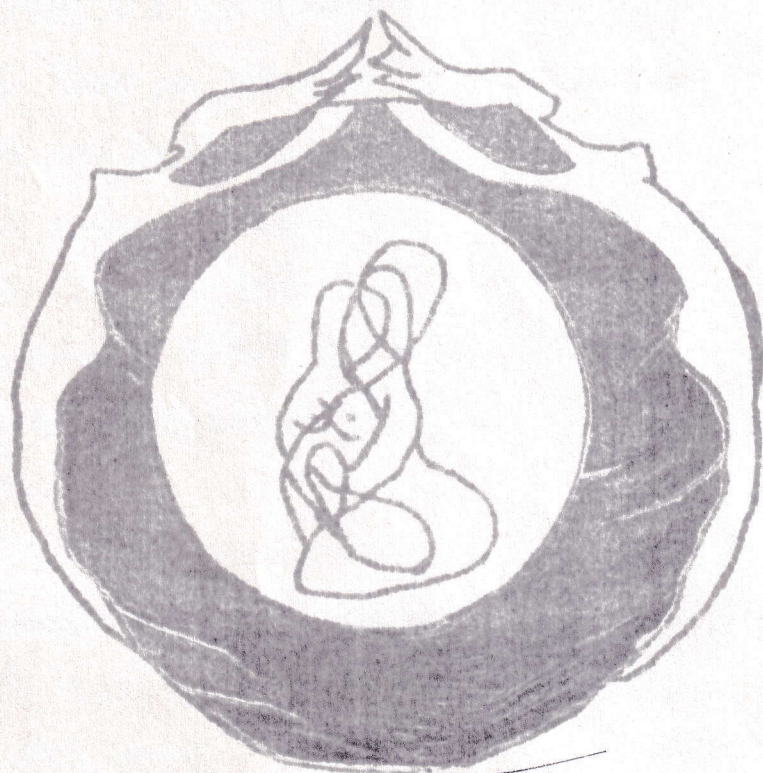


KENSINGTON WOMEN'S GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 7 OCTOBER.

SHOULDER ^{TO} SHOULDER



- CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE -

89 M^cCRACKEN STREET

KENSINGTON

PHONE 376 7280.

EDITORIAL

"THIS THING CALLED YOUTH"

Over the last four to six weeks, many of have been discussing the position of our teenage kids in this society, and in particular, our own community.

Many women who are involved in the Women's Group are parents of teenage children, and recently, have been faced with a number of questions, related to areas, such as, how to cope and understand problems, our kids face during adolescence, what are their aspirations?

We have devoted part of this Edition of "Shoulder to Shoulder", asking many questions, in particular, "what is this thing called youth?"

The article examines broadly - the stages of adolescence; how the label of "teenager" is worn; how this is seen by the adult world; struggling for identity; powerlessness.

Many of us have felt that some of the existing programmes set up for teenagers in the area, are not catering for a wide variety of needs, particularly the lonely, vulnerable, groups of kids. We have felt strongly, that there

needs

is a need for more talk and action, exchanging of information, and ideas between workers, parents and teenagers, so that the overall problems and needs of teenagers can be tackled, in support of creating programmes with wider involvement, to include parents, teenagers and workers, and hopefully provide better understanding and communication.

Some of us have come together and formed a "Youth Needs Group".

The basic aim of the group is to talk about our own situations in relation to having teenage and pre-teenage children; to document information on needs etc; and to link in with groups in the area, who are involved in this work.

We would invite comments on this topic, and on the basis of what is included in this issue of our newsletter.



DEADLINE FOR NEXT

ISSUE OF 'SHOULDER
TO SHOULDER'

OCTOBER 23RD

SPEAKING FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, AN UNEXPECTED
DEATH OF A CHILD IS A TRAGIC EXPERIENCE. WE ARE
UNPREPARED TO LOSE SUCH A CLOSE MEMBER OF THE
FAMILY. WE OFTEN BLAME OURSELVES, BY SAYING (MAYBE I
COULD HAVE BEEN A LITTLE MORE UNDERSTANDING, MAYBE I SHOULD
HAVE LISTENED MORE OFTEN INSTEAD OF SAYING DONT BOTHER ME
HOW BUSY I AM.) DEATH AFFECTS PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT WAYS,
SOMETIMES THE GRIEF STAYS WITH PEOPLE FOR MONTHS EVEN YEARS.
IT IS A TIME WHEN YOU NEED YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS AROUND
YOU TO HELP HANDLE THOSE THINGS THAT HAVE TO BE DONE, E.G.
(FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS) WE JUST GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF
DAY TO DAY LIVING NOT REALLY KNOWING WHAT WE ARE DOING OR WHY
BEING ABLE TO UNDERSTAND OR ACCEPT DEATH IS SOMETHING WE
ALL FIND RATHER DIFFICULT TO DO.

Beverly Snea

Letters to the Editor.

Dear Sirs,
The C.C.L. Association and Staff of
E. wish to congratulate the Co-op on its
production of "Shoulder to Shoulder. Thoroughly enjoyed
the article "Our Trip to Sovereign Hill" looking forward to
your next issue. Good Luck.

Grat. Wensle

Dear Every-one of Kensington Women's Group;
I stopped by Community Child Care today, and Gayle showed me your newsletters, both editions. Reading them made me smile from ear to ear, and my heart (or whatever part it is of me that feels emotion) just grew so big, happy to see so many good and positive things happening in Kensington.

The newsletters has so much, its honest, humorous, positive, encouraging, questioning, determined, but over-all the feeling of caring comes through very strongly.

If you could send me a copy of each edition it would make me feel as if I was still a part of what I do remember as my happiest times; when I was at Kensington.

The art work is great too, good to see some of that talent being displayed.

Love to all

Helen Sheil.
xx

Money is towards postage or whatever.

Thanks Helen, we all hope you can make it to a meeting one Wednesday.

Letter to the Editor.

Dear Editor,

I wish to comment on the article in the last issue of Shoulder to Shoulder. The issue is an extract from Ripple about Children & Violence. I feel that this article is another stain on the pensioner & low income families. Why do people automatically assume that because a person does not have money and a grand house to live in must also abuse their children. I feel and am sure many other people in the same circumstances would agree with me. I personally am fed up with such articles that so called experts write. Statistics show that child abuse is more prominent in higher income families the ones with money and prestige.

Yours Truly,

A Responsible Pensioner & Single Parent.

The article was not written by professionals but from the collective thoughts of the parents & staff of Robinson St. Co-op.

The staff at Community Child Care Association agree that child abuse can happen at any level of society, rich or poor.

I am a thing, who is supposed to be a living human being, I say supposed, because how do you treat a person as a human being, by being yourself, 'fat chance' today you're not supposed to be yourself, you have to live up to other people's expectations, is that any way to live, 'personally', I don't think so. To be yourself, you have to be yourself nobody, but nobody can be you, only you. I would love to laugh, never be down in the dumps, never have to worry about money ect, ect, but most of all never have to worry, or listen to what other people have to say, or supposed to say about you, as that is where most of us come undone, one person says something to another person, that person passes it on & so it goes on & on, and by the time it gets all around, it's about a mile long &

all out of proportion, then people say 'Did you hear what that thing said,' (or done) It's okay if your kids haven't the best of clothing or other things, as long as they know they're loved, wanted & needed for themselves, not, as that things kid, why worry what people say. We're not things because some people say, 'look at their house 'ugh', look at the way the kids are dressed, look at the bum there living with, 'Oh God', there've been belted up again, that B..... is an alcoholic, but we care, we're not things we have hearts & souls like anybody else, some people just have to struggle a bit harder than others, & those who don't now, might have to a bit latter on in life, so people, a thing isn't anything to laugh about, as if you do, your laughing about yourself, as God didn't make everybody perfect, we are ALL just human beings not as some people call. 'that THING'.

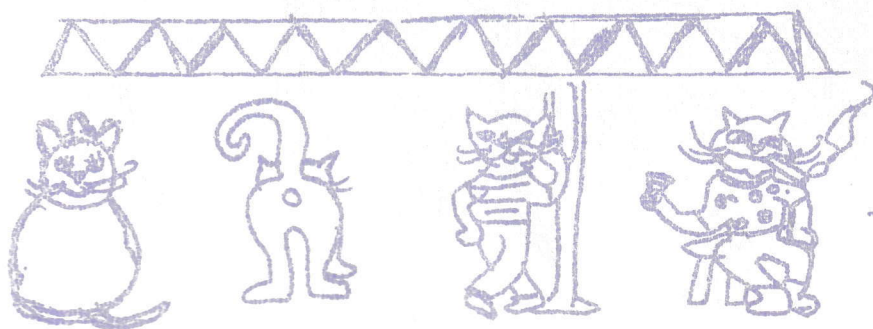
OH! TO BE A TEENAGER?

YUK!

THIS TOPIC CAME ABOUT AT ONE OF OUR WEDNESDAY MEETINGS, AS A NUMBER OF WOMEN HAVE TEEN-AGE CHILDREN.

MANY OF US HAD DISCUSSED PROBLEMS WE FACED AS PARENTS, IN BRINGING UP AND UNDERSTANDING TEENAGERS, & WE FEEL THE NEED TO HAVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND INPUT BY OTHER PEOPLE, ON A WIDE RANGE OF THINGS. FOR EXAMPLE, SEXUALITY, DRUGS, UNEMPLOYMENT. FURTHERMORE WE WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH OTHERS AND AMONGST OURSELVES, "WAYS OR "METHODS" OF LEARNING HOW TO HAVE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT ADOLESCENCE FEELS LIKE MEANS AND SO ON, AS WELL AS LEARNING WAYS OF EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING AND KNOWING WHAT MAYBE HAPPENING TO OUR KIDS DURING THIS TIME OF THEIR LIVES. BEFORE ADULTHOOD,

WE HOPE THAT THIS ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY DENISE JONES, WILL OPEN UP A FEW NEW AREAS OF THINKING, AND HOPEFULLY, A FEW RESPONSES TO THE EDITOR.



What is this thing called Youth? (1)

There is a time in our life when we are neither child nor adult, immature or mature or undeveloped nor developed. It isn't, however, a time of nothingness but rather a period of rapid change. As a child we look forward to being adult with great idealism. Youth is only understood, as is a period within our life, with increasing age. While passing through this stage - and how many times have you said that it is only a phase they're going through - we fail to identify with "youth". The label of youth is worn because of our age. There are other terms used to describe youth - adolescent, teenager - but they make no clearer what is meant by "youth". I've suggested so far that youth is a time of rapid change recognisable by age and poorly understood by both children and adults. I'd even go so far as to

suggest that youth themselves are in the dark about the changes that are occurring. Being not so far from youth as to misunderstand, but far enough removed to have gained an adult perspective, I will try to convey what this thing called youth is for me, anyway!! As adults we have a well defined set of social responsibilities such as financial, personal, family and moral. In contrast the child is supervised in all of these. The youth, on the other hand, who no longer has the physical appearance of a child, but rather that of an adult wants to be "responsible". In many instances it isn't only a want but rather a need. Because youth is not so far removed from childhood, adults do not readily grant the youth these responsibilities. This decision is not of the parents individually, but

What is thing called Youth? (2).

rather, the society of adults. As youth we don't understand that, as we must answer to parents, teachers and police as individuals.

As adults we argue that they don't have the experience so how can they be responsible for the same things as us. It is true. During youth we don't understand—we make bad decisions. But so do adults. Try to imagine the confusion of a person when they know they have the faculties to make good decisions—teachers are constantly telling them so—and to be denied the right, while they can see adults make faulty ones. Imagine too the anguish as the result of a decision, that the youth has fought hard to make on his own, that misfires. The inevitable "I told you so's" aren't quite as bad as the sense of failure; the personal "let-down". Physically no longer able to identify with childhood

and rejected as the equals of adults the youth is forced to identify with others in similar positions. The adult world is threatening so we retreat to the security of our peers. As youth we are a minority group and despite the powerlessness of the position, we do serve as threat to the adult world.

As a consequence of such a position those members that are on the front line—the parents, teachers and police tend to react in response to their own needs. This reaction is the most likely, because time, often not available when dealing with youth, is needed if empathy, or, at least, understanding are to be given to youth.

Youth is marked by puberty—times of physiological and mental change. The individual hasn't time to cope with these, let alone the added pressures and desires he

What is this thing called Youth? (3)

takes on as a consequence of these changes.

Youth do need empathy but then so too, do adults. When we are young there's a tendency to blame adults just as when we are older we have a tendency to blame youth. So for me youth is a time of physical, mental and social change. You're desirous of moving in an adult world, frightened by it, but frustrated because you are not able to do so. As youth we lack the experience and confidence to admit that maybe we don't understand, but as adults we make similar mistakes. As

parents we are frightened of admitting that we don't know. As youth we are desperate to meet on equal ground with adults but the interactions are all too often characterised by misunderstanding. The other basic contradiction of the condition of youth is its powerlessness and the threat it poses to the adult at the same time.

Is it fair to demand of youth that they behave like adults, when they are limited to responsibilities of a child?

???

Denise Jones.

Kensington Free Legal Service →

Have you used this service? Do you have any comments that could go to the lawyers who provide this Voluntary Service. The Ken Child Care Co-op (Robertson St) have written to them to get them to run a Legal Service Session on a Sat some time soon to suit the shift workers and people with young kids who find it hard to get to the present Monday night appointments at the Health Centre.

Must keep track of time, mustn't let a minute pass unseen, or you'll find yourself working in a factory run by men who know where you have been.

Must keep track of time, mustn't let an inch of space remain, or they'll take your arm and inject you with poison that keeps us afraid of lying in the rain. Must keep track of time mustn't let a word that's said keep still, what people say often thunders deafening and devours our ears as we keep fresh the kill. Must keep track of time, mustn't let a door remain right, for vertical they serve the queen of blindness, but lying flat, they'll serve our dream of light. Must keep track of time, mustn't let a man's heart die unfed, for bitterness will write the fevered song the singers will regret where they've been lead. Must keep track of time, mustn't let the street you walk decay, or the singer watching from his crystal staircase will lean too far, no more to show the way. Must keep track of time, mustn't let our hands take hold too soon, or the golden knife we grasp to carve our freedom will cease to glow and turn a rusted spoon. Must keep track of time, mustn't leave a mother's cry unheard, or your passion will beg your eyes tomorrow your infant's cry to ring throughout the world. Don't keep track of time, for tracks of time will catch you at the grave, time is now an earthly consolation, if time we serve, no master can we serve.

TO WRITE, SO I THOUGHT!!
WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING ON MY MIND AT THE
MOMENT - MY KIDS - I DON'T
LIKE THEM RIGHT NOW!
GOING THROUGH A BIT OF
DEPRESSION AND I DON'T SEEM
TO HAVE THE ENERGY OR
THE INCLINATION TO GIVE MY
KIDS THE ATTENTION THEY
NEED - GUILT - OK. GET RID
OF DEPRESSION - DO SOMETHING.
FOR MYSELF - SO I LEAVE
THE KIDS AT A DAY CARE
CENTRE - GUILT. KEEP
THE KIDS AT HOME "LIKE A
GOOD MOTHER" - MY HUSBAND
COMES HOME, HE'S TIRED I'M
TIRED WE CAN'T RESPOND TO
EACH OTHER - GUILT. TRY TO
COPE WITH THE KIDS - RELAX
LET THE HOUSEWORK AND WASHING
GO FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS
MEET THE KIDS NEEDS. PEOPLE
COME CALLING, THE HOUSE IS
A MESS - GUILT

WHY DO I FEEL SO GUILTY
AND WHAT DO I DO TO OVER
COME IT: I CAN POP PILLS,
GO TO MY DOCTOR, FRIENDS,
MEDITATE, DO DEEP BREATHING,
BUT BASICALLY ITS ALL UP TO
ME - SHUDDER - GET MY PROBLEMS
STRAIGHT, WHAT DO I WANT
FOR MY-SELF - BUT THAT'S
SELFISH - GUILT FOR MYSELF
BUT THAT'S SELFISH - GUILT
WHAT IT IS TO BE OF MIDDLE
- CLASS BACKGROUND BRAIN -
WASHED WITH MIDDLE - CLASS
BACKGROUND AND VALUES AND NOT
HAVE THE DETERMINATION TO DO
WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO TO
SAVE MYSELF!!

"AROUND AND AROUND IN A
CIRCLE I GO,

WHERE I LAND I DO
NOT KNOW - YET

BUT I'M WORKING.
ON IT. ! - - -

SWEARING:-

As you would have noticed by now, many (or should I say all) of our children have recently learnt how to swear!

Do not despair as it is not just your child, or children who have acquired these new words.

Children learn to swear the same way they learn all new words - by imitating & copying the words they hear around them - from their parents, other children, & other adults. Children do not understand that adults are allowed to use some words but they are not. Very young children do not even realize the meaning of such words. I feel that it is nearly always just best to ignore swear words, especially with very young children & as they grow older begin to explain to your child that such words are unnecessary & not suitable, & you really don't like them using such words.

It will help your child to develop his language skills, by taking notice of acceptable (to you) language he uses, listening to what he has to tell you and talking with your child.

Remember children learn words from the words they hear around them.

Sean.



- OCT 15 - Drop-In-Centre open: Tennis 10. a.m. met at house.
- OCT 16 - Drop-In-Centre open: "Movies" - meet at 10:15 a.m.
- * Diana group - 2:30 p.m. at house.
- OCT. 17 - Women's group discussion 10:30.
- Newsletter group 12:30 pm.
- Drop-In-Centre open.
- OCT. 18 - 12 noon. "Youth Needs Group" meeting.
- Drop In Centre Open.
- OCT. 19 - Drop In Centre Open.
- OCT. 22 - Tennis: Drop In Centre Open.
- OCT. 23 - Diana Group 11. am.
- Drop In Centre Open.
- OCT. 24 - Women's Group discussion 10:30.
- Newsletter Group 12:30.
- Drop-In Centre Open.
- OCT. 25 - Shopping 10 am at house.
- Drop In centre open.
- OCT. 26 - Drop In Centre open.
- Parents Dinner 6 pm →.

Weekend of OCT. 26th and 27th

The centre will be open all weekend. from 10 am to 6 pm.

On Saturday at 2 pm there will be a games afternoon.

On Sunday from 12 noon on, there will be a family B-B-Q.

Coffee, music, time to do people to meet.
Come along sometime during this weekend.

