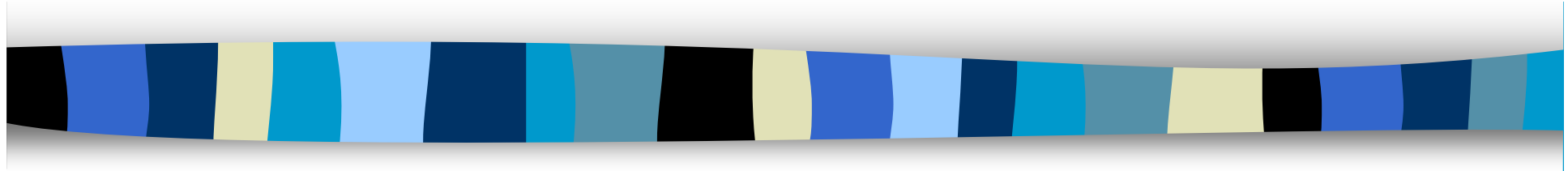


VACRO Women's Mentoring Program



**Corrective Services Administrators
Council (CSAC)
7th National Women Offenders
Conference.**

Presented by Michelle Chrimes

Women's Mentoring Program



- **Woman to Woman (W2W) founded in 2000**

Supporting Women's exiting Prison to integrate into community following release.

- **VACRO Women's Mentoring Program 2003-2006**

Funded by William Buckland Foundation & R.E.Trust

- **VACRO Women's Mentoring Program 2007-2009**

Funded by Corrections Victoria



What is a Mentor?

“ Mentors provide a spectrum of learning and supporting behaviours, from challenging and being a critical friend to being a role model, from helping to build networks and **develop personal resourcefulness** to simply being there to listen, from helping people work out **what they want to achieve**, and why, to planning how they will bring change about.”

David Clutterbuck



WOMEN'S MENTORING PROGRAM

Strength Based Approach

- **People are the experts on their own situation.**
- **All people have strengths and capacities.**
- **People change and grow from their strengths and capacities.**
- **The problem is the problem, the person is not the problem.**
- **Problems can blind people from their noticing and appreciating their strengths and their capacity to find solutions.**
- **Strengths include peoples' interpersonal, intellectual and physical skills, the resources in their environment and the aspirations, hopes, dreams and interests.**



WOMEN'S MENTORING PROGRAM

Mentor Role

- **Role-model**
- **Further develop personal resourcefulness**
- **Help build networks**
- **Provide some practical assistance**
- **Emotional support**
- **Provide information and encouragement**
- **Act as community educators in relation to problems faced by disadvantaged and marginalised women**



Women's Mentoring Program Aims

- **Assist the transition from prison to the community.**
- **Connect women with their greater community.**
- **Provide ongoing support and positive role modelling.**
- **Facilitate women's awareness of their strengths and competencies.**
- **Reduce the incidence of self-harm and accidental death through the provision of social support.**
- **Provide transitional support to a range of 'special needs' groups identified as in need of additional support services.**



Expectation of Mentors

- **Commit to 12 month involvement in the program**
- **Complete 10 Training modules**
- **Attend monthly Group Supervision Sessions**
- **Maintain regular contact with participant on at least a fortnightly basis**
- **Report any concerns to VWMP Coordinator**
- **Attend ongoing training and development sessions**
- **Police Record check**



Mentor Screening

- **Detailed application form, resume and two referees**
- **Initial Interview**
- **10 Training sessions (including prison tour)**
- **Post training interview**
- **Police Check**



How it Works

- **Who is Eligible?**
- **Referral/Assessment**
- **Matching**
- **Introduction**
- **Signing Agreement**
- **Review**
- **Completion Celebration**



Challenges.....

- **Referral**
- **Concerns regarding mentor agenda's and ability to understand and maintain boundaries**
- **CCO work load**



Future Direction

- **Continue promoting to prisons and Correctional sites**
- **Extending VWMP to women supported by the Home Detention Unit**
- **Next round mentor intake March 2008**
- **Target Islamic women and Vietnamese women to participate in next round of mentor training.**

QUESTIONS

