

# CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

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## **Children's advocates welcome report**

Child Poverty Action group has welcomed the new [Families Commission report](#) that emphasises the importance of caring and nurturing required for all children to meet their potential.

CPAG researcher Donna Wynd says the report is solidly backed up by a large body of local and international research. "Most of this is stuff we've known for a long time, but it's good to see it presented in a manner that is unequivocal about the link between economic security and children's development," she said. "We particularly support the recommendation that adequate income, decent housing and affordable access to healthcare be available to all New Zealand families. But we have a long way to go."

The report notes that income has a significant impact on children's wellbeing. CPAG economics spokesperson Dr Susan St John agrees, adding "New Zealand is unusual among the developed countries with family assistance policies that seek to deliberately undermine children's welfare based on their parents' source of income. It is time we refocused on children and implemented policies that treat all children as being deserving of a fair start in life. This report supports CPAG's recommendation to the government that the In Work Tax Credit to be extended to all families with children immediately."

In December the Human Rights Review Tribunal found the In Work Tax Credit discriminated against the children of beneficiaries and resulted in serious harm. Dr St John says that at a time the economy is losing jobs, this discrimination makes no sense. "Children's needs don't change when their parents hours at work are cut back. Why should these families get less assistance for their children? The upcoming budget needs to make sure that children are supported now, not in a few years time when we think we can afford it. As this report shows, children's development cannot

be put on hold. We might think we can save some money now, but future social costs of current policy make that look very shortsighted.