him to be with his wife to help her in the marvellous moment of producing a new human life. Awareness and preparation before, during and after the birth lay strong foundations for a family's openness, honesty and tolerance.

Tolerance must replace violence, for it is the ability to see through the eyes of another, to understand the other's feelings and actions. 'Birth Without Violence', a book (and now a concept) by F Leboyer, brings new tolerance to the experience of birth.

It gives a 'baby's eye view' of the birth, showing two choices. A tiny baby can be met by glaring lights, rough hands, a slap on the bum (the first act of violence) and often by immediate (and sometimes prolonged) separation from his mother, his only security. Alternatively we can welcome our new human friend with a gentle, loving, caring atmosphere.

Home birth does not mean giving birth in the back yard. It means carefully planning a safe pregnancy and birth, with love and concern for the physical and emotional wellbeing of the mother and baby. Pregnancy is a healthy natural state, not an illness. Birth, similarly, is a natural event.

CLOSENESS

Western society has tended to move further away from natural childbirth as more technical equipment is developed for monitoring and controlling labour and birth. However, a hospital birth, for those who choose or for those with a difficult medical history, can be made to closely resemble the positive factors present in a birth in the home, particularly to retain the closeness and gentleness which lay the foundations of confidence and security.

Hospitals will change and indeed are changing as more people demand their right to be involved decision makers in the birth process and to choose where and how their children should be born.

A group of Waiheke women and friends met recently to discuss these and other aspects of Home Birth. The function of such a group in our community was considered and its aims formulated. They are:

- To gather information on pregnancy, breast feeding and related matters for ready access by the community.
- To help inform the community about safe planned birth (be it in hospital or at home) and parenthood.
- To support Homebirth as an alternative choice. This includes providing support for domiciliary midwives and the NZ Homebirth Association in their struggles for realistic government assistance.
- To provide support in all ways to pregnant women and new mothers on Waiheke Island.
- To make available information about sympathetic homes in Auckland where Waiheke women can stay and give birth.

The group is open to all who wish to learn more about our personal potential to make the world a more healthy, gentle place to live, by beginning at the beginning — with birth.

Contact phone numbers for the group are Gael Benoit 7586, Jude Pemberton 7366 or Penny Holmes 7631. The next meeting will be at Matiatia Farm on Tuesday June 29.

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Sorry this is late but the 2nd one is now enclosed Love Mum

Home Birth: A Stand Against Violence

(By Gael Benoit and Jude Pemberton)

Tune in to the radio news, newspapers, TV and, in the words of the late Bob Marley, "Everywhere is war, war ... rumours of a war". Violence, the violence all around us, is the cancer of today's world.

Though it may manifest itself between countries, social groups or individuals, like charity it begins at home and the social attitudes which condone it are developed there. Likewise, the attitudes which promote tolerance and deny violence are nurtured within the home and family.

STRENGTH

The family is our strength. Within the family there is potential to change and improve the ways in which people regard and treat each other. Children, babies and childbirth are at the very centre of the family's strength.

Home birth is a stand against violence for it has a philosophy of preparing mentally, physically, and emotionally for the arrival of a new human being. Home birth is concerned with welcoming that person with gentleness and consideration and making the transition from womb to world as easy and comforting as possible.

This is the first of a series of articles prepared on behalf of a Waiheke group supporting the concept of home births.

Home birth aims to bring the family together; to involve the family so that the mother is an active participant in the birth, not separated from all that is familiar to her, in control of her labour, in touch with what she feels, not debilitated by unnecessary use of drugs and surgery, not disturbed by technological machines attached to her and to her child. As she is at home she can touch and handle her child whenever she chooses and not be regulated by an institution's routine.

FATHER

Home birth aims to involve the new baby's father, by helping him to understand what his wife is doing and why, by encouraging

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