New Zealanders’ Attitudes to Child Poverty

Research Report
July 2014

Prepared for: Child Poverty Action Group

Prepared by: MMResearch™

In association with: Research Now
This study was designed and conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice established by The Research Association of New Zealand.

MMResearch™ believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.
# Table of Contents

1. **Executive Summary** ........................................................................................................... 1  
   1.1 Child poverty in NZ ........................................................................................................... 1  

2. **Background** ......................................................................................................................... 5  
   2.1 Research Objectives .......................................................................................................... 5  
   2.2 Research Methodology ...................................................................................................... 6  
   2.3 Sample Profile .................................................................................................................. 7

3. **Results and Findings** ......................................................................................................... 8  
   3.1 Perceptions of Child Poverty in NZ .................................................................................. 8  
   3.2 Awareness of Organisations that Address Child Poverty in NZ ........................................ 10  
   3.3 Perceptions of the Causes of Child Poverty ....................................................................... 11  
   3.4 Consequences of Poverty for Children ........................................................................... 15  
   3.5 Signs of Poverty ................................................................................................................ 20  
   3.6 Personal Experience ......................................................................................................... 22  
   3.7 Government and Media Attention Paid to Child Poverty .................................................. 24  
   3.8 Public Awareness of Programmes to Reduce Child Poverty .............................................. 27  
   3.9 Perceptions of Programmes’ Effectiveness ....................................................................... 30  
   3.10 Open Access or Targeted Programmes? .......................................................................... 31  
   3.11 Agreement with Tax Increases ....................................................................................... 33  
   3.12 Respondents’ Comments ................................................................................................. 34  

Appendix 1. Awareness of Programmes - Demographic Tables .................................................. 41
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of an online panel survey of 1013 members of the New Zealand public conducted from 10 to 16 June 2014. The results have been post-weighted by region, gender and age.

1.1 Child poverty in NZ

The scale of the problem

Eighty percent agreed that child poverty is a problem in New Zealand.

- A quarter (24%) said they personally know of a child or children living in poverty.

If the assumed number of children living in poverty in New Zealand is 285,000 then many respondents underestimated the scale of the problem, while a fifth were unsure (22%).

- Only eight percent indicated they thought the number of children living in poverty in New Zealand was between 200,001 to 300,000.
- Half (49%) thought the number was less than 100,000.

Respondents were asked to name any organisation that they know of, that addresses child poverty in New Zealand.

- There was highest awareness of the Salvation Army (16%) and KidsCan (12%).
- Three percent mentioned CPAG unprompted.

Primary causes

Opinion was evenly divided on the primary cause of child poverty in New Zealand:

- Forty percent said it was due to economic factors including unemployment, low wages and rising living costs.
  > *The ever-increasing monthly power bills that the government won’t regulate or force down. The ever-increasing cost of food, which largely went up because of oil company and supermarket greed (most prices should have dropped back down by now, but they haven’t). But, most of all, the low incomes families receive (whether through work or social welfare), despite all these rising costs.*

- Another forty percent thought child poverty was caused by bad parenting choices; neglect, lack of budgeting, and not prioritising children ahead of spending on alcohol, smokes, drugs etc.
  > *Parents neglecting their children’s needs - not spending money on necessities, not giving their children enough love/attention, not educating them well enough to break out of the cycle.*

Around one in ten attributed child poverty to:

- Systemic failures and lack of government support (12%)
- Lack of education – uneducated parents (9%)
- People having too many children for them to support (8%)
  > *Systemic failures - benefits are aimed at adults, not children. Blanket funding for all children with food (school lunches) and medical care (through schools) would go a long way.*
  > *Uneducated parents, drug parents, selfish parents, or unskilled parents without a job, or young parents too young to be a parent.*
  > *Combination of factors.... deadbeat parents, government policies, cost-cutting companies...*
The consequences
Respondents mentioned multiple consequences of poverty:

- Almost half (48%) mentioned that poor health and sickness are a consequence for children living in poverty.
- Two-fifths (43%) said poverty impacts on children’s educational achievement, making it harder for them to fulfil their potential leading to decreased employment opportunities in the future.
- A quarter (27%) commented that poverty can lead to anti-social behaviour including violence and crime.
- A fifth (20%) were concerned that poverty can lead to hungry children and malnutrition.

Signs of poverty
Almost all said the signs for a child living in poverty would be that the child:

- Lacks food, adequate clothing and other basic essentials (97%)

Other signs of a child living in poverty perceived as almost as strong were:

- Going to school without breakfast or lunch (93%)
- Parents or caregivers who can’t afford to take them to the doctor when they are sick or buy them medicines (92%)
- Lives in cold and damp housing (92%)

Personal experience
A quarter (24%) said they personally know of a child or children living in poverty. This group was asked which of a list of factors were the main reasons why the child they know lives in poverty.

- The main reason given was an abusive immediate environment (72%).
- This was followed by the high cost of living (63%), unemployed parents or caregivers (63%) and not spending money wisely (62%).

Government and media attention paid to child poverty

- Despite less than two fifths (38%) indicating that child poverty in New Zealand ranks among the worst in the developed world it is still viewed as an important issue.
- Three quarters (75%) agreed that child poverty is an important issue in New Zealand, and a fifth (19%) agreed the current government is doing enough to address child poverty in New Zealand.
- Thirty percent agreed that child poverty in New Zealand is taken very seriously by the current government, and a fifth (22%) have full trust and confidence in this government reducing child poverty in New Zealand.
- Nearly half (46%) agreed that child poverty in New Zealand is getting plenty of media attention, and two-fifths agreed what they have seen and heard in the media has greatly influenced their thinking about child poverty (39%).
Prompted awareness of interventions
Respondents were shown a list of interventions or programmes aimed at reducing child poverty in New Zealand and asked which they were aware of. Only six percent had not heard of any.

- Public awareness was highest for the free milk in schools (82%) and free doctor visits (80%) for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015).
- More than two-thirds (69%) were aware of the KidsCan programmes, and almost three-fifths (58%) had heard of improvements to housing like subsidised insulation.
- Only ten percent were aware of adopting the Commissioner for Children’s Report.

Women were more likely than men to be aware of free milk in schools, free doctor visits and KidsCan.
Perceptions of programmes’ effectiveness

The majority thought all the programmes and interventions listed were somewhat effective at reducing child poverty, but the standout programme is free doctor visits.

- Almost all (92%) said that free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015) are effective at reducing child poverty, and over half (52%) thought free doctor visits are “very effective”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmes/interventions</th>
<th>TOTAL EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Somewhat effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most aware of the following programmes said they are effective, but more thought they are “somewhat effective” rather than “very effective”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmes/interventions</th>
<th>TOTAL EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Somewhat effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers helping in schools and communities</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting business to help provide food</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open access or targeted programmes

Members of the public were asked whether four specific programmes (free milk, free doctor visits, subsidised insulation, and tax credits) should be universally applicable to all children in New Zealand or only to certain defined target groups.

The majority thought two programmes should be universally applicable to all children:

- Free doctor visits for children under 18 (77%)
- Free milk in schools (74%)

Whereas opinion was divided on the other two between the programmes being universally applicable or only applicable to a defined target group:

- Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation (46% said universal, and 46% targeted)
- Tax credits for families with young children (41% said universal, and 46% targeted)

Agreement with tax increases

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that if reducing child poverty in New Zealand means that we all need to pay more tax, would they agree or disagree with this?

Opinion was divided; over a third agreed that reducing child poverty means we all need to pay more tax (36%), but slightly more disagreed (38%), and a quarter were undecided (26% neutral or don’t know).
2. **BACKGROUND**

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is an independent charity working to eliminate child poverty in New Zealand through research, education and advocacy.

CPAG was formed in 1994 out of deep concern for the rising level of poverty in New Zealand and its effects on children. CPAG has approximately 2,000 members and supporters across New Zealand including leading academics, doctors, teachers, health workers, community workers, business people and many other people concerned about the poorest children in New Zealand society. There are branches in Whangarei, Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. CPAG also works closely with other child-focused organisations.

CPAG works to produce evidence about the causes and effects of poverty on children and their families. It looks carefully at how Government policies affect children. CPAG publishes reports, makes submissions and conducts small-scale research projects to achieve its goals. However, CPAG has never commissioned any public research into New Zealanders’ attitudes towards child poverty.

**The challenge**
While it might be said CPAG has a good enough measure of the public’s ideas and perceptions around child poverty in Aotearoa, there isn’t any robust data or research to back this up. There has never been any research commissioned to form base line data and enable a trend analysis of people’s understanding and attitudes towards child poverty.

**The opportunity**
Child Poverty is one of the top five election issues this year – along with education, health, wages and jobs. It ranks number two issue for Labour/Green voters and fourth for National voters. It appears, New Zealanders are becoming concerned about the extent of child poverty and realize the extent (and cost) of the damage it causes. Now is a perfect time to keep the conversation going.

CPAG commissioned MMResearch™ to conduct a research study to explore New Zealanders’ understanding and attitudes towards child poverty in this country. They want to find out Who believes What? in terms of perceptions, ideas, realities and stereotypes we have about child poverty.

2.1 **Research Objectives**
The main objectives of this survey are:

- To obtain robust base line data around New Zealanders’ understanding and attitudes to child poverty in New Zealand
- To enable attitudes to be measured over time
- To provide a trend analysis over time
- To understand Who believes What – demographic splits
- The research should help clarify audience groups with different attitudes – and therefore become a solid foundation for targeted marketing and communications campaigns
2.2 **Research Methodology**

This research was conducted as an online panel survey of the general public. Respondents were randomly selected from the Research Now panel and invited to participate. The survey was designed to be representative of the New Zealand public aged 18 years or older.

The survey consisted largely of multiple choice and rating scale based questions aimed at uncovering the New Zealand public’s understanding of, beliefs about and attitudes to child poverty in New Zealand. These were complemented by four open text questions that allowed respondents:

- to recall organisations that address child poverty here
- to detail their views on the causes and consequences of child poverty in New Zealand
- to add any final comments

The comments received were quite varied and wide ranging in terms of the views they express. They have been grouped into key themes to aid analysis.

A total of 1013 surveys were completed and processed to provide the estimates presented in this report. The national results have been weighted by Territorial Local Authority (TLA), gender, and age group, to represent the population distribution from the 2013 Census data. (NB: Weights have not been applied to the verbatim comment themes.)

**Notes on Statistical Tests and Margins of Error:**

- T-tests have been applied to examine the apparent reporting differences between the various sub-populations.
- We believe that these tests provide valuable indicative information on which of the apparent differences are likely to present in the real world.
- We believe it is reasonable to use the calculated Maximum Margin of Error (95% CI, 50% prevalence) associated with a sample of 1013 (±3.1%) as a guide to the likely reliability of the estimates contained in this report.
### 2.3 Sample Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Title</th>
<th>n Unweighted</th>
<th>% Unweighted</th>
<th>% Weighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower NI</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of NI</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Island</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Territorial Local Authority</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gisborne</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawke's Bay</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manawatu-Wanganui</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlborough</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northland</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otago</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southland</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taranaki</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasman</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waikato</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay of Plenty</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24 years old</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 34 years old</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44 years old</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54 years old</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+ years old</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Household Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000 to $40,000</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,000 to $60,000</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$61,000 to $80,000</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$81,000 to $100,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All NZ</strong></td>
<td>1013</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

These results are based on an online survey of 1013 members of the New Zealand public, aged 18 or older.

### 3.1 Perceptions of Child Poverty in NZ

**Is child poverty perceived to be a problem?**

Eighty percent said that child poverty is a problem in New Zealand.

**From what you know or have heard, is child poverty a problem in New Zealand?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Island</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower NI</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of NI</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All NZ</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demographic variations**

The groups who were less likely to say that child poverty is a problem were:

- Men
- People living in Auckland
The scale of the problem
If the assumed number of children living in poverty in New Zealand is 285,000 then many respondents underestimated the scale of the problem, while a fifth were unsure (22%).

- Only eight percent indicated they thought the number of children living in poverty in New Zealand was between 200,001 to 300,000.
- Half (49%) thought the number was less than 100,000.

From what you have heard or read, how many children do you think live in poverty in New Zealand?

- Less than 50,000: 24%
- 50,000 to 100,000: 25%
- 100,001 to 200,000: 13%
- 200,001 to 300,000: 8%
- 300,001 to 400,000: 3%
- More than 400,000: 4%
- Don't know: 23%
3.2 Awareness of Organisations that Address Child Poverty in NZ

Respondents were asked to name any organisation that they know of, that addresses child poverty in New Zealand. There was highest awareness of the Salvation Army (16%) and KidsCan (12%). Three percent mentioned CPAG unprompted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations mentioned (unprompted)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KidsCan</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYFs</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAG</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School breakfast/lunches (Kickstart: Sanitarium/Fonterra)</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches (Presbyterian Support, Anglican Services, St Vincent de Paul, Methodist Mission, Catholic Social Services)</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnardos</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government (MSD/Social Welfare)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINZ</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unicef, World vision, Oxfam, Child Fund, Amnesty</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Missions (Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Anglican)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety club</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plunket</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food banks</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Children's Commissioner</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthright</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV3/Campbell Live</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tip Top</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties (Labour, Greens, Mana)</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori/Some Iwi providers</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organisations (varied)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None do</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Perceptions of the Causes of Child Poverty

The public were asked to write (unprompted) what they think is the primary cause of child poverty in New Zealand. The comments have been grouped into broad themes (multiple themes mentioned by an individual have all been treated separately).

Opinion was evenly divided on the primary cause of child poverty in New Zealand:

- Forty percent said it was due to economic factors including unemployment, low wages and rising living costs.
- Another forty percent thought child poverty was caused by bad parenting choices; neglect, lack of budgeting, and not prioritising children ahead of spending on alcohol, smokes, drugs etc.

In your opinion, what do you think is the primary cause of child poverty in New Zealand?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>18 - 24</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>All NZ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic factors: Lack of jobs/money/low wages/high cost of living/widening gap between rich and poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad parenting/choices: neglect, not prioritising children, not budgeting, spending on alcohol, smokes, drugs etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic failures/lack of government support: benefits/housing/political issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of education/uneducated parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having too many children/not able to support, unplanned pregnancies/single parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments (no parents/cultural factors/giving money to churches/ill health)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perception that child poverty is caused by bad parenting choices appears to increase with age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>18 - 24</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>All NZ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty caused by bad parenting/choices</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some examples of the comments follow.
Economic factors: Lack of jobs/money/low wages/high cost of living/widening gap between rich and poor

> Adult poverty, in a system the does not support its most vulnerable. We live in a society where we want more, more, more, our society creates a mind set of "why should I give someone else some of mine?" While the richer among us in New Zealand continue to get richer and richer. We should not judge our country by how many of us are successful or wealthy. We should judge our society by how we look after those who are the most vulnerable, the people with nothing who are suffering. While our government officials make more money per week than some of these people would see ever.

> The ever-increasing monthly power bills that the government won't regulate or force down. The ever-increasing cost of food, which largely went up because of oil company and supermarket greed (most prices should have dropped back down by now, but they haven't). But, most of all, the low incomes families receive (whether through work or social welfare), despite all these rising costs.

> High cost of living, low wages, no work.

> Poor wages, poor housing, poor parenting.

> The lack of a living wage for their parents.

> The increasing gap between rich and poor, worse than just about anywhere in the western world per capita. We have socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor, think about it.

Bad parenting/choices: neglect, not prioritising children, not budgeting, spending on alcohol, smokes, drugs etc.

> Drugs, Booze and Family Violence.

> Parents are too lazy to work or would rather spend their money on vices like smokes or drugs.

> Predominantly parents spending money on other things like alcohol, cigarettes, huge televisions etc. I do believe there are some that do not, but people need to budget better.

> Parents neglecting their children’s needs - not spending money on necessities, not giving their children enough love/attention, not educating them well enough to break out of the cycle.

> NZ is a country with a good welfare system. Real poverty does not exist compared with third world countries. Children unfortunately suffer from poor home situations where adults make poor choices that affect the whole family.

> From what I’ve seen and experienced the leading factor is drugs/mental health.

> Lazy parents with poor judge of priorities.

> Living in expensive city like Auckland with low wages or only benefit. Unfortunately in my experience some of the child poverty where I live is parents who have their child/children at the bottom of the priority list, and/or don’t seem to have budgeting skills. From first-hand knowledge I have seen a child go shoeless, and in dirty rags while the mother and boyfriend smoked and drank. When I tried to do something about it I was told that the problem is all too common, and at least she was not being physically abused.

> Parental ignorance of a child’s basic needs and requirements, as well as social behaviours (on the parent’s part) which detract from providing basic necessities for their children, e.g. gambling, addiction to drugs and alcohol, cultural issues etc.

> Parental irresponsibility. Lack of parenting skills. People on benefits screwing the system and it affects those who genuinely need help. Cost of living going up, the government doesn’t care about people on low incomes.

> Parental non budgeting. Parents wanting everything brand new and not willing to wait until they can actually afford things, unable to say no to their children and/or explaining why
something cannot be had at that time, smoking /drinking rising cost of food especially milk and meat and fish, fuel costs.

> Parents not knowing how to look after the children they have, they think it’s more important to have their cigarettes and alcohol than feed and clothe their children.

> Parents who struggle to make ends meet and spend what they have on booze and cigarettes instead of food for the family!

> Poor parenting: the welfare benefit gives adequate income to cover basic needs but the parents end up spending the income on smokes, alcohol, gambling, and other luxuries such as Sky TV. It’s the behaviour of the parents and elders that put children at risk. Their desire for goods and services far outweigh their means. The inability to budget, be patient and conserve wealth is not due to a lack of education but the inability of controlling their desires. In addition, I suppose the high unemployment (probably due to lack of jobs), high living costs for basics, and high costs of services such as education puts a lot of stress on families.

**Systemic failures/lack of government support: housing/political issues**

> Systemic failures - benefits are aimed at adults, not children. Blanket funding for all children with food (school lunches) and medical care (through schools) would go a long way.

> Lack of government recognition of any poverty problem, as we are supposed to be a first world country. Also, negation of prejudices in NZ society that lead to some minorities or marginalised members of society into lesser paid jobs and employment discrimination.

> Poor Govt policy…. we are too ruled by election year rotations; we need to learn from the Scandinavian countries. Our PM believes he is an expert because he grew up in a state house…. big difference from living in state home with working and healthy and safe family than what most of our families live like in state homes today.

> Combination of factors…. deadbeat parents, government policies, cost-cutting companies...

> Lack of education in relation to parenting. Lack of education in teens regarding pregnancy and the reality of child rearing. No programmes to support teens and young parents when this does occur. Lack of employment. Minimum wage does not support and should be a living wage. The continuance of parents on benefits that continue to have children and remain on a benefit. A system that supports people on benefits that have no intention of looking further than government support. It should be a hand up not a hand out. The lack of affordable housing that is well maintained, the government would be at the bottom of that list. The lack of support for those that are looking to better themselves. The realism that we consider the middle class are also struggling to provide the basics with working parents/parent. Lack of parenting skills. Schools have now become social working agencies as well. Government spending is not addressing the issue and yet we continue to still do the same things.

> Lack of support from government for whanau.

> Not enough support for the family. I think it is very hard for children to 'break the cycle', i.e. poor families will probably not be able to afford education for their children, therefore they might remain in poverty throughout their lives. Additionally to that there may be problems like alcoholism and drug abuse and other issues associated with poverty, making it even harder to change life circumstances.

> Our economic system - debt driven money systems and the banking system in general. Government policy that favours business and the wealthy. A welfare system that penalises those who use it.

**Lack of education/uneducated parents**

> Parents with poor parenting skills, this mixed with poor social skills, low wages due to lack of attaining a proper education and having a low paying job. Children are in poverty because their parents have failed them.
Lack of communication and education in parents about how to raise their children - they are doing what they themselves experienced, and don't know how to overcome the problems they face.

Uneducated parents, drug parents, selfish parents, or unskilled parents without a job, or young parents too young to be a parent.

Uneducated parents that do not think about the cost of feeding children as they get older and have several children, the home cooking and veggie garden are of the past and the parents are driven by child demand for fast quick foods that they can ill afford, but are convenient for them to buy and feed the children quickly. Parents putting their needs ahead of the children e.g. cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, purchased ahead of quality food.

The affluent are always in a position to take most of the money, and do. Way too many landlords, too many persons who don't own their own home. And lack of real education about financial matters from as early as secondary school. And 'CREDIT CARDS' should be illegal. Everyone is in debt. Except 4 me:).

Having too many children/not able to support, unplanned pregnancies/single parents

Unplanned pregnancy resulting in parents getting any entry level job they can to support their child, however the wage is minimum and doesn't provide enough for the parent to provide for the child when bills and rent come into play. Low wages and high tax isn't a great combo either.

Sex education for children and teens, as they are taught it is okay to have sex if you use protection, however that is never 100% effective, which leads to them having children, even though they are unable to provide for their own needs, let alone another human beings needs. Also selfishness on the parents' part. Too selfish to break addictive habits such as drinking and smoking in order to save money so they can provide for their children's needs over their wants.

Uneducated people that keep having kids. They don't know that "if you can't feed them, don't breed them".

Poor education. To a lesser degree: Overpopulation - tendency of poor families to have too many children (partially caused by religious beliefs about contraception).

People have more children than they can afford to look after; they have poor budgeting skills; poor home economic skills and live in areas where rents and property prices are too high and employment is unavailable to them.

Poor families having too many children to be able to support on the types of jobs they are able to get due to their skills.

Other comments (includes: No parents/cultural factors/giving money to churches/ill health)

Islanders (Samoans etc.) sending all their money back home and leaving none for themselves to live on.

Low wages, betting, drinking, not managing money, people giving money to churches.

Parents or family members dying.
3.4 Consequences of Poverty for Children

Members of the public were asked: What could be the consequences for a child living in poverty?

This is obviously a complex issue, and many respondents mentioned multiple consequences of poverty. These have been grouped into separate broad themes below.

- Almost half (48%) mentioned that poor health and sickness are a consequence for children living in poverty.
  - Women (54%) were more likely than men (42%) to mention poor health.
- Two-fifths (43%) said poverty impacts on children’s educational achievement, making it harder for them to fulfil their potential leading to decreased employment opportunities in the future.
  - Women (48%) were more likely than men (38%) to mention the impact on education and opportunities.
- A quarter (27%) commented that poverty can lead to anti-social behaviour including violence and crime.
  - Men (30%) were more likely than women (24%) to mention exposure to crime.
- A fifth (20%) were concerned that poverty can lead to hungry children and malnutrition.
  - Women (26%) were more likely than men (14%) to mention hunger, as were younger people (30% of those aged 18 to 24 years).

In your opinion, what could be the consequences for a child living in poverty?

- Poor health/children die/development issues/poor mental health/anger: 48%
- Less education/achievement/opportunities/learning difficulties/unemployment in future: 43%
- Exposure to crime/bad behaviour/violence: 27%
- Hunger/malnutrition: 20%
- Cycle of poverty/welfare dependency/bad for society: 17%
- Neglect (e.g. lack of clothes/adequate housing): 11%
- Abuse (domestic/child): 4%
- Addictions (Drug.smoking/drinking issues): 3%
- Removing from parents/CYF care: 1%
- Other: 1%
- Don't know: 12%
Some examples of respondents’ comments follow.

**Poor health/children die/development issues/poor mental health/anger**

- Higher death tolls because children will be starved of basic human rights, which leads to low immune systems, being more susceptible to illnesses. Higher crime rates as the children will grow up and begin stealing just to survive and be punished for it, so will become bitter towards the correctional services and re-offend. More mental illnesses, such as depression, seen in children and adults because they begin to believe it is their own fault that they don’t get the basic necessities of life.

- Death, failure to thrive, crime, illness.


- Failing at school, always unwell, may die due to say rheumatic fever. Children left alone so could fall prey to predators, children could involve themselves in crime i.e. stealing food. Suicide.

- Health - infections, rheumatic fever and heart damage, mental well-being - feelings of rejection, low self-worth etc. Education - low achievement through lack of social capital, inability to feel included in school curricula and extra-curricular activities.

- Health. Theft, and a life of crime by joining a gang which provides them with some sense of family and protection. Or success to get them out of their current situation. Examples, John Key and John Banks.

- Many illness as not being feed properly or clothed properly especially in the winter. Also education is not high on the parents agenda, so children are often not sent to school so cannot read or write properly.

- Poor health and low self-esteem causing effects that may well remain throughout its life unless it be a truly gifted and quite remarkable child.

- Poor health due to substandard cheapest housing, and nutritional needs not being met due to only being able to afford cheap low quality food, and increased stress levels. This will affect the country’s health expenditure in the future. Poor education through lack of resources at home, and nutrition, and stress levels. This will affect the country’s labour skills.

- Sick uneducated children who grow into demanding selfish greedy violent adults.

**Less education/ achievement/opportunities/ learning difficulties/ unemployment in future**

- A lot more prone to sickness, missing school, unable to concentrate at school due to lack of breakfast and lunch.

- Bad health, low education and no job prospects when they grow up.

- Badly educated children, more crime more and more poverty as these children grow up with no hope.

- Because the parent(s) of a child or children have little or no money the child/children have little or no self-esteem, will go to school with hardly any clothes on & no shoes on get into fights at school because of having no money for lunch or proper clothing especially in the winter, then they will leave school without proper education, then turn to a life of crime.

- Learning difficulties for children who are hungry, health problems, a generation of children who don’t see any sort of future for themselves.

- Malnourished, lack of opportunities for fun, enrichment, health care is neglected (due to lack of money to attend medical appointments/pay for scripts) lack of choice for early childhood poor clothing and footwear - may be cold in winter does not get the opportunity to pursue
their passion or strengths e.g. a sport, hobby, art, music, extra-curricular subject does not get to school every day (lack of transport.. maybe petrol low for a few days etc.) does not get family holidays, does not have reading material, board games etc. - simple things at home to occupy them on cold days etc. parents are stressed due to lack of money which impacts on their social well-being.... .... the list goes on.

> Never reaching their full potential. Poor education. Low-paying jobs for the rest of their life.

> Obviously if they live in poverty a big consequence is lost opportunities. Children could miss out on educational or extra-curricular opportunities which could help them in the future or encourage them to work hard in the future in areas that they are good in. It could lead to a cycle within the family because of how hard it is to escape the cycle of poverty. A worse consequence of poverty is that the child may suffer abuse due to parents being stressed and taking it out on the child.

> Reinforcement of the cycle of socio-economic inequality. A child living in poverty does not attend school in a fit condition to absorb knowledge and pursue opportunities - if they attend school at all, and if such opportunities are even offered. This leads to being behind other children who are not in poverty, thus the gap in knowledge, highest education achieved and future earning potential widens and this cycle repeats.

> The child suffers physically and mentally, they don’t grow up with the same opportunities as other children not living in poverty.

**Exposure to crime/bad behaviour/violence**

> A life of wanting, possibly resulting in crime - the only way they get what they NEED; from there, crime to get what they WANT, what has been deprived from them.

> Constantly sick, un-fed, lack of clothing and shoes, finding hard to concentrate at school, leaving school early, spending time on the street could be involved in thefts, gangs, and be this way through to adulthood. This is not what a child deserves.

> Bad start to life with crime been seen as not a problem for them, also having low esteem would not give them the confidence to do better at school and grow as a person.

> Broken family, poor health, no high education, lack of proper nutrition, poor quality life-style and an inability to save money. This will most certainly lead to homelessness or an inability to afford rent and ultimately can lead to illegal activities such as drug-dealing, burglaries etc. (in order to get money).

> Child growing up and committing crime, poor health, depression, angry, bitterness.

> Ending up in gangs, becoming criminal, becoming dependant on drugs/alcohol. Really not having a chance in life because no-one took care of them as a child.

> Growing up learning to steal, become involved in gangs/drugs. Or just lead to a cycle of them being unemployed and their children growing up in poverty too.

> Poor health of the child, abuse of the child, lack of education received by the child, the wrong attitude to society in which they live and criminal activity being shown to them as the only way to live and make their way in the world.

> Stealing to survive, joining a gang, ending up homeless, not having the stamina and energy to focus at school.
Hunger/malnutrition

> Being under nourished for food, affecting their learning ability. Not having a home that is supportive of education and available money for other important activities that are at school that provide other skills that aren’t taught. Social skills, money skills, team work, self-motivation etc.

> Hardship such as inadequate clothing (cold in winter) Feeling inferior because of being shabby. Lacking essential nutrients. Bad diet. Possible obesity due to fizzy drink and fatty, salty, sugary food. (Though how anyone can say that fast food is the cheapest option, I don’t know, and who needs fizzy when there is lovely water in NZ?).

> Hunger, being more prone to illness & infections, nutritional deficiencies affecting growth, IQ, mood & energy levels leads to physical, mental, and emotional issues. Might not do so well at school etc.

> Hungry, cold children are more likely to get sick and MUCH less likely to be able to concentrate at school to gain a good education.

> Inability to grow well in all aspects of living; mentally, physically, emotionally...

> Inadequate nutrition/clothing/healthcare/opportunity.

> Lack of proper nutrition causing poor scores in school, lack of energy to be able to concentrate, participate in sport and be motivated. Poor housing contributes to illness through damp and unsanitary conditions. Obesity from eating the cheapest of the cheap due to insufficient funds to buy nutritious food. Violence from frustration of not having as much as others... whether it is food, clothing or toys.

> Malnutrition, illness, lack of education, violence, crime, prison, death.

> Poor nutrition which impairs development violence, crime, prison, death.

> Poor nutrition which impairs development and hinders learning leading to low education levels and poor income in the future. A sense of overall hopelessness watching parents and others in their community struggle. More childhood illness and or chronic illness due to poor housing + nutrition leading to impaired development and having to miss school. More likely to turn to drugs/alcohol/crime due to poor circumstances.

Cycle of poverty/welfare dependency/bad for society

> Any child living in poverty has an uphill battle to get out of the poverty trap and many often repeat the same mistakes their parents made, poor health is often a result of poverty.

> Bad Health, abuse, low self-esteem, poor learning skill, poor social skills, poor decision making, being caught up in the cycle of poverty and / or welfare dependence, poor positive outlook.

> Cyclic dependency on the state, increased crime, poor health and decreased education levels.

> Poor health, diseases that will affect child when they are adults, resentment of not having what they see others have, falling into a cycle of poverty into the next generation. Crime delinquency, abuse, break up of families because they can’t cope with cost of child rearing.

> Poor housing, nutrition and financial situation inhibit learning, development and educational opportunities, resulting in poor job and life opportunities which feed the circle of poverty to the next generation.

> The child could turn to crime, low self-esteem, bullying of them, them bullying others to take stuff, endless cycle of the poor and impoverished staying that way for generations.

> They might become sick/ depressed/ malnourished/ angry with their parents/ family/ friends/ spouses/ the world. They might get stuck in a cycle of poverty/ abuse/ neglect and so it will continue with their children.
Neglect/lack of clothes/adequate housing

> Children not having access to things that will help them grow and develop into good adults.

> The effects for a child living in poverty can be devastating - if the bare necessities are not provided for, not only can the child become physically underdeveloped, but the child can develop a variety of social disorders/misfunctions, which can then lead onto more serious issues. Child poverty is a symptom of ignorance and carelessness on the part of the parent, and instead of treating the symptoms, we should try and address the underlying issues.

Abuse (domestic/child)

> Poor health, poor education, low-paid job, high likelihood to suffer abuse, higher likelihood to be a victim of crime.

> Hunger, abuse, truancy, poor clothing, sleeping arrangements - lack of love and care.

> Low IQ, low self-esteem, high likelihood of living on a benefit and continuing the cycle, high likelihood of abuse, crime and other negative social behaviour.

> Poverty trap, vicious cycle, child abuse.

Drug/smoking/drinking issues

> Bad education, creating a cycle of welfare dependency, poverty and substance abuse.

> Ending up in gangs, becoming criminal, becoming dependant on drugs/alcohol. Really not having a chance in life because no-one took care of them as a child.

> Living a whole life in poverty. Higher chances of getting involved with drugs and crime. Higher risk of become obese and living unhealthy lifestyles.

> Low literacy rate if they left school early to work, perhaps turn to crime to supplement low income e.g. drugs.

Removing from parents/CYFs

> It was great for me I learnt a lot of lessons that will stick for life but I was always quite worried about CYFs, dying or jail.

> Starvation. In serious cases where children’s basic needs aren’t met Child Youth and Family services may need to step in and remove the child from their home and into the care of someone who can.

Other varied comments

> The child would be able to grow up knowing that life can be hard but that all is possible. There are plenty of examples.

> People should not be paid to have children (benefits). Children are not an income. If you can’t afford to have children then don’t have them. Sick of kids being neglected in NZ. The parents do a shit job in bringing up their kids in poverty and they end up being the rest of society’s problem.

> Grow vegies in a garden, op shop for cheap clothing.

> Not owning a PS or Xbox.
### 3.5 Signs of Poverty

Almost all respondents said the signs for a child living in poverty would be that the child:

- Lacks food, adequate clothing and other basic essentials (97%)

Other signs of a child living in poverty perceived as almost as strong were:

- Going to school without breakfast or lunch (93%)
- Parents or caregivers who can’t afford to take them to the doctor when they are sick or buy them medicines (92%)
- Lives in cold and damp housing (92%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A sign of a child living in poverty might be that the child:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Some of the time</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacks food, adequate clothing and other basic essentials</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is going to school without breakfast or lunch</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has parents or caregivers who can’t afford to take them to the doctor when they are sick or buy them medicines</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives in cold and damp housing</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives in a family on a welfare benefit</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives in a working family on a low wage</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does poorly or gets behind at school</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has parents or caregivers who cannot afford to pay for after-school activities like sport, music or cultural activities</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographic variations in perceptions of signs of a child living in poverty

Younger respondents were less likely to agree that a sign of a child living in poverty most of the time might be that the child:

- Does poorly or gets left behind at school
  (22% aged under 35 years compared to 35% overall)

Women were more likely than men to agree that a sign of poverty most of the time is that a child:

- Lives in cold and damp housing
  (58% of women compared to 45% of men)

- Is going to school without breakfast or lunch
  (56% of women compared to 48% of men)

- Parents or caregivers who cannot afford to pay for after-school activities like sport, music or cultural activities
  (48% of women compared to 42% of men)
3.6 Personal Experience

A quarter (24%) said they personally know of a child or children living in poverty.

**Thinking of your own experience, do you personally know of any child or children living in poverty?**

- **Demographic differences**
  - Women were more likely than men to personally know children living in poverty (28% of women, compared to 20% of men).
  - Respondents in the South Island were more likely to personally know children living in poverty (30%), while those in Auckland were less likely - 18% said they personally knew children in poverty.

Do you personally know of any child or children living in poverty?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region &amp; Gender</th>
<th>Auckland</th>
<th>Lower Nth Is</th>
<th>Rest of Nth Is</th>
<th>South Is</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reasons for Child Poverty**

The quarter (24%) who indicated they did know a child living in poverty were asked which of a list of factors were the main reasons why the child they know lives in poverty.

The main reason given was an abusive immediate environment (72%), followed by the high cost of living (63%), unemployed parents or caregivers (63%) and not spending money wisely (62%).
Which of the following do you think are the main reasons why the child you know lives in poverty?

Other reasons mentioned by individuals were:

- Solo mother who only has had minimum wage jobs which are not enough to raise a child on.
- Solo parent
- Parents involved with gangs
- Having too many kids
- Overpriced NZ goods and services
- Immoral behaviour
- After a time out of work it is impossible to get back into the workforce
- Substance abuse/mental health issues/children with high needs and the inability to work due to this (not necessarily a recognised and diagnosed behaviour)
- A low wage
- Caregiver smoker
- Ignorance
- Going to churches who DEMAND a portion of their money. Polynesians are the ones seriously caught up in this scam and intimidation. People STUPID enough to get involved with "destiny" church. Their DESTINY is Poverty and misery while that w..... Tamaki gets RICH by pocketing all their money.

Demographic variation

- Respondents from the South Island were less likely to say the main reason why the child they know lives in poverty is unemployed parents or caregivers (50% compared to the average of 63%).
3.7 Government and Media Attention Paid to Child Poverty

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements.

- Despite less than two fifths (38%) indicating that child poverty in New Zealand ranks among the worst in the developed world, it is still viewed as an important issue.
- Three quarters (75%) agreed that child poverty is an important issue in New Zealand, and a fifth (19%) agreed the current government is doing enough to address child poverty in New Zealand.
- Thirty percent agreed that child poverty in New Zealand is taken very seriously by the current government, and a fifth (22%) have full trust and confidence in this government reducing child poverty in New Zealand.
- Nearly half (46%) agreed that child poverty in New Zealand is getting plenty of media attention, and two-fifths agreed what they have seen and heard in the media has greatly influenced their thinking about child poverty (39%).
**Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree, nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty is an important issue in New Zealand</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty in New Zealand is getting plenty of media attention</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I have seen and heard in the media has greatly influenced my thinking</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty in New Zealand ranks among the worst in the developed world</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child poverty in New Zealand is taken very seriously by the current government</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have full trust and confidence in this government reducing child poverty in New Zealand</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The current government is doing enough to address child poverty in New Zealand.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demographic variations**

**Child poverty is an important issue in New Zealand**
- Women (79%) were more likely than men (71%) to agree overall

**Child poverty in New Zealand is taken very seriously by the current government**
- Those less likely to agree compared to the average (30%) were:
  - Aged 25 to 34 year olds (19% total agree)
  - On annual household incomes under $40,000 (21% total agree)
- South Islanders were more likely to disagree (45% compared to 38% overall)
Child poverty in New Zealand ranks among the worst in the developed world

- Those more likely to agree overall were:
  - Living in the South Island (44% compared to 38% overall)
  - Women (42%) are more likely agree than men (33%)
- Aucklanders were less likely to agree (31% agreed)

Child poverty in New Zealand is getting plenty of media attention

- Those less likely to agree overall were:
  - Aged under 35 years (32% compared to 44% overall)
  - Women (39% compared to 49% of men)

I have full trust and confidence in this government reducing child poverty in New Zealand

- Those less likely to agree overall were:
  - Women (18% compared to 26% of men)
  - Aged 35 to 44 years (14% agree compared to 22% overall)
  - On low household incomes (11% of those on less than $20,000 total agree)
- South Islanders were more likely to disagree (55% disagreed), while Aucklanders were less likely to disagree (38%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full T&amp;C in Govt reducing child poverty in NZ</th>
<th>Auckland</th>
<th>Lower NI</th>
<th>Rest of NI</th>
<th>South Island</th>
<th>All NZ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree, nor disagree</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current government is doing enough to address child poverty in New Zealand

- Those less likely to agree overall were:
  - On low household incomes (10% of those on less than $20,000 agreed compared to 19% overall)
  - Women (16% agreed compared to 23% of men)

  Conversely:
  - 54% of women and 47% of men disagreed the current government is doing enough to address child poverty in New Zealand
  - People living in the South Island were more likely to disagree (58% compared to 51% overall)
3.8 Public Awareness of Programmes to Reduce Child Poverty

Respondents were shown a list of interventions or programmes aimed at reducing child poverty in New Zealand and asked which they were aware of. Only six percent had not heard of any of the programmes.

- Public awareness was highest for free milk in schools (82%) and free doctor visits (80%) for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015).
- More than two-thirds (69%) were aware of the KidsCan programmes, and almost three-fifths (58%) had heard of improvements to housing like subsidised insulation.
- Only ten percent were aware of adopting the Commissioner for Children's Report.

Awareness of Programmes or Interventions to Reduce Child Poverty in New Zealand

- Free milk in schools: 82%
- Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015): 80%
- KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats: 69%
- Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation: 58%
- Volunteers helping in schools and communities: 43%
- Increasing tax credits for families with young children: 42%
- Targeting business to help provide food: 29%
- Media Campaigns: 26%
- Targeting politicians to change policy: 19%
- Other housing initiatives like Curtain Bank: 15%
- Adopting Commissioner for Children's Report: 10%
- None of these: 6%
Demographic variations in awareness of interventions
Please note the demographic tables are included in the Appendix.

**Free milk in schools – 82% awareness**
- Those less likely to be aware of free milk in schools were:
  - Living in Auckland (76%)
  - Men (78% aware compared to 86% of women)
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (73%)
  - Aged under 35 years (72%)

**Free doctor visits – 80% awareness**
- Those more aware of free doctor’s visits were:
  - Living in the lower North Island (86%)
  - Women (85% aware compared to 74% of men)
- Those less likely to be aware of free doctor’s visits were:
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (68%)
  - Aged under 35 years (65%)

**KidsCan programmes – 69% awareness**
- Women (76%) were more likely than men (62%) to be aware of KidsCan
- Those aged 18 to 24 years were less likely to be aware of KidsCan (62%)

**Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation – 58% aware**
- Those more aware of improvements to housing like subsidised insulation were:
  - Women (64% compared to 53% of men)
  - Aged over 45 years (69%)

Awareness of subsidised insulation increases with age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>18 - 24</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>All NZ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Those less likely to be aware of subsidised insulation were:
  - Aged under 45 years (43%)
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (44%)
Volunteers helping in schools and communities – 43% aware
- Those aged 55+ were more likely to be aware of volunteers (57%), while those aged 25 to 34 years were less likely to be aware (29%).

Increasing tax credits for families with young children – 42% aware
- Those less likely to be aware were:
  - Aged 18–35 years (32%)
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (28%)

Targeting businesses to help provide food – 29% aware
- Those less likely to be aware were:
  - Aged under 45 years (19%)
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (20%)

Media Campaigns – 26% aware
- South Islanders were more likely to be aware of media campaigns (35%)
- Those in the “rest” of the North Island (outside Auckland and the lower North Island) were less likely to be aware (18%)

Targeting politicians to change policy – 19% aware
- Those more likely to be aware of targeting politicians to change policy were:
  - Living in the South Island (25%)
  - Aged 55+ (27%)

Other housing initiatives like Curtain Bank – 15% awareness
- Women (19%) were more aware than men (11%)
- People living in the South Island (21%) and lower North Island (21%) were more aware than those in Auckland (9%) and rest of North Island (9%)
- Those less likely to be aware were:
  - Younger (8% aware aged under 35 years)
  - On household incomes less than $20,000 (6%)

Adopting the Commissioner for Children’s Report – 10% aware
- Those aged under 35 years were less likely to be aware (4%)
3.9 Perceptions of Programmes’ Effectiveness

Members of the public were asked how effective they think various programmes are at reducing child poverty. (They were only asked about ones they were aware of.)

- The majority thought all the programmes and interventions listed were somewhat effective at reducing child poverty, but the standout programme is free doctor visits.
- Almost all (92%) said that free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015) are effective at reducing child poverty, and over half (52%) thought free doctor visits are “very effective”.

:\nIn your opinion, how effective are these programmes at reducing child poverty?\n
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmes/interventions</th>
<th>TOTAL EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Somewhat effective</th>
<th>Not very effective</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Aware n=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers helping in schools and communities</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting business to help provide food</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free milk in schools</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other housing initiatives like Curtain Bank</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopting Commissioner for Children’s Report</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing tax credits for families with young children</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Campaigns</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting politicians to change policy</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic variation

Increasing tax credits for families with young children – women (82%) were more likely than men (70%) to say these are effective.
3.10 Open Access or Targeted Programmes?

Respondents were asked whether four specific programmes (free milk, free doctor visits, subsidised insulation, and tax credits) should be universally applicable to all children in New Zealand or only to certain defined target groups.

The majority thought two should be universally applicable to all children:

- Free doctor visits for children under 18 (77%)
- Free milk in schools (74%)

Whereas opinion was divided, and almost half said the following programmes should be applicable only to a defined target group:

- Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation (46%)
- Tax credits for families with young children (46%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Universal Access</th>
<th>Targeted Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free doctor visits for children under 18</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free milk in schools</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax credits for families with young children</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion, should the programmes listed below be universally available across the board to all children in New Zealand or only to certain defined target groups?
Demographic variations

**Free doctor visits for children under 18**
- Those more likely to support universal applicability were:
  - Women (81% compared to 74% of men)
  - Aged 18 to 24 years (90%)
- Those aged 55 years or older were less likely to agree free doctor visits should be universally applicable (69% compared to 77% overall)

**Free milk in schools**
- Aucklanders were less likely to support universal applicability (69% compared to 74% overall)

**Improvements to housing like subsided insulation**
- Those aged 55 years or older were less likely than average to support universal applicability (39% compared to 46% overall)

**Tax credits for families with young children**
- Those more likely to support universal applicability of tax credits were:
  - Women (44% compared to 36% of men)
  - Living in the “rest of North Island” (51%), i.e. mainly provincial areas outside Auckland, and the lower North Island
- Those less likely to agree tax credits should be universal were:
  - Living in households with incomes less than $20,000 (28% compared to 41% overall)
  - Aged 55 years or older (34%)
3.11 Agreement with Tax Increases

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that if reducing child poverty in New Zealand means that we all need to pay more tax, would they agree or disagree with this?

Opinion was divided; over a third agreed that reducing child poverty means we all need to pay more tax (36%), but slightly more disagreed (38%), and a quarter were undecided (26% neutral or don’t know).

If reducing child poverty in New Zealand means that we all need to pay more tax, to what extent would you agree/disagree with this?

Demographic variations

- Those more likely to agree (or strongly agree) we all need to pay more tax were:
  - Aged 18 to 24 years (51%)
  - Men (42% compared to women (31%)

If reducing child poverty in New Zealand means that we all need to pay more tax, to what extent would you agree/disagree with this?
3.12 Respondents’ Comments

Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to make a final comment in regards to this survey or the plight of children living in poverty in New Zealand. Two-fifths (44%) made a comment. A summary of the main types of comments is shown below.

Is there any other comment that you wish to make in regards to this survey or the plight of children living in poverty in New Zealand?

A selection of the comments follows.

**Needs people to take responsibility/educate parents/on budgeting/education**

- Take an interest in neighbourhood kids, talk to them, give them a feed if necessary, listen to their concerns.
- I think more attention needs to be placed on why the kids are in poverty. i.e. Are families having too many children that they can't afford? What are the parents spending their money on? Are the parents lacking education on nutrition and child care? Do families need education on budgeting? Also families may not know all the community and government organisations that are there to help.
- Education around drug/alcohol abuse and gambling, budget advice and community health workers would help on a larger scale as well as community contact points for different racial groups etc.
- I think increasing tax is only a short term ‘fix’, if at all. Children and parents NOW need to be educated about life, money and how their choices affect those around them. The cycle needs to be broken or nothing will get fixed. People need to realise that the benefit or dole is not something you want to be on unless you are truly physically or mentally unable to work. Parents are setting their children up to fail and it’s not ok. Education is the answer, not free milk.
It tends to be the Maori and Pacific Island children/families that are poorer. Without sounded racist (I am NOT) it would make sense to target them with budgeting advice since most of them smoke, drink and have big cars while their children go to school with empty stomachs! With so much money having been given to Maori tribes as their treaty settlement I can’t understand why it hasn’t helped their people in those areas, after they said it would! Educate the poor people with budgeting/addictions and that in turn will free up a large amount of cash each week.

The answer to ending child poverty is not to merely throw more money at symptoms such as free milk in schools or free fruit/breakfast programmes. What needs to happen is their parents need help perhaps getting better qualifications, apprenticeships, diplomas, etc. to increase their earning potential. They also need help with budgeting and perhaps government welfare payments need to mandatorily assign certain amounts or percentages to being spent on the specific needs and necessities of the children in the household, to ensure that they are being prioritised in the parents’ spending. The root of child poverty needs to be solved, not just the side effects of it, such as hungry children coming to school with inadequate warm clothing, etc.

The targeting of this issue is not specific enough. It is not enough to beat around the bush. It is like telling off a classroom when only one child is throwing their toys. Awareness is a major part and I think we are at the start of the road to developing awareness however we have a long time to go. Our mentality of everyone that it only affects the benefit stricken is not the reality. It could be the person next door whose children always look clean and tidy however there is not enough food, heat, they don’t attend the class trips (sick on the day) and lots of other little signs. It is not always as obvious as the child with no shoes or food.

Some poverty is also learned behaviour (i.e. don’t care). Though having been through rough times ourselves it is the donations (St Vincent de Paul), discounts and volunteers (babysitting etc.) that helped us out as every little bit counts where it is needed the most.

While there will always be a need for a safety net more emphasis needs to be placed on the personal responsibility of parents in raising children. There are far too many one parent families and teenage mums. What about free contraception to mitigate these?

More work needs to be put in to going around the communities and making compulsory awareness events. I know it might sound a bit controlling but honestly I live in an area where the only places you see aid etc. is in the doctor’s office or if you stare at a noticeboard. How are families who are too afraid to go out and ask for help supposed to know about the things they can get especially when a lot of the parents are just neglecting their kids, not providing adequate clothing etc. Being a student myself I think it’s silly how the world is driven by sexualisation now and kids go out without much clothing on or shoes and are spitting... it just displays a clear lack of education when it comes to health and awareness... and I feel New Zealand should be a lot more advanced on this than other countries due to our small size/number of people and our ability to make public awareness count.

The National Party doesn’t care about people on a benefit and kicks them between their two big toes and have done that since Holyoake was prime Minister. Get rid of them on 20/09/14.

Throwing money at the problem is not the whole answer - education and support for parents/families and taking the attitude that we want to help NOT judge, and the ‘takes a village to raise a child’ mentality is needed.

We have 3 generations of welfare dependent families where poverty, crime, and addiction is entrenched. Education is an important way to break this cycle.

It breaks my heart to see our children going to school hungry tired with dirty clothes and no lunch We are not a rich whanau 1 income 3 kids all under 10. But our babies all got to school with a full puku, clean clothes and healthy lunch boxes and they share what they have with other kids that don’t have anything.. Sad thing, we live in a white middle class area and they go to a really good school apart from a few other Maori whanau’s no one cares about the
(poor) kids living in poverty. Teachers, parents, all seem to be happy to turn a blind eye to it. Shame on them when my 7yr old girl knows better!!

> We brought up our six children not qualifying for any subsidy, had very high interest rates and still paid our mortgage on one wage. I made their clothes and if we couldn’t afford to go out, we didn’t. We never had family holidays, our children have all grown up with good work ethics and are wonderful parents who explain to the children why something cannot be had. I know that some people find it very hard to manage but still they could do more for themselves.

> There are many of us that have paid tax, but are living on low incomes. I do not see putting up tax is the answer, but I think many of today’s parents could learn ways of helping their family and cut back on the number of children they have. We got by on a very low wage, but grew vegetables, did not go on holidays, I spent many hours working nightshift, right up to my retirement. People have to learn how to make ends meet.

> Whilst I know there is sometimes a shortage of jobs people need to be prepared to work and not expect the Government to give them a living. I am aware of parents who work who earn less than the unemployment benefit but manage their budget to suit and their children are loved and well cared for.

> It’s a National tragedy. However, throwing money at this problem is not the simple answer. We need to educate parents to properly look after kids and ensure that parents allocate appropriate resources instead of wasting it on flashy, crappy consumer goods. We need to break the cycle of negative thinking and give a hand up to relevant families, groups and communities.

> There’s an old saying, give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and he feeds himself. Hand-outs merely alleviate the pain of poverty, it does nothing to get people out of poverty.

Govt needs to take action/food in schools programmes/healthy menus/raise awareness

> Stop paying parents to have children, offer food vouchers and education in place of, address obesity via education and higher taxes on unhealthy food and put those taxes into reducing the biggest problems in child poverty.

> I understand that these children need help and that is fine, but it is hard to be supportive when a lot of the parents don’t help themselves and/or they take the things given to the children for themselves. There needs to be a different way of doing things so that hardworking parents that just don’t earn enough get the help they need to bring up their family but the long-time beneficiaries that keep pumping out kids to stay on the benefit receive more targeted help that benefits the children directly.

> Increasing tax will have those affected by child poverty suffering even more. That is no solution. Education is key. Living within means. The Government needs to step in and help with more effective programmes.

> It may mean paying higher taxes, but it would create a better society for ALL New Zealanders, not just those on low incomes who would directly benefit. High crime rates and bad health statistics affect everyone. I believe it would also only mean higher taxes initially, once the programmes were in place it would cost a lot less as we wouldn’t need the crisis management.

> Paying more tax seems to be an easy “cop out” option. More and better targeted programmes, redirection of funding for NGOs agencies towards targeted education, healthcare and similar initiatives is needed (after brief but concerted and conscious analysis and planning).

> Child poverty stems from adult poverty and ignorance (in that order). Tax-funded benefit/support schemes resolve neither. I support funded nutritional and health programs for children, but mainly to aid achievement in school. The real challenge is to lift the achievement and aspiration of ALL New Zealanders, and empower them, so we don’t have the
problem in the first place. To this end, initiatives such as community-level micro-financing seem more useful.

> While these initiatives are good, they do not go far enough. People living in poverty are reliant on landlords and Housing Corp to install insulation, none of these initiatives put food on the table, none address the cycle of poverty that come through low incomes and lack of equitable employment opportunities. The Govt is not adopting enough of the Vulnerable Children’s Bill to make it meaningful. Poor effort Govt!

> Programmes to be set up to support the parents, e.g. instead of free school breakfasts, that parents be given bread, Weetabix etc. so they can then provide their children with breakfast. That budgeting advice be given to parents and help given with menu/recipes, shopping lists. Parents/caregivers need to be helped and supported in the care of their children.

> We need to stop helping out other countries until we have cleaned up our own back yard. Millions of dollars of aid in the form of food, clothing, buildings, money is sent to countries when our own citizens are in need of it. NZers should come first.

> Address the problems with personnel that know what they’re talking about and develop productive development schemes with penalties to the parents for not adhering to them. Stop bailing out the so called parents, pay the rent directly from the benefit, pay the utilities direct from the benefit, buy food parcels, if the temptation of money being given out freely to parents that obviously have no awareness of how to bring up children and run a household. Benefit for many low income, unemployed families means top up drug, booze and gambling abilities, how on earth can this ever be stopped other than to take the temptation away of a lump sum once a week with no checks in place.

> Free or subsidised eye care, dental care, free meals in schools for hungry children, more awareness so people will donate warm clothing, knitting bees to make them warm things.

> The Present Government is not targeting child poverty. Pressuring sole parents back into paid employment, yet studies also put out show that sole parent children run the highest risk of truancy and trouble with the law, due to the fact that there is no parental supervision. We need more education to be given to at risk areas in NZ such as the Maori, and Polynesians. On financial issues, making them more accountable. But expecting non-profit organisations to accomplish this on lower government funding is just ludicrous.

> Having been a school principal for 9 years in a poor area in Dunedin, I am gob smacked at the arrogance of Govt in doing very little.

**Parents spending money on other things like alcohol, cigarettes and gambling**

> Families should be given vouchers for the essentials rather than cash in their accounts. Too much tax payer money is spent on booze, ciggies and gambling and therefore nothing is left for the children. Pay their rent, power and give Pak n Save vouchers. Problem solved.

> Double the price of smokes in NZ, target families that have a history of child neglect and be more severe in removing at risk kids from families that show they cannot support them. Introduce compulsory sterilisation to females who have a history of child neglect. Stop calling it Child Poverty and call it Child Neglect.
Expensive in NZ/living wage would help to solve/better paying jobs/solve unemployment issues/tax the rich

> If the education system were to change for the better it would definitely help but I also found it severely hard to find legal work as a homeless youth so I feel like if there was something there to support the young to get some work it would reduce crime and the number of children living in poverty.

> If the taxes were to increase I think it would just push more Families into the poverty lifestyle as there are many Families who are only just able to get through each week. I think the higher income earners should have a tax increase or the politicians should take a pay cut instead, they are being paid too much and not doing enough to solve the problems our country is facing! Children are starving and those fat cats are sitting in parliament debating pointless issues such as the right to gay marriage instead of the right for Children to grow up in a warm home, food in their stomachs and warm clothes on their backs!

> I think that it is not only those on a benefit struggling - coming from a former situation of a two parent family (now only one) where there has always been one or two working parents, the rise in living costs has made a massive difference over the years in our disposable (or lack of) income. The biggest change came when GST went up and things like petrol and meat prices have sky-rocketed, plus electricity and many other costs seem to have gone up more than the rate of the GST increase. Healthy foods are more expensive than junk food. The cost and hassle of a permit to get necessary renovations done to make the house more liveable has meant it cannot be afforded... all these things should have been affordable with a 2-working-parent family and now that I am on my own it is impossible. I think there has to be a rethink in how people are taxed, how companies are ‘allowed’ to raise and change prices all the time - somehow there needs to be more transparent accountability for these things. Other little things like fuel discounts for big supermarket spends mean that only the well-off can take advantage of the discounts when it is those on lower incomes that really need them. I would also like to see acknowledgement to those people who spend lots of time working as volunteers or in charitable organisations that pay low rates to staff and will often spend their own money in their service to the community.

> We have turned the middle class into beneficiaries - we need to increase wages and target benefits to those in need. We need to provide incentive programmes e.g. $10 increase per week for full immunisation, attendance at early childhood regularly. We need to tax high fat foods and get GST off fruit, veg. Some form of food credits for healthy food would improve affordability. Free doctor’s visits are not helpful unless required medications are also free. Funding such as the IES millions in education should be directed to low decile families - with the major funding going to decreasing student teacher ratios and provision of extra staffing to support students with learning and behavioural needs.

> It isn’t free for under 6s to go to the doctors, it might be subsidised but it isn’t free. beneficiaries and low income earners do not have enough income to provide for families adequately without having to rely on extended families for donations and food banks etc. the benefit will cover rent and power and a little bit of food, but not much more than that, so doctor’s visits especially for a parent are not an option, also if they use a car, the income doesn’t account for the cost of registration and warrant or repairs.

Concerned about problem

> Just breaks my heart to think of children being hungry, cold or wet. These are basic human rights that we should all be well fed, warm and dry.

> Child poverty is an important issue that needs to be addressed otherwise it ultimately affects all New Zealanders as these children grow and achieve less and have more health problems. Children need adults to stand up for them and be their voice.

> I was mainly made aware of the situation on Campbell Live, who did a great and horrifying piece on children in poverty, showing what they brought to school for lunch. Since then, I have been more aware of it in the media and through donation drives.
I am a teacher in a South Auckland school and have seen first-hand child poverty but have also seen the great impact Kids Can has. Well done to them.

Better parenting skills

Parents need to be educated on how to budget better and look after their kids better. Tighter regulations put on those companies that target the poor and uneducated charging them huge interest rates.

Child poverty is not based solely on income. Families have serious implication of how the child is brought up. If you want to fight child poverty, focus on helping the parents. This could be helping with time when the parents are working or helping the parents change the way they see their child and not as a burden (in this case - family abuse). Parents is almost the sole cause for child poverty. E.g. stop the parents wasting money on alcohol/cigarettes and spending that extra $20-$40 on the children.

It is hard to watch when we see the parents of deprived children drinking, smoking and lazing about in overgrown lawned government subsidised housing and find apathy for them, pity is a shame that the children pay the price of this attitude.

Child poverty in NZ is not a financial issue. There is plenty of money thrown at this problem. There are genuinely financially "poor" children who you would not know were poor. The ones who "appear" poor are usually suffering more from lack of parenting.

People should not be turning down jobs they don't like to do - when you have children a job means money coming in. I should know as I cleaned peoples’ homes when I was a single parent. You need to do whatever is necessary to look after your children properly.

From what I have observed in Northland, I believe the problem is based in poor parenting skills. Lack of health, cooking, budget and general care of children. Parents is almost the sole cause for child poverty. E.g. stop the parents wasting money on alcohol/cigarettes and spending that extra $20-$40 on the children.

Stop having children if you can’t afford it

If someone cannot afford to have the basics as they are, stop having children. And I understand the need to give families with children more money when they are on a benefit, but people use it as a way to get more money, without the thoughts for their children in mind. It is a tricky one, and perhaps a case by case basis, but it is a bit of a joke. Don’t tax honest, hardworking families more money so that we pay lazy parents who have children for more money, because that is getting everyone nowhere.

I think a great deal of the cause is due to poor parenting, and families choosing to have more children than they can afford. There is too much reliance on government hand-outs by people who make poor decisions.

It is a combination of the parents' responsibility to put their children first, if they have children they should take the responsibility that comes along with it and do all they can to ensure their health and education are to at least average standards. If they can't afford kids, they shouldn't have had them, and if they don't work for legitimate reasons or otherwise despite the right to have children and many people feeling it is a need in their life journey, if you cannot provide for them it is irresponsible to do so. The population is already out of control and affecting my generation in terms of competition for schooling and jobs and it will only get worse the more kids there are about.

No real poverty here/not aware of poverty in NZ

I actually think this is a bit of myth...blown up out of proportion by lefty media!! Compare NZ's 'child poverty' with that of the 'undeveloped world', now that's poverty!!!

I really do not like the term "poverty" being used in the New Zealand context. This country simply does not have anybody who experiences true poverty (as would be seen in parts of Africa, India and Asia for example). I do agree that there are disadvantaged children in New Zealand.
Zealand but I absolutely, whole-heartedly disagree that we have poverty in this country. I have been overseas and seen real poverty first hand. It does not exist here. Also, I do not think it is low-income that fuels poverty I think it has more to do with parents miss-using their income. I grew up in a very low-income family yet we always had everything we needed because my parents were very careful with their money. In contrast, I had a lot of friends whose parents earned more than mine, yet they had next to nothing because they would waste their money on alcohol, drugs, gambling etc.

Child poverty is relative, there are many many more children in the world that are much worse off than our children in poverty. Families need to be responsible and governments need to determine necessities before granting benefits. For example, Sky or mobile smartphone service is not a necessity and tax money should not go to these things. Parents with older children should work and there should be no long-term/lifetime housing benefits - those should be short term to help folks “get on their feet”. It makes me mad to hear of generations of families growing up in state housing, and makes me less sympathetic to those beneficiaries.

Feedback about survey

> It was very interesting and eye opening, thank you for the opportunity to take this survey.

> Great relevant survey.

> Loved this survey as it was interactive and nicer and more enjoyable to do.

> Glad to see it’s being highlighted through investigating avenues like this as opposed to assumptions.

Other

> Children should not be living in poverty in New Zealand and I believe that the majority of children that are living in poverty are children of the Pacific nation mostly because, Pacific people that migrate to New Zealand can come straight into this country and get on the benefit practically the next day.
## Appendix 1. Awareness of Programmes - Demographic Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of programmes aimed at reducing child poverty in NZ</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free milk in schools</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>Lower NI</td>
<td>Rest of NI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers helping in schools and communities</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing tax credits for families with young children</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting business to help provide food</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Campaigns</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting politicians to change policy</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other housing initiatives like Curtain Bank</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopting Commissioner for Children’s Report</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### New Zealanders’ Attitudes to Child Poverty

Prepared by MM Research TM

**Total**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>All NZ</th>
<th>82%</th>
<th>85%</th>
<th>82%</th>
<th>88%</th>
<th>86%</th>
<th>81%</th>
<th>77%</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>77%</th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>69%</th>
<th>69%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 34 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+ years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Awareness of programmes aimed at reducing child poverty in NZ

- Free milk in schools
- Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015)
- KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats
- Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation
- Volunteers helping in schools and communities
- Reducing tax credits for families with young children
- Housing initiatives to help provide food
- Media Campaigns
- Targeting politicians to change policy
- Other housing initiatives like Curtin Bank
- Adopting Commissioner for Children’s Report
- Other (specify)

### Annual Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Household Income</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>82%</th>
<th>85%</th>
<th>82%</th>
<th>88%</th>
<th>86%</th>
<th>81%</th>
<th>77%</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>77%</th>
<th>73%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>69%</th>
<th>69%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000 to $40,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,000 to $60,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$61,000 to $80,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$81,000 to $100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Annual Household Income by Age Group

- 18 - 24 years
- 25 - 34 years
- 35 - 44 years
- 45 - 54 years
- 55+ years

### Awareness of programmes aimed at reducing child poverty in NZ by Age Group

- Free milk in schools
- Free doctor visits for children under 6 (increasing to 13 from July 2015)
- KidsCan programmes donating shoes and raincoats
- Improvements to housing like subsidised insulation
- Volunteers helping in schools and communities
- Reducing tax credits for families with young children
- Housing initiatives to help provide food
- Media Campaigns
- Targeting politicians to change policy
- Other housing initiatives like Curtin Bank
- Adopting Commissioner for Children’s Report
- Other (specify)

### Annual Household Income by Age Group

- Under $20,000
- $21,000 to $40,000
- $41,000 to $60,000
- $61,000 to $80,000
- $81,000 to $100,000
- Over $100,000