



MEDIA RELEASE

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Anti-Smacking Law ‘Has Made No Difference’ – Law Society

Family First NZ says that the Law Society has admitted that the anti-smacking law has made no difference to NZ’s unacceptable rate of child abuse.

Chair of the Family Law Section of the Law Society Paul Maskell was asked on a radio interview this week whether the law has done anything to reduce child abuse from the perspective of the legal profession. He responded ‘we haven’t noticed any change at all...The change in law really has made no difference’. He agreed that abusers don’t even know what the law is and don’t really care.

“This is backed up by an online poll of 3,829 people on the *NZ Herald* website yesterday which showed that 89% believed that the anti-smacking law had had no effect on child abuse, Curia Market Research in March where 77% believed that the law change would not reduce the rate of child abuse, and 87% of respondents on a *littlies.co.nz* website last year who felt the law was ineffective,” says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ.

“The underlying issues identified by UNICEF and CYF - including drug and alcohol abuse, family breakdown and dysfunction, and poverty and stress - continue to be ignored. Green MP Sue Bradford admitted that the law was never intended to solve the problem of child abuse.”

“We want the problem of child abuse tackled but it’s time we got realistic about the causes, and the actual families at risk,” says Mr McCoskrie. “People who opposed the law change aren’t pro-beating as claimed – they simply want some honesty in the debate and laws targeted at the real causes.”

ENDS

For More Information and Media Interviews, contact Family First:

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