

# LIGHTING LIVES



FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN TRUST

Official Newsletter November/December 2008

## ABOUT US:

As a trust we believe that every child of our nation is born precious and must be treated as precious by individuals and the community.

We are a fierce advocator for children's rights, particularly the right every child has to be loved, wanted and nurtured, to have the best possible environment where they can grow into healthy, well-balanced New Zealanders.

## Trust Mission Statement

To raise awareness and advocate for the establishment of FSOCT principles throughout New Zealand by identifying and empowering key change agents of influence to achieve a child-friendly New Zealand through families, reduction of child violence and eliminating child-poverty.

To influence a nation who will demand an action of positive change by our elected representatives to develop social policies that better reflect FSOCT principles.

To work in partnership with key change agents within communities to build up young leaders to become individuals of influence.

## CONTACT US

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## A MONTH OF SORROW

The month of November has been, sadly, a very busy month for the Trust.

The much publicized Nia Glassie trial has featured prominently in the media and, as the details surrounding the beautiful 3 year old's life and death were released, the nation went into an uproar.

Her untimely death, along with a string of recent high profile child killings . James Whakaruru, the Kahui twins, Delcelia Witikia, Lillybing, Coral-Ellen Burrows . has called New Zealand's attention once again to the problem of child abuse in our country.

As awful as it is that it has taken the tragic death of one of our young children to get us to wake up, once again, to the problem of child abuse

in our country, it has provided the trust with an opportunity to play an active part in the nationwide conversation.

This resurgence in national interest saw the trust invited to contribute to national television and radio discussions, as well as print.

John Sax, Chairman of the board, was invited to talk on Breakfast about the problem of child abuse in our country and the need for social policies that would encourage the safest environments for raising our children.

This was followed by a lively debate on Radio NZ's afternoon panel and an article in Muriel Newman's NZCPR Weekly Newsletter.

### Take Away Stat....

There are 20 confirmed cases of child abuse and/or neglect in New Zealand every day.



*Nia Glassie— A photo of the beautiful 3 year old taken before her death*

The article looks specifically at how our social policies are out of sync with the results we want to achieve and talks frankly about creating success-focused policies to reduce the chilling child abuse statistics in our country.

For the full article 'Redefining Compassion' visit [www.nzcpr.com/guest125.htm](http://www.nzcpr.com/guest125.htm)

## THE NEXT STEP...



The Trust has been very busy over the past three years advocating for the reduction of child violence in New Zealand. Not only has the message reached the hearts of many New Zealanders, evidence shows we as a nation are beginning to report such violent acts to the police.

We as a Trust believe we have established a movement of change throughout the Nation where people are now wanting to make a difference within their communities and voice their concerns and develop programmes for young children. The Trust believes it's now time to develop social action to further ensure our principles of love, care and concern for a young person is practically implemented in our communities.

**New Zealand's current reality is one of social chaos.** As the central role of parents has been steadily subverted, society's various sectors now compete for the greatest influence on a child's development. The results have been disastrous.

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## A CHRISTMAS GREETING FROM OUR FOUNDER:

Dear Friends,

The past year has been one of both sorrow and triumph. We have seen many public tragedies in the media but there have also been many, many more which have gone un-seen and unheard.



Chairman and Founder  
John Sax

On a positive note, Christine Rankin and Bev Adair's tireless efforts to give our children a voice is now paying off. People all over New Zealand are starting to sit up and recognise that we do have a problem here and this recognition gives us a lot of hope for ushering in a new era and a brighter future for our children. The battle is not won, but it has definitely begun!

We personally want to take this time to thank you so much for your support this year and also to pause and reflect on the Christmas message of love, peace and joy. This message means a lot to us as a trust as it is something that we long to see become more than just words but a daily reality for everyone in our community, particularly in the lives of our children.

As we close the year we leave this message with you, the glad tidings of peace and joy and we wish love, peace, and joy on you, your family, and your community.

Merry Christmas

Aroha-nui

John Sax



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TRUST

## Fatherhood left wanting...



New Zealand's media continues to expose the crisis faced by our beloved children: abused by their parents, bullied in schools, ensnared by the influence of gangs and ultimately wreaking havoc on our communities through crime and violence. With such a high profile, ideas on the appropriate response have been widespread. For the Sake of Our Children Trust hopes to turn the focus toward prevention. In essence, we are talking about leading people away from the cliff rather than the ambulance-at-the-bottom approach.

Prevention starts with the family. Endless studies show that virtually every major social pathology we face can be linked back to the breakdown of the family: violent crime, drugs and alcohol abuse, truancy, unwed pregnancy, suicide, psychological disorders. (See Dr. Muriel Newman, Restoring Fatherhood+ [www.nzcpr.com](http://www.nzcpr.com))

Newman goes on to describe how Andrew Becroft, New Zealand's principal

Youth Court Judge, portrayed the deep-seated need boys have for a father figure: "At 15, and 16 year-old boys seek out role models like heat seeking missiles. It's either the leader of the Mongrel Mob or it's a sports coach or it's Dad. But an overwhelming majority of boys who I see in the Youth Court have lost contact with their father. What I'm saying is that I'm dealing in the Youth Court with boys for whom their Dad is simply not there, never has been. Gone, vanished and disappeared. +Indeed, his recent report that over 35,000 kids are currently living on the streets further evidences the social tragedy faced by New Zealand.

Despite this fundamental need for families to be founded on a strong mother-father unit, many Government policies and various social movements have pushed for the exact opposite. Welfare laws, anti-smacking legislation, civil unions and the like imply that the Government is a better caregiver than a child's own parents.

We have been active in our campaign to empower New Zealand's parents once again. It was such a delight to support the collection of more than 390,000 signatures for the last smacking referendum and we wait with

baited breath to see whether it will be implemented in the upcoming election.

### What can you do?

At the individual level, be the instruments of change. Catherine Lawson, Jigsaw Professional Consultant, stated that every New Zealander is responsible for keeping our children safe and alive. (See: [our Voice](http://www.ourvoice.org.nz) can save a child's life, [www.scoop.co.nz](http://www.scoop.co.nz)) How right she is. You are encouraged to visit [www.parentsinc.org.nz](http://www.parentsinc.org.nz) for practical parenting tips in your own homes.

On a public level get active and use your voice to:

Phone talkback radio

Write to the editors of local and national newspapers

Write to the Prime Minister

Write to your local MP

Join protests/action groups

Report abuse to the Police

Join Light One Life and sign up to support our principles. [www.lightonelifelife.org.nz](http://www.lightonelifelife.org.nz)

Thank you again for your support and for giving our kids your vote.

### Continued from Page 1— The Next Step

**Our objective over the next two years will be to look at reinstating these various inputs in our children's lives back to their appropriate place.**

Our goal first and foremost is to see parents, as the primary guardians, be reinstated as the interface through which society interacts with our children.

We believe strongly that good inputs into a young child's life will return good outputs such as good character, good citizens and good future leaders of New Zealand.

### Take Away Stat

New Zealand has the developed world's highest rate of births outside of marriage (44%), and the third-highest teenage birth rate (after the USA and UK). Nearly a third of all children grow up in fatherless homes. Ref: Statistics NZ, 2001