

## **No funding for those who choose not to collaborate**

**Media Statement from Lifewise  
December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011**

Lifewise, one of Auckland's largest providers of foster care for children supports the call made in Mel Smith's report, into the serious mistreatment of children, for greater collaboration and co-ordination between social services agencies working with child abuse and family violence. John McCarthy, general manager of Lifewise says "We see the impact of severe and sustained violence against children every day in our work receiving children into our care. Collaboration is critical to stop violence against children and in families. I would go as far as to say that the Government should not fund agencies that cannot demonstrate collaboration when working on these issues".

All the evidence shows that single-agency, one-dimensional practice is the least effective way of dealing with this issue. "On the contrary, the evidence is compelling that only by co-ordinating our effort in a very focussed way, will we have an impact on this serious and persistent issue in our community. These approaches must also include involvement of the wider community by those social service agencies. There are several good examples of this kind of collaborative community-based approach from within New Zealand and around the world that have been shown to work in reducing the level of violence in those communities".

Lifewise urges the Government to use its ability as a funder to contract only with child protection and family violence organisations when they are able to show evidence that they are collaborating with other agencies in a purposeful way through formal agreements, joint projects, and leadership of collaborative practice. "It is not sufficient any longer to simply say we are collaborating as agencies. We have to do it and show our communities we are doing it" John McCarthy adds.

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