

ANTI-SMACKING LAW POLL March 2011

- CLIENT:** Family First New Zealand
- POLL DATES:** Evenings of Thursday 10, Sunday 13 and Thursday 17 March 2011
- SAMPLE SIZE:** 1,000 respondents agreed to participate.
- SAMPLE SELECTION:** A random selection of 10,000 nationwide phone numbers, with the person in the household aged 18+ who next has a birthday asked to participate.
- SAMPLE ERROR:** Based on this sample of 1,000 respondents, the maximum sampling error (for a result of 50%) is +/- 3.2%, at the 95% confidence level.

VIEWS ON CRIMES ACT AMENDMENT

In 2007 Parliament passed a law that removes a defence of reasonable force for parents who smack a child to correct their behaviour, but states the Police have discretion not to prosecute if they consider the offence was inconsequential. What is your view of this law?

Anti-Smacking Law		Count	Col %
Anti-Smacking Law	Strongly Agree	179	18%
	Somewhat Agree	157	16%
	Neutral	97	10%
	Somewhat disagree	242	24%
	Strongly Disagree	300	30%
	Unsure/Refuse	25	3%
	Total	1000	100%

54% disagree with the law, and 34% agree with it. This is almost unchanged from 2010 when it was 55% disagree and 33% agree.

Anti-Smacking Law BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Anti-Smacking Law	Strongly Agree	20%	14%	18%	18%	16%	19%	16%	21%	18%
	Somewhat Agree	17%	15%	28%	19%	15%	13%	17%	15%	15%
	Neutral	11%	9%	10%	11%	9%	10%	11%	6%	11%
	Somewhat disagree	23%	25%	18%	27%	27%	21%	25%	25%	23%
	Strongly Disagree	27%	34%	24%	22%	31%	32%	28%	31%	32%
	Unsure/Refuse	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	3%	2%

Overall 55% (65% in 2009, 73% in 2008, 62% in 2007) of respondents disagree with the law, and 33% (25%, 29%, 20%) agree with it.

Males disagree with the law more strongly than females with 59% opposition for men and 50% for women. Under 30s support the law by a net 4% while all other age groups are opposed.

SHOULD THE LAW BE CHANGED?

Do you think the new law should be changed to state explicitly that parents who give their children a smack that is reasonable and for the purpose of correction are not breaking the law?

Should law allow light correctional smacking

		Count	Col %
Should law allow light correctional smacking	Yes	815	82%
	No	146	15%
	Unsure/Refuse	36	4%
	Total	997	100%

82% (77% in 2010) of respondents would like the law amended to explicitly allow reasonable smacking for the purpose of correction.

Should law allow light correctional smacking BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Should law allow light correctional smacking	Yes	81%	83%	90%	76%	86%	79%	78%	81%	88%
	No	16%	13%	10%	19%	11%	16%	17%	15%	11%
	Unsure/Refuse	3%	5%		5%	2%	4%	6%	3%	1%

PARENTAL CONFIDENCE DUE TO LAW

Has the anti-smacking law made you less confident as a parent when dealing with unacceptable behaviour from your child?

Has law made you less confident

		Count	Col %
Has law made you less confident	Yes	40	21%
	No	146	77%
	Unsure/Refuse	3	2%
	Total	189	100%

21% of respondents who have a child aged under 12 said they felt less confident dealing with unacceptable behaviour due to the law.

Has law made you less confident BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Has law made you less confident	Yes	18%	26%	25%	18%	26%	50%	23%	15%	23%
	No	81%	73%	75%	81%	72%	50%	74%	83%	77%
	Unsure/Refuse	2%	1%		2%	2%		2%	2%	

Male parents are more likely to have felt less confident.

THREATS TO REPORT PARENTS

Has your child ever said they would tell authorities like a teacher, social worker or the police if you smacked them?

Has child said they would report you for smacking

		Count	Col %
Has child said they would report you for smacking	Yes	60	32%
	No	127	67%
	Unsure/Refuse	2	1%
	Total	189	100%

Around one third of parents with a child aged under 12 said that their child had told them they would be reported to authorities if they smacked them.

Has child said they would report you for smacking BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Has child said they would report you for smacking	Yes	31%	33%	8%	25%	55%		31%	37%	28%
	No	67%	68%	92%	73%	45%	100%	66%	63%	72%
	Unsure/Refuse	2%			2%			2%		

It is older parents (aged 46 – 60) who say they are most likely to have had a child threaten to report them. This is probably because they have some older children than younger parents. Note all parents in the survey had at least one child aged 12 or under.

POLITICAL IMPACT OF LAW CHANGE PROMISE

If a political party promised that amending the law to allow light correctional smacking was a non negotiable policy at the next election, would that make you more likely to vote for them, or less likely, or make no difference to your likely vote?

Vote Impact if party promises light smacking law change

		Count	Col %
Vote Impact if party	More likely	317	32%
promises light smacking law change	Less likely	98	10%
	No difference	542	54%
	Unsure/Refuse	39	4%
	Total	996	100%

32% (22% in 2010) of respondents are more likely to vote for a party that promises to change the law to allow light correctional smacking, and 10% (12% in 2010) are less likely.

Vote Impact if party promises light smacking law change BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Vote Impact if party promises light smacking law change	More likely	28%	37%	48%	33%	31%	29%	34%	30%	30%
	Less likely	11%	7%	2%	6%	10%	12%	12%	8%	8%
	No difference	57%	51%	46%	58%	55%	54%	50%	58%	57%
	Unsure/Refuse	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%

Men are more likely to vote for a party that promises to change the law.

CHILD ABUSE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Do you think an independent Commission of Inquiry into the wider causes of child abuse and family violence in NZ should be established by the Government?

Inquiry into Child Abuse

	Count	Col %
Inquiry into Child Abuse Yes	651	65%
No	267	27%
Unsure/Refuse	78	8%
Total	996	100%

65% of respondents support a commission of inquiry into the wider causes of child abuse.

Inquiry into Child Abuse BY Gender + Age + Area

		Gender		Age				Area		
		Female	Male	18 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	61+	Metro	Provincial	Rural
		Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Inquiry into Child Abuse	Yes	69%	60%	92%	71%	69%	57%	61%	68%	70%
	No	22%	33%	6%	23%	27%	31%	30%	25%	24%
	Unsure/Refuse	8%	6%	2%	6%	5%	12%	9%	7%	7%

Women and younger respondents are most supportive of a commission of inquiry.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

		Count	Col %
Gender	Female	568	57%
	Male	420	43%
	Total	988	100%

Age

		Count	Col %
Age	18 - 30	50	5%
	31 - 45	176	18%
	46 - 60	362	37%
	61+	402	41%
	Total	990	100%

Area

		Count	Col %
Area	Metro	415	42%
	Provincial	273	27%
	Rural	312	31%
	Total	1000	100%

Metro is defined as Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

Provincial is all other cities in New Zealand.

Rural areas are all areas not Metro or Provincial.

Have children under 12

		Count	Col %
Have children under 12	Yes	195	20%
	No	792	80%
	Total	987	100%

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