



CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

A New Zealand where children can flourish:

Family income support priorities paper AND media release EMBARGOED UNTIL: Thursday June 29, 2017 6am.

[CPAG \(Child Poverty Action Group\)](#) says the upcoming election provides an opportunity for all political parties to put the wellbeing of all New Zealand's children at the centre of their policies.

Each year, there are around 40,000 hospital admissions in New Zealand of children who have preventable illnesses that are linked to poverty. CPAG's priority for the 2017 election is the introduction of measures to help substantially reduce child hospital admissions for such illnesses, including improving family incomes.

Safe, secure, affordable housing and access to healthcare are primary requirements, but parents must also have sufficient income to meet their children's basic health, nutrition, and education needs.

If the newly elected government brings in policies that vastly improve our current welfare and tax credit systems to better support low-income families, then we will have a New Zealand where all children can flourish. CPAG has just released the third in a series detailing such policies: ***Priorities for supporting family incomes.***

CPAG says that much could be done to alleviate the hardship experienced by low-income families and improve their children's health through strengthening the Working for Families (WFF) system of tax credits for low-income families.

"Changes announced in the latest Budget will not go far toward this goal, and they act to reduce Working for Families sharply for low-income working families earning over the very low income threshold," says Associate Professor Susan St John, CPAG Economics spokesperson.

"Unless the system is drastically improved, we will continue to see many working families at food banks and budgeting services."

CPAG has compiled a comprehensive list of recommendations to improve Working for Families and welfare payments. Implementing these recommendations would substantially reduce the worst child poverty and contribute to a reduction in hospital admissions for poverty-related illnesses.

www.cpag.org.nz