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Attack on Families Commission Unjustified.

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) takes issue with the National Party's motives for attacking the Families Commission, "wanting it to be more relevant".

In a forum yesterday, National Party leader John Key said that he supported the abolition of physical force legislation. But, at the same time, National Welfare spokesperson Judith Collins has been quoted questioning the relevance-of The Families Commission.

The Families Commission has been fundamental in educating parents and caregivers to learn and develop alternative behaviours and attitudes towards family violence. It has invested in promoting the value of effective and responsible parenting as well as having tackled the whole-of-family approach, from Paid Parental Leave, to the balancing of family responsibilities with the plethora of opportunities life presents. The Commission has provided a portal for parents and their voices.

"NCWNZ believes the position that the Commission took on physical discipline, with its moves to support providers in moving parents away from out-moded parenting styles forms the basis for it being targeted as irrelevant," says NCWNZ National President Christine Low.

"NCWNZ is concerned that the National Party is pandering to the pro smacking lobbyists through suggestions it will abolish the Families Commission. Likewise, a similar fate could be faced by the Office of the Children's Commissioner, which recently released a publication on positive parenting, *Choose to Hug*," says Christine Low.

National Party leader John Key said yesterday that his party would like to see more money put into the Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and that he admired the work of Parents Inc.

"It is to be hoped that the NGOs that John Key admires are not the ones using scare tactics in an effort to return to the past. The Council would be more comfortable hearing that worthy grass root organisations like Plunket, Parents Centre and Playcentre would receive

targeted government funding for their work with families on a daily basis,” says Christine Low.

ENDS

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"Women Influencing Policy"