



MEDIA RELEASE
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No Holds Barred Media Undermines Violence Message

Family First NZ says that the White Ribbon message is being undermined by failing to restrict the violent and sexual content in our media and public displays.

A recent report highlighted by Family First NZ documents an alarming rise in violence against women and girls on prime-time television. The study found a shocking rise in the depiction of teenage girls as victims, more scenes showing intimate partner violence, and an increase in the use of violence against women as a punch line in comedy series.

"It highlights the concern that our unacceptable levels of family violence are potentially being driven by a violent media culture," says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ. "The increasing use of violence against women as a punch line in comedies such as *Family Guy* and *American Dad* also shows a disturbing trivialisation of the seriousness of this issue."

"The report correctly concludes that this may be contributing to an atmosphere in which viewers see aggression and violence against women as normative, even acceptable. There is ample evidence and research that shows that violence and sexual content in our media is a significant risk factor for violence in the community and families."

"The *Boobs on Bikes* parade, the sexualisation of children in marketing, a weak response to the growth of hard-core pornography and child pornography, and the underlying sexual themes in many advertisements is also fuelling the view of women and children as objects and cheapens their value and the respect they deserve," says Mr McCoskrie.

"As NZ invests millions of dollars and resources into tackling the problem of family violence, sexual abuse and assaults, and the *It's Not OK* campaign, it may be that the media, porn and advertising industry is being left uncontrolled and unaccountable as they undermine these messages and normalize unacceptable behaviour which the community is trying to tackle."

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