



24 Year Snapshot of Child Abuse and Neglect Deaths in NZ

The tabulated 24 year snapshot is of New Zealand children who have been killed as a result of abuse and neglect. The table identifies 58 horrific deaths of children in this country from 1990 to date. Data has been collected from media and internet research and small number of coroner reports where available.

For the Sake of Our Children's Trust looked to identify what sort of environment these children had come from asking the questions: was the child born into an environment where their parents were married or not? Did the child come from a family who depended heavily on the welfare system ie., was the mother and/or father on a benefit?, was the child exposed to an environment of drug and alcohol abuse? Who was the perpetrator of the child's death?

Based on the 58 known cases listed, 51 cases identified child's biological parents were NOT married. The perpetrator responsible for the death indicated 27 of the deaths tabulated had a 'stepfather' or 'boyfriend/partner of the mother being responsible or part responsible for the child's death. The remaining figures for the perpetrator was indicated the mother or relative of the child or unknown.

Many of the children killed were of Maori descent with 35 cases indicating ethnicity of child. The question New Zealanders need to ask is 'What are our Maori Leaders doing about these staggering statistics? Have Maori political leaders addressed such issues in party policies for the upcoming elections? Of course New Zealanders expect both major parties to seriously look at addressing these issues of family violence but more specifically violence to children, children being killed as a result of violence and the ongoing growing reporting of child abuse cases.



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The research was unable to provide evidence of welfare dependency of parent(s) as this information is not stated in most of the cases. The Trust stands steadfast on its assumption that for many of the children born into a single parent home or an environment where their parents were not married is associated to long term welfare dependency, hence undermining marriage and breaking up families. Broken family structures and relationships of the child's environment is clearly evident based on the presence of a non-biological adult being responsible for the death of 51 of the cases identified.

This list will continue to grow with the most recent death of an 8 month old child in June.

The unfortunate reality is that for these children who have been killed they did not have the choice to choose who their parents would be, and many of us would say these children are the lucky ones because abuse and neglect would still continue if they remained alive in their abusive environments and quite possibly grow up to exhibit violent traits.

The Trust is not about dealing with the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff – many agencies/organisations are already presenting reports around this area concerning family violence presenting solutions.

The Trust is demanding for the Government to truly examine the REAL CAUSE of family violence – not the aftermath of it, looking specifically to developing efficient achievable solutions to: the role of drug and alcohol abuse, relevance of marriage for the protection of children, family structure and breakdown, welfare dependency of vulnerable families and at the same time address ethnic-based issues, child poverty, and other factors.



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For the Sake of Our Children's Perspective

The current social landscape could not be described as encouraging for our children, with there being no sign of a curtailing of the level of abuse or murder of our children.

Probably more disturbing is the continued degeneration of the social structures that give rise to exceptionally poor outcomes for our children -- in the order of 1600% worse off on average, than children brought up in the sorts of home/environment/relationships we aspire to -- for them!

There is no political will within the present government, at this point in time, to give any real priority to the "social malaise" of so many of our precious children.

The Trust's position is to educate our society with tools to "grow great families, grow great children, grow a great community, grow a great nation, and grow a great economy". Vulnerable families are susceptible to adverse factors (drug and alcohol abuse, welfare dependency, broken relationships, poor role modelling in parenting) to preventing many from achieving this goal.

In canvassing the views of all members of Parliament it is clear that our elected leaders have "no answers" only ongoing recommendations. This is also disturbing, as it is election year, and no political party appears to have a clear view of the social roadmaps to mitigate child abuse and neglect for the near future.

We also see an unfortunate silence from the "silent majority who know better"

Arguably the churches of New Zealand should be the "social guardians of our families" -- but sadly the response could be described as "an unholy silence".



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The question then comes back to -- have we as a nation of 4+ million made progress?

There is no doubt a significant increase in the general public awareness of this country's growing social problems. There also appears to be an increasing confidence amongst certain sectors of society in speaking out against "what works and what doesn't".

The Trust was launched to create a movement of change to a generation who cares for our children and for the well-being of this country's social landscape. In short the real work is only just beginning -- with our focus progressively shifting to driving "what works -- and opposing what doesn't" based on the real causes of child abuse and neglect and ignoring any politically correct stigma associated.

The 2014 Declaration for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect should be signed by all child advocates/organisations who wish to be a voice for our children. There is no obligation to sign, but with a collective voice on an issue that matters your support to the Declaration will exhibit a collective authority to ensure our political leaders deliver solutions with tangible outcomes.

If our children matter - it will require our endurance!

If our children are precious - it will require our courage!

If our children are the hope of our future - it will require our wisdom!

If our children are to be led into a brighter future -it will require our vision!

If we are to realise their vision - it will require our passion!

In short, many positive things have happened - but there is a lot more to do.



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	Date	Child	Age	Death	Married Biological parents	Non-biological parents	Ethnicity	Person responsible
1	1990	Robert Harlen	19mths	Shaken to death	No	Mother's partner		Mothers partner
2	1991	Delcelia Witika	2yrs	Bashed, burned, child abuse, neglect	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Biological Mother , Mother's partner
3	1992	Craig Manukau	11yrs	Beaten/kicked to death	Yes			Biological Father
4	1994	Jordan Ashby	3yrs	Beaten to death	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mothers partner
5	1995	Veronika Takerei-Mahu	11mths	Beaten to death	No		Maori	Biological Father
6	1997	Jaydon Perrin	10mths	Head injuries	No	Mother's partner		Biological Mother , Mother's partners both acquitted of murder
7	1997	Tichena Crosland	3yrs	Traumatic head injuries	No		Maori	Biological Father guilty of murder but not rape
8	1999	James Whakaruru	4yrs	Punched and kicked to death	No	Stepfather	Maori	Stepfather
9	2000	Hinewaoriki (Lilly-Bing) Karatiana-Matiana	2yrs	Cerebral swelling after being shaken	No	Care of two aunts	Maori	Two aunts convicted & jailed
10	2000	Mereana Edmonds	6yrs	Beaten to death	No	Mother's gay partner	Maori	Mother and her gay partner
11	2001	Saliel Aplin	12yrs	Knife attack	No	Stepfather	Maori	Stepfather



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12	2001	Olympia Aplin	11yrs	Knife attack	No	Stepfather	Maori	Stepfather
13	2003	Tamati Pokaia	3yrs	Beaten to death	No	Foster care	Maori	Foster father
14	2003	Kelly Gush	12yrs	Kicked to death	No	Stepfather	NZ	Stepfather
15	2003	Coral-Ellen Burrows	6yrs	Knocked unconscious and beaten to death	No	Stepfather	NZ	Stepfather
16	2003	Rocky Wano	15yrs	Kicked to death	No		Maori	Biological Father
17	2005	Unidentified boy (name suppression)	2yrs	Abuse and injuries consistent with violent abuse	No	Male friends of mother		2 Male friends of the mother, Mother knew of abuse was sentenced 18months
18	2004	Tangaroa Matiu	3yrs	Beaten to death with a fence paling	No	Stepfather	Maori	Stepfather, Mother
19	2006	Ngatikaura Ngata	3yrs	Beaten to death for soiling pants	No	Stepfather	Maori	Both mother and stepfather, manslaughter
20	2006	Chris Kahui	3mths	Serious assault, neglect	No	8/9 occupants of household	Maori	By a person or persons as yet known
21	2006	Cru Kahui	3mths	Serious assault, neglect	No	8/9 occupants of household	Maori	By a person or persons as yet known



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22	2007	Jyniah Mary Te Awa	10mths	Physical abuse	No		Maori	Child minder
23	2008	Nia Glassie	3yrs	Physical Abuse/Neglected, Died of Brain injuries.	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother – manslaughter, Boyfriend & Brother - murder
24	2008	Dylan Hohepa Tonga Rimoni	3yrs	Head injuries	No	Foster care	Maori	Foster care
25	2008	Tyla Maree Darryl Flynn	22mths	Severely burned, murdered	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partner
26	2008	Duwayne Toetu Taote Pailegutu	7yrs	Kicked, beaten with a cricket stump.	No	Stepfather	Maori	Stepfather – murder
27	2008	Riley Justin Osborne	16mths	significant head injuries	No	Beneficiary Stepfather	Maori	Mother's partner - murder
28	2008	Tahani Mahomed	2mths	severe head injuries including a skull fracture, Neglect	Yes		Asian	Parents
29	2009	Sachin Dhani	16mths	Head injuries	Yes		Asian	Uncle
30	2009	Cherish Tahuri-Wright	3yrs	Severe head injuries	No		Maori	Family member/carer
31	2009	Jayrhis Ian Te Koha Lock-Tata	5wks	Beaten and head injuries	No		Maori	Biological Father aged 22yrs old
32	2009	Trent James Matthews	1yr	Assault by carer	No		NZ	Unrelated female



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33	2009	Jacqui Peterson-Davis	2yrs	Head injuries	No		NZ	Biological mother charged with manslaughter
34	2009	Kash McKinnon	3ys	extensive, non-accidental head injuries	No		NZ	Unrelated male
35	2007	Cheyenne Petersen	2ys	Physically beaten	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partner
36	2009	Hail-Sage McClutchie	22mths	Serious head injuries	No		Maori	Unresolved
37	2009	Karl Perigo-Check Jr	3yrs	Kicked violently in the stomach	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partner
38	2010	Toddler boy	13mths	Drowned in bath	Yes		NZ	Mother charged of manslaughter
39	2010	Cezar Taylor	6mths	Physically beaten	No	Mother's ex partner	Maori	Mother's ex partner charged for murder
40	2010	Sini Unaloto Ikamanu	3yrs	Severe head and body injuries	Yes		Pacific	Father charged for manslaughter and causing grievous bodily harm
41	2010	Sahara Jayde Baker	5yrs	Assaulted	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partner
42	2010	Newborn baby girl	1day	Smothered to death	No			Infanticide charge of mother
43	2010	Newborn baby girl	1day	Abandoned at birth to die	No			Infanticide charge of mother



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44	2011	Mikara Ranui Jarius Reti	5mths	blunt force trauma to his liver, which caused internal bleeding	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partner charged with manslaughter
45	2011	Serenity Jay Scott-Dinnington	6mths	Non-accidental injuries	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's partners charged with murder
46	2011	Christian Afoa	1wk	Suffocated	No		Pacific	Mother charged of manslaughter
47	2011	James Joseph Ruhe Lawrence	2yrs	Severe damage to internal organs	No	Mother's partner	Maori	Mother's Partner charged of murder
48	2011	Popo	1yr	Fracture to the rear of his head and a massive brain bleed	Yes		Pacific	Neighbour/babysitter charged for murder. Non-related.
49	2012	Hinekawa Topia	2mths	deliberate head injury	No		Maori	Biological father charged of murder
50	2012	Leilani Mary-Jane Lotonu'u	2yrs	Splitting of internal organ	No	Mother's partner		Mother's partner charged with murder
51	2012	Newborn baby	9wks	Suffocated while sleeping	No		Maori	Biological mother charged.
52	2012	Newborn baby	1day	Abandoned at birth	No			Biological Mother charged
53	2012	Antony Christensen	9yrs	Administered Class B drug methadone	No		Maori	Biological Mother charged with manslaughter



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54	2013	Raynar-Lee Soljar Thompson-Hatley	4mths	Head injuries	No		NZ	Inquiry under investigation
55	2013	Reef Ripa Stone	10days	dehydration and meningitis (lack of care)	No		Maori	Mother walks free of manslaughter charges
56	2013	Atreyu Taylor-Matene	1yr	Significant head injuries	No		Pacific	Homicide Inquiry under investigation
57	2014	Stevvie Ella Lawsom	11mths	Significant head injuries	No		NZ	Homicide Inquiry under investigation
58	2014	Child	8 mths	Significant head injuries	N/A		NZ	Male charged with assaulting baby, under investigation
59	2014	Who will be next ?						