

Social Service Department 2023 - 2026

Rhona Theodore

Social Service aims to promote the welfare of others

“The Social Services Department reaches out to the community and individuals who are neglected, suffering or in need, without any prejudice of race, religion, age or gender by sharing the love of Jesus Christ through giving our love and support”. WWCTU

Our name - WCTU it is at the very heart of who we are. At every Convention and every Meeting throughout the history of WCTU, the presidents' opening talks have all been focussed on the Christian aspect of our work.

The aftermath of the COVID 19 pandemic is exposing the inequalities in the various countries and is a persistent cause for concern. This was a world-wide catastrophe - and recovery was/is slower in some countries who were already marginalised. *In this context, practical solutions that can accelerate progress on the SDGs will be urgently needed.*

How can this be achieved?

It is essential that we work together on two levels:

The everyday needs of people:

- Prioritise the essentials: Providing food, ensuring that students can go back to school, provide lunches for school going students, school drop offs.
- Organise/join a small group to visit a school and help with students who need that extra help - on a 'one on one' basis.
- Commence visiting the sick and the aged. Shopping, providing meals, and being available when possible to help where needed. Be prepared for emergencies.

These are just a few ideas -

- Connect with other WCTU members to share ideas that can be implemented elsewhere/in any country.
Look around and 'see a need and fill it'.

The wider community:

- Write to Members of Parliament and other relevant authorities about issues with which we are concerned, particularly regarding alcohol policy, moral issues and the welfare of women and children, especially regarding family violence.
- When they reply - thank them.

With the lifting of the restrictions in 2022, WCTU Australia was able to recommence most of our activities.

Our 43rd National Convention held in South Australia was a welcome start to 2022, the Theme was **“To Come Alive”**.

“Five years ago, Karen Edward, President of WCTU SA realised they could fill another need. She writes: “We are now in our fifth year operating the WCTU Teatotalers Tea Rooms, which is a wonderful ministry in so many ways. We are open to the public and sell Devonshire tea, non-alcoholic wines, gifts where the proceeds support those in need. WCTU history is displayed throughout our rooms along with literature.

We have many opportunities to pray with people and share about the work of WCTU.

As South Australia was at the forefront of the Suffrage movement, we are well recognised in the State Government, and have hosted many morning teas with parliamentarians. We are blessed to have good relationships with like-minded politicians who can give us insight to detrimental Bills on the horizon, so we can then take action if possible.

We also supply our ‘We Care Boxes’ to Major Crime who distribute the boxes to victims’ families lost through murder, and at times suicide”. Inside is tea & coffee etc & a Christian book on grief.

In Victoria, ‘Our Drug Education in schools continue to be well received. Drug Education in schools has been on-going for more than 30 years. It is important and one way to try to educate and influence young people. This covers drugs, alcohol and smoking. WCTU has produced a range of excellent information leaflets, many of which are used in the Drug Ed programs and are widely distributed where appropriate.

In 2022, VAPING was also included. An article on VAPING will be included in the drug education presentations this year.

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WCTU have written letters to Members of Parliament and other relevant authorities about issues with which it is concerned, particularly regarding alcohol policy, moral issues and the welfare of women and children, especially regarding family violence.

WCTU has been represented at organisations with which it has a relationship – among them being National Council of Women Victoria, World Day of Prayer, Family Council, Melbourne Total Abstinence Society, Drug Advisory Council of Australia, League of Women Voters, Travellers' Aid, Drug Free Australia and Dalgarno.

Advertisements about FASD were placed on the sides or backs of buses. It had a picture of multi-ethnic babies, a "no alcohol" symbol, and the message, "For baby's sake THINK – DON'T DRINK especially if pregnant or hoping to be pregnant."



WCTU has also been showing FASD ads on advertising TV screens in doctors' waiting rooms with a total view count of over 15,000 per month in more than 10 venues throughout Australia. (View the 20 second advertisement)

Thank you to Margaret Ostenstad, our World President who has outlined a "WWCTU Plan of Action for 2023 - 2026", focussing on 10 Objectives, (international and domestic). These will give us a base on which to work from in 2023.

The State of the Organization Address from the Convention of 2019 in Helsinki has stated 10 objectives:

1. To actively develop and implement new alcohol and drug prevention projects while continuing existing projects.
2. To be informed and up to date on international research on drugs and drug abuse.

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3. To focus on the connection between drugs and partner violence through campaigns, information and preventive measures.
4. To be vigilant to promote and protect our Christian values in our homes and communities.
5. To promote cooperation with other compatible organizations. (On-going)
6. To maintain work for clean drinking water and sanitation. (International project SDG 6)
7. To maintain and strengthen our work with children and youth (global SDG4 quality education).
8. To focus on the value of creating a drug free zone when spending time with children and the family, especially during the holidays (SDG 3 good health and wellbeing).
9. To strengthen and develop work in the local branches.
10. To take good care of the members and continue membership recruitment.

A promise from God's Word: Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His Will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

1 John 5:14,15



*"The 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report will be launched as the world approaches the half-way point of the 2030 Agenda **and struggles to rebuild in the aftermath (or in the midst) of the COVID-19 pandemic.***

We must rise higher to *rescue* the Sustainable Development Goals – and stay true to our promise of a world of peace, dignity, and prosperity on a healthy planet.

António Guterres Secretary-General, United Nations