

## Open letter: to the men of NZ whose violent behaviour is damaging their children

To those it concerns,

Do your children see you get angry and shout? Have they watched you lash out at their mum? Do they cower in the corner when you enter a room? Are they frightened of you?

It doesn't have to be like this for your children. It shouldn't be like this.

When you are violent it always affects your kids. It changes their development and it changes how well they'll do in life. When they grow up they are more likely to be violent themselves, or be victims of violence. They are more likely to have major mental health problems, drug and alcohol problems and physical problems.

As a pediatrician - I've seen your kids in my clinic. Kids like the four-year-old girl with a developmental age of two. And like the little boy who wasn't learning at school; not because of ADHD (like everyone thought) but because he was terrified that when he got home mum would be hurt or dead.

Your kids still love you but they want you to change. I think you love your kids too. I think you want your kids' lives to be better than yours. I've seen dads turn their lives around because they love their kids and they love their kids' mum. You can too.

It's not too late. I'm asking you to step up and get help right now. I know this is not easy but take a positive step for the sake of your kids.

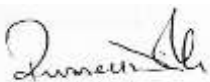
You could start by taking the White Ribbon pledge to promise to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence towards women. You could talk to someone you trust about your behaviour and ask for help. You could call the Family Violence Information Line on 0800 456 450.

Be the kind of dad your kids would love you to be. They want you to walk into a room and give them a cuddle, or play with them or talk about their day. They want to be happy to see you.

Most men in New Zealand are not violent. Become one of them.

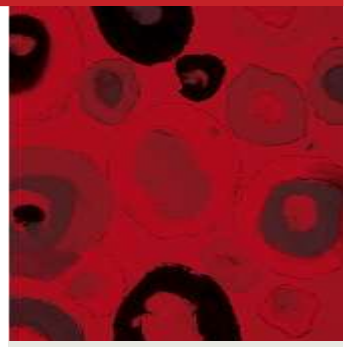
Yours Sincerely

Dr Russell Wills



Children's Commissioner

*The Children's Commissioner is calling on all New Zealand men to take the White Ribbon pledge to promise to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence towards women. Take the pledge at [www.whiteribbon.org.nz](http://www.whiteribbon.org.nz)*



For more information please contact Anna Santos on 027 696 5101 or:

[a.santos@occ.org.nz](mailto:a.santos@occ.org.nz)

*Things can change for you and they can change for your kids. I'm asking you to step up and get help right now.*

For more information on the White Ribbon campaign and events visit:

[www.whiteribbon.org.nz](http://www.whiteribbon.org.nz)