

# KENSINGTON WOMEN'S • GROUP •

SHOULDER<sup>TO</sup> SHOULDER



NEWSLETTER  
NO. 10

- CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED -



# Editorial - "Doing It Together"

We have been able to let you know, through a variety of articles and stories published in S.T.S. over the last 2½ months, what sort of things and activities we are involved in and other projects we are currently in the process of developing.

One of the main things that stands out in our centre, is the consistency of people who use the "drop in centre" on a regular basis. On any one day, there are as many as 15-20 people who come through the door between 9 a.m and 6 p.m. Often, a lot of these people, go off, and come back throughout the day 2-3 times. There is always someone around to talk with, to listen, give advice or help with some problem. We have recognised the ever expanding need to include evening and weekend activities, as these times are often the most loneliest for people because, either, they have no-one else, they work or their social life is somewhat non-existent. The weekend of activities we had recently was quite successful, with around 30 people passing through the door, enjoying the fun, meeting friends - feeling at home.

Many of us have contact with a number of families and individuals who are not able and/or ready to become apart of a larger group. We visit regularly, as to provide companionship and keep them informed, realising that, people will become involved on their own level, at their own pace. The Drama Group is well on the way and provides great release and self expression through its group work orientation.

Our regular Wednesday discussions, shopping days, dinners, family outings, B-B-Q's and the establishing of a resource centre and library, not only offers a chance to build relationships, but, as well, a chance to share in the organising and carrying through. Our article in the October Ken. news describes some of it this way -

"Our group is orientated towards - mutual support of each other, creating on-going friendships (particularly outside of



## "Doing It Together" cont....

help (having the opportunity to learn and experience new things or alternatives to things that have often proven a trial and difficult in the past, sharing knowledge and having access to information related to areas that effect us, for example, what to do and who to contact if assistance is needed, say, with over due social security benefits. Thus, through sharing skills and knowledge and personal real support. we strive towards the understanding of the practicalities and efforts involved in helping ourselves to better our lives, whilst offering this same opportunity to others in similar situations."

"Moreover, we discuss broadly, our own involvement, participation and responsibilities to others and the centre, how we feel about this, are there any problems, new developments, and on it goes."

"The group tries to maintain regular contact with other women and agencies in the area, as to allow, input and discussion on areas of our work which is interrelated.

This ensures that:

1. people know who is doing what and with whom,
2. that there is little as possible, duplication of services,
3. that we are in a position to put people in contact with the appropriate person and for the right reason."

Often, many of us, who are either working in the field of community work or participating in community activities, get tired of using the same language and phrases to describe our group, its function as so on. I guess it is hard to



## "Doing It Together" cont....

substitute or get away from using such words as, "participate" "involvement", "responsibility" etc. It seems to be apart of the welfare "cult", and besides, in using them, we all know what we are talking about. In fact, we constantly describe the Women's Group using such terms, as we believe, that those words best describe our work, programme and those involved.

Starting in the next issue of S.T.S. we are going to bring you a 6 part history, describing the growth and development of the Womens Group (Child Care Co-operative), from 1975 to 1979. "DOING IT TOGETHER" - a study commissioned by Community Child Care, researched and written by Sophie Inwald in collaboration with Yoland Wadsworth and with the help of parents and staff of neighbourhood houses throughout Victoria, looks at the emergence of the Women's Group, reasons for establishment, type of approach, and the processes involved. We will attempt to recount 1979 as our sixth part, as to keep the history alive.

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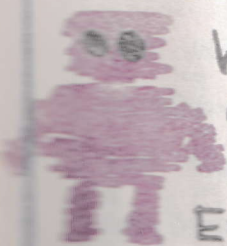
# ACTIVE LISTENING.

An ancient Hebrew sage said, "The beginning of wisdom is silence; the second stage is listening." Modern psychology concurs. To communicate with children, we need to employ attentive silence and active listening. Attentive silence means being quietly attuned in order to understand the child's feelings.



# A WARM AND FUZZY FAIRY TALE

by Claude M. Skinner



When we left you last time an old wicked witch had come along and tricked a nice generous bunch of people into being selfish and hard.... read on.....

Even though they still found a fuzzy each and every time they reached into their bags, they worried more and more about the witch's runout of limited supply, so they reached less and less.

As this wicked idea began to spread throughout the neighbourhood, everyone became more fearful and more stingy. The less they reached into their bags, the more scarce warm fuzzys became.

Everywhere you went, people complained about feeling less fuzzy and more unhappy. Some—even shrivelled up and died.

Many turned to the witch in desperation, and they bought large quantities of potions and salves, even though they really didn't work at all.

Now the situation was becoming very serious indeed. If everyone shrivelled up and died, there would be no more market for potions and salves, so the clever witch devised another devious plan.

She gave everyone a brand new bag that looked just like the warm fuzzy bag, except that it was cold and prickly.

Whenever you reached inside the witch's bag, you found a Cold Prickly. Cold pricklys did not feel very good because they were lumpy and slimy like an old toadstool. When you gave one to someone else, it shrivelled up into a small hard spiny ball that made you feel cold and prickly all over.

This didn't make people happy, but it did keep them from shrivelling up and dying, so the neighbourhood began to accept Cold Pricklys as being better than nothing at all.

At first, this created a lot of confusion. Some trusting people would still give a Warm Fuzzy when asked, only to get a Cold Prickly in return. They soon learned their lesson however, and it wasn't long that you could see the sad sight of two old friends asking each other for Warm Fuzzys but getting only Cold Pricklys.

As a result, fewer people were actually dying, but practically



# OUR AUSSIE NIGHT

(1)

## (BOUGHT BY A POM)

As most people know, every month we have a dinner for the Womens group & anybody else who wishes to come along. Well this one was no exception, but you had to be there to see it, or even to believe it. First off in a pom & so was the other person who was SUPPOSED to help me, yes you've all guessed who I mean, Maureen, she was so busy yakking as usual, (but she did help a bit) I got the bloke next door to me (Lock), to buy me two dozen pies as he can get them a bit cheaper from four & twenty, then I ordered a couple of dollars worth of chips, (so I wouldn't have to cook 'em) then I bought all the salad stuff, as there was one fussy person there who is a vegetarian (Marg) I bought some fish & done a special batter which the ingredients consisted of, butter, lemon juice, paprika,

Worcestershire Sauce, parmesan Cheese, horseradish & parsley, we never done it before but the people who ate it reconed it was okay. As it happened we ended up with two fussy persons, as Helen Shields also came to see us, which was great as we havnt seen Helen for ages & we all have missed her. Anyhow we talked her into coming back to the dinner, which I'm glad she did as she helped me to prepare the rotten Salad to make it more of an Aussie night. Maureen & myself went to the second hand store & bought some old gear so we could dress up as "swaggy", well didn't we ever dress up, we even had old hats on and as we couldn't get hold of any corks to put around the brim we had to use (excuse me folks) some meads, but they done the trick, all hanging & swaying around, we even had our



Cont from Previous Page

(2)

stick over one shoulder and  
guitar on the other, some  
old wire made into braces  
to hold our supposed baggy  
pants up, which I might add  
we kept losing, the braces  
I mean not our pants, we  
even blackend out some of  
our front teeth, Maureen  
used bootpolish & I used  
black Mascara, "ugh", it didn't  
taste the best I can tell  
you. Anyhow Pies heated up,  
just cooked, and all the  
salad stuff, on the table  
everyone got stuck in, but  
seeing as it was an Aussie  
night anybody caught using  
a knife & fork got it  
taken away, it was fingers  
or nothing, I must say  
it was a bit hard for  
fish lovers. When most  
of us had finished somebody  
wanted a song so Maureen  
& I got our guitars &  
started playing (mind you  
it was a laugh as neither  
of us can play or sing a  
damn note) I think we

started off with "Walking  
Matilda", & then on to  
"there's a hole in me bucket"  
but as we didn't know the  
words we made them up  
as we went along, the  
words we did make up  
I'll leave it to your  
own imaginations. Then  
we went around the  
table, everybody had to  
do something, Mary done  
a Scottish jig, she's real  
good at it, Helen  
Sherks done that thing  
where the music gets faster  
& faster, I can't remember  
what it's called, oh, I  
no "Zorba", the other  
Helen, well her arm  
was pretty sore as it  
was used that much lifting  
her drink up so much, I  
can't really remember what  
everybody done, but for  
once Cathy didn't have  
much to say as she  
bought a male friend  
along with her (Fred)  
well poor old Fred had



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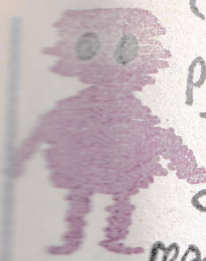
(3)

a terrific time, he even wore our hats and played the guitar he even took the part of a "swaggy", then he went out the back & went down the slide "Sorry Lynn", but I think Fred was really educated that night, but he enjoyed himself, the same as we enjoyed having him & we hope he will return. After the food eaten, we decided to have a game of bingo, that was a mistake as Theresa won all the money if it was her it was one of Bev's kids, I'm sure it was a fixed game. As the

night wore on, people started going home, till I think there was only 4 of us left out of the 15, Marg, Maurcen, Shirley & myself we couldn't really go as there was still a bit of drink left & it would have got real lonely by itself so we had to drink it & Shirley drank all the wine which was supposed to be rotten, but oh boy it didn't taste it. Anyhow all happy and contented we called it a night, all we had to do was come back next day & clean up. Hope to see everybody at our next dinner on Friday, it's an Italian night, don't laugh, cooked by Bev. Happy eating Val.







(CONT. FROM PAGE 5) knew how badly it felt to be cold and prickly.

The situation was further complicated by the virtual disappearance of Warm Fuzzys. Even though you could still find one anytime you reached into your warm fuzzy bag, people were too afraid that they might be feeling the last one. So they used their Cold Prickly bags almost exclusively. This made Warm Fuzzys very scarce and valuable, and people would do almost anything to get one. Some heartless people even went so far as to disguise some of their Cold Pricklys to make them LOOK like Warm Fuzzys, which they in turn sold at dear prices to people who cared enough to give a Fuzzy, but were too afraid to reach into their own bag for one. These people would then exchange their imitations, alternately known as False Fuzzys or Plastic Pricklys, in the anticipation of feeling warm and fuzzy again. When instead, they continued to feel cold and prickly, they became confused and more afraid than ever to involve themselves with Warm Fuzzys under any conditions. At this dismal point in time, another stranger moved into the neighborhood. Unlike the ugly old witch who caused all the trouble in the first place, this was a young woman with long golden hair, bright smiling cheeks, and generous proportions that caused people to call her the Hip Woman. Having no knowledge of the witch and her scheme, the Hip Woman was not the least bit worried about running out of Fuzzys. She gave them out freely, even when not asked, but mostly to children, because they were the only ones left who were not afraid of getting a cold Prickly by mistake. The parents were shocked by this unexpected show of generosity and they strongly disapproved of the Hip Woman's influence. The children liked her very much however, because they always felt warm and fuzzy around her, happy too. It wasn't very long before they had developed the habit of handing out Fuzzys whenever they felt like it. Their cold and prickly parents quickly passed a law making it a crime to pass out Warm Fuzzys in a free and reckless manner. The law, they said, was designed to protect children from the danger of running out of fuzzys too soon, and thus, dooming them to a long and lonely life of feeling cold and prickly.... worse..... of shrivelling up and dying.





(CONT. FROM PAGE 9.) While their children were feeling young and fuzzy, but they didn't say it out very loudly.

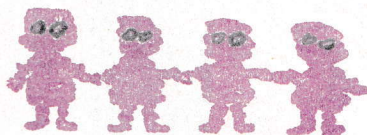
So the law came to pass and the witch was deputized to enforce it. Mostly however, the Hip Woman and the children ignored all the fuzz and continued to give their Warm Fuzzys whenever and wherever they felt like it AND ALWAYS when asked.

Because there was so many children and only one witch, she found it impossible to enforce the law and end to her wagon at the same time.

Which brings our story right up to this very minute and leaves us with questions yet to be answered. —

- Will the adult forces of law and order be able to stop the dangerous generosity of the children?
- Will the parents take a chance on joining their children, and thus bring back the days of original happiness?
- Will the wicked witch go out of business and take her wagonful of Cold Pricklys elsewhere?
- Is the supply of Warm Fuzzys REALLY unlimited, or will it run out someday as the witch claims?

We will have to wait for the future to bring us the answer, but in the meantime, if someone should ask you for a Warm Fuzzy, take a chance on giving one and see what happens.... even if that someone looks like a mean old witch!  
..... and (MAYBE - our inclusion) everyone will live happily.



THE END

Deadline for next  
issue of S.O.S. —  
**DECEMBER 4<sup>th</sup>**



FEELINGS HAVE  
MEANING.  
SOUNDS HAVE  
MEANING.  
OPEN LANGUAGE  
CAN BE A JOY  
A LANGUAGE WE  
CAN GROW WITH,  
GROWL WITH.



To the Editor of  
Community or

Catastrophe :-

I would like to  
add something more to  
your comments on  
community -

A house is only as  
good as the people in  
it, a song as good as  
the singer, a party as  
good as the people at  
it - etc.

I think you came close  
to the truth of the matter  
when you said we should  
not at ourselves and the  
reason why we are doing  
nothing and the genuine  
we can come together  
and do something - I've  
always believed - that  
we can clean up your own  
yard first - (and  
I don't mean it  
up has to be tidy)  
and then you can  
clean the world!

UNSIGNED.

UNTITLED

We have to live our life  
the way we choose  
For we do have choices  
which sometimes we abuse  
Although it's very difficult  
in times of stress and pain  
To have the strength and energy  
to start all over again.

And when you have friends  
around who really do care  
It helps to build your  
confidence and teaches you to  
share

They also give encouragement  
which helps you to go on  
Whether you have lots of  
friends or even just one.

As we all need faith and  
hope and love  
To help us on our way  
And where will you  
find these gifts  
In a friend  
we meet each day.

UNSIGNED.



# DROP IN CENTRE

OPEN EACH  
DAY.

9-6 pm.

89, McCracken  
ST.

December

14th

7.30 p.m.

KEN  
TOWN HALL

B.Y.O. \$3.

Tickets - see Maureen  
Fagan: 3769475.

KEPSINGTON

WOMENS GROUP

Discussion  
Group

EVERY  
WED.

10.30

This  
issue

was brought  
to you by

[Val, Maureen,  
Bet, Norma,

"unsigned", Gina,  
Joanne, Sue.

# DRAMA GROUP

Every Monday 11am



Your chance  
to be



Shopping  
List

Apples  
oranges.

Tomatoes  
2 @



Onions

WORKING BEE  
SAT 1st DEC.  
10am.

Your help would  
be  
appreciated?



Drop in  
house

5pm on



# IMPRESSIONS

By 3 Occupational Therapy Students

For those of you who did not meet us, our names are Gina, Janine & Sue. We are occupational Therapy students from Lincoln Institute. We've just spent a week with Kensington Women's Group learning about the activities & aims of the group. We would sincerely like to thank all those we met for their hospitality and the time they spent talking to us, and thought we would like to share with you some of the impressions we gained from our week here.

We were able to visit a few ladies in their flats, and after several cups of tea, (and Therese's delicious cheese and biscuits) these are some of our thoughts.

Despite the close living conditions, there seemed to be many lonely people. Some we heard of had not left their flats for months, and only had a television for companionship. Mothers with several young children were trying to cope in small flats that allowed them no privacy or room to have some time to themselves. We heard of children being left in flats while parents were working because of the lack of child care facilities in Kensington. Completely absent in the area is a service which provides overnight care for children in cases of emergency — and this seemed to be greatly needed. There also appears to be a need for organized activities for the adolescent age group.

We were really impressed with the work of the Women's Group. They have a real desire to help each other and in doing so, help themselves. Their barbeques, group discussions, ethnic nights, excursions and shopping outings are a great way to meet others, a chance to share attitudes and ideas and provide opportunities for entertainment and relaxation.

We thought activities such as the drama group were a good form of self-expression, and we hope to see Val, Maureen, Betty, Mary, Kathy, Helen, Bev and especially Therese starring at HER MAJESTY'S next year. (Don't forget to invite us to your first production)

The newsletter produced by the Group provides a much needed form of contact and communication, not only for those within the Women's Group, but also for



those unable to attend.

We thoroughly enjoyed our morning at the zoo with Jean, Lyn and the children from the kindergarten, and were astounded at their stamina - we were exhausted! Despite financial difficulties and general lack of facilities the centre is doing a marvelous job in caring for these children.

There are many other things we saw and heard that have made this week an invaluable experience for us about which we could write pages, but time will not permit this. We would just like to conclude by thanking Marg Welsh for spending time with us and helping us to gain insight into the workings of the Group and the life of the community.

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### Update on FAC'S R.F.F.

Last meeting on November 14th, discussed mainly gathering of information of future Trends in the inner urban region, Melbourne City Council recent group meetings was presented to the Community Planning Committee, cheer person Phil Andrew, to help to get facts and figures, which are impossible to get elsewhere. The R.F.F. group will also have to discuss and recommend policy on housing and education Green papers next year and the hardcore problems of homeless teenagers and youth unemployment in our inner area :-

Kath Gibbs



## Ode to a Solo Mother!

The nights are long and lonely,  
When the children are asleep in bed.  
The flickering box provides,  
Your sole companion and friend,  
And you talk to empty walls.

You budget your money so carefully,  
Trying to stretch the paltry Govt. pensions  
Trying to feed, clothe and educate your kids.  
On a very small amount,  
And dreading the arrival of bills.

Your accommodation is often sub-standard,  
A high-rise Commission box,  
Or a dingy little flat.  
No luxurious shag-pile wall-to-wall carpet  
Or innumerable appliances and colour TVs.  
Only the barest necessities of furniture,  
No luxurious comforts for you.

The Media is always picking on you  
Blaming you for everything,  
From child delinquency, violence, illiteracy,  
Poor nutrition, etc. .... etc.  
Why blame us, we are only doing the best we can  
Mind your own bloody business,  
And leave us alone.

If you can't say something nice about us,  
Then say nothing at all.

And when all is said and done  
The crunch comes that you stand alone.  
No strong man's shoulder to lean on.  
You have the burden and responsibility,  
The worries, the heartbreak, everything alone.  
From one solo mother to others.



## CAPRICORN

you HAVE AN URGE  
TO DO SOMETHING  
UNUSUAL, think  
carefully Before you  
MAKE A DECISION.  
GOOD WEEKEND COMING  
up.

## AQUARIUS

you WILL HAVE A  
DIFFERENCE OF opinion  
WITH SOME-ONE. BUT  
DON'T LET IT BOTHER  
you. Lucky with LOVE  
this WEEK. Buy A TITIS  
TICKET.

## PISCES.

you WILL RECEIVE A  
GIFT OF JEWELLERY

DON'T MAKE ANY PLANS AFTER ALL SO YOU ARE HAVING DOLLARS FOR A RAINY DAY  
FOL NOV 24<sup>th</sup> IT COULD BE YOUR UNLUCKY DAY

TAKE AN INTEREST IN  
MUSIC IT COULD

BROADEN YOUR MIND. SO YOU WILL BE BUBBLING WITH TIME TO MAKE PLANS. Buy

## ARIES.

NOW IS THE TIME  
TO GO IN SEARCH OF  
THAT JOB YOU WERE  
THINKING ABOUT.

PLAN A HOLIDAY WITH YOU AT THE MOMENT. TAKE NO'S COULD COST YOU A FORTUNE  
A FRIEND. Lucky No. 7. 3 + 8 IN A LOTTERY TICKET

# YOU AND YOUR STARS

## TAURUS

SPEND SOME TIME WITH A  
FRIEND WHO NEEDS YOUR  
SUPPORT. YOU ARE IN A  
CREATIVE MOOD SO PUT THOSE  
TALENTS TO THE TEST.

ROMANCE IS IN THE AIR

## GEMINI

GET OUT AND ENJOY THE  
GOOD THINGS IN LIFE SPEND  
SOME TIME WITH YOUR  
CHILDREN. DON'T GAMBLE  
ON DEC 3<sup>RD</sup> IT IS NOT

## CANCER.

your HEALTH IS NOT  
THE BEST. SO TAKE

MORE CARE WITH YOUR-  
SELF. DO NOT RUN YOUR-  
SELF INTO TOO MUCH DEBT

## LIBRA.

you MAY GET THAT PROMOTION SAVE THAT EXTRA FEW

you MAY GET THAT PROMOTION SAVE THAT EXTRA FEW  
DOLLARS FOR A RAINY DAY  
FOL NOV 24<sup>th</sup> IT COULD BE YOUR UNLUCKY DAY

A BIRTHDAY PARTY COMING UP.

## SCORPIO.

ON DEC 5<sup>th</sup> PROMISE OF TRAVEL ABOUT MARRIAGE NOW'S THE

BROADEN YOUR MIND. SO YOU WILL BE BUBBLING WITH TIME TO MAKE PLANS. Buy

EXCITEMENT A LOST ROMANCE

HURTS YOU A LITTLE BUT

SURPRISES AHEAD.

## SAGITTARIUS

LADY LUCK IS SMILING ON DON'T GO OVER-BOARD IT

PLAN A HOLIDAY WITH YOU AT THE MOMENT. TAKE NO'S COULD COST YOU A FORTUNE

A FRIEND. Lucky No. 7. 3 + 8 IN A LOTTERY TICKET ASK ADVICE FROM A FRIEND

## VIRGO

if you ARE RE-DECORATING

DON'T GO OVER-BOARD IT

PLAN A HOLIDAY WITH YOU AT THE MOMENT. TAKE NO'S COULD COST YOU A FORTUNE

A FRIEND. Lucky No. 7. 3 + 8 IN A LOTTERY TICKET ASK ADVICE FROM A FRIEND