



RCD Women's News

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Services for women at the Refugee Council, Brixton

There are currently a number of services specifically for women refugees and asylum seekers available at the Refugee Council One Stop Service (OSS) in Brixton: The Women's Group, the Vulnerable Women's Project and a domestic violence project run in partnership with the Gaia organisation in Lambeth.

The Women's 'Group' is in fact two groups. The Monday Club is for women who are recently arrived and perhaps do not speak much English. A volunteer ESOL teacher helps group members develop their language skills as part of the group's activities. The Thursday Club is for women who have been here longer and can participate in English. Both groups are social and last from 11am-3pm. Activities include workshops and speakers on topics chosen by the group members, outings, Shiatsu massage and a mentoring project for women living with HIV/AIDS. The aim of the groups is to break down isolation among this client group. The groups are facilitated by Anne Akaki, the Refugee Women's Development Worker who also represents the Refugee Council at the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) multi-agency meetings to discuss issues of concern regarding women asylum seekers.

The Vulnerable Women's Project has been funded for three years by Comic Relief to support asylum-seeking women who have been raped or sexually abused, in the UK or in another country. The project can help women access appropriate counselling or psychotherapy services, sexual health clinics and other social and legal support as required. We also offer Therapeutic Casework, a model of support combining counselling skills with advice and advocacy, which we have developed specifically for this client group.

Two members of staff from the Refugee Council Support and Advice Section (SAS) also provide an outreach service to asylum seeking women experiencing domestic violence at the Gaia Project in Lambeth. Women are given advice on their rights and entitlements and are assisted with accommodation and other issues which might affect them.

For further information on these services, or to make a referral, please contact:

Women's Groups:	Anne Akaki	020 7346 6771
Vulnerable Women's Project:	Elena Hage	020 7346 6790
Domestic Violence:	Angelina Jalonen	020 7346 1043
	Anne Akaki	020 7346 6771

Free directory of sexual violence services (London and home counties)

Eaves Directory of Sexual Violence Services lists organisations in the London area that support women who have experienced rape and sexual abuse. To receive a copy, send a self-addressed A5 envelope for 23p to: Lilith Directory, Eaves, 2nd Floor Lincoln House, 1-3 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6DE. Women on low income or unemployed can obtain a copy by emailing lilith@eaveshousing.co.uk stating their address.

Funding

The primary objectives of the **The Lotus Foundation** trust are 'to offer financial aid and assistance to facilitate family and child welfare, women's issues, animal protection, addiction recovery and education'. Grants range from £400 – £64,000.

To apply for funding submit a brief outline of the work, the amount of funding required and information about the project .

For more information visit:

www.lotusfoundation.com/ or write to:
Mrs B Starkey, The Lotus Foundation, 90 Jermyn Street, London, SW1Y 6JD.

The next application deadline for outline proposals to the **Nuffield Foundation's** Access to Justice, Child Protection and Family Justice, Older People and their Families and Open Door programmes is the **9 November 2007**.

For more information go to:
www.nuffieldfoundation.org/go/grantprogrammes/page_6.html

Conference to launch domestic violence research - 7 December 2007

A one day conference will take place at **South Manchester Law Centre** to launch **Women Asylum Seekers from Pakistan's** (WASP) research findings on the key issues relating to domestic violence issues as they affect Pakistani women asylum seekers in the UK.

Keynote speakers will be: Hina Jilani, human rights lawyer based in Pakistan and UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion; Pragna Patel, chair of Southall Black Sisters; Melanie Plimmer, barrister at Garden Court North specialising in asylum and women's rights issues; and Alison Stanley, solicitor and Head of Immigration at Bindmans and Partners.

For further information about the conference contact, **Nadia Siddiqui** at **nadia@smlc.org.uk** or call **0161 248 1879**

Training

The Greater London Domestic Violence Project is running **Basic mental health awareness training** on **Monday 26 November 2007** at 1 London Bridge, 1st Floor Downstream Building, London, SE1 9BG.

The training will explore:

- attitudes and beliefs around mental health
- the different types of mental ill health and how these intersect with domestic violence
- the legal and health issues around working with clients who have mental health difficulties

Priority will be given to staff from front line domestic violence services who wish to improve their response to survivors who may be experiencing mental distress.

Time: **9:30am - 4.30pm**
Voluntary organisations: **£75**

Please email **chelsea.mckinney@gldvp.org.uk** or call **020 7785 3860** for more information.

Lecture on violence against women and HIV (London)

Professor Charlotte Watts, London School of Hygiene and Medicine will present evidence on the levels of HIV infection, and levels of violence against women globally.

She will discuss how violence against women fundamentally weakens strategies of abstinence, behaviour change and condom use (ABC), which are being promoted for HIV prevention by the US Government. The lecture will include key recommendations.

Venue: **London School of Economics (Tower 1, Room U8)**

Date: **7 November 2007**

Time: **6.30pm-8.30pm**

For more information go to:

www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEAIDS/events/dfid_lectures_seminars.htm

To submit any articles about women's asylum issues, email **cdt@refugeecouncil.org.uk**