

# Faith Communities Against Family Violence

## A National Statement

Family violence in our communities is one of the most significant moral, spiritual and social challenges that we currently face as a country. As communities of faith in Aotearoa New Zealand, we believe it is our responsibility to take a stand and address this challenge.

Family violence is completely unacceptable and is never justified. Often the most vulnerable victims of violence are children, and it is here that we are taking a stand. Our children deserve the best we can offer them.

Accordingly, we have come together, as communities of faith, to declare the following:

- *We recognise that children are our future and as such are a significant and precious gift to society today.*
- *We understand that our beliefs, values and traditions will live on through our children*
- *We accept that the wellbeing of children is our responsibility.*
- *We acknowledge that children deserve our compassion, kindness, love and care.*
- *We believe we can make a difference in the lives of children and families.*

In light of these declarations we commit our communities to:

- *Accept our responsibility to stand up for our children, women and families. Refuse to tolerate violence within our families or communities or turn a blind eye to it.*
- *Strive to provide places of safety and nurture for the children and families of our community.*
- *Encourage our communities to report family violence, hold perpetrators accountable and provide support for victims.*
- *Ensure that our staff are trained to respond safely to family violence and are well supported with appropriate policies and resources.*
- *Partner with community organisations to ensure that families experiencing violence are referred appropriately and we will advocate with government for policies and resources to address family violence.*

## Signatories

Archbishop John Dew	<i>The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference</i>
Bhante Jinalankra	<i>Dhamma Gavesi Meditation Centre</i>
Beth Lew, National Secretary	<i>National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand</i>
Bishop Barry Jones	<i>Catholic Bishop of Christchurch</i>
Bishop Brian Tamaki	<i>Destiny Church</i>
Bishop Charles Drennan	<i>Catholic Bishop of Palmerston North</i>
Bishop Colin Campbell	<i>Catholic Bishop of Dunedin</i>
Bishop Denis Browne	<i>Catholic Bishop of Hamilton</i>
Bishop Patrick Dunn	<i>Catholic Bishop of Auckland</i>
Commissioner Don Bell, Territorial Commander	<i>The Salvation Army</i>
Dr. Anwar Ghani, President	<i>Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand</i>
Elizabeth Duke & Elizabeth Thompson	<i>The Religious Society of Friends</i>
Geoffrey Fyers	<i>Family Federation for World Peace and Unification</i>
Haihn Dinh Njuyen, Chairman	<i>Vietnam/Buddhist Then Thai Monastery</i>
Jimi Wallace, General Director	<i>Soka Gakki International of New Zealand</i>
Pastor Don McDonell	<i>Inspire Church Albany</i>
Pastor Edward Tupai	<i>North New Zealand Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church</i>
Pastor Iliafi Esera, General Superintendent	<i>Assembly of God</i>
Pastor Jerry Matthews, President	<i>New Zealand Pacific Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church</i>
Pastor John Steele, National Leader	<i>New Life Churches International</i>
Pastor Lloyd J Rankin, National Director	<i>Vineyard Churches Aotearoa New Zealand</i>
Pastor Mark Whitfield, President	<i>Lutheran Church of New Zealand</i>
Pastor Mike Griffiths, National Leader	<i>Elim Church of New Zealand</i>
Prithipal Singh	<i>Sikh</i>
Rabbi Mendy Goldstein	<i>Jewish (non-denominational)</i>
Rabbi Samuel Altschul	<i>Auckland Hebrew Congregation</i>
Rabbi Yitzchak Mizrahi	<i>Wellington Hebrew Congregation</i>
Reverend John Roberts, President	<i>Methodist Church of New Zealand</i>
Olive Tanielu, Vice-President	<i>Methodist Church of New Zealand</i>
Reverend Lucky Slade (Faifeau Toeaina)	<i>Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa The Congregational Church of Samoa</i>
Reverend Ray Coster Moderator at the General Assembly	<i>Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand</i>
Reverend Rex Nathan JP	<i>Methodist Church of New Zealand</i>
Reverend Dr Richard Waugh QSM, National Superintendent	<i>Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand</i>
Reverend Te Ahorangi Wayne Manaaki Rihari Te Kaawa	<i>Te Aka Puho – Ohope Marae</i>
Robert Newson, Chairman	<i>Te Runanga o te Hahi Katorika ki Aotearoa</i>
Rukman Wagachchi	<i>New Zealand Sri Lanka Buddhist Trust</i>
Sensei Amala Wrightson, Chairperson	<i>New Zealand Buddhist Council</i>
The Most Reverend D J Moxon	<i>Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia</i>
The Most Reverend W B Turei	<i>Maori Anglician Church in Aotearoa New Zealand</i>
Venerable Abbess Manshin	<i>Fo Guang Shan New Zealand</i>

*The Hindu Council of New Zealand (Hindu Dharma) endorses this initiative. The Hindu Council have chosen to write their own statement, which includes the declarations made in the National Statement, but also contain reference to Hindu philosophy and scriptures. The two statements sit alongside one another.*