



FATHER-CON



# Strengthening Family Relationships as a Means for Crime Prevention: The Role of Parents

31<sup>st</sup> Commission of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ 31) [Side](#)

[Event – virtual, May 20, 2022, 13:10 - 14:00 CET](#)

An International Call for “Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development”  
(Working paper at 14<sup>th</sup> Crime Congress)

This event can also be viewed on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06FjK-w8YUI>

**Dr. Maria Riehl**, director of WFP Vienna UN Office, **Dr. Maria RIEHL, MD**, Chair of NGO Committee on Peace, Vie.



Dr. Riehl warmly welcomed the participants. She briefly explained the topic of the event.

*Dr. Maria Riehl initiated WFP – Austria, officially registered in Dec. 1992, and was its first president. Dr. Riehl is medical Doctor and has been a general practitioner for 37 years. She is married, mother of five children, and has 11 grandchildren.*



**HE. Mrs. Irene Susan NATIVIDAD** Charge' d'Affaires, a.i. & Acting Permanent Representative of the Philippine

Embassy and Permanent Mission, Vienna, since April 2022;

expressed her appreciation for being invited to this meaningful event organised by the “Women`s Federation for World Peace” (Un Vienna Office)

As a parent herself, she said she shared the aspiration of all parents, which is for children to grow up in a world that is safe, where they never experience violence, hate and discrimination. However, to make this dream a reality, parents need to instil in the minds of children and grandchildren the values of peace, tolerance of differences, respect for the law, hard work, taking responsibility, and other virtues that make them productive members of their community.

Mrs. Natividad emphasised that creating peaceful communities, preventing crime and shunning violence start with families. Such families will teach these values to their members and provide support when these values are challenged. They will continue to guide especially the young and impressionable on a path away from drugs, crime and violence and other harmful activities. She believes Filipinos are very family centred people. However, this sense of family is not unique to them, but is shared with other cultures, in particular Asian, Latin Americans and Africans.

Referring to the Philippine constitution, she mentioned that it appreciates the important role of the family and that the state recognises the family as the foundation of the nation and that its solidarity and development should be strengthened. Strong families make strong communities; strong communities make strong societies, which make stronger nations.

Finally, Mrs. Natividad expressed her eagerness to listen to other initiatives helping to build stronger families and safeguard peace in our society.

**HE. Mrs. NATIVIDAD** is Lawyer and a Career Diplomat, she has a degree in journalism, research Fellowship on Non Traditional Security Issues, University of Hong Kong, 2005. Within the last 30 years HE. Mrs. NATIVIDAD took on a

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variety of responsibilities in the Department of Foreign Affairs Philippines, Milan/ Italy, New York, Singapore, Honolulu. Her special interest is international law. HE. Ms. NATIVIDAD is married and has two children.

**Mrs. Sokneang Sim**, *Second Secretary of Cambodia Embassy in Brussels*, thanked the organisers for inviting her, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Nong SAKAL who is very pleased to listen to reports on the various projects for family values. He is especially keen to learn about the “Healthy Family Programme” which is taking place in Cambodia.



She stated that the family plays a key role in the development of children and young people; it is the place where children learn important values, such as respect for their tutors, other family members and their surroundings, and where they learn to take responsibility for their future.

Mrs. Sim also highlighted the importance of the family as the place where peaceful conflict resolution can be learned in addition to other important values. Therefore, parents need to be well educated about their role and be given the necessary support to fulfil this.

She concluded by saying that healthy families contribute to a healthy society.

**Mrs. SIM** is Bachelor of International Relations at Pannasastra University of Cambodia, she successfully attended Training Courses for Asian Diplomats in India and China; Professional experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Departments for America and Africa, since 2021 Mrs. SIM is appointed to her current position. Mrs. SIM is married and has two children



**Mr. Patrick Erlandson, Founder See it - End it Film & Arts Festival**, first became interested in Human Trafficking while at UNHCR in LA, where he learned about Organ Trafficking of African refugees. Later, as head of the prevention subcommittee of the Long Beach Human Trafficking Task Force, he examined the causes, focusing on two areas: cultural forces normalising exploitative behaviour, and the role of fathers. Through listening to stories of survivors, he observed a link between fathers and exploitation.

Studies on fatherhood demonstrate the importance of fathers in child development and family stability. Fathers engaging with children supports academic achievements and creates empathy and a sense of security.

Unfortunately, some fathers feel hindered because of their own abusive experiences as children by a trusted adult. Their unhealed trauma makes them fear becoming abusers themselves, thus depriving their children of intimacy and affection. Daughters deprived of a father’s affection are insecure and vulnerable to online predators, while sons feel angry, entitled and justified in pursuing a false view of manliness.

Patrick founded **Father-Con** in 2018 to address the link between fathers and human trafficking and the role of fathers in reversing the trend.

The term **CON** addresses three points:

- A **con** is a deception used to manipulate someone; e.g., pornography hurts no one.
- **Conversation** between husband, wife, parents and children develops trust, accountability, honesty and intimacy

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- Annual **conferences** gather men to inform and inspire them to be protectors and providers of love and support for children and communities.

**Father-Con** provides safe space for healing and training on such topics as cyber safety relevant to fatherhood and human trafficking. Awards are granted to exceptional fathers who have gone above and beyond in caring for children. Father-CON is linked with 40 resource organisations and agencies with opportunities for action. He concluded by saying, 'Fathers are critical to reducing the vulnerability and entitlement driving modern enslavement'.

**Mr. Erlandson** is born in Los Angeles, he has travelled to Cambodia, Paraguay, Zambia, Israel, Korea, Thailand as well as Canada and Mexico in various capacities of service.

Since 2010 working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Los Angeles, USA, Patrick first learned of Field agents working in Africa with human trafficking in organs. Since 2012 he began leading the prevention subcommittee of the Long Beach Human Trafficking Task Force. Mr. Erlandson founded [father-con.org](http://father-con.org) as a means of Prevention of trafficking. Mr. Erlandson is married and has two daughters. **Founder See it - End it**

**Film & Arts Festival**, [seeitendit.org](http://seeitendit.org), **Founder. Father- con** [father-con.org](http://father-con.org)

Long Beach Human Trafficking Task Force, MSAT Men Standing Against Trafficking, 310-994-1141

**Dr. El Khani** Humanitarian Psychologist, International Consultant Drug Prevention and Health Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)



Utilizing Family skills as a tool of prevention for risky behaviours Promotion of Family Wellbeing and the role of caregivers, addressing the mothers and the fathers.

Dr. El-Khani brings examples from the field: How utilizing family skills-intervention is key to preventing a number of negative outcomes including criminal activities and other mental and physical outcomes.

UNODC has been implementing resources to inspire to do locally what UNODC is doing globally. Often the role of the family is greatly underestimated, but family is so powerful in the lives of children! Healthy Parenting is essential to early childhood development and can prevent so many negative outcomes.

There is an assumption, that parents and caregivers automatically know what is best for their children, and how they will deal with the different situations! But actually it is not that easy! On the contrary it is rather quite complex, as a child goes through different phases of development.

This can be increased by stressful circumstances.

This is why it is so important to concentrate on the support of caregivers.

A peaceful, understanding parenting can build resilience even in difficult circumstances, while harsh full and inconsistent parenting increases the likelihood of drug use, low school attainment, delinquency and more. The programs offered by UNODC Strong Families aim to strengthen the protective factor of a family, through communication, trust building, problem solving skills (relevant to the culture). Often they include opportunities to spend positive time together for bonding and are focusing on behaviour change, rather highlighting good behaviour, than only criticising wrong behaviour

**Dr. Aala El-Khani** is a developer of numerous family skills resources as well as a global trainer of family skills programmes and research methods, having conducted training in over 15 countries. Aala is a humanitarian psychologist and works as a consultant for several international organisations including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Honorary Research Associate at the University of Manchester at the Division of Psychology and Mental Health. Her current work collaborates the efforts of the UNODC and The University of Manchester in developing and evaluating family skills programmes in countries such as Afghanistan, Palestine, Serbia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Indonesia and Lebanon. Email: [Aala.el-khani@un.org](mailto:Aala.el-khani@un.org)

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**Mrs. Almera Grace MAYO**, *President WFWP Philippines*, introduced the “Domestic Peace Education Program” – Part ONE: The Role of Mothers in Raising Filial Children and Patriots”; The program supports SDG5-Gender equality, SDG 16 Peace and social Development and SDG 17 Partnership for the globe.



The “Domestic Peace Education Program” aims to uplift women as Peace Makers, focusing on building love-relationships within the family as a means to prevent domestic violence. During the 12-week program, the couples were given a special task each week. Progress was monitored by regular meetings. The program concluded with a graduation ceremony for couples who completed it.

The weekly tasks included such activities as making a coffee for each other, doing sports together, going for a walk together, sharing daily experiences each evening. All tasks focused on achieving a more active husband and wife relationship and on strengthening love and commitment towards each other. The couples shared testimonies at the closing ceremony, which highlighted the beauty of their experiences and the value of spending meaningful time together. They also promised to continue practising what they had learned.

The closing ceremony was supported by the city councillor.

WFWP Philippines has plans for follow up courses, especially focusing on the relationship between parents and children.

*Mrs. Almera Grace Mayo is graduate of Industrial Education major in General Home Economics, public school teacher. While in Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan, she worked in a Child Development Home Program (CDH). As a CDH provider, she attended various developmental trainings which includes Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care focusing on individual child observations.*

*Mrs. Mayo is active in various non- government organizations both in the youth and family sectors, interreligious dialogues and pre-marriage orientation. She holds a Master`s Degree in Public Management.*

[wfwpmayo@gmail.com](mailto:wfwpmayo@gmail.com)

**Yuka TAKAHASHI**, *WFWP President – Cambodia*, WFWP Cambodia conducts programmes on Family Values Education to protect youth and create a peaceful society.



Cambodian youth are endangered by information from foreign media and social media, which affects their mindset and lifestyle, sometimes leading to crime. Also, parents work far from home resulting in family dysfunction. Some children leave school early to work to support their families. As a result, parent-child communication is lacking and basic ethics are not taught at home.

WFWP, which promotes the original family ideal to protect youth, has three targets

- parents and guardians
- educators
- social leaders

WFWP cooperates with the Ministry of Civil Service Cambodia, which supervises civil servants and public organisations and reforms national systems.

In 2020, WFWP introduced family values lectures to trainees of Royal School of Administration (RSA), an educational institute. Afterwards, WFWP and RSA trainees held seminars for parents, teachers and society leaders. WFWP sometimes incorporates family values lectures into independent RSA projects and also cooperates with Buddhist monks to convey family education in temples.

WFWP provided lectures as one of the course credits in an RSA training course launched for Combating Drugs. Approximately 1000 officers from central and local government who gathered to study at RSA participated in family values education.

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Lecture contents focus on:

- common problems among youth causing crime,
- the importance of close relationships between parents and youth
- parents' responsibility in their daily lives to guide with affection, etc.

Parents, as educators/leaders should foster the mental health of the youth as future leaders to enable them to judge right from wrong, to act responsibly and lead meaningful lives.

This year, 2022, WFWP intends to reach out to college students.

WFWP believes a correct understanding of the value and role of the family will lead to a fundamentally better society, where each person can live in righteousness and peace.

**Mrs. Yuka TAKAHASHI** is Japanese, she is Bachelor of Science, with major in psychology; She has also gained a counsellor qualification. Mrs. Takahashi lives in Cambodia since 10 years and is married to a Cambodian. She is working for non-profit organizations, helping to improve health and educational standards. Currently she is conducting and developing the **"Healthy Family Program,"**. The target groups are parents, guardians, educators, and social leaders. These programs are conducted with the full support of the local government. [Cambodia.education.2018@gmail.com](mailto:Cambodia.education.2018@gmail.com)

**Mrs. Carolyn HANDSCHIN-MOSER**, President of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women at the United Nations in Geneva, In her closing remarks Mrs. Handschin said:



Thank you for giving me the floor for some Ideas but already solutions presented.

For decades we tried to prove that putting goals to reach the SDGs of the United point with a different perspective. UNODC programs that are proving the efficacy of time when this was not so popular), to understand, solve and even prevent many social problems or even crime.



closing ideas. There have been not only many

family on the side would better serve the Nations. Luckily we are coming back to this has been a silent champion in setting up strengthening family relationships, ( even at a

Another important point is to build mutually supporting relationships; when functioning well the family surely is such a reinforcing support system!

If we support healthy families more we would need to rely less on heavy legal systems of law re-enforcements of common sense Human Rights!!

The discussion that we experienced here today automatically comes back to us, which is healthy: We are civil society, members of families; we cannot expect governments to solve our problems. We need to do this. It has to start locally, it has to begin with me as a parent, as a global citizen!

Thank you very much!

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ROYAL EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA - BRUSSELS

Mrs. Carolyn Handschin is Director of the WFWPI Office for the United Nations Relations globally, Coordinator for Europe & Middle East, International Association of First Ladies for Peace, Vice-President of Women’s Federation for World Peace, International, Mrs Handschin has led the WFWP advocacy team at the United Nations in Geneva for 26 years. She guides the leadership and advocacy training of young women and men in the WFWPI-UN Internship Program in Geneva (2005-now) and remains active as Co-founder and programme director of the “GIIA Model UN Interreligious Youth Council” Program (2009 - now). [c.handschin@wfwp.org](mailto:c.handschin@wfwp.org)

Ms. Kyung In VAN DE VEN OLIVEIRA, Youth representative of WFWP Europe and Dutch WFWP Chapter, has been the moderator of this session.

Ms Van de Ven Oliveira is born and raised in Amsterdam the Netherlands, and recently joined the UN International WFWP team in Vienna. Currently working as a legal guardian and child’s advocate of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers at the National Guardian Institution in the Netherlands.



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