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PRESS RELEASE

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RATIONALISING THE DISCIPLINING OF CHILDREN

The lack of media coverage for the recent Children's Commissioner's survey on New Zealanders' views on the nicknamed "anti smacking" legislation is very disappointing says the National Council of Women of Zealand (NCWNZ).

The results of the survey, which were released publicly, show that the majority of people questioned supported and understood what the Government wanted to achieve by repealing Section 59 of the Crimes Act.

"The repealing of Section 59 has enabled professionals in the community like GPs CYFS, emergency departments and the police to know that, if they report alleged violence against children, the perpetrators no longer have the defence of reasonable force to fall back on in a court of law to defend their actions," says NCWNZ National President, Elizabeth Bang.

NCWNZ also believes the way in which the media covered the issue has allowed lobby groups, such as Family First, the opportunity to be scaremongers in the community, giving the impression to parents that they have lost the right to discipline their children in a reasonable way.

NCWNZ is also concerned about Family First's continued calls on the new government to merge the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Families' Commission when the objectives and mandate of the two offices are very different

"The Office of the Children's Commissioner promotes rights, health, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people, while the Families' Commission role is to encourage a better understanding of family issues and needs among government agencies and the wider community," concluded Mrs Bang.

ENDS

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"Women Influencing Policy"