



Battered Women's Trust

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For immediate release

The Duchess of Cornwall visits Battered Women's Trust

The Duchess of Cornwall today visited Battered Women's Trust, BWT, one of the largest women's refuges in the South Island. The visit was specifically requested by the Duchess, as she is committed to raising the profile of family violence.

The Duchess listened to survivors of family violence, as well as to front-line advocates. She learned about the journey of women, and children, from their first call to BWT's 24/7 Crisis Line, potential access to a safe house, ongoing support and education about family violence issues, and how to keep safe.

CEO Lois Herbert said, "It's a privilege to have the opportunity to meet with Her Royal Highness, and know that she is passionate about highlighting the issues surrounding family violence. With 1 in 3 women experiencing some form of physical or emotional violence in their life time, it's vital that the message that family violence is not acceptable is continually highlighted in the media in order to effect behavioural change.

"It's particularly important in Christchurch that we also recognise the ongoing effects for people traumatised by the earthquakes, especially young people."

Battered Women's Trust was founded in 1976 by a group of 40 women. Each year BWT supports over 1800 women and their children, helping them to feel empowered to lead safer lives, away from family violence. Beginning as a support group, today it offers a wide variety of services providing safety, advocacy, counselling and education to women and children who are victims of family violence. It is also a member of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges.

BWT is also part of the Integrated Safety Response (ISR), a multi-agency approach to ensure the immediate safety of victims and children, and to work with perpetrators to prevent further violence. BWT is the lead provider for the local ISR collaboration, a group of 6 agencies, known as the Canterbury Whanau Safety Service (CWSS) Collaboration.

Photo provided

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