

**AIDS EDUCATION WITH MALE SEX WORKERS: Filing in the gaps and taking up the slack.**

A large proportion of male sex workers are gay, and a significant proportion are IV drug users. Many, particularly the young, don't identify with, or become adequately serviced by their communities and relevant organizations. An aim of education projects to male sex workers is to educate such groups so that the possible risk gap presented by male sex workers is minimised.

**Direct services essential to HIV prevention include casework, referrals, advocacy and, ideally, a drop in centre**

This paper will discuss male sex worker projects running within existing prostitutes rights organizations. Such projects include direct service provision of safe-sex information, condoms, syringes and the skills and support necessary for converting knowledge to safe work practices.

Male workers involved in projects visit agencies and groups to participate at policy level, contributing an experiential knowledge of the affects on susceptibility to HIV infection of the prostitution sub-culture issues, i.e.,

homelessness, police and community violence, illegality, poverty, drug dependence and the James Dean ethic- livfast, die young.

Direct services which are essential to functional HIV prevention include casework, referrals, advocacy and ideally a drop in centre

in which social contact can form the basis of a supportive peer network.

**CONCLUSION**

A potentially disastrous gap in AIDS services can be redressed by facilitating an interface of services in combination with support and direct health and welfare provision on a peer level.



**PASSION**  
desire  
lust  
itch  
eroticism  
lustfulness  
sexual hunger

**WHICH LIST FOR MALE PROSTITUTES?**



**AFFECTION**  
love  
bond  
tie  
loyalty  
devotion  
attachment  
fondness

**NATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE**

**CANBERRA, AUGUST 1990**

**Special issues: sex workers**

**CHAired BY SHERANNE DOBINSON, PCV**

**Speakers:**

**Deb Milka, PASA**

**Dianna Allen, SWAN**

**Andrew Hunter, Scarlet alliance**



The national AIDS conference is once again on. This conference will see representatives of sex worker rights groups from all over Australia. At the last conference three groups were represented. This time around there are eight state based groups, the Scarlet alliance, members of a new group forming in Tasmania, and representatives of Sex worker groups in South East Asia. Printed below are abstracts from the sex worker session. How we've grown!



8-11 August 1990

### 'SISTERS':

AIDS programmes with female sex workers

By DEB MILKA

Female Sex workers make up the majority of the sex working population in Australia. In terms of organizing in collectives and associations we have also been the front-runners. It is for these reasons; rather than 'high risk' that large AIDS programmes for female sex workers have been established first, within sex workers rights organizations.

Condoms have been the preferred method of avoiding sexually transmitted diseases for sex workers for a very long time. Absence of condom usage can usually be linked to policing and/or management practices. For this reason, most of the AIDS programmes with female sex workers have focussed on empowering workers to negotiate safe sex practices with clients; working with managements to ensure optimal work conditions to facilitate condom use; and equipping women with knowledge about AIDS that goes beyond transmission. This knowledge allows them to convince clients of the need for condom use and convert safe sex knowledge into safe work practices.

Increasingly work with female sex workers is more in the context of occupational health and safety issues. This is the most appropriate way to deal with AIDS prevention in this work context. Different groups have tailored programmes to local sex industry conditions.

#### CONCLUSION

Because sex workers are an often isolated group, who have knowledge of std prevention, innovative ways of ensuring education messages and methods reach workers are essential. This will often

include other areas of industrial and other advocacy. Education programmes would not be of interest to any sex workers unless the definition of prevention is expanded to include these areas that sex workers see as the most important

### 'NEVER LET A CHANCE GO BY...'

DIANA ALAN

AIDS education to young people in general, and 'hard to reach young people in particular, has often been an area left for the too hard basket.

Sex workers rights organizations have found that large numbers of these young people have turned to us for assistance and information. In this presentation I will go through work we have done with homeless and 'street youth', transsexual youths and young women working on the streets.

Many of these young people work in the sex industry, or are closely associated with people who do. This does not mean, however that they all regard themselves as sex workers. It is often through the reputation of trust and understanding that we build up with

identified street workers that leads other young people to approach our organizations. This chance to work with people who were clearly not receiving the information and support they required elsewhere was too important to ignore.

**The chance to work with people who were clearly not receiving the information...was to important to ignore**

and gone unnoticed and unsupported. Sex worker rights organizations require recognition for this work. We need to be supported in continuing it, or consulted and involved in designing and implementing specific programmes for these groups.



#### CONCLUSION

Sex worker groups have done large amounts of vital work with young people in the area of HIV prevention. This has often stretched our own resources