

## Media release

20 March 2009

Number of pages: 2

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### For our children's sake, let's be fair and sensible

A coalition of organisations committed to positive outcomes for children and families wishes to set the record straight regarding the child discipline law.

After much debate and consideration of opinion and international evidence, this law was passed by both Labour and National and came into effect in May 2007.

It's time the nation got the straight story on what the law does and doesn't say, and how it is being used. The law is both fair and sensible.

It clearly states that parents can still use physical force to keep their children, or other children, safe. It allows parents to restrain or physically remove children, for example, to grab a child to keep them from running onto the road, or to carry them to their room, or to separate children hurting each other. Fair and sensible.

It does not allow the use of force for the purpose of correction. Children and adults now have equal protection under the law from all forms of assault. Fair at last.

It also clearly states that the police are not expected to prosecute in cases where assaults are very minor. Police monitoring of their activity in this area shows no significant increase in complaints, investigations or prosecutions. This information is on the police website for anyone to read and parents can be reassured. Again, fair and sensible.

So, physical punishment is out, positive parenting is in. Love, warmth, guidance, encouragement, clear boundaries – these are the parenting strategies that work and that support children so they know what is expected of them, what the rules are, and at the same time they feel valued and loved.

So let's clear up the confusion. Let's be fair and sensible and simply get on with supporting each other to love and nurture our children.

This is a joint media release by Barnardos and:



**Te Kahui Mana Ririki**

ENDS

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