



NELSON WOMEN'S CENTRE
TE WHARE ĀWHINA MŌ NGĀ WĀHINE PUAWAI

Nelson Women's Support Inc.

and

Women in Nelson Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2013 - 31 March 2014



Nelson Women's Centre / *Te Whare Āwhina Mō Ngā Wāhine Puawai*
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Introduction

This has been a year of organisational change for Women in Nelson (WIN), Nelson Women's Support (NWS) and the Nelson Women's Centre. The Centre's name in te reo, *Te Whare Āwhina Mō Ngā Wāhine Puawai*, indicates "a supportive place where all women can flourish." This describes how we want to be with each other, and what we want this place to be for all women who come here.

Women in Nelson Inc (WIN) was formed in the 1970's and has for almost 20 years been the community group responsible for owning the Nelson Women's Centre property, coordinating its daily operation and funding the ongoing development of the Centre. WIN's overall focus has been "community action and community development for women."

Over the years, Women in Nelson has had an annual membership of 20-80 women, and has been governed by a Collective of 4-8 women. The most recent WIN Collective members were Gail Collingwood, Elena Meredith, Anna Geene, and Heather Vass. Former WIN Collective members have included many other key Nelson community leaders/activists: Penny Molnar, Trix Dyer, Jacquetta Bell, Susan Hawthorne, Laura Black, Bets Stallard, Briar Haven, Esme Palliser, Juliet Speers, Nicki Green.

Nelson Women's Support Inc (NWS) has for the past 20 years been the social work and counselling arm of the Women's Centre. NWS provides practical support, advocacy, counselling and growth groups for women of all ages who face big life challenges. NWS Collective Members were Carrie Mozena, Deanne Kilpatrick, Mal Shepherd-Harris and the volunteer counsellors: Ruth Parsons, Mia Riddell, Mira Markovic, Nadine Kunz, Jenny Davis, Rebecca Young, Myffie James.

The Merger

At last year's AGM (and after months of discussion), Women in Nelson and Nelson Women's Support agreed to merge. This strategic decision was based on many changes in the social, political and economic environment which have challenged the survival of small community groups. The aim of our merger is to: strengthen the Nelson Women's Centre's governance, clarify our public profile, and simplify daily roles/responsibilities, while continuing to develop our core services.

We wrote a new constitution to combine the aims of WIN and NWS, but under the name of Nelson Women's Support Inc, in order to maintain Charities Registration (CC25321) and our approvals status with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Our new constitution was approved by the Societies Register in September 2013.

We affirmed that our mission is: "empowering women to be safe, resourceful, to value themselves and to reach their potential."

We formed a new Governing Collective at last year's AGM, which included members from both previous Collectives. The new Governing Collective members selected were: Gail Collingwood, Anna Geene, Elena Meredith, Heather Vass, Ruth Parsons, Mira Markovic. However, early in 2014 Mira Markovic resigned to take up full-time work, and Myffie James, Joy Shackleton and Raewynn Greenwood came on board.

WIN and NWS financial accounts were operated separately through 2013-14, in order to account properly for all grants made to those separate groups. The final financial merger and asset transfer were completed on 31 March 2014. This means that the Women's Centre property at 44 Trafalgar St. is now owned by Nelson Women's Support Inc. Many

thanks to Victoria Hall at McFadden McMeeken Phillips for donating the conveyancing work. (All workers employed by WIN up to 31 March 2014 are now employed by NWS.)

We note that the most visible legacy of Women in Nelson is the ownership of the Nelson Women's Centre building. Purchasing the property back in 1996 required an ambitious, 18-month \$160,000 fundraising campaign (that began with just \$160 in the WIN bank account). House ownership provides a secure base for all of our Women's Centre services, including SASH (and a lovely, welcoming environment for all who come here). We are still one of only three Women's Centres in New Zealand owned by the occupants.

Technically speaking, Women in Nelson Inc wound-up on 31 March 2014.

Women in Nelson Services at Nelson Women's Centre

Women in Nelson has employed the Women's Centre Coordinators, Carrie Mozena and Deanne Kilpatrick. They are facilitative leaders who work to keep all of the services, workshops, gatherings and events here running well; and who keep looking for ways to help address issues in the community that are important to women.

Other employees are Kathleen O'Connor, Finance Administrator, and Lisa Ines, Cleaner.

Highlights this year for WIN and Nelson Women's Centre Coordination

- **Participation in all of the programmes and services at the Women's Centre continues to grow.** Our total number of client contacts for the year was **3358** (this is an **11% increase** over last year, and a new annual high). This includes Centre visits, phone calls and email queries. (More contacts keep coming via our new website, especially from younger women.)
- **46% (1535) contacts related to our SOCIAL/CULTURAL offerings.** Lots of people (individuals and agencies) enquire about our workshops; some approach us to be tutors; many attend other groups (e.g. 10-15 women and their children attend the Women Parenting Alone group every Friday).

Hands-On Art and Discovery Afternoon workshops are popular: 405 women attended **56** workshops throughout the year. The wide variety of workshops we offer accomplish many things: they introduce women to creative arts and crafts, help them to learn new skills, enable them to get to know new people, and boost their confidence in many ways. The tutors we engage are dynamic, skilled and inspiring people to be with. Our workshops also provide many women an easy introduction to the Women's Centre, which encourages them, later on as they may need, to link with the support groups, social work, advocacy and counselling services offered here.

Our Hands-On Art workshop topics included: drawing, painting, mixed media, pastels, felting, mosaics, paper mache, rag-rugging, batik, creative sewing, quilting, ethnic cooking and gluten-free baking.

Our Discovery Afternoons included a mix of personal development and life skills topics: budgeting, homeopathy for common ailments and first aid, Mothers Raising Boys, herbal household products, Indian Head Massage, Qi Gong, menopause, self-defence skills, belly-dancing, Alexander Technique, accessing your intuition, Emotional Freedom Technique, the politics of abortion and family planning, boundary-setting, relationship and communication skills.

- **16% (544) contacted us for HEALTH reasons.** Many women ask us for referrals to counsellors, GP's or other health services. This is because they are new to town, on a low income, or not happy with their current health provider. We refer women to NWS and SASH for support and counselling, and we maintain a resource list of private counsellors who are full members of NZAC or NZAP. We provide vouchers for free cervical smears for women who have a Community Services Card. We also have had several skilled volunteers offering gold-coin massage, holistic pulsing or Reiki sessions for women on low incomes. This year **189 women received a 30-or 60-min healing session** here at the Women's Centre.
- **15% (496) came for a TIME OUT or to visit the OP SHOP.** We are a drop-in centre where women can pop in for a cuppa, browse in our Women's Library, meet a friend for lunch, have an informal chat with someone, just hang out, or hunt for bargains in our Op Shop. This year we have seen a great flow of donations to and sales from our **Op Shop: sales were over \$2,000.** Funds raised from the Op Shop help cover the daily running costs of the Women's Centre (such as power, internet, milk, tea, rubbish, cleaning supplies, etc).
- **4% (134) contacted us for help with INCOME.** We are a contact point for the Angel Women's Loan Fund, who provide no-interest loans up to \$1200 for women to help with their training/ education or to help start/grow a small business. We continue to get many requests for help re changes to benefits and often link people with BUWT (Beneficiaries and Unwaged Workers Trust), the Nelson Budget Service, and with the Fifeshire Foundation (for grants in cases of domestic hardship). Also, due to ongoing tough times, many people come to the Women's Centre seeking food. We almost always have surplus bread, meat and fish to give away to individuals and families in need. **We are immensely grateful for regular food donations from Nelson Food Bank and Tozzetti's Bakery (bread), Sealord (fish) and Lonestar Farms (meat).**
- **3% (109) were requests for help with HOUSING issues.** This includes emergency housing, the Bond Bank and affordable rental housing.
 - a. **Emergency Housing:** The Women's Centre works closely with the Nelson Tasman Housing Trust, who oversee two emergency cabins at Tahuna Beach Holiday Park. The Women's Centre and six other community agencies share access to this emergency housing: Family Start, Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, Victory Community Centre, Whakatu Marae and Women's Refuge. On average, 80 adults and 60 children each year are housed for 10 days. This emergency housing gives women and families breathing room so that they can find longer-term accommodation. The Women's Centre Coordinator helps lead the bi-monthly Emergency Housing Committee meetings, which guide the development of emergency housing in Nelson.
 - b. **Bond Bank:** The Women's Centre Coordinator set up the Bond Bank in 2008, which is now run by the Nelson Tasman Housing Trust (NTHT). The Bond Bank provides no-interest loans up to \$750 to help people pay the bond for a new tenancy. As an NTHT Trustee, our Coordinator is involved with reviewing, approving (and sometimes declining) the bond loans.
 - c. **Affordable Rental Housing:** Women on their own and families on low incomes have a hard time finding housing they can afford in Nelson. It is not unusual for people to struggle to pay rents that are 50-65% of their weekly incomes. We provide

information on where and how to look for housing, refer people to the Bond Bank, and link people to Women's Centre social workers and the Salvation Army for skilled advocacy on accommodation issues.

- **9 daytime VOLUNTEERS worked a total of 507 hours** this year. We hugely appreciate Clancy Hunt for all of her gardening skills and creative additions to our grounds. Our loyal volunteer Deb Rapson continues to keep the Op Shop neatly sorted and organised. Megan Norquay and Ngaire Askew helped with many house jobs and errands. **Heartfelt thanks as well to the skilled healers** who freely gave their time this past year to help women on low incomes: Erika Keegan with massage; Linda Kotua, Joss Hogarth and Delamay Carpenter with Reiki; and Megan Norquay and Rona Spencer with Holistic Pulsing.

Nelson Women's Support Services - Overview

Nelson Women's Support empowers women to be safe, resourceful, to value themselves, and to achieve their potential, through practical social work support, advocacy, counselling and education. All our clients are validated and heard. They are treated with respect and dignity in a confidential and safe environment. Our Māori wāhine are embraced within the kaupapa of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Our office is open every weekday from 9am to 4pm. We are central to town at 44 Trafalgar Street. The uniqueness of our agency is we are able to see all women within and around our community. We are able to respond to all enquiries as quickly as possible. We prioritise urgent cases. These are generally walk-in clients who are in distress and need urgent help: women of different cultures and ages who may need to talk to someone regarding food, housing, domestic violence, advocacy re Work & Income or lawyers appointments etc. Women also present with mental health issues that need immediate attention. We also have an outreach service that allows our social workers to make home visits. This is beneficial for all women who are disadvantaged financially and physically.

Our referral system is a simple: a phone call, to the landline or our cell phone which is held by one of the social workers at all times, or via email or the website. We aim to respond to any messages left to us within one hour during work hours or otherwise within 24 hours. Women are referred to Nelson Women's Support by family, friends, co-workers or other agencies such as Nelson Hospital, GPs or practice nurses, Work & Income, CYF etc.

Social Workers' Roles

We employ two social workers, Lyn Ginty and Christine Henwood, who are both full members of ANZASW (Aotearoa NZ Association of Social Workers). They are both very experienced and respected in the community, with good reputations for being honest and trustworthy when working alongside other agencies. Both social workers work from a strengths-based perspective which allows the client to determine their own journey or course of immediate action. Our Maori social worker, Lyn, has her own ability to engage specific theories within her practice e.g. Te Wheke Maori model is used when working alongside the whanau determining whakapapa. This enables both worker and client to form a meaningful relationship and where both fit in iwi, hapu, whanau.

Both social workers have a strong belief regarding safety of children. Notifications are made alongside whanau as we promote transparency, trust and support. Anonymous notifications are only made if there is a threat to the safety of the social worker. Both social

workers have a wide knowledge of the Nelson community therefore are able to think on their feet regarding referrals to other agencies within the area who may have more expertise in specific areas.

Re domestic violence and abuse, both social workers, Lyn and Christine, have a lot of experience helping women address domestic violence. We are well able to help women understand the dynamics of power and control, create safety plans, and help them secure protection and parenting orders if needed. We frequently refer women to the programmes of Stopping Violence Services. We also link many clients to the services of SASH so that women who had been sexually abused as children or raped as part of ongoing family violence can get specialist support and care. Our social workers continue to help these clients with practical matters re housing, food, clothing, children's education and more.

Social Work Support & Advocacy – this service has two “streams”:

- a. **Intensive Family Support**, for 60 high-risk families per year, funded by a contract with Ministry of Social Development/ Child Youth & Family. This year, we worked with a total of **71 high-risk families** (with 273 children), with **64 (or 90%)** of these families achieving at least 80% of their goals set through their case plan.
- b. **General Social Work Support & Advocacy**, largely funded by grants from NZ Lottery and The Canterbury Community Trust. This year, we worked with **over 260** women and families in this general area.

Primary Presenting Issues for All of Our Clients

Domestic violence/abuse - 25%

Housing - 15%

Parenting/custody issues - 15%

Financial hardship - 15%

Mental health, anxiety/depression/grief - 15%

Legal issues - 10%

Medical/physical health - 5%

AGES OF CLIENTS

26% 17-30 years

35% 31-40 years

36% 41-60 years

03% over 60 years

ETHNICITY of Clients

70% NZ European

27% Maori

01% Pacific Islanders

02% Other

Outreach Clients - 30 clients were seen this year on home visits
85% single-parent families ; 14% two-parent families; 1% elderly - sick

Counselling

Nelson Women's Support has six qualified, volunteer counsellors, who provide up to 10 free counselling sessions to any woman over age 17. Our social workers assess women who request counselling, and will “hold” these clients until they are able to be seen by a counsellor (usually within 2 weeks). Our counsellors are required to keep written records and evaluation sheets on each client as an accountability measure for the agency. The

counsellors attend a meeting with all staff once per month, and meet as a peer group after the main meeting. All counsellors have their individual external professional supervision paid for by the agency (thanks to ongoing fundraising for this purpose).

This year, our counselling service worked with 85 new clients. This is a substantial increase from our usual total of 50-60 counselling clients per year. A very big thank-you to our counsellors Ruth, Mira, Jenny, Rebecca, Mia, Nadine and Myffie for all of their work in empowering women to make positive choices and changes. Their skilled presence in working with largely low-income women who aren't able to pay for private counselling makes a wonderful difference in women's lives.

Outcomes from our counselling service include: clients reporting positive changes in their attitudes and perspectives on grief, conflict, and loss; improvements in clients' abilities to set appropriate boundaries in their relationships; improved self-acceptance and sense of self-worth; greater willingness to try new things; and enhanced ability to assert themselves as necessary.

Pathways to Power Courses

Each year we run two Pathways to Power courses, skilfully facilitated by Kindra Douglas. (Kindra created the course 10 years ago and continues to develop the course material). Pathways to Power is an 8-week guided course in exploring one's sense of self, strengths, ability to reflect on one's behaviours and beliefs, the power to choose and make things happen, and to feel more in charge of life – now and for the future. **18 women attended two Pathways courses** this year. Participant feedback is overwhelmingly positive.

Learning outcomes are: increased self-knowledge, centredness, and self-confidence, and a clearer sense of life direction and goals. Participants in two of our previous Pathways groups continue to meet together every couple of months, which demonstrates the strength of many of the relationships formed on the course.

Important Trends Seen by Our Social Workers This Year:

New Family Law system for parents or separated families with custody and access issues has improved, with the new Family Dispute Resolution, counselling and mediation process. This means more care-of-children issues are being dealt with out-of-court which makes the process faster for all concerned. If an agreement cannot be reached it is then referred to court.

However, paying lawyer's fees for women separating from partners is often very hard as there is almost no legal aid available for this. The outcome is that our social workers are often doing a lot of work that the lawyers used to do.

Welfare Reform – Women over 50 on benefits come to us stressed, tired and often very tearful as they are being targeted by Work and Income to find work. Many of these women have health problems e.g. ongoing back and knee problems. They have expressed that they would love to work but are unable to stand for any length of time. Work and Income are sending these women to a 26-week course to attain qualifications to re-enter the workforce. If they are unable to attend they are doing volunteer work just to keep their benefit. Many older folk in Nelson are aware that employers prefer to employ young people without health problems.

Single mothers on benefits are also being pressured into training and to find work of more than 20 hours per week. The outcome for most of these mothers is stress, anxiety, depression and worry about child care. There is not a lot of work available in Nelson between 9am and 2.30pm for single parents, therefore this goal is quite unrealistic.

Housing – There is a lack of homes for women with children and pets after separating from their partners. Loss of a family pet creates more anxiety and sadness for the children. We also hear about a lot of cold, damp houses as many women have said they cannot afford power. Often blankets and mattresses are used up against doors and windows to keep drafts out. Other single women just go lay in bed with an electric blanket on.

Poverty – Women are presenting more and more with needing food from the Women's Centre. They are feeding their children first and then eating the leftovers from the children's plates. Many of these women appear very under-nourished and tired. And for too many of our clients, especially in winter, it is "heat or eat."

Doctor's fees for adults – Many women are neglecting themselves and their older children's needs because of the high cost to see a doctor.

The Working Poor in Nelson – This year with the increase in the costs of food, power, petrol and housing, plus the lack of stable employment, we have seen many working families struggle. The women have been humbled to come into our agency and ask for food for their families. These families are not entitled to anything from Work and Income. We are fortunate to be able to provide them with a food parcel from our donated supplies. We are also able to link them with local agencies that can sometimes help pay for things such as car registration, warrants for cars, medical bills and electricity.

For example, we rely on people like Lois from St Vincent De Paul's who often help with food parcels or finance for medical bills or refills for gas cylinders. Without her swift care, life would be dismal for some of our clients.

Fifeshire Foundation has to be our clients' biggest financial support. Every month, both social workers Christine and Lyn, make applications for urgent grants to cover power bills, firewood, dentistry, washing machines, food, furniture, and car registration. We are very humbled by the Fifeshire Foundation's generous support of people in great need.

Thank-you also to the Salvation Army as they provide help for our clients experiencing addictions, urgent travel costs and needing food parcels.

We also thank the Nelson Tasman Housing Trust for all their support in housing many of our families. This has given these women the hope, warmth, security that has encouraged them to make positive changes. A happy, warm home makes happy people, no matter how hard the struggle, for themselves and their families.

In conclusion, we wish to thank the new Governing Collective members, Gail, Anna, Elena, Heather, Ruth, Raewynn, Joy and Myffie for their support, vision and energy. We also want to thank all our wonderful volunteers, as well as our co-workers, Deanne, Kathleen, Christine, Sarah-Jane, Delia and Sinnet for their heartfelt work and good humour this year. We all of us make the Nelson Women's Centre a good place to be.

Sincerely,

Carrie Mozena
Women's Centre Coordinator

Lyn Ginty
Community Social Worker

Financial Summaries:

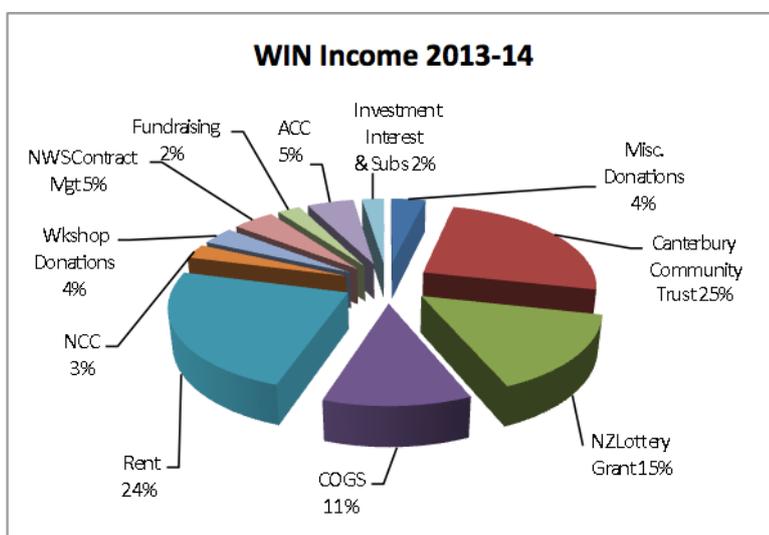
Women in Nelson has had a diverse mix of funding sources. We are especially grateful for the long-time support of NZ Lottery Grants Board, The Canterbury Community Trust, COGS, Nelson City Council and the Creative Communities Scheme. We also greatly appreciate the community support that has made our fundraising events so successful.

WIN's total income for the year was \$52,605 and our total expenses were \$79,051. This means a deficit of \$26,446. The main reason for this deficit was the need to fully spend all WIN grants by 31 March (and not apply for ongoing funding). Two unusual expenses were the relief cover for our Coordinator when she was injured and on ACC, and the accounting practice to track leave accrual for employees shifting over to Nelson Women's Support.

Women in Nelson Inc Funding Summary 2013-14

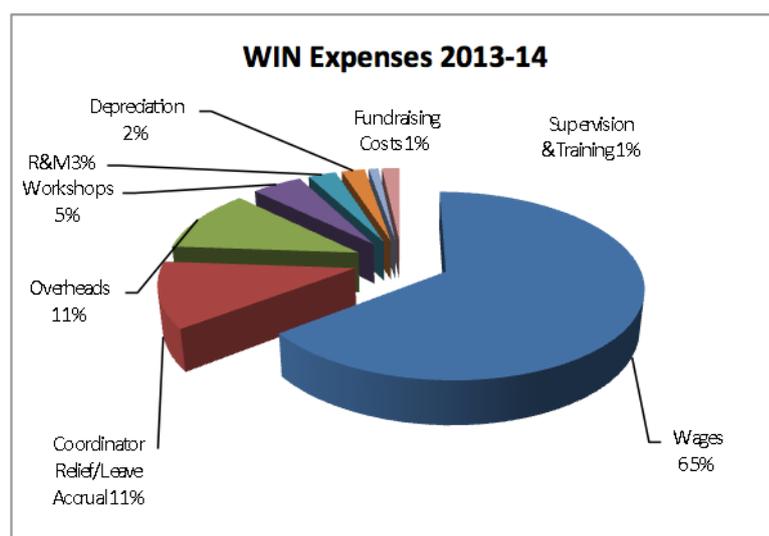
Income:

Misc. Donations	\$ 1,972
The Canterbury Community Trust	\$ 13,000
NZ Lottery Grants Board	\$ 8,000
COGS	\$ 6,000
Rent (from SASH & NWS)	\$ 12,600
Workshop Grants: NCC	\$ 1,500
Workshop Donations	\$ 1,852
NWS (for contract management)	\$ 2,400
Fundraising events	\$ 1,323
ACC (reimbursement of wages)	\$ 2,686
Investment Interest & WIN subs	\$ 1,272
Total Income:	\$ 52,605



Expenses:

Wages (incl Kiwisaver & ACC)	\$ 51,061
Overheads	\$ 9,141
Coordinator relief & leave accrual	\$ 8,801
Workshops: tutors/materials/ads	\$ 3,926
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 2,179
Depreciation	\$ 1,802
Fundraising costs	\$ 761
Supervision & Training	\$ 1,380
Total Expenses:	\$ 79,051
Surplus (Deficit) for Year:	-\$ 26,446



WIN finished the year with \$11,335 in the cheque account and a term deposit of \$25,998. These assets, plus \$332,873 in property, transfer to Nelson Women's Support per our merger agreement.

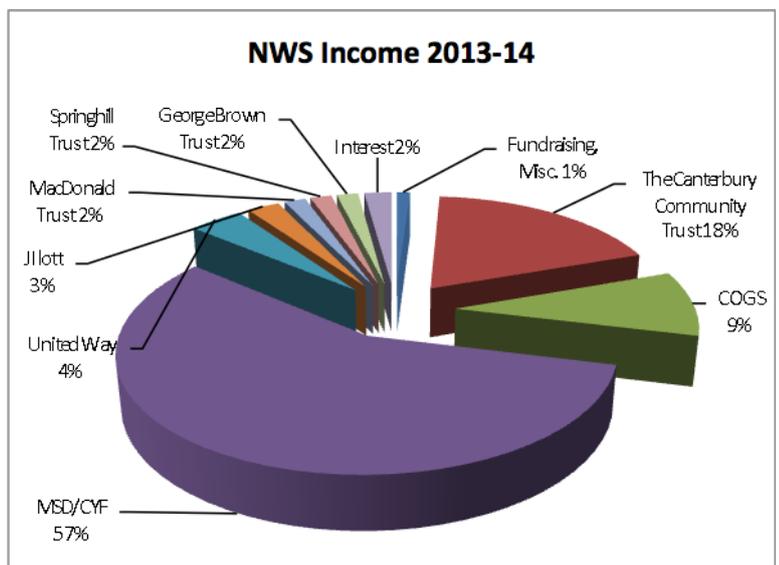
Nelson Women's Support has a strong mix of funding sources. We have a social work contract with MSD/Child Youth & Family, and we appreciate the ongoing support of The Canterbury Community Trust, COGS, United Way NZ, George Brown Trust, John Ilott Charitable Trust and RG & EF MacDonald Trust. The NZ Lottery Grants Board is also a very important funder, but due to their change of grant dates, we show no funds from them in 2013-14. This does distort the picture for this financial year.

NWS' total income for the year was \$59,396 and our total expenses were \$85,941. This means a deficit on paper of \$26,545. The reason for this deficit was receiving the NZ Lottery grant not in March (as in previous years) but in April 2014. Due to the merger with WIN, our 2014 NZ Lottery grant will be \$53,500 towards 5 workers' wages.

Nelson Women's Support Inc Funding Summary 2013-14

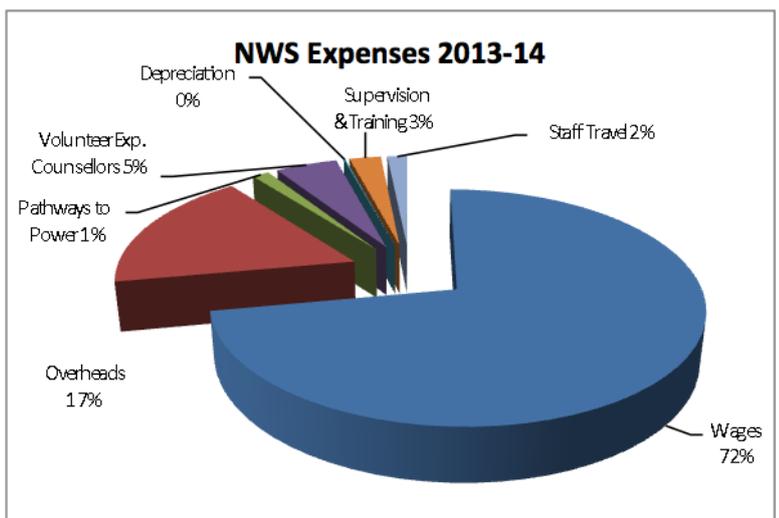
Income:

Fundraising & Misc. Donations	\$ 616
The Canterbury Community Trust	\$ 11,000
COGS	\$ 5,500
MSD/Child Youth & Family	\$ 34,000
United Way NZ	\$ 2,500
John Ilott Charitable Trust	\$ 1,500
RG & EF MacDonald Trust	\$ 1,000
Springhill Trust	\$ 1,000
George Brown Trust	\$ 1,000
Investment Interest	\$ 1,280
Total Income:	\$ 59,396



Expenses:

Wages (incl Kiwisaver & ACC)	\$ 61,942
Overheads	\$ 14,984
Pathways to Power	\$ 1,158
Volunteer Exp - Counsellors	\$ 4,221
Depreciation	\$ 113
Staff Supervision & Training	\$ 2,160
Staff Travel	\$ 1,363
Total Expenses:	\$ 85,941
Surplus (Deficit) for Year:	-\$ 26,545



Nelson Women's Support finished the year with \$11,822 in the cheque account and a term deposit of \$25,998.