

## Strong Families: An Essential Support For Development Of Children And Youth

Renate Amesbauer

May 15, 2024

WFWPI Office for UN Relations in Vienna, Austria



On May 15, the WFWPI Office for UN Relations in Vienna sponsored a side event at the 33rd Session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) titled "Strong Families: An Essential Support for Healthy Development of Children and Youth."

Dr. Maria Riehl, Director of the WFWPI Office for UN Relations in Vienna, opened the event by expressing her appreciation for the participants. She emphasized the value of a warm family atmosphere, embracing three generations, and the important role everyone plays in this context. She noted that three generations together provide high stability and a solid background, contributing to the physical and mental health of everyone involved.

Ms. Atty. Daryll Generyn Migano, Attaché of the Permanent Mission of the Philippines, highlighted the crucial role of family in society as the first place of socialization, where basic values and capabilities are learned. She emphasized that it is the responsibility of a country to protect families and offer support in times of need, as manifested in the constitution of the Philippines.

Mr. Patrick Erlandson, Founder of "FATHER-CON," discussed the link between the absence or misconduct of fathers and exploitation. He shared insights into organ trafficking among African refugees and explored cultural forces that normalize exploitative behavior. He emphasized the role of fathers in child development and family stability, noting that engaged fathers support academic achievements, empathy, and security. Patrick founded Father-Con in 2018 to encourage men in their roles as fathers.

Veronika Lippert, Chairperson of Elternwerkstatt (Parents Workshop), dedicates herself to parents'

education and advice, focusing on non-violence and appreciation of every individual. She highlighted the importance of non-judgmental communication and respectful treatment to reduce and prevent family violence. Elternwerkstatt is supported by the government of Vienna and offers training in 11 languages.



Lillian Nyangasy, Lawyer and Youth Advocate and founding partner of Manasseh and Co. Advocates, represents victims of human trafficking pro bono in various cases across Kenya. She offers legal consultancy and aid to victims and survivors of crime and trafficking, focusing on returning decision-making power to survivors. Her organization, Set Free to Thrive, raises awareness and supports girls' education with initiatives like sanitary packages. She emphasized the importance of family and community in instilling values in children to help them grow into responsible adults.

Dr. Wadih Maalouf, from the UNODC-Family United-Universal Family Skills Programme, discussed his work coordinating family skills programming under the prevention portfolio at UNODC. He contributed to international standards on drug use prevention and violence against children. Dr. Maalouf emphasized that investment in family relations and communication is the most effective prevention of youth misconduct and criminal behavior. He introduced the CH.AM.P.S (Child Amplified Prevention Services) initiative, which builds supportive and safe environments for children in communities and schools.

The event underscored the essential role of strong families in fostering healthy development for children and youth, highlighting the importance of family support, engagement and effective communication in preventing crime and promoting overall well-being.

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