International Women's Day is celebrated globally every year on 8th March. Originally called the International Working Women's Day, it was first started as a political and socialist movement in 1909 in four European countries. Until the late 1900s, the influence of the day was limited to Europe. In 1975, 8th March was announced as the official date for International Women's Day by the United Nations.

International Women’s Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities.

The original aim of the day – to achieve full gender equality for women around the world – has still not been realised. A gender pay gap persists across the globe and women are still not present in equal numbers in business or politics. Figures show that globally, women’s education and health is still worse than that of men and that violence towards women continues.

On International Women’s Day women across the world come together to highlight these inequalities, whilst also celebrating the achievements of women who have overcome these barriers.

More on International Women’s Day + photos of events in Leeds inside!
We went to an International Women's Day event hosted by Zest Health For Life. It was a brilliant day with stalls, Zumba dancing to join in with, a wonderful choir singing, delicious lunch and loads of amazing women!

We were lucky enough to meet Sophie Varley, the England Women’s Boxing Champion. Here she is with Lisa, one of our volunteers.

Everyone looking at all the stalls and joining in with Zumba dancing!

Kylie and Lisa, two of our fabulous volunteers, on our information stall at the event.
We also went to the Leeds Queer Film Festival event for International Women’s Day at Leeds Museum. There were loads of stalls, activities and things to do, including film screenings and workshops.

Some of the crowds enjoying the event.

A girl should be two things: who & what she wants.

Everyone contributed to making a zine (a mini magazine) on the day and we loved this entry!
Our Rainbow Hearts group took a banner they had made to the Festival of the Body event for International Women’s Day at Leeds Central Library.

We would like to say a big thank you to GERS Paving who are based in Hunslet for their continued very generous donations to support the women and children we work with.

We all really appreciate your support - thank you!
The Key – young women’s group

The young women from The Key project recently had the chance to share their experiences of being out on the street at night with RashDash - a feminist all female theatre company. It was a great opportunity for us to talk about what it's like to be women outside in the dark but brought it home just how many women feel unsafe and threatened walking alone at night and just how many have been followed on the street. RashDash are currently in the research stages for their 2017 show 'The Darkest Corners', a project about violence against women on the streets. We are looking forward to seeing the show next year, it sounds like it will be fantastic!

info@rashdash.co.uk

Screening awareness for women

Womens Health Matters are running a project to raise awareness about breast, bowel, lung and cervical health and screening. We want to help dispel any fears and myths around cancer and NHS screening, letting people know what the screenings are about and what to expect if they should decide to go for mammograms or lung x-rays. We also offer information around the bowel testing kits that come through the post and practical advice about how to collect stool samples.

If you know of any groups that would like a free session do get in touch.

We are also at Leeds Market, outside the Ministry of Food on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month between 10.30 and 12.00 with lots of information so do pop down for a chat or just to say “hello”.

We believe in personal choice and respect that many people choose not to have screenings. It’s our aim to help more people feel they are making an informed choice.

Get in touch: Sally 0113 2762851 sally@womenshealthmatters.org.uk

We also offer sessions to BME women, in particular women over 50 and can offer appropriate language and cultural support in Asian languages.

Get in touch: Angela 0113 2762851 angela@womenshealthmatters.org.uk
Come and join us!

- Ask about our groups
- Visit one of our market stalls
- Use our enquiry service

If we can’t help we’ll know someone who can!

0113 2762851

Welcome Kay!

We would like to give a big welcome to Kay who has joined us to run YUMs, our young mum’s group in South Leeds.

Kay has lots of lovely sessions planned for the young women and their children.

The group runs every other Monday from 12 noon to 2pm and is open to any young mum up to the age of 25.

If you would like more information about the group please get in touch:
0113 2762851  kay@womenshealthmatters.org.uk  07444 296497

Citywise at the Merrion Centre – under 19s only

The Leeds Sexual Health city centre clinic at the Merrion Centre is now open. The clinic will offer an under 19s only “Citywise” service from 4:00 to 5:30pm Monday to Thursdays and will offer contraception and chlamydia screening. This will be a drop in service, so no appointment is necessary.

Young people are able to use the clinic at other times if needed. Please see www.leedssexualhealth.com for more details and information on other services available across the city, including Saturday emergency clinics.
Our BME women’s group art project

Our BME women’s group took part in a project with Skippko as part of the British Art Exhibition in Leeds.

Here are just a few of the lovely pieces they produced as part of the project.

Group members on a trip to Leeds Art Gallery as part of their arts project.

For more information about our BME women’s groups contact Angela:
0113 2762851   angela@womenshealthmatters.org.uk
Do you want to be in a women’s group?

For all women with a learning disability or difficulty to get together, have a cuppa and talk about health

Wednesdays 11am-1pm
at Womens Health Matters, Bridge House, Balm Road, Hunslet, LS10 2TP

Contact Jane Bethell for more information:

Ring: 0113 2762851

Text: 07504 232989

E-mail: seen@womenshealthmatters.org.uk

We’d love to hear from you!

Our BME women’s group worker, Angela Singh, was awarded this certificate for her contribution to the recent 16 Days of Action campaign, where she spoke about the work Womens Health Matters does around domestic violence, gave key messages for BME women and delivered this in Punjabi.

16 Days of Action is an international campaign which started in 1991, to highlight violence against women and human rights issues.

Well done Angela!
As part of the International Women’s Day events in Leeds, Megan and Leeanne spoke at the Festival of the Body at Leeds Central Library. The festival was a month long programme of events, including a conference, performances and talks, organised by F=, an interdisciplinary research group based at Leeds Beckett University. Megan and Leeanne spoke at the “Women, Visibility and Playful Acts” unconference, where a full day of talks and performances covered issues from Women, Travel and Exploration to Hair and the art of identity. Their talk was titled, “Powerfully Ordinary Feminism: Being/Working with Leeds Women in the Voluntary Sector” and detailed the unique way that Womens Health Matters works with women, and the benefit of attending groups as a way of accessing support. Despite it being predominately artists and performers, everyone was really interested in the work that Womens Health Matters does across the city, and were surprised at the breadth and scope of the work carried out by the staff at Womens Health Matters. It was a really enjoyable event, providing an interesting insight into how feminism is explored through art, design and academia. Thank you very much for the invitation.
**Womens Health Matters market stalls**

Every Friday we run a market stall between 11am and 1pm where we give out health information.

Find us on row G of the indoor market next to the Ministry of Food.

Every other Wednesday we have an information stall aimed at women over 50 in the same place ~ come and get some information!

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Massive thanks to the **White Rose Centre** for making Mother’s Day happen for the women in our groups, with a generous donation of gifts - on behalf of the women we work with, thank you!

http://white-rose.co.uk/

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**BME women’s group art work**

This beautiful piece of art work was made by our BME Hopes and Dreams women’s group ~ the women made this collage after their inspirational trip to the British Art Exhibition at Leeds Art Gallery.
We would like to say a huge thanks to Leeds University Union for their generous collection of sanitary items for the women in our Rainbow Hearts group. Their “Tampons Don’t Grow on Trees” campaign highlighted the fact that VAT is payable on tampons and sanitary towels, making them even less affordable for women on low incomes and those who are destitute.

The campaign aimed to educate people about the difficult situations vulnerable people, such as the homeless, refugees and those on low incomes have to face, often including a stark choice between buying sanitary products or food.

Leeds University Union’s Welfare Officer Freya Govus said: "Choosing between starvation and humiliation should never be a decision people have to make."

Freya’s work within the Union is part of a wider discussion to remove the ‘tampon tax’ within the UK.

**Breaking news:** the Government has announced plans to remove the ‘tampon tax’ altogether........watch this space!
A big thank you to our supporters!

If you would like to support our work you can make a donation to our postal address below; cheques should be made payable to Womens Health Matters ~ thank you

Or go to our website to give online
www.womenshealthmatters.org.uk

Womens Health Matters Bridge House Balm Road Leeds LS10 2TP

Contact us
Telephone: 0113 276 2851
E-mail: admin@womenshealthmatters.org.uk
Text: 07504 232989
Web: www.womenshealthmatters.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/LeedsWHM

By post: Womens Health Matters, Bridge House, Balm Road, Leeds LS10 2TP

“Courage is like a muscle ~ we strengthen it with use”
Ruth Gordon

Staff members

Jane Bethell - disabled women’s groups
Sally Blyth - English language support, group support, cancer screening awareness
Lucy Fishwick - domestic violence support groups
Nicola Hardman - Footsteps, Caring Dads, The Key (young women)
Kay Holdsworth - YUMs (young women)
Sarah Keane - The Key (young women)
Fi Kellett - Finance
Ruth Mulryne - Director
Elaine Roberts - Admin, Information, Shine (sexual health)
Leeanne Rowinska - Include (young women) Footsteps
Angela Singh - BME groups, group support, cancer screening awareness
Megan Waugh - Maternity Services Liaison Committee co-ordination

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