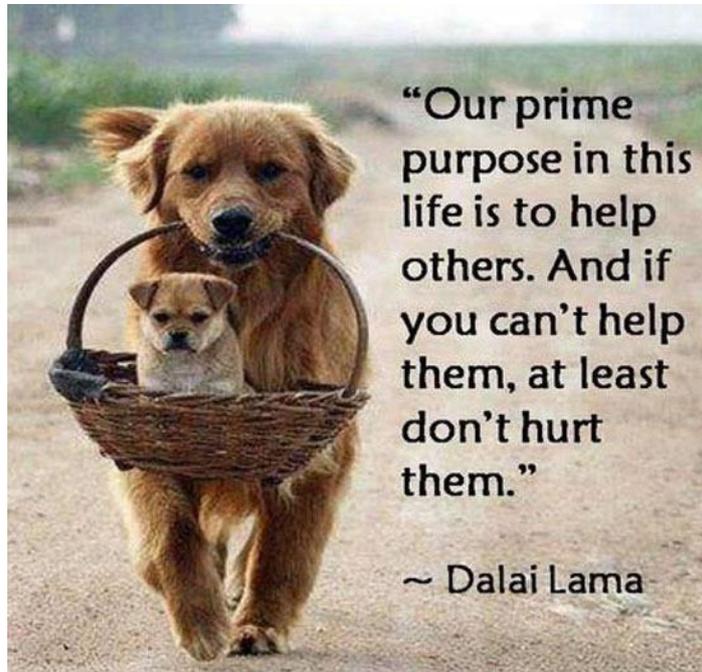




SEWACS

Annual Report 2018-2019



Chairpersons Report

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Yin people, the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today, and to pay my respects to Elders past and present. A better appreciation of the culture, beliefs, history and hopes of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people helps us all achieve reconciliation.

The SEWACS annual report for the 2018-19 year provides a glimpse into the hard work and activity undertaken by the staff and management of the organization in supporting the communities in which they work.

The delivery of human services in regional areas often requires a commitment to collaborative practice across organizations to ensure that resources are used to gain the best outcomes for the community. This report highlights the ongoing dedication of SEWACS to work in collaboration with other services to best meet the needs of the people they support.

During this financial year SEWACS provided a total of 596 people services across three programs: Staying Home Leaving Violence, Eurobodalla Domestic and Family Violence Homelessness Support Service and South East Youth Accommodation Support Services funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

The 2018/19 year was not without challenges with changes occurring in the management of the service early in 2019. Caroline Long was appointed as the new Regional Manager after stepping in temporarily for a period of time. Congratulations to Caroline on her appointment to this role and her dedication to maintaining smooth transitions for clients and staff during the change process.

The management committee would like to acknowledge and extend thanks to the program managers and staff across SEWACS services who show such a strong commitment to the clients they work with and advocate for social justice and support for the region.

Acknowledgement and thanks is also given to the management committee volunteers for their contributions to the running of the service over this year.

We are pleased to table this year's annual report and to recognise the many accomplishments of the organisation and of the people for who it exists.

Brianna Armstead





SEWACS

History

South East Women and Children's Service (SEWACS) is a not for profit community organisation with a strong history and presence in the Bega Valley. In the early 1980's a group of women in the Bega Valley started to meet to identify the needs of women, including having a safe place to stay when leaving violence, a resource centre, a child care centre, medium term housing and help with women's health issues. The Bega Women's Refuge (BWR) began operating in 1988 as part of the Southern Women's Group and became an independently incorporated entity in 1990. The refuge continued to respond to the community's need to provide a range of safe and supportive options for women and children who were experiencing domestic and family violence, and were at risk of homelessness as a result of this violence.

2004 saw the organisation successfully apply for funding to run the pilot program for Staying Home Leaving Violence. In 2005 the BWR expanded to include 10 transitional housing properties in Bega. To reflect the changing geography of the organisation, in 2008 the organisation changed its name to South East Women and Children's Services. SEWACS further expanded into Eden where it ran a drop in, outreach and support service with a strong focus on domestic and family violence.

Today, SEWACS provides three comprehensive programs: Staying Home Leaving Violence and South East Youth Accommodation Service within the Bega Valley, as well as the Eurobodalla Domestic and Family Violence Homelessness Support Service, which provides crisis and transitional accommodation and an outreach program supporting men who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless in Eurobodalla.



Vision

SEWACS is a community organisation working within social justice principles to achieve greater safety and wellbeing for all people in the South East region of NSW.

Values

Our values define who we are. They are the fundamental beliefs of our organisation. They guide our actions and behaviour. They influence the way we work with each other – and the way we serve our clients and engage with our communities, funding bodies and partners.

Dignity

We will treat all of our clients with dignity and respect

Inclusiveness

We work with everyone with a spirit of openness, acknowledging our common humanity

Integrity

We will be honest, sincere and committed in everything we do

Accountable

We will be accountable for all our activities and services to our clients, community and funding bodies

Collaborative

We will work collaboratively with our clients, funding bodies, partners and each other

Social Justice

SEWACS is underpinned by the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights



What we do

SEWACS is addressing homelessness within the South East region of NSW. The work of SEWACS is primarily based around the provision of support and accommodation for women, children and youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic and family violence. SEWACS also provides outreach support, case management and housing options to males who are at risk of homelessness or homeless in the Eurobodalla region.

SEWACS is committed to working towards the elimination of domestic and family violence in the work provided through the Staying Home Leaving Violence program and the specialist homelessness services.

SEWACS works within a feminist framework of practice which emphasises the safety of women and children first and provides client centred support and case management to empower women, children and youth, to live safely in our community.

Our organisation actively promotes and supports the employment of Aboriginal workers across all programs and seeks Aboriginal participation and support on Management. Cultural competency training for all staff is of high priority and reflected in policy.

SEWACS

- is an Incorporated Association
- is registered as a public benevolent institution
- is a registered Community Housing Provider
- provides 'Officers and Directors' Liability Insurance for Management Committee members

Tanner, Salt and Associates were the appointed official auditors of SEWACS for this period. Thanks to Liz for her support throughout the year.

Principle Statement

SEWACS is working towards the elimination of homelessness and domestic and family violence in a community where all people are treated with respect and live in a safe and secure environment.



Management Committee

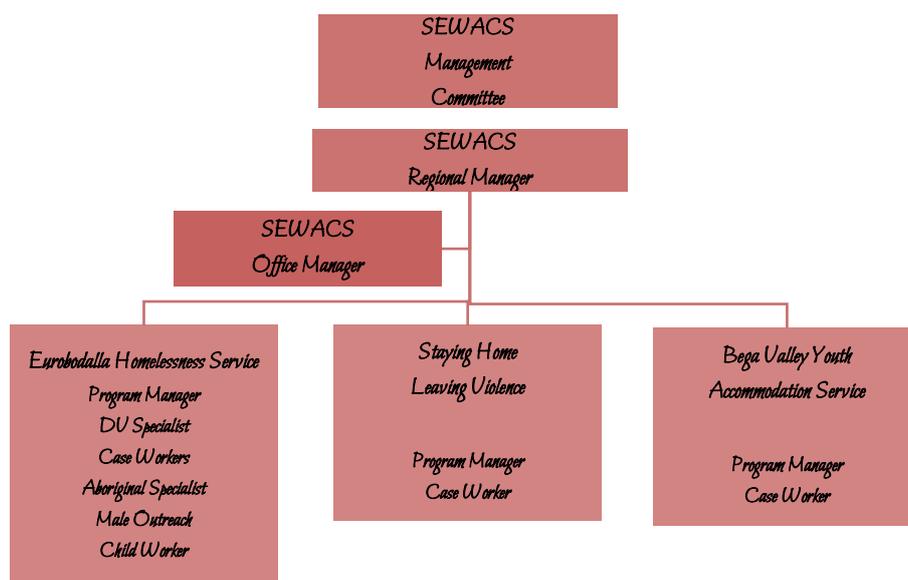
Chairperson	Dianne Smithett/Brianna Armstead
Secretary	Ange McKechnie
Treasurer	Ange McKechnie/Stephanie Rayment
Members	Russell Meers Brianna Armstead Marjorie McKnight Sue Ogier

SEWACS staff acknowledges the huge commitment and expertise that members bring to the organisation. The robust committee of SEWACS enables us to uphold our culture of social and community understanding through its feminist values. We thank you all greatly for your contribution.

Staffing

Regional Manager	Julie
Office Manager	Sylvia
SHLV Program Manager	Caroline
Case Worker	Tahnee
SE Youth Accommodation Program Manager	Kylie
Case Worker	Skye
Eurobodalla Homelessness Program Manager	Zoe
Case Workers	Liz and Naomi
Outreach Worker (Aboriginal)	Kellie/Jay
Male Outreach	Tony
Child Worker	Veronica
Evening Case Workers	Sam, Vicky, Sarah, Kylie, Veronica
SHLV relief worker	Jenna

SEWACS Organisational Structure



SEWACS Service Provision

SEWACS provides a range of services and support mechanisms through its various programs operating in the Bega Valley and Eurobodalla Shires. This is provided across an intervention continuum which includes:

- Primary Prevention/Education/Community Awareness
- Early Intervention/SHLV
- Intensive Intervention/Crisis Accommodation/Transitional Accommodation
- Outreach Support
- Integrated Case Management
- Support Groups
- Child & Adolescent Support
- Post Crisis/Outreach/Follow-up

This report details the varied services that SEWACS programs deliver, including client demographics, program activities and outcomes. It also includes the local, state, national and international networks and partnerships we value and maintain.

SEWACS Programs

For the year 2018-2019 SEWACS managed three programs funded by NSW Government, Family and Community Services:



- Staying Home Leaving Violence
- Eurobodalla Domestic and Family Violence Homelessness Support Service
- South East Youth Accommodation Support Services

Donations and Special Thanks

Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast
Share the Dignity
Pambula/Merimbula CWA
Dalmeny Women's Bowling Club
Woolworths Moruya
SAGE gardens-Moruya
SECOND BITE
The Moruya CWA
Dalmeny and Batemans Bay Quota club
Sapphire Community Pantry
Salvation Army

Strategic, Operational and Risk Management Plans 2015-2018

SEWACS is currently reviewing the strategic plan for the organisation. The Strategic Plan provides us with our Vision and Values. The Operational Plan provides a clear picture of how each program will contribute to the achievement of the organisation's strategic goals. The Risk Management Plan clearly identifies our risks, assesses the risk and develops strategies to support the organisation. The current strategic plan is under review and will be completed by the end of 2019.

Community Housing Registration

SEWACS is accredited under the National Regulatory System as a Community Housing Provider. This year SEWACS was successful in completing the NRSCH compliance assessment.



ACNC

SEWACS is registered as a charity with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Eurobodalla and Bega Local Homelessness Forums

Staff and management have actively participated in, the local area Homelessness Forums facilitated by FACS (Family and Community Services). SEWACS staff are committed to working with other Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) in the South East region to support clients who are at risk of homelessness and provide coordinated case management which ultimately provides better stability for the clients in the community.

Housing NSW staff have also worked collaboratively with SEWACS through these forums and as approached, to be more responsive with the staff to improve the options for people experiencing homelessness in the SouthEast Region.

Family Case Management

SEWACS continued its participation in local integrated Family Case Management as needed. This integrated approach is now embedded in local practice bringing together services and departments with a focus on supporting families where children and young people are identified as 'at risk of harm'. This practice of multiple agencies working together at dual levels has been modelled and extended across an increasing number of locations in the South East region.

Work Development Orders

SEWACS is registered with the State Debt Recovery Office to over Work and Development Orders (WDOs) for clients who have debts from fines. Clients engage in case management and support activities to reduce their debts.

Referral Networks and Partnerships



SEWACS staff also worked in partnership with a range of other agencies and services to assist in the delivery of coordinated responses for youth, women, children and men in our service and to foster broader community awareness of the prevalence and the impact of homelessness and domestic and family violence.

SEWACS is committed to partnerships with other services and community organisations such as Sapphire Coast Tenancy Scheme, Mission Australia, Anglicare and Impact Eurobodalla, Police, Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, FACS/Housing, Family Support Services, Bega Valley and Eurobodalla Council, Campbell Page, Katungul Medical Services, Women's Resources Centre, Wandarma, Brighter Futures, Sapphire Community Pantry, NSW Health Services, Social Justice Advocated of the Sapphire Coast and many more community groups such and the philanthropic Church groups to support and care for young people, men, women and children who are experiencing homelessness and/or family and domestic violence and in the South East NSW region.

Memberships

- Jobs Australia
- NCOSS
- NSW Federation of Housing Associations
- WESNET (Women's Emergency Services Network)
- Yfoundations
- Youth Action and Policy Association – YAPA
- DV NSW
- Homelessness NSW



DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
NSW

Homelessness NSW



Staying Home Leaving Violence

Funding

The South East Women and Children's Services (SEWACS) manages the Staying Home Leaving Violence Project (SHLV), which is funded by Family and Community Services. The program also received funding from the Federal Government. We are grateful to both the Federal and State Governments for their continuing support of this program. The Program continues to provide support to families throughout the Bega Valley.

Staff

The Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) Project employed two part-time workers in the past 12 month period. Caroline Long remains as Program Manager and Tahnee Austin continues as the Domestic Violence Case Worker. We have also employed Jenna McDonald as a relief worker and to fill a vacancy while Caroline acted as regional manager. SHLV has supported a Bachelor of Social Work student, Danya Thompson, from the Charles Sturt University to complete their requirements for their first practicum. We have also supported a Certificate IV in welfare student to meet their placement requirements.

Service Hours and Environment

SHLV is located at 50 Parker Street, Bega. We are co-located with SEWACS Youth Accommodation Service and SEWACS administration. Hours of operation are Monday to Thursday 9 am to 5 pm.

Our email addresses are caroline.long@sewacs.org.au; tahnee.austin@sewacs.org.au. We also have a generic email address that can reach both workers at shlv@sewacs.org.au. SHLV continues to maintain the website located at stayinghomeleavingviolence.org.au.

Networks and Meetings

Community networking has always been an essential element of SHLV to disseminate information about the project, establish good referral pathways and to continue to develop collaborative work practices. Workers from SHLV have been active participants in groups and on committees, the details of which are outlined below.

- Local Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee, which also acts as the SHLV Consultative Committee.



- Headspace Consortium meeting.
- Family Support Service management meetings. Caroline remained an active member and Treasurer of the Far South Coast Family Support Service management committee.
- Court Users Forum.
- Safety Action Meetings, where appropriate.
- Interagency meetings organised and facilitated by Family Referral Service.
- Attended the Annual general Meetings for Family Support Service.
- Meetings with our FaCS CPOs.
- Meeting with the Regional coordinator for the new Eden Housing Initiative.
- FaCS round table meet and greet at Bega Civic Centre.
- Caroline attended the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CSLD) meeting in Nowra.
- Youth Action Meeting-Eden.
- Eden Interagency Meeting.
- SHS homelessness forums.
- NAIDOC event-Eden and Bega

Staff Development

Staff development and access to training has been recognised as a high priority within the service, although appropriate, affordable training is often difficult to access. SHLV workers attended the following training:

Caroline	Tahnee	Jenna
suicide prevention	suicide prevention	Motivational Interviewing
Nitty gritty- sexual health training-Bega	Motivational Interviewing	Trauma Informed Practice
Safety and Security conference-WESNET in Coolangatta	Safety and Security conference-WESNET in Coolangatta	
National Homelessness Conference - Melbourne	National Homelessness Conference - Melbourne	
Motivational Interviewing	Trauma Informed Practice	DV Alert
Trauma Informed Practice	Double Whammy-Mental health & Alcohol & other drugs	Double Whammy-Mental health & Alcohol & other drugs
Double Whammy-0Mental health & Alcohol & other drugs		
Leadership matters		

Get On Board: Building and Motivating Boards and Committee Women's DV tenancy information session		
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DV coasters distributed along the shire as part of the local DV Committee

Presentations and Promotion of Project:

- Presented an education session at Bega TAFE to Cert IV Welfare students x 2.
- Domestic Violence talk to Workability – Disability trust staff.
- ABC radio interview
- Eden Magnet newspaper interview.
- TAFE presentation to Welfare Certificate IV students.
- TAFE presentation to Welfare Diploma students.
- Pambula/Merimbula talk and Christmas hamper gift to SEWACS.
- Domestic Violence march and event in Bega.
- Presentation to interagency meeting facilitated by Family Referral Service.

Share the Dignity continue to support women with personal items including sanitary goods and handbags laden with personal hygiene items. This has been well utilised and an essential product provided to our service users.



International Day for the elimination of violence against women

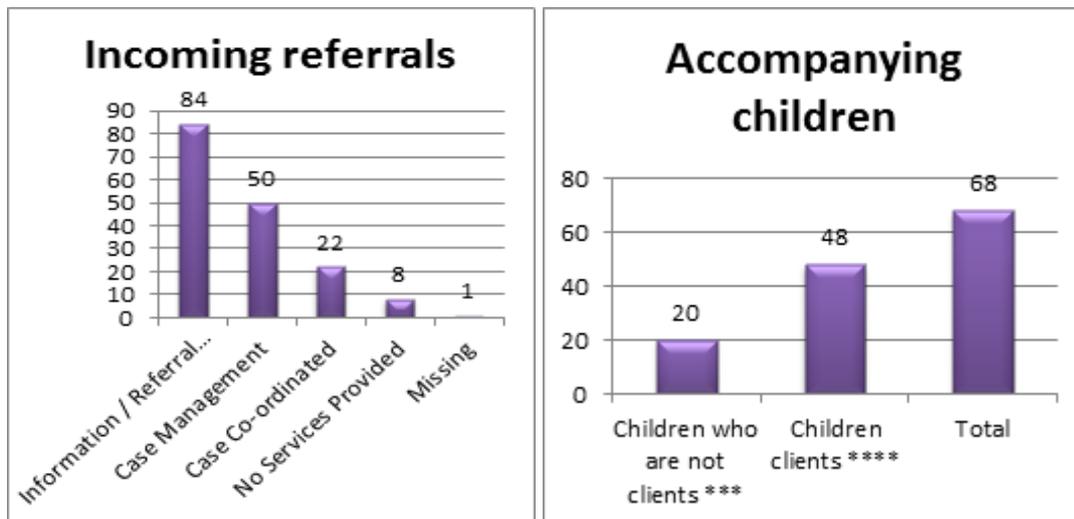
Clients

165 referrals were received in the 2018-2019 financial year. Some of these were re-referrals due to changed circumstances or an escalation of violence. 50 Women were case managed and 22 were case coordinated. These figures do not reflect the accompanying 68 children, 48 of which also needed referrals and supports. Although numbers of people supported were down from previous years it must be noted that the women presenting had a wide range of complex issues. It is also worth noting that the service roles have changed in the last few months with Caroline stepping up into the Acting Regional Manager role and a new worker, Jenna, being trained into the case worker role while working at reduced hours. We received

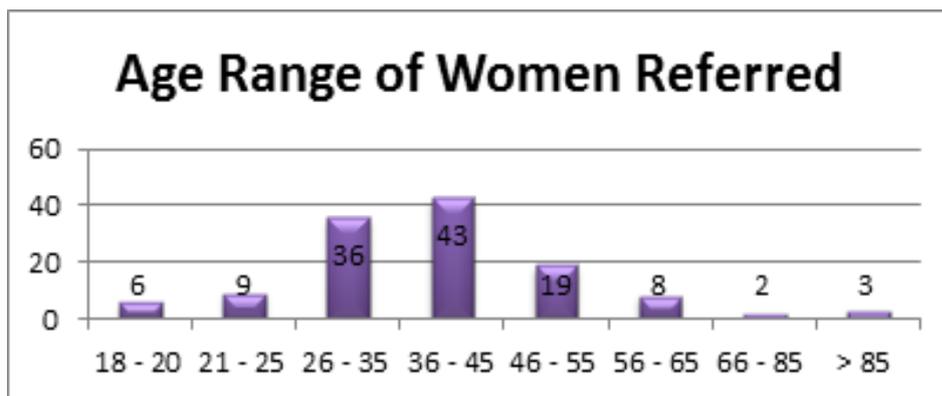
21 referrals from women identifying as First Nations people, nine of which were case managed and case coordinated.

There has been a definite increase in women needing support through hearings and needing support through the family law process, including writing affidavits. There has been a marked increase in supporting women in applying for victims services assistance and housing assistance. There has also been an increase of women presenting with multiple diagnoses.

Our partnership with WDVCS continues with providing support at court for women seeking ADVOs, cross referrals and working collaboratively to help achieve the best outcomes for the women we support. Providing support at court during hearings and other court matters is also part of the service provided to case managed/coordinated clients. Often the issues are related to the domestic violence and could include child protection issues or family law.



*** Persons aged 17 or under who are not clients in their own right (do not have an Incoming Referral in the reporting period with a note/service recorded between the start and end dates of the referral), but have an adult relationship with an Incoming Referral with a Case Management/Case-Coordinated outcome.



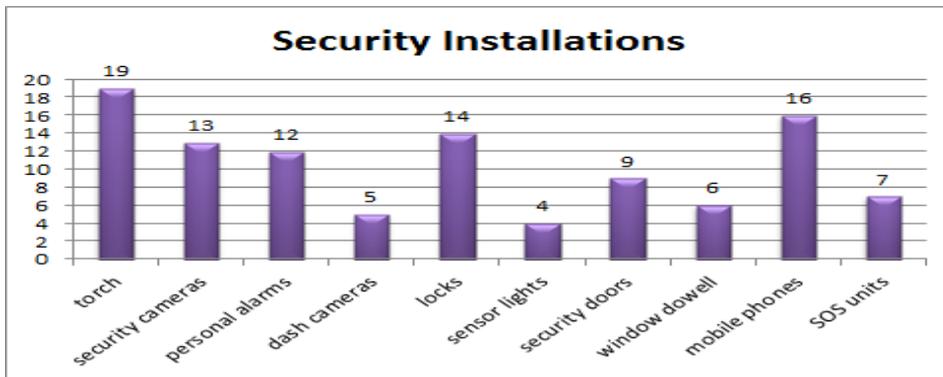
As can be seen in the table above women who present to SHLV are predominantly in the 36 – 45 age range, although 26 – 35 is still highly represented. A disturbing trend has been the increase in women over 66 and particular over 85 who have sought support.

The Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT) remains as an assessment tool that is a mandated form that allows the service to determine the level of threat or threat of the presenting woman. Any score over 12 signifies a significant risk and can be referred to the Safety Action Meeting.



March against violence as part of the 16 Days of Activism

Security Installations:



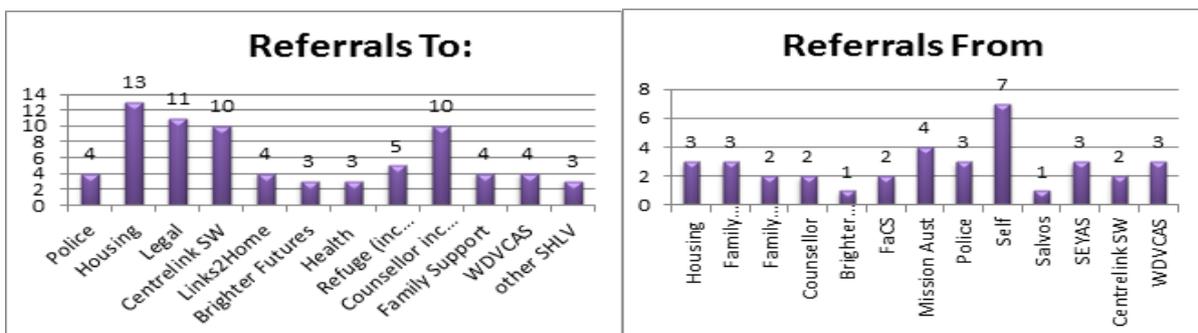
Security installations are still an important safety feature of the project, although it is recognised that this works in conjunction with safety planning and ongoing support. Each plan is individually tailored to the particular needs of the client.

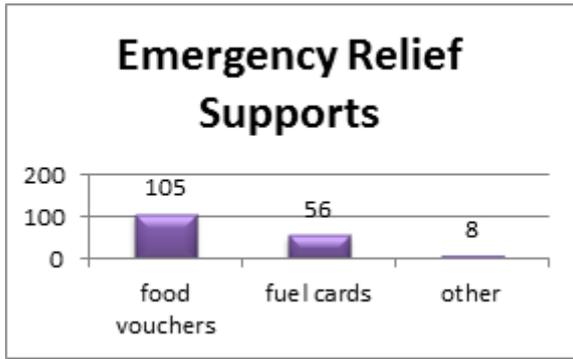
Extra funding from the Commonwealth Government has allowed us to focus on purchasing security cameras and focus on IT security. We are grateful to the federal government for this initiative.

SOS Security System

The SOS, back to base GPS system funded by Community Services continue to provide a vital aspect of safety devices provided to clients. We now have five units to lend to clients on a needs basis and have distributed 7 within the last 12 months. Women have reported these devices have improved their sense of safety and the police response has been We are grateful to FaCS for their continuous support of this program.

Referrals





Food and fuel vouchers are part of the emergency relief supports provided to clients. Other represents school uniforms and assistance with vet accounts. Vet care is done in conjunction and with the support of animal welfare.

Food and fuel vouchers have seen a marked increase from last year. We have made some adjustments in utilising the community pantry as a viable food source.

DV CIMS database

The CIMS database is being utilised with some teething issues. Some functions were not required to be completed but this has made accessing data reports difficult. Fortunately we also keep separate records. However the database has proven to be a useful tool in storing all relevant information, including notes. As our proficiency in using the database increases and as glitches in the system are rectified, this will be a useful resource for the program.

Safety Planning Booklet

The Safety Planning booklet was updated in the previous year and is available for services to purchase or is given to each new client of the program. The updated booklet gave the foundation for the safety planning app, which is again up and running.



In response to feedback we have developed different ways to disseminate information. Requests from the hospital and local hotels and clubs for a way to pass on information to women suspected of being in a violent relationship led to the development of innovative ways to achieve this. Empty lip balm holders were purchased and our information card was copied and rolled to fit into the holders. These have been distributed to local pups, the emergency

department (ED) at the local hospital and at information sessions. ED have requested more of these as they are discrete and compact.

Safety Plan Application-Safe Around Me

With thanks to funding received through FaCS via Federal funding the safety planning App, Safe Around Me, is back up and running. Due to IOS updates the App could not be run on iPhones. It also needed updating and we needed to be able to make changes as required rather than using through a third party. It is also very important we continue to provide multiple ways for people to access information. The App can now be modified as needed and is available as a free resource through the App stores.

Wesnet/Safety Connect Mobile Phones and phone recharge

Providing a new phone is often one of the important factors in safety planning and phones are often one of the first things to be destroyed in a domestic violence event. The WESNET/Telstra partnership in providing phones recognises this and provides an essential service. We continue to receive and distribute free mobile phones and phone credit as part of the WESNET and Telstra safe Connections program. The mobile phones are specifically for

women leaving domestic violence and have been a benefit to the service while providing a valuable service to our client base.

SHLV Website

The SHLV Bega website continues to be a well utilized resource. We have provided links to the domestic violence/SHLV webpage and other relevant resources. We also have a virtual copy of the safety booklet online, which is available as a free download. The website is available at stayinghomeleavingviolence.org.au

SHLV is also linked to the new SEWACS website located at <http://sewacs.org.au>.

SHLV Bega continues to get referrals from our bordering shires, particularly from Eurobodalla. We will continue to lobby to expand the Bega service to cover the Eurobodalla fulfilling a need within this region.

We thank Family and Community Services for their continuing support of this program. We also acknowledge the Commonwealth funding received over the last three years that has allowed us to focus on technology. We are grateful for this support.



Eurobodalla Domestic & Family Violence Homelessness Support Service

Service and Environment

Staff Development

Staff development and access to training has been recognised as a high priority within the service, although appropriate, affordable training is often difficult to access. SEWACS workers attended the following training:

- First Aid re-certification
- LOVEBiTES updated training
- Practical skills in responding to people who experience Domestic and Family Violence
- Understanding the Impacts of Cofactors within Disability Justice
- Identify and Respond to Children and young People at risk
- Facilitating Emotionally Charged groups
- CIMS training with Stephen Tremble/Impact/Campbell Page/ SEWACS
- Aboriginal culture awareness
- Child Protection part 2
- Trauma informed practice
- Trauma and addictions
- Understanding the impact of cofactors
- A person centred approach
- 123 Magic



Network Meetings and Conferences

Community networking is an essential component to establish good referral pathways and to continue to develop collaborative work practices with other service providers. SEWACS employees enhance their knowledge to better assist our community, the details of which are outlined below.

- Strategic Women's Planning Day conference
- SHS monthly meetings
- Quarterly Homelessness Forum
- Attended NAIDOC celebration in Moruya
- "I'm Sorry" bridge walk ceremony Moruya
- Bimonthly DV Committee
- Bimonthly Eurobodalla Family Network Meeting
- NAIDOC week
- Overcoming Indigenous Family Violence Forum, Melbourne



*Overcoming Indigenous Family Violence Forum, Melbourne 2019: Survivor Stories: The Experience Behind The Statistics
Tanietta De Launey, Case Manager, Bugalma Bihyn Aboriginal Women's And Children's Refuge, Women Up North Housing, Master of Indigenous Studies (Wellbeing), Bachelor of Indigenous Studies (Trauma & Healing).*

Our clients

We have assisted a total of 328 people this financial year, including 40 adult males and 219 adult females, and their children. Out of the people supported by SEWACS, 150 identified as Aboriginal origin, 0 identified as Torres Strait Islander and 2 identified as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Clients aged 36-45 years represented the most supported aged group this year (59 women and 13 men) followed by clients aged between 26-35 years (62 women and 3 men). Domestic and family violence is the main reason for accessing our service for our female clients with Housing crisis (eg eviction) as the second highest reason.

Most of the clients we have supported throughout 2018-19 experience a range of complex issues, including homelessness; domestic and family violence; legal and medical issues; drug and alcohol issues; trauma and other mental health issues; sexual assault; pregnancy; as well as transitioning from custodial arrangements and lack of family support. They are likely to be experiencing financial hardship and require assistance with their income support, sometimes compounded by low literacy skills, including relating to digital and financial literacy.

The primary need for women, children and young people seeking assistance at the crisis accommodation is to access safety from domestic and family violence and homelessness. Once safety is established and their physical needs have been met, the priority for the majority of our clients is to access stable accommodation and financial independence. Indigenous clients are over represented in accessing our services and remain a focus for our service.

Service and environment

Our service continues to provide a crisis accommodation service to assist women and men with or without children who are experiencing domestic and family violence, or who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We also provide one stop phone assistance and referral, extensive outreach support, community education programs and child specific support groups, as well as post crisis work and transition support with women, children and young people leaving the service to establish their own homes.

Crisis accommodation

Throughout 2018-19 we have continued to provide crisis accommodation for up to six women and their children at any one time. Our Moruya refuge offers communal living areas, an outdoor play area as well as a designated art/craft/play room for children, computers and a library. The accommodation is located in town within an easy walk to services, and has a bus stop out the front. The service continues to receive Domestic Violence Response Enhancement funding to extend our operational requirements from 5pm to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm every Saturday.

Case management and outreach support

We have continued to provide residents and outreach clients with case management support tailored to address their immediate physical and emotional needs, through a trauma informed approach. We provide them support to plan for them to move towards achieving long term goals, including moving into independent and sustainable housing.

Once our clients are ready to leave our refuge or transitional house, their support needs are assessed to ensure a smooth transition to their independent accommodation. This includes consultation with other services and follow-up services for up to three months to give our clients the best chance to secure ongoing tenancy.

We also continue to provide a diverse range of support services and activities to families and individuals including outreach support, court assistance/referrals, children and young person's after-school and holiday programs/referrals, advocacy, liaison and domestic and family violence prevention activities such as Love Bites.

The male outreach worker continues to provide support to men who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Transitional housing

Our transitional houses have continued to provide a stable home for three families. The houses provide 3 bedroom accommodation for families for three to twelve months, with the aim of assisting them to attain long term, permanent accommodation. Throughout 2018-19 we have provided case management support and services to the families living in our

transitional houses. SEWACS undertakes responsibility for the full management and maintenance of these properties, as a registered Community Housing provider.

Accommodation outcomes

Our strong focus on building and maintaining positive relationships with local real estate agents provides possibilities for private rental tenancies. Continued availability and accessibility of affordable housing options is critical to our service's ability to support positive accommodation outcomes for women fleeing domestic violence.

Whilst an increased length of intensive support may ultimately contribute to better outcomes in terms of future housing stability, living in a communal setting for an extended period can be quite challenging for many individuals. This can result in residents choosing to stay away from the refuge because of tension in the house, which impacts our caseworkers' ability to maintain positive engagement and progress case management outcomes.

Aboriginal outreach

Our Aboriginal outreach worker supports Aboriginal women by providing culturally sensitive and appropriate outreach support for women experiencing domestic violence or homelessness, or who are at risk of becoming homeless. Outreach is offered to Batemans Bay through to Narooma.

The Aboriginal outreach worker supports the team to ensure all our services are culturally sensitive and appropriate, along with cultural awareness training undertaken by workers throughout the year.

Child Support

It is widely acknowledged that children and young people exposed to domestic or family violence experience a heightened vulnerability to educational failure, early school leaving and homelessness, entering into unhealthy relationships, physical and emotional harms, substance use or other antisocial behaviour. Our child support program aims to address the needs of children and young people staying at the refuge and break the cycle of abuse. We offer activities during child support sessions that aim to empower children of all ages and support them to build self-esteem and self-confidence in a playful and light atmosphere. Wherever possible and particularly with preschool aged children, adult caregivers are encouraged to participate.

Therapeutic engagement with children in the refuge occurs within the context of a variety of activities. While structured activities such as art, crafts and games are enjoyable, it is in the relational engagement that the trauma of DV can begin to heal. Structured sessions commence with a quiet 'sit down' welcome circle and a song to draw the children's attention to focus on sharing a special time in a child centred space. We then proceed in a semi structured style that reflects the ages and presentations of participating children.

Sometimes children have difficulty with emotional and physical regulation. For these children, we use rhythmic body movement games and encourage the children to make sounds both loud and soft to harmonise their mind and body. This approach is very effective in stabilising dysregulated emotional states and allows the children to think, talk and engage in planned activities. Underpinning the engagement style with children at Moruya Refuge is the PACE paradigm, (*playfulness* [keeping it light] – *acceptance* [of where the child is 'at'

right now] – *curiosity* [simple desire to understand the child] – *empathy* [being alongside a child with their feelings].

Male outreach activities

As part of the outreach service for men, the male outreach worker facilitates the *Rent It Keep It* module created by FACS. The purpose of this module is to introduce participants who have experienced homelessness to all aspects of the process of securing long-term private rental accommodation.

Men participating in the module are generally living in supported housing, come from a variety of backgrounds and are of a wide range of ages. Some have had experience of living in private rental accommodation whilst some others have not. Amongst those who have lived in private rental accommodation there are those who have found themselves in difficulty resulting in rental arrears and eviction. The male outreach worker has created a supportive atmosphere where members' various experiences are shared and individuals are assisted by the group, for example, through the process of applying for rental accommodation and securing tenancy.

Collaborative partnerships with local services

Domestic Violence Interagency Committee

SEWACS Eurobodalla has played the role of convening and hosting the Domestic Violence subcommittee that reports into the Eurobodalla Family Network meeting. Throughout 2018-19 the subcommittee aimed to meet bimonthly and developed domestic violence initiatives for *White Ribbon Day* including a movie night at the Perry St Cinema Batemans Bay and the *16 days of activism against women* including a market stall and walk against violence as well as a story telling workshop at Narooma to explore healthy relationships.

The statement: *Eurobodalla says no to violence* continues to drive the work of the committee.

The committee aims to:

- raise local community awareness that domestic violence is a criminal act
- enhance interagency collaboration and responses to those who are victims of domestic and family violence
- address issues of violence against all women in our community including:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
 - women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - older women
 - young women
 - lesbians and bisexual women
 - women living with disabilities.

It does this by sharing ideas and expertise to collaboratively initiate, develop and implement:

- key events and activities to raise local community awareness
- fundraising efforts for events and activities
- collective applications for grants
- other activities as relevant to the scope and purpose of the committee.

Love Bites 2018-19 - collaborative partnerships with local services

This financial year, SEWACS program manager Zoe coordinated the 2018-19 *Love Bites* effort across five local high schools, reaching approximately 400 15-16 year olds.

Love Bites is a respectful relationship education program that aims to change attitudes and behaviours. It is a NAPCAN violence prevention program, based on best practice standards for education programs, as recommended by the Federal Government funded Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House and other leading academics in the area of violence against women.

Joined by SEWACS facilitators Liz, Naomi and Vicky and Zoe from SEWACS, worked with other *Love Bites* facilitators from Campbell Page, Impact Eurobodalla, Mission Australia and WDVCS. Together they facilitated the year 10 *Love Bites* program covering Moruya High, Batemans Bay High, St Peters High, Narooma High and Carroll College.

In early 2018, new facilitators were trained through the NAPCAN *Love Bites* facilitator training, resulting in a pool of 12 facilitators across the region.

To ensure the program is run consistently regardless of the facilitator, schools have been provided NAPCAN resources, such as the opt-out note and checklist. Facilitators met with year advisers/principle and in most cases the school counsellor to prepare them for the program.

A debriefing and planning session was held at the SEWACS meeting room to prepare for 2019-20. Positive feedback received from all involved, including the students, teachers and facilitators indicates strong support for the program over the coming year.

An interview with Elise Searson from *About Regional* was conducted at Batemans Bay High school and SEWACS offices.

Donations

Garden

SAGE gardens donate fresh produce weekly, including occasional artisan bakery bread, fresh fish and meats. SAGE also provided volunteer labour, soil and seedlings to replant the SEWACS refuge veggie garden.

refuge



SAGE Veges –building the vege garden at the

Donation Basket

Shoppers at the Woolworths Moruya store generously contribute to the donation basket located in the store.



Lyn Fredin, Assistant Store Manager at Woolworths and Tony Agnew from South East Women and Children's Services (SEWACS).



Second Bite delivery at the

Moruya office

Second Bite

Community volunteers collect bread donations from Coles Batemans Bay as part of the Second Bite program. This is provided to residents at the refuge, to outreach clients (male and female) as well as to other services for distribution.



Dalmeny Women's Bowling Club donation of hampers

Dalmeny Womens Bowling club

Beautiful christmas food hampers with hand made toiletry bags were donated to the Eurobodalla Domestic and Family Violence Homelessness Service

Share the Dignity

Generously donate handbags packed with sanitary and toiletry items for distribution to homeless women, as well as specifically packed bags for mums and for youth. Surplus toiletry items are repacked for male outreach clients.

Hand Knitted blankets, beanies and Jumpers for kids

The Moruya CWA and Dalmeny and Batemans Bay Quota club

Members as well as other community members have generously donated childrens hand knitted beanies, jumpers and blankets as well as blankets and beanies for adult service users.



South East Youth Accommodation Service

The youth homelessness service began operating in September 2104. The name of South East Youth Accommodation Service (SEYAS) was implemented to stay consistent with the SEWACS branding. Staffed by Kylie Furnell as program manager, and Skye Woolhouse as case worker. The service operates in business hours, five days a week.

SEYAS moves into its fifth year of providing support to the youth of the Bega valley who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. We have continued to strengthen relationships throughout the Bega valley to work in partnership, support young people in the community and work closely with other service providers to be responsive to homeless youth and advocate for 'wrap around' services.

SEYAS have developed strong ties with the charities and other service providers in all towns across the shire. The combined knowledge and support of SEYAS staff has been regularly requested by various government and community organisations within the sector.

The main barrier to services to assist young people in housing crisis or at risk of homelessness in the Bega Valley remains the lack of a youth refuge and very few youth designated public or community housing properties. Private rental properties in the valley have continued to show a marked increase in rental rates, with high competition from the general public to secure these properties. This increased competition for available properties has been an ongoing challenge and has been impacted by the Tathra bush fires in 2018.

Clients

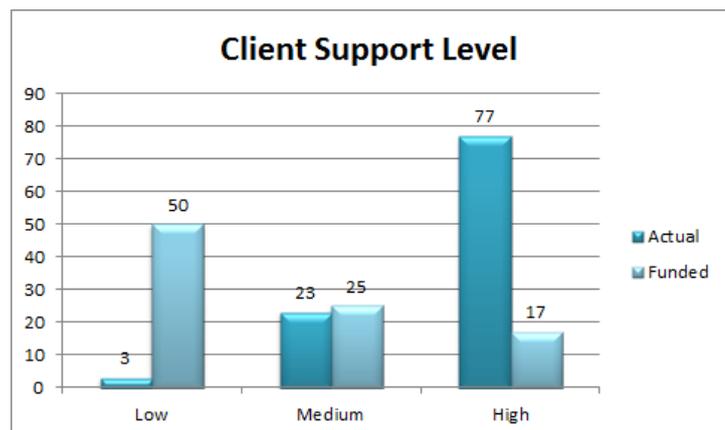
The levels of high need services provided to service users continues to far exceed the funding contracted requirement. The continued demand for this high needs service will require additional funding to adequately support homeless youth in the Bega Valley. The data base shows 103

We were funded to service a total of 92 service users for the 2018-2019 financial year, with the funding bodies definition comprising of, 18.5% High Effort service users, 27% Medium Effort service users and 54.5% Low Effort service users.

CIMS data records show a total of 103 high medium or low service records for service users for the 2018-2019 financial year with a repeated reverse trend of High Effort level service delivered to 75% of

service users, Medium Effort support to 22% of service users and Low Effort support to 3%. This is unsustainable with our current level of funding, with most presenting service users requiring High Level of Effort. Overall the outcomes achieved this year has been outstanding.

This year the data base shows we provided service to a total of 103 clients with 87 "new" service users, and a further 16 people returning for repeat service episodes. 37% of these were Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander descent. This exceeded our required target of 25%.



The contract for the program ends in June 2020.

Lobbying

SEYAS Staff created an awareness campaign in Littleton garden Bega to raise awareness of the numbers of youth couch surfing in the Bega valley. SEYAS utilised the Yfoundation state petition aimed at state government to call on political leaders to commit to a national plan to tackle the homelessness amongst young Australians. A national plan to end youth homelessness would address the systemic issues that drive and exacerbate youth homelessness, including:

- Family violence
- Access to affordable housing
- Youth justice
- Young people on custody orders
- A housing guarantee for young people leaving care
- Young people leaving care
- Child protection
- Education
- Youth unemployment

Youth
Homelessness
Matters
Day



Youth Homelessness event in Littleton Park Bega. The focus was the unseen homeless due to sofa or couch surfing. The local op shop generously loaned a lounge for the event.

SEYAS Program manager took a lead role in proactive advocacy for youth by speaking for a motion at Council to ensure they prioritise Social and Affordable housing as part of council prioritised agenda of items. The Bega Valley Shire Council Housing solutions Round table meeting was formed from this with SEYAS PM ensuring a Youth Crisis accommodation model stood alone as a need and working party formed to find solutions. This campaign led to numerous articles in the local media and wide ranging debate.



Community of Practice (Youth)

SEYAS staff have been active members of the Youth Community of Practice, facilitated by YFoundations, DV NSW and Homelessness NSW. CoPS members meet face to face twice a year and teleconference twice a year.

The SEYAS Program manager took part in an induction video being created for newcomers to the workforce of the community services sector. Films were made on the topics of CALD, Domestic violence, Rough sleepers and Youth. SEYAS were the only rural voice in the youth section.

The Youth 5-minute film provides an overview of working with young people experiencing homelessness. The film includes:

- Overview of client group
- Building rapport/connecting with clients
- Working in a residential setting/non residential setting
- Pathways into youth homelessness
- Goal setting
- Practical tips
- Barriers to working with young people

YCoPS also produced and sent letters to all relevant local, state, and federal ministers, addressing our concerns and requesting their action to Investing in housing solutions to help end youth homelessness.

The group also produced a Service mapping and Directory of Youth Services, including 24/7 Refuges, SHS Youth Homelessness services without refuge, OOHC, AOD Support, Legal Support, and Mental Health Support

Bega Local Homelessness Forum

Staff and management have actively participated in the local area Homelessness Forums facilitated by FACS (Family and Community Services). SEWACS staff is committed to working with other Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) in the South East region to support clients who are at risk of homelessness and provide coordinated case management which ultimately provides better stability for the clients in the community.

Housing NSW staff have also worked collaboratively with SEWACS through these forums and informal meetings, with improved responsiveness to provide greater options for people experiencing homelessness in the South East Region.

MOU's

Sapphire Coast Tenancy scheme, Community housing provider, continue to be a SEYAS partner for three bedsits at Brogo flats at Bega and 2 parenting properties from their stock. These properties enable young people to gain transitional housing and a formal lease. SEYAS have nomination rights for these properties in exchange for client support. This partnership continues to work well.

In partnership with Housing NSW, SEYAS has nomination rights on two, 2 bedroom units at Ravenswood st Bega. These properties enable young people to gain transitional housing and a formal HNSW lease. Ongoing support and living skills training is provided by SEYAS staff to

these tenants to transition to mainstream tenancies or to permanent placements within the Housing NSW system.

SEYAS is committed to informal partnerships with other services and community organisations such as, Headspace, Teen clinic, Youth Frontiers, Anglicare, Police, Juvenile justice, Parole and Probation, Illawarra Tenants service, FACS/Housing, Far South Coast Family Support Services, Flourish, Wellways, Eden Access centre, Bega Valley Shire Council, Fun House, Disability trust/Workability, HYAP- SYFS, Campbell Page, Mission Australia, Katungul Medical Services, Women's Resources Centre, NSW Health Services, McKillop, Family referral service, Homelessness NSW and YFoundations peak bodies, 2PI, the Social Justice Advocacy Group and many more community groups such and the philanthropic Church Groups and Charities to support and care for young people who are experiencing homelessness in South East NSW.

Collaborative service delivery

This year SEYAS and Wellways commenced a living skills program called "Adulting" based on the SkillBot app. Services who assisted in the delivery of this 6 week program were, Wellways, the Sapphire Community Pantry Bega, Social Justice advocate members, Campbellpage, Headspace, HNSW and Directions Pathways.

Each session focused on different aspects of "Adulting"

Participants in the group reported to have expanded their knowledge of living independently and all the responsibilities they will incur. We were lucky to be running the program as the federal election was taking place so were able to walk participants through the voting process at the Bega polling booth.

Due to high demand this program will run again in October 2019 in the Eden area.



ADULTING: South East Women and Children's Services' Kylie Furnell with Wellways Karen Wright and Sapphire Community Pantry's Christine Welsh and Peter Buggy.

Work Development Orders

SEWACS remains registered with the State Debt Recovery Office to oversee Work and Development Orders (WDOs) for clients who have debts from fines and who engage in case management support and activities. The WDO's allow clients to repay fine debts by participating in various activities such as counselling, groups and training.

Donations and Special Thanks

Thanks to the Social Justice Advocates of the Bega valley who have again supported SEWACS and the Youth accommodation program by providing accommodation in both

caravans and their unit, as well as furniture for clients in need. This year Social Justice Advocates provided an old caravan for us to renovate along with \$300 for costs.

Network Meetings

- Local Homelessness and Youth Forums
- Eden Interagency
- Bega Interagency
- Youth Services Network
- SJAG
- YFoundations Peak
- Cassurina Planning group
- Principals Forum Eden
- Community of Practice committee (Youth)
- BVSC Affordable Housing round table

Training/Conferences

- National Homelessness Conference
- Nitty Gritty Sexual health training
- Mediation & Conflict resolution
- Aboriginal Mental health first aid
- Suicide prevention
- Trauma informed practice

SKILLBOT APP

Funding was used to update Skillbot app. We continue to promote and share the Skillbot App, a "Youth Worker in an app," which was devised by Kylie. YFoundations has agreed to promote this app through the Yfoundations newsletter

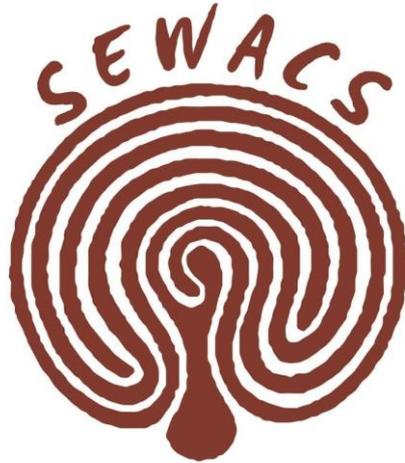
General

- Eden Youth Festival
- Youth Homelessness matters
- Homelessness Awareness Week
- Brogo Flats Tenants, community morning tea



*Eden Youth Festival.
Hanna Tattooing with Lumen Christi and Eden Marine High school students.*

SEYAS, HYAP and Family Support staff manning the activity. .



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