

RECLAIM THE NIGHT – All Women Deserve To Be Safe

For immediate release, 23 October, 2009



SA Sex Industry Network, a program of The AIDS Council of South Australia Inc.

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RECLAIM THE NIGHT - All Women Deserve To Be Safe

Reclaim the Night is a worldwide event acknowledging the issue of women's safety in their communities. It has been running in Adelaide for more than 30 years and the 2009 event takes place next Friday the 30th of October. The philosophy of Reclaim the Night encourages grass roots participation in the organisation of the event by as many women as possible. Last years event was organised by the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL), and for the first time this year the event has been organised by the Sex Industry Network (SIN), a health organisation aimed at supporting South Australian sex workers.

"The aim is for a different women's group to take the lead role in organising the event each year, as we believe this will encourage diversity in participation of the event and ensure it remains relevant to today's women and communities" says Bridget Partridge, spokesperson from WEL.

This year the theme of the event is '*All Women Deserve To Be Safe*' and SIN is calling on supporters to extend their messages of safety to those women who are working in the sex industry. They believe that currently sex workers are being let down.

"There seems to be a belief that if you're selling sex you deserve anything you get. If the job that a woman does dictates her level of safety, then we have a problem. What are we saying as a society if some women deserve to be safe and some women don't? This year Reclaim the Night is making the bold statement that ALL WOMEN DESERVE TO BE SAFE" says Ari Reid, Manager of SIN.

An anonymous female sex worker said "The continued criminalisation of sex workers and our jobs makes it impossible for me to fight for our rights to be safe at work or safe anywhere for that matter. How do I force my boss to provide a safe work space when we are all criminals? Who do I call if I'm bashed or raped? Does anyone care?".



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SIN is using the women's safety event to highlight the lack of support for the safety of sex workers in South Australia and to call for the decriminalisation of the sex industry. Like other members of the community, sex workers need legal protection to be able to live and work safely and to be able to report crimes committed against them.

"Decriminalisation of sex work is about protecting the dignity of those involved. Sex workers deserve equal access to justice and a safe workplace in South Australia" said Elena Jeffreys, President of Scarlet Alliance, the Australian Sex Workers Association.

SIN invites all women and children to mobilise for the rally and march on Friday night, the 30th of October from Victoria Square commencing at 7pm, and men are encouraged to support from the sidelines. Supporters of all genders are welcome to the after party where there will be an array of entertainment, light refreshments and community stalls.

Live entertainment will include:

- Mr Bigpants (from 'Debby doesn't do it for free!')
- Nancy Bates (considered one of the most dynamic indigenous female performers in South Australia)
- Guest speaker: Miss Anonymous (a sex worker) who will talk about how stigma and discrimination can affect victims of violence; and
- DJ, SandyJ (playing us music into the evening)

Date: Friday 30th October, 2009

Where: Rally and March from 7pm, gather at Victoria Square

After Party at Yungondi Courtyard, Lions Art Centre, - Cnr Morphett St & North Terrace, City, 8pm – 11:30 pm



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