



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

*United Nations Consultative status with ECOSOC, UNESCO and UNCTAD
Special relations with the ILO, FAO, UNICEF, and other organisations and
agencies*

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The Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear Mr Key

The members of our organisation, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, are very concerned about the levels of family violence in New Zealand, which according to recent statistics is one of the highest in the developed world. It is heartrending to hear of yet another baby being killed or injured and seemingly nothing being done to reverse this trend.

Some of our members have worked in the health and community areas for many years, and from our experience we believe that a comprehensive home visiting programme for all families with babies and pre-school children, which includes prenatal supervision, needs to be set-up, preferably by an already functioning organization such as Plunket, which has accepted access to families for health check-ups. If families will visit clinics, that is great, but often the families who are most at risk do not attend clinics and, needless to say, when visiting the home the nurse or community worker is often able to recognize situations where more preventive and interventionist help is needed.

This programme would need appropriate government financial support, but the cost must surely be less than the huge consequences of the family violence that is occurring in our communities.

A number of other issues should be dealt with that are causing stress for our families and leading to violent behaviour, such as, ongoing generational poverty and unemployment, children who are constantly ill and untreated because of this poverty and lack of adequate housing. Access to secure shelter is a human right which is sadly not being provided for many people in this country.

We urge you and your government to become much more active with regard to reducing the high level of family violence in this country. The current situation is just not acceptable.

Yours sincerely

Celine Kearney

President, WILPF Aotearoa

cc Minister for Social Development; Minister of Health; Minister of Social Housing; Leader of the Opposition, Andrew Little; Metiria Turei, Green Party co-Leader