



7 March 2008

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

### **Pride in being a Woman**

International Women's Day is a celebration of women's social, economic and political achievements; but how do New Zealand women measure up in today's society, questions The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ).

"Politically and economically, New Zealand women are blazing across the barriers," says NCWNZ National President Christine Low. "However socially, women seem to be confusing empowerment with what has been historically classed as the domain of stereotypical male behavior".

New Zealand women have long been encouraged to do anything they wanted with their lives, with the slogan "girls can do anything". But recent surveys and studies are showing a worrying new trend among New Zealand women

Along with a rise in New Zealand women's unsafe sexual behaviour, there has also been an increase in binge drinking, with one in four women revealing they cannot remember what they did when they were drinking.

This kind of behaviour leads to women potentially putting themselves into situations for which the consequences can be life-changing.

"There is a raft of socially damaging impacts, the risk of contracting sexually- transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies - going hand in hand with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome," says Christine Low, "and the increased possibility of becoming the victims of physical and sexual violence."

Women need to realise that empowerment does not disenfranchise them from being a woman.

"What women actually want is equality with men, not to be the same as men. Women need to know that it is perfectly acceptable to act and behave like a woman and not a "blokette" with something to prove to their male counterparts," concluded Christine Low.

ENDS

Further Information:

Christine Low, National President

Ph: 03 357 8887 or 021 065 5565

National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ)

PO Box 12 117

Wellington

Email: [ncwnz@ihug.co.nz](mailto:ncwnz@ihug.co.nz)

*"Women Influencing Policy"*