

Annual Review 2023





Vision

WCC envisions an inclusive society free from gender violence and discrimination, and where women can actualise their full potential.

Mission

WCC is committed to:

- Eliminating violence against women and children
- Empowering women and children
- Promoting gender equality and social justice

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Donation

WCC is a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation and is totally dependent on donations and sponsorship to support our work. We welcome donations.

Pusat Kesedaran Wanita
CIMB 860 1023057

**Any donation of RM50 and above will be issued a tax exempt receipt.*

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President's Report

by Annie Yeap Lay Pheng
WCC President

Although 2023 brought a new “normality” with the Covid-19 pandemic largely behind us, we continued to see geopolitical tensions intensify, conflicts persist, and climate change resulting in global food shortages and economic challenges. Despite these challenges, WCC remained committed to our mission to protect and empower women and children. Overall, although this year has been busy, we have continued to make inroads into realising our mission.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Men Against Violence Public Event

In June 2023, WCC partnered with the Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) and the Penang State Government to organise our Men Against Violence public event. It was part of the Penang State Sukaneka Hari Keluarga 2023 held in Seberang Jaya. It attracted over 1,500 people, including 250 families from all walks of life and different age groups. WCC ran six designated stations featuring interactive games or fun activities that conveyed the message “Men Against Violence” and related themes of gender equality and positive familial relationships. We created a large poster calling on men to stop violence, respect women and children, and help change the situation. We also organised a video competition, “Your Turn, Bro!” for men and boys to submit short videos with messaging to end gender-based violence.



Better Protections for Child Victims

In January 2023, WCC met the Chief Justice of Malaysia, YAA Tun Tengku Maimun Binti Tuan Mat, to present recommendations on how to improve protections for child sexual crime victims in court, following from our national judiciary dialogue the year before.

Our victim support advocacy expanded to include Johor and Sabah, where we organised multi-agency seminars and trainings for relevant government agencies. These sessions brought together stakeholders who handle child sexual crime cases, in line with WCC's ongoing goal of promoting greater inter-agency cooperation. They also served as a forum for agencies to share their experiences and challenges when dealing with child victims. This significantly helped the agencies to better connect and leverage on one another to improve support for vulnerable child victims.

Collaborating with UNICEF, the Office of the Law and Institutional Reform Minister, Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said, and other civil society organisations, WCC was actively involved in lobbying for amendments to the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 and Evidence of Child Witness Act 2007. Notable changes include the amendment of the term "child pornography" to "child sexual abuse materials" and the addition of "sexual extortion". The scope of the law was also expanded to include all children under 18.



Resource Development

WCC continues to produce excellent resources like brochures, posters and videos. In 2023, the WCC communications team developed a total of 70 multi-lingual online posters to raise awareness on child sexual abuse, domestic violence, mental health, online violence, and other critical issues through social media. An educational video titled "Parti" ("The Party") which focuses on the grooming of a young teenage girl, resulting in sexual assault, drew an impressive 25,000 social media views.

WCC's ONGOING WORK



Service

This year, our counselling work saw a 22% increase where clients sought counselling in both offices, on Penang Island (WCC Island) and the mainland (Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita, PPW). As the pandemic eased, it was evident that clients felt more comfortable meeting face-to-face with our social workers. We noted a rise in cases involving family relationship problems and a decline in child sexual abuse cases in PPW.

With the availability of new shelters in Penang and the underutilisation of the WCC shelter, we felt it was more cost effective to refer our clients needing refuge to these new shelters. Hence, we decided to close our shelter, allowing the service team to focus on their core work - service and advocacy support.



Service Advocacy

Our collaboration with One Stop Crisis Centres at the six main and district government hospitals in Penang state enables domestic and sexual violence victims to be referred to us for emotional support, upon consent of the client or guardian. Our victim support services include following up with the police on case status, arranging pre-trial briefings by the Deputy Public Prosecutor if the accused is charged in court, and providing support during the court trials. We supported 88 court cases, both new and ongoing, in 2023.



Community Outreach

WCC's prevention work on child sexual abuse via our OK Tak OK and Cybersafety programmes continued, as schools regularly request for these programmes. In 2023, we educated 4,400 children on good touch and bad touch in 39 primary schools. In secondary schools, we engaged approximately 2,000 teenagers on online dangers and exploitative relationships. Many of these programmes were made possible by dedicated volunteers, particularly from Dell Technologies' Women in Action Community Engagement Pillar. We also conducted nationwide online training for educators on OK Tak OK so that these educators may continue to sustain the programme in their own states, and trained NGOs that work with children with disabilities on the issue of child sexual abuse.

WCC VALUE SHOP

WCC's social enterprise, the Value Shop (VS), celebrated its sixth year of operations in November. What an achievement for us! With zero experience in retail, WCC has been able to grow VS into a well-respected thrift shop in Penang.

Overseen by a committed working committee and dedicated supervisors, VS has been able to mobilise a pool of amazing volunteers who have given their hearts to ensure its success.

We are thankful to our generous donors for their donations which have kept our customers coming back for more. More importantly, VS has fulfilled our goal of serving as an additional source of income to sustain WCC's work.



SPONSORS & DONORS

The work of non-profits like WCC is only possible through generous funding, sponsorships, and donations. We are extremely grateful for all your support which has enabled WCC to grow and expand our work from year to year. Special thanks to our major sponsors and donors:

- Penang MMK for Social Development and Welfare, for its annual grant for PPW's operations to serve those in need on the Penang mainland
- Hasanah Special Grant for our work in service, community outreach, and communications
- Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) for our advocacy work
- Embassy of the Netherlands for our Safe Family Policy work
- Lim Lean Teng Foundation
- Neoh Foundation
- Individual patrons and charities who gave generously in support of our work

Finally, to the staff, General Committee, and volunteers, whose priceless dedication has made 2023 a meaningful year for our work on women and children, a heartfelt thank you to all of you.

Thank you!

Service Report



In 2023, both WCC offices (WCC Island office and Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita, PPW, on the mainland) saw an increase in face-to-face counselling as the Covid-19 restrictions eased. Collaboration with the One Stop Crisis Centres (OSCCs) at six government hospitals in Penang remained strong. Notably, however, cases handled through OSCC referrals from the mainland, especially on child sexual abuse, reduced considerably.

WCC sustained our good partnership with the Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) by training First Support Points to respond to local domestic violence cases, under the Penang State Safe Family Policy.

On the basis that WCC's shelter operations have not been cost effective, with low numbers of clients for the past few years, we decided to close our shelter. We also considered the fact that other suitable shelters are available in Penang.

SERVICE PROVISION

Face-to-Face Counselling in 2023

Clients	WCC Island	PPW	Total No. of Clients
New Clients	387 (13%↑)	243 (37%↑)	630 (22%↑)
Former Clients	63	24	87
Total	450	267	717

Number of Face-to-Face/Online Counselling Clients

referrals remained one of the most common means for the public to learn about our counselling services. Social workers continued to provide online counselling (via Zoom and video calls) for clients who were unable to see us face-to-face due to transport and distance constraints.

As shown in the table, we saw a total of 630 new clients in 2023, an overall increase of 22% compared to 2022. Out of this, WCC Island handled 387 clients (13% increase) whereas PPW handled 243 new clients (37% increase). The growth in PPW's new clients was largely due to extensive promotion of PPW's services via WCC's website, social media, and press coverage. Word-of-mouth

Clients	WCC Island	PPW	Total No. of Clients
New Clients	157	132	289
Former Clients	91	36	127
Total	248 (10%↑)	168 (34%↑)	416

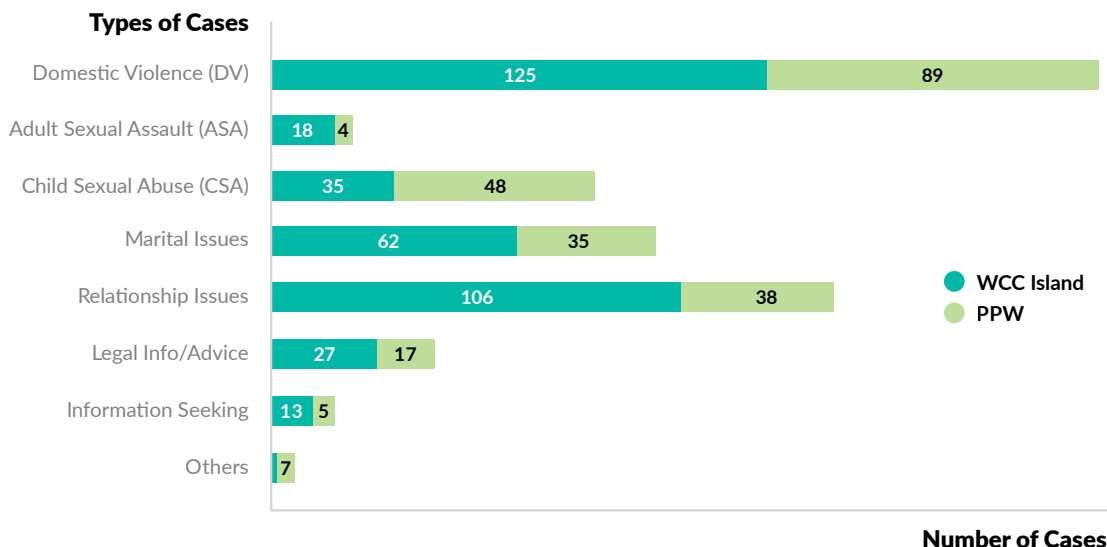
Number of Face-to-Face Follow-Up Counselling Sessions

Both offices showed an increase in follow-up counselling sessions, especially PPW with a 34% increase. The increase came largely from handling relationship issues within the family including counselling children dealing with parents undergoing domestic violence and marital conflicts, which required more sessions to resolve.

“*Saya menghadapi keganasan rumah tangga selama bertahun-tahun. Saya menjadi hamba kepada dia. Saya telah berjumpa pekerja sosial WCC dan sudah tiga tahun dapat sokongan. Sekarang saya mampu jaga anak-anak sendiri dan keluarga. Saya juga sudah bercerai. Hidup saya lebih tenang dan bahagia.*

- Anis, 36, domestic violence survivor”

Types of Cases Handled in 2023



Types of Cases Handled by WCC Island and PPW

As shown in the graph above, and consistent with previous years, domestic violence and sexual assault formed the bulk of cases handled by both offices in 2023. Noticeably, cases of relationship issues for both offices increased significantly, including problems such as family communication breakdown, parent-child relationships, behavioural issues and so on.

For PPW, the number of child sexual abuse (CSA) cases dropped significantly by 34%, from 73 to 48 cases, as cases seen at hospitals had dropped as well. Of the 48 CSA cases handled by PPW, 36 cases (67%) involved teenagers between 13 to 17 years old, indicating their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Demographically, most of the CSA victims were from lower income Malay communities.

In 2023, we continued to document the trend of online violence against women and children. Interestingly, for WCC Island office, most of the online violence cases recorded involved domestic violence through online stalking and harassment by spouses, whereas in PPW, the online violence occurred mainly in child sexual abuse cases via online grooming, and taking and distribution of nude pictures without consent.

“ I am glad you were able to give me counselling without prejudice. I still have grievances over my unjust treatment but it’s not really troubling me anymore. Thanks again. I am glad to find PPW and your help really pulled me through my difficult times.

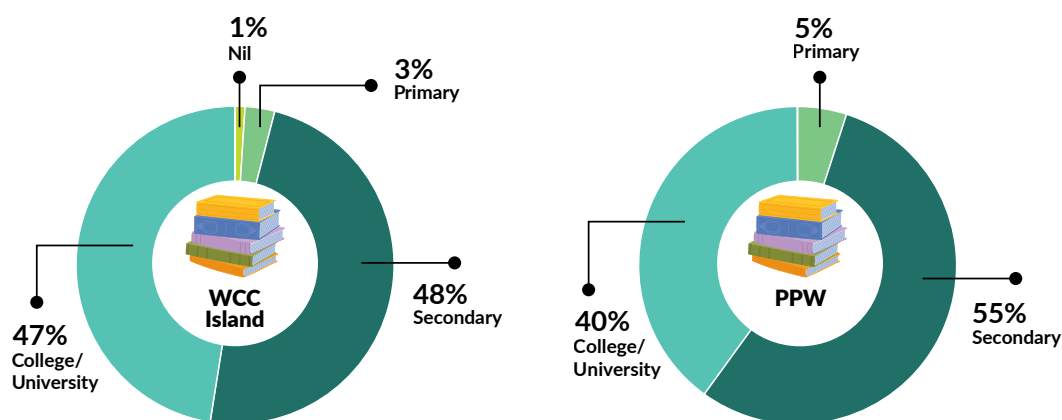
- Jason, 53, male domestic violence survivor ”

Clients' Demographics



As shown in the diagram, the majority of the WCC Island office clients were of Chinese ethnicity, whereas for PPW in the mainland, Malay clients constituted the largest group. Most of our Malay clients (61%) were referred by hospitals.

At PPW, about 41% of Chinese clients were referred through word of mouth, resulting in an increase of Chinese clients compared to last year.



Adult Clients' Education Level

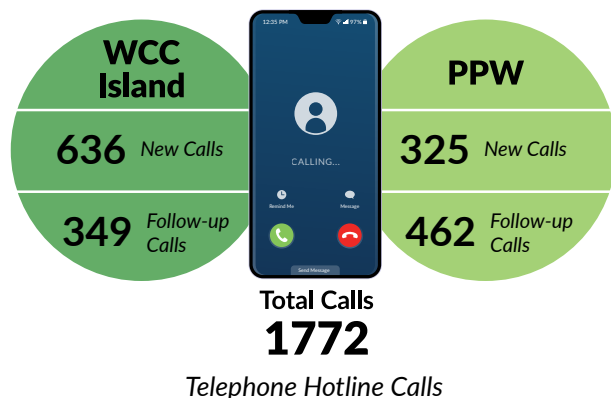
Of the 630 new clients seen in 2023, 122 were children, and the rest were adults. Half of our adult clients from both offices (51%) had secondary education, while 45% had college/university education. We note that there is an increase in the number of clients with tertiary education seeking help from our offices.

Income Level	WCC Island	PPW
Adult Students	4%	-
Nil	20%	30%
< RM1000	5%	6%
RM1001-RM2000	22%	27%
RM2001-RM3000	15%	9%
>RM3000	34%	28%
Total	100%	100%

Adult Clients' Income Level

In 2023, 47% of WCC Island office's non-student adult clients earned RM2,000 and below. Of these, 20% of the clients had no income whatsoever. Around a third of the clients earned more than RM3,000. For PPW, a considerable 63% of adult clients earned RM2,000 and below, with 30% of clients having no income at all, while 28% earned more than RM3,000 per month. Overall, 35% of our clients from both offices earned above RM3,000, reflecting a general increase in income compared to previous years.

Hotline Calls



In 2023, there was a very slight increase in new calls for counselling. Most of the new callers were referred to us by their friends and family members who learnt about our services through online platforms. PPW saw a decrease in both new and follow-up calls, with a total of 787 calls handled.

Out of PPW's 325 new calls, 40% were calls made to clients referred by OSCC, while 60% were new incoming calls.

Hospital Support for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims

Cases	Cases handled by WCC Island HPP & HBP		Cases handled by PPW HSJ, HKB, HBM & HSB		Total Cases Handled by both offices	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Domestic Violence	32	31	156	107	188	138
Sexual Assault	52	55	83	53	135	108
Total	84	86	239	160	323	246 (24%↓)

*HPP - Hospital Pulau Pinang

*HBP - Hospital Balik Pulau

*HSJ - Hospital Seberang Jaya

*HKB - Hospital Kepala Batas

*HBM - Hospital Bukit Mertajam

*HSB - Hospital Sungai Bakap

OSCC Cases Handled by WCC Island and PPW

Both WCC offices continued our strong collaboration with all six main and district government hospitals in Penang. With client's consent, WCC Island office and PPW provide counselling and emotional support to victims of domestic and sexual violence who are being treated at the One Stop Crisis Centres (OSCCs) of these hospitals.

As shown in the above table, in 2023, the total number of OSCC cases handled decreased by 24%, as the cases seen at all the hospitals in the Penang mainland, except for Hospital Kepala Batas, also decreased: sexual assault cases dropped by 36%, and domestic violence cases by 31%. There was little change in the number of OSCC cases handled by the WCC Island office.

E-mail and Social Media Enquiries

In 2023, the total number of enquiries received via e-mail and WCC's social media channels (Facebook Messenger, Instagram and Twitter) dropped quite significantly, with 38 enquiries compared to 59 enquiries in 2022.

Shelter

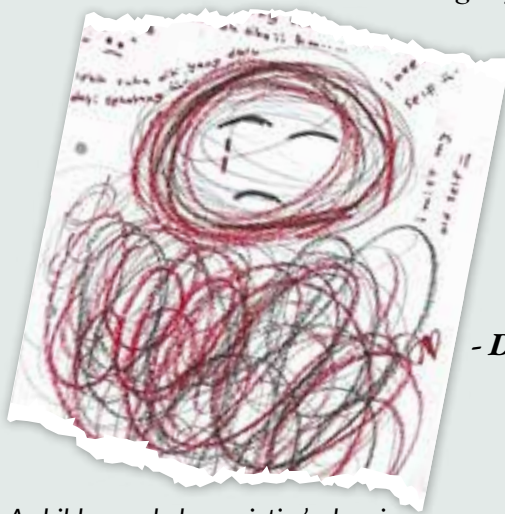
In 2023, WCC made the difficult decision to close down our shelter. With the availability of new and alternative shelters in Penang and the under utilisation of the WCC Shelter, we felt that it was more cost effective to refer our clients needing refuge to them. Hence, working in partnership with these other shelters, allows WCC to continue to provide shelter services when needed.

In 2023, we referred three women and their five children to the Pembela Wanita shelter. This decision enables the service team to focus on its core work on service and advocacy support.

WCC-OSCC Collaboration

“ *The work you do goes far beyond mere assistance; it embodies empathy and solidarity, offering hope to individuals and families navigating through some of their darkest moments. Your commitment to providing comprehensive support services, including counselling, legal advocacy, and empowerment programmes, is truly commendable.*

Through our collaboration, we have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of your initiatives. Your tireless efforts have not only provided immediate relief but have also contributed to the long-term healing and resilience of survivors. By offering a safe haven and a supportive community, you have empowered individuals to reclaim their autonomy and rebuild their lives with dignity and strength.



A child sexual abuse victim's drawing

Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of survivors and working towards a future where every individual can live free from fear and violence.”

**- Dr Sumaiyah Bt Syed Ibrahim,
Emergency Physician,
Hospital Seberang Jaya**

TRAININGS AND MEETINGS

Safe Family Policy Work



In 2023, in collaboration with the Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) under the Penang State Safe Family Policy, WCC conducted four First Support Point (FSP) training workshops to a total of 123 participants from the Setiausaha Kerajaan Pulau Pinang (SUK) office, State Assemblyperson (ADUN) service centres, Women and Family Development Committees (JPWK), and NGOs.

WCC received positive feedback from participants who shared that these interactive trainings had greatly increased their knowledge on domestic violence issues and equipped them on how to better respond to victims.



Two focus group discussions were organised with attendance by 37 participants from ADUN service centres, District and Land offices, and NGOs. The discussions covered challenges faced by FSPs when assisting domestic violence victims, and that further support was needed. Some of the penghulus in attendance requested for follow-up training to strengthen their skills in identifying and handling domestic violence victims.

A strategic planning meeting was also organised to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Penang State Safe Family Policy since its implementation in 2020.



The meeting was attended by the then Penang State Exco for Social Development, YB Chong Eng, Sungai Pinang State Assemblyperson, YB Lim Siew Khim, senior representatives from PWDC and WCC, as well as key FSPs who had previously completed our training.

Participants identified new strategies to ensure the sustainability of FSPs, such as increasing institutional recognition and support, and in-depth coaching of FSPs to enhance their capacity.

Talks for Medical Personnel

In 2023, WCC gave several talks to 419 medical personnel from various hospitals including Hospital Pulau Pinang, Hospital Sungai Bakap, Hospital Kepala Batas, Hospital Sultan Abdul Halim and Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Seberang Perai Utara on how to support domestic violence and sexual assault victims. The talks covered important topics such as understanding forms of violence and the role of WCC in handling OSCC victims through a holistic approach. The talks helped to sensitise participants to the issues, and highlight the importance of referring victims to WCC.



Interagency and Networking Meetings

In 2023, both offices attended three interagency meetings organised by the Penang State Health Department, Hospital Pulau Pinang, and Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat. At these meetings, agencies shared experiences and best practices in handling domestic violence and sexual assault cases. WCC made a courtesy visit to the Director of the Penang State Health Department to strengthen continued collaboration among the OSCCs and both WCC offices, especially where the sharing of OSCC data is concerned. We also paid a courtesy visit to the Director of the National Registration Department to share about our work, and encourage referrals of cases involving family conflict to our WCC Island and PPW offices.

Publicity & Promotion

To increase visibility of PPW's work, media interviews were carried out in multiple languages with China Press, Guang Ming and Buletin Mutiara on topics such as domestic violence, child sexual abuse issues, and PPW's services. Chinese language television channel, Astro AEC, interviewed PPW social worker Ooi Bee See for its documentary series, "The Guardians", which highlighted PPW services and our OK Tak OK programme delivered in schools. This has helped to publicise PPW's work to a nationwide audience. Similarly, WCC social worker Asmar Hamariyah Bakhari, was interviewed by Astro Awani in Bahasa Malaysia on the issue of child grooming.



Moving forward, WCC will continue to enhance our collaboration with the OSCCs and the Penang State Health Department with the goal of further expanding our services to women and children in need. We will also continue working with PWDC to empower more community leaders to respond to domestic violence on the ground.

Advocacy Report



The Advocacy team achieved significant milestones in 2023 in our work to support victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the legal system. The team:

- advocated for improved protections for child victims in court before the Malaysian Chief Justice;
- organised two multi-agency seminars and training sessions in Johor and Sabah; and
- contributed actively at national-level advocacy groups for the protection of women and children.

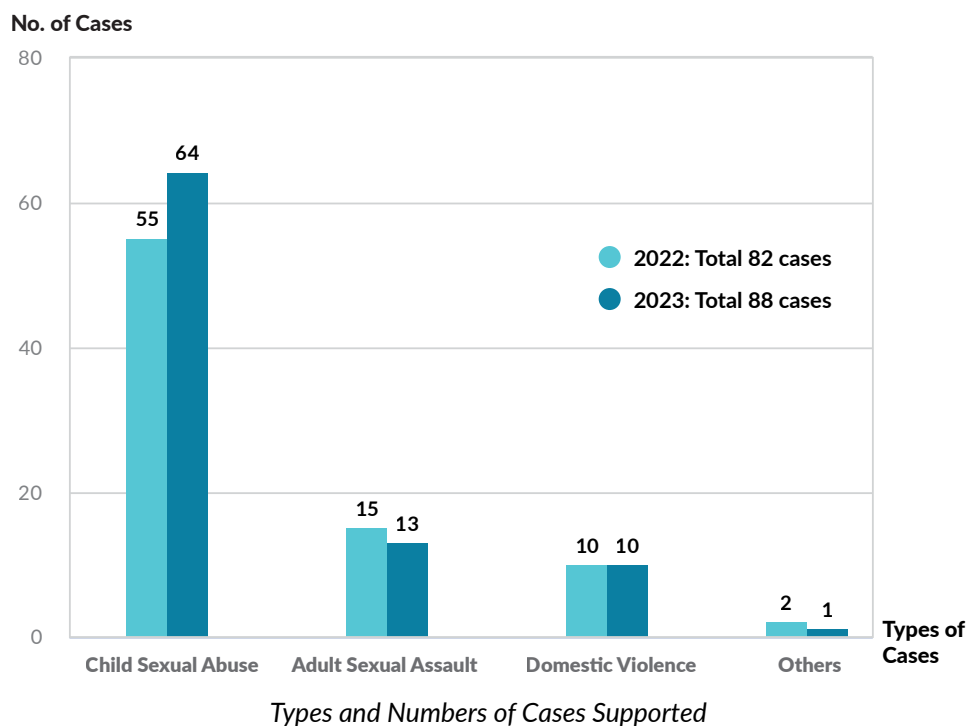
ADVOCATING FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE VICTIMS

Case Support Statistics

Recognising the importance of victim support services to the recovery, empowerment, and access to justice of SGBV victims and their families, WCC continues to proactively provide these critical services. The WCC Advocacy team steps in when cases are charged in court to comprehensively support victims and their families in navigating through the court process.

In 2023, such support was extended to victims of domestic and sexual violence in 88 court cases (an increase of 6 cases from 2022) comprising 40 new cases and 48 ongoing cases from previous years.

The graph below shows the types and numbers of cases supported in 2022 and 2023. Consistent with previous years, child sexual abuse cases remained the highest, at 73% of the total cases supported.

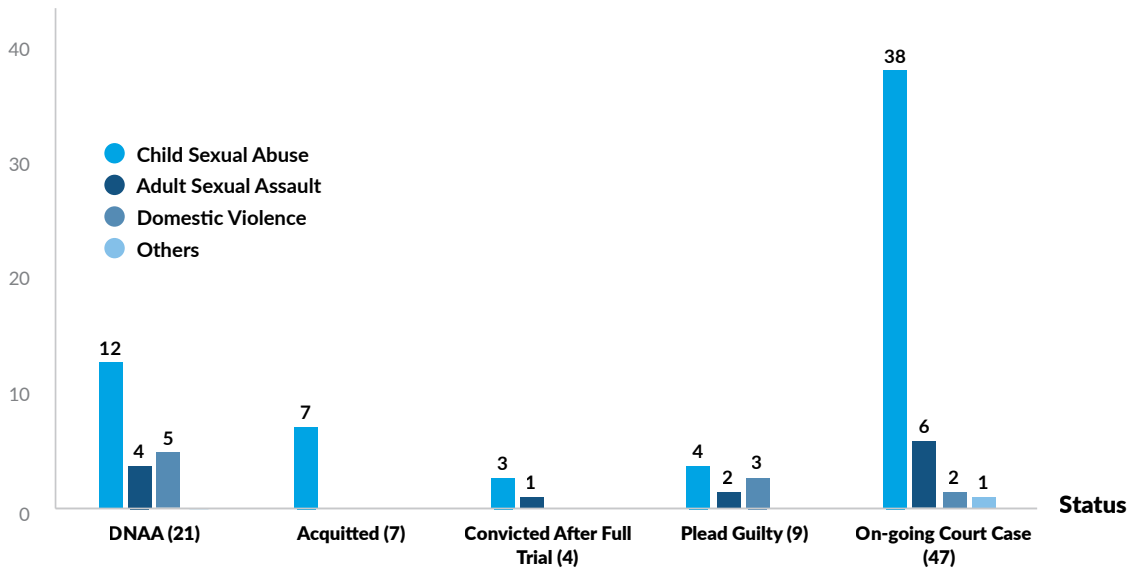


Status of Cases Supported

The graph below shows the status of the 88 cases supported in 2023. Disconcertingly, 21 cases (24% of the total) resulted in a Discharge Not Amounting to Acquittal (DNAA). Reasons for DNAA varied, including victim withdrawals, and, in some cases, a recharge is pending. In child sexual abuse cases, there were seven acquittals, mainly due to prosecutors failing to prove a prima facie case.



No. of Cases



Status of the 88 Cases Supported in 2023

Interventions Carried Out in 2023



The diagram indicates the extensive and integrated range of interventions implemented by the Service and Advocacy teams from both WCC and PPW offices in support of our clients' journeys through the criminal justice process. A total of 520 interventions were carried out in 2023, including 35 court attendances to accompany clients. These efforts served to safeguard the rights and best interests of our clients.

IMPROVING PROTECTIONS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Victim Support Advocacy

Sponsored by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), WCC organised six impactful activities in Putrajaya, Johor and Sabah, all of which received positive feedback from participants.

Courtesy Visit to Chief Justice

On 4 January 2023, WCC followed up on our 2022 National Judiciary Dialogue by paying a courtesy visit and presenting key recommendations on “Improving Court Processes for Child Sexual Crime Victims” to the Chief Justice, YAA Tun Tengku Maimun Binti Tuan Mat, and senior representatives of the judiciary at the Palace of Justice, Putrajaya. Recommendations presented were:

- to improve court video live link facilities;
- to ensure child witnesses are accompanied by adults in court; and
- to ensure consistent implementation of the Special Guidelines on Handling Sexual Offences Cases Against Children.



Johor Multi-Agency Seminar on Improving Protections for Child Sexual Crime Victims

On 5 March 2023, at TROVE Hotel Johor Bahru, WCC collaborated with the Johor Women’s League (JEWEL) to organise a one-day multi-agency seminar on improving protections for child sexual crime victims at the Johor state level. The seminar was officiated by YAM Che’ Puan Khaleeda Bustamam, Consort of the Regent, and closed by YA Dato’ Mary Lim, Federal Court Judge. A total of 37 participants from the police, hospitals, state Social Welfare Department (JKM), prosecutors, courts, and NGOs attended the seminar. This seminar received media coverage and increased visibility due to the presence of Johor royalty.



Participants agreed that such multi-agency seminars should be held annually, and be hosted by different participating agencies. To improve and facilitate inter-agency communications and cooperation, each agency appointed a representative who attended the seminar to serve as a focal point.

Johor Investigating Officer (IO) Training on Handling Child Sexual Crime Cases

On 7 March 2023, WCC, together with JEWEL, conducted a full-day training workshop for 27 police investigating officers (IOs) from multiple districts in Johor, to improve their handling of child sexual crime cases.

Aside from WCC, a senior D11 representative from Bukit Aman, Deputy Public Prosecutors, and other agencies also delivered sessions to enhance the IOs’ knowledge and skills. The training was closed by the Johor State Chief Police Officer, YDH Datuk Kamarul Zaman Mamat.



Sabah Dialogue on Improving Protections for Child Sexual Crime Victims

Together with the Sabah Women's Action-Resource Group (SAWO), WCC organised a half day dialogue on 15 August 2023 at the Palace Hotel, Kota Kinabalu. This brought together 42 representatives from key agencies and NGOs in Sabah, and federal-level representatives from D11 Bukit Aman, the Attorney General's Chambers, and JKM.

The dialogue was insightful to all as participants candidly shared the multiple challenges faced by victims and agencies in Sabah which include poverty, statelessness, and the lack of infrastructure and resources.

Sabah NGO Networking Session

In the afternoon of 15 August 2023, WCC facilitated a Sabah NGO networking session, where 25 participants from six local NGOs gathered to share and learn about each other's work, and to discuss issues impacting child sexual crime victims as well as broader child rights issues in Sabah.



Sabah Agency Training on Handling Child Sexual Crime Cases

On 16 November 2023, WCC partnered with the Sabah Women's Affairs Department (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Wanita Sabah, JHEWA) to organise a full-day training workshop on handling child sexual crime cases at Wisma Wanita Kota Kinabalu for 34 participants from the Sabah state police, JKM, hospitals, and JHEWA. The prosecution shared good practices in handling such cases, followed by a discussion on support measures for the wellbeing of agency personnel involved. Participants unanimously agreed that the training was highly beneficial and much needed.

Legislative & Policy Reforms

In 2023, WCC was actively involved in three national-level advocacy groups, namely:

Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 (SOAC) & Evidence of Child Witness Act 2007 (ECWA) Advocacy Group

WCC initiated the formation of this multisectoral advocacy platform, comprising women and children's rights civil society organisations, representatives from the office of YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister of Law and Institutional Reform in the Prime Minister's Department, and UNICEF.

The group's primary objective is to advocate for amendments and address issues concerning the SOAC and ECWA. In 2023, WCC attended 10 online meetings, including a briefing for Members of Parliament on the amendments to SOAC and ECWA in March, and provided written feedback on proposed ECWA regulations.



Anti-Sexual Harassment Advocacy Group

Comprising the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), ENGENDER Consultancy, and Young Women Making Change, the group aims to address issues and gaps in the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act 2022 and its implementation. In August 2023, representatives from the group met the Women's Minister to present recommendations to address gaps in the Act and improve its enforcement.

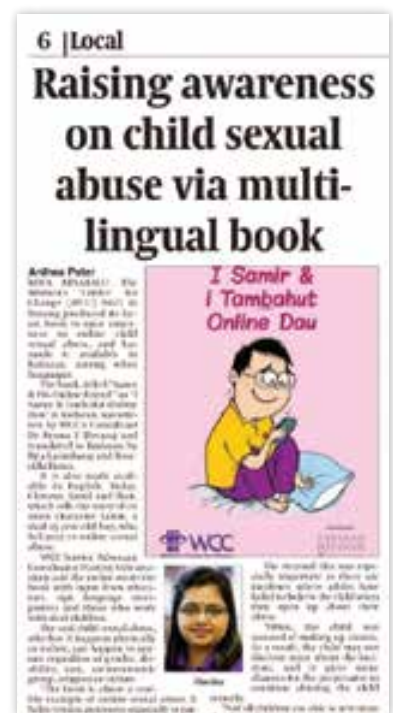
National Domestic Violence Committee (Jawatankuasa Keganasan Rumah Tangga, JKRT)

The JKRT, of which WCC is a member, focuses on improving coordination among relevant agencies and NGOs in addressing domestic violence cases nationwide. WCC also sits in two of the JKRT's working committees, on data and advocacy and capacity building, respectively. In 2023, WCC attended four online meetings of the JKRT and working committees, as well as an in-person strategic planning meeting for the advocacy and capacity building working committee in January.

RAISING MEDIA AWARENESS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

In 2023, WCC continued to actively engage the media to advocate on a range of issues affecting women and children, and on human rights. WCC participated in 12 media interviews, endorsed six media statements issued by civil society organisations and JAG, and issued two media statements on amendments to SOAC and on improving women's representation in Penang.

Moving forward, the Advocacy team remains committed to supporting and advocating for the rights of SGBV victims, especially child sexual crime victims, in Penang as well as other states in Malaysia. We will continue to leverage on WCC's nationwide networks to effectively address issues and gaps. We will also be updating our resources on domestic violence and enhancing staff knowledge and skills on relevant laws and procedures.



Short Film: The Party

WCC produced a 6-minute short film titled *Parti* (The Party), based on a real-life case of child sexual grooming and assault. The film highlights how young teenage girls between 13 to 15 are particularly vulnerable. The main message is that family support and community sensitivity are critical in protecting children. Released in December 2023, *Parti* reached well over 25,000 social media users. It also received good media coverage in three languages.



Outreach Report



WCC's outreach team continued its efforts to prevent gender-based violence and child sexual abuse by reaching out to children, youths, and women. Our staff and volunteers, worked together with teachers, to meaningfully engage over 4,000 children in nearly 40 primary schools on good and bad touch and more importantly; how to seek help if they experience abuse. We responded to the increase in online violence cases, by reaching out to approximately 2,000 teenagers, educating them on online dangers via our *Cybersafety* programme. Through our *Respek* programme, we shared tips on how to build healthy relationships with over 300 teenagers.

With the support of the Hasanah Special Grant, WCC continued to remotely deliver both its *OK Tak OK* workshop in Chinese and storytelling workshop for Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (KEMAS), reaching nearly 100 teachers and educators nationwide.

This year, we are proud to report that we made inroads to a new underserved client demographic. For the first time, WCC organised a training workshop on how to handle child sexual abuse cases for NGOs and educators working with children with disabilities.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

OK Tak OK

OK Tak OK, WCC's signature child sexual abuse prevention programme of over two decades for primary school children, continued to be in popular demand. This programme teaches children to differentiate between good and bad touch, and empowers them to inform a trusted adult if someone touches them inappropriately.

In 2023, we reached out to 4,386 children in 39 primary schools, with our staff working in synergy with our dedicated volunteers from Dell Technologies Women In Action Community Engagement Pillar as well as trained teachers. We are happy to share that we were able to conduct our programme with 16 national schools this year, a significant increase from two schools last year. On the whole, engagement with national schools remained a challenge. Although the PPW team made a concerted effort to contact 140 national schools on the Penang mainland, only 10 responded positively.



Cybersafety And Respek

Children and teens are at their most vulnerable when they go through puberty, becoming curious about sex, sexuality and relationships. With easy access to a wealth of information on these topics via the internet and digital technology, it is crucial that they be empowered with knowledge, awareness, skills, and guidance so that they can navigate through the potential dangers such as cyber grooming, cyber bullying, sexting, etc., presented by online dating and relationships.

To address these concerns, WCC developed our *Cybersafety* programme targeted at adolescents and teenagers. In 2023, our staff and Dell Technologies volunteers conducted this programme for 1,924 students in 12 schools.

WCC's *Respek* programme is designed to educate teenagers on how to build healthy relationships and effectively manage conflict through better communication skills. This year, WCC reached out to 4 schools and 318 students through this programme, and we continue to receive invitations from schools to conduct the programme for their students.



What Teens Ask



“Bahayakah berkenalan online?”

“Is it normal for teenagers to want to have sex with someone older?”

“Jika ada perempuan menunjukkan tubuh badannya kepada lelaki yang dia kenal online, apakah tindakan yang boleh diambil oleh perempuan itu jika dia nak putus hubungan?”

“Is it wrong hugging your friends? How can I show affection without making them uncomfortable?”

“Jika lelaki itu memaksa kita untuk membuat seks, apa yang perlu kita lakukan?”

TRAINING WORKSHOPS TO PREVENT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Online Training Workshops

Bijak Itu Selamat (BIS) Training Workshops

Targeted at teachers and educators, WCC's BIS training workshop equip them with knowledge and skills on how to effectively deliver our *OK Tak OK* programme to primary school children. This year, we successfully trained 24 educators from Selangor, Melaka, and Kuala Lumpur through an online BIS workshop conducted in Chinese, and 10 out of these 24 educators subsequently delivered 14 sessions of the *OK Tak OK* programme to 674 students in their respective communities.

Storytelling Workshop

Over the past two years, WCC has produced two storytelling videos based on our online story books, *Lisa and Her Secret* and *Yusri and His Secret* which aim to raise awareness on child sexual abuse. In 2022, we conducted an online storytelling workshop using the *Lisa and Her Secret* video. This year, we invited a storytelling trainer, Tasha Merican, to specifically train 73 teachers from KEMAS Penang, Kelantan, and Sabah on child sexual abuse and how to effectively utilise our *Yusri and His Secret* storytelling video as a tool to teach children child abuse prevention. As a result of this workshop, 18 trained educators conducted 18 storytelling sessions for 400 students.

In-Person Training Workshops

Training NGOs and Educators Working with Children with Disabilities

For the first time, WCC trained NGOs and educators who work with children with disabilities on how to handle child sexual abuse cases. To enhance the WCC's staff's knowledge and skills on children with disabilities, the WCC team went through meetings and discussions with Dato' Dr Amar Singh HSS, a consultant pediatrician. This enabled the WCC team to design and implement specific and suitable methodologies for this new client group.

For the training, we invited Dr. Anuradha Thiagarajan, a Family Medicine Specialist from the Bukit Minyak government clinic to share about the vulnerability of children with disabilities towards sexual abuse. We trained 33 participants on how to identify child sexual abuse, its symptoms, how to respond when a disclosure has been made, and, lastly, how to prevent it by teaching children about good and bad touch. To ensure accessibility of the workshop content, we also engaged two sign language interpreters to support deaf participants.



As a result of this training, WCC received two invitations directly from some of the NGO participants to conduct follow-up workshops on child sexual abuse awareness and prevention. We then trained 50 staff, parents, and members at the Cerebral Palsy Centre, and 50 residents and staff at Cheshire Home.

At the request of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), WCC also trained 18 refugee school teachers on how to conduct WCC's *Cybersafety* programme.

ENGAGING THE CORPORATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Talks and Promo Booths

WCC regularly receives multiple invitations from private companies and local community organisations to deliver public talks on topics relating to gender-based violence, women's rights and gender equality. Invitations for talks and programmes were also received from institutions of higher learning, NGOs, and multinational corporations.

These included talks on intimate partner violence for 60 Management & Science University (MSU) college students, and on gender equality for 70 employees of Lam Research. This year we conducted a total of 24 talks for 1,848 in-person participants and 2,400 online participants.





To build our public profile, gain greater visibility within local communities, and expand our networks, we ran promotional booths at 25 events, offering interactive games or activities to engage the various members of the local communities such as children, educators, parents, local agencies and other NGOs in addition to sharing materials and information about our services and work.

Each year serves as a learning curve for the WCC outreach team. From 2023, we have gained valuable insights on how to build on our strengths, approach our challenges, and make the best of new opportunities. We are excited to

move into the coming year, and to continue our meaningful programmes to empower women and children.

WCC Children's Storybooks



“ Thank you WCC Penang for raising public awareness about online child sexual abuse (CSA). CSA affects all children including children with different abilities.

These children are more at risk of sexual abuse because disabilities often create vulnerabilities.

”
- YB Teo Nie Ching,
Deputy Minister of Communications

Our People

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Khadijah Mohd Nor

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Appreciation & Gratitude

WCC thanks donors, funders and patrons, big and small, for generously supporting our work.

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- Jumble Sale by JPWK Pulau Tikus, MPKK Kg Sireh Kebun Nyiur and MPKK Bangkok Lane
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- Plexus employees
- ViTrox Technologies employees
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About WCC



Women's Centre for Change, Penang (WCC) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation dedicated to the elimination of violence against women and children, and the promotion of gender equality and social justice.

Established in 1985, we provide services in counselling, court support, and referral to temporary shelter. WCC also conducts outreach programmes in schools and communities, and advocates for legal and policy reforms affecting women and children.

WCC is a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) which actively campaigns for policy and legal reforms affecting women and children

About PPW



Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita (PPW) is a smart partnership set up in 2009 between WCC and the Penang State Government where the state allocates an annual grant for WCC to manage its operations.

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