

# CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

[www.cpag.org.nz](http://www.cpag.org.nz)

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## **Child poverty the focus for legal action**

This election-year Waitangi Day the time is ripe to look at visionary, inclusive measures to protect children, says Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG). We will know that all children are truly valued in our society when the voices demanding better income protection for our poorest families become louder than the voices calling for the legal reinstatement of corporal punishment, the group says.

CPAG is calling on the public to resist attempts by special interest groups to engineer further debate, and incur further public cost, with an issue already exhaustively dealt with in a cross-party legislative effort. A New Zealand Herald poll taken over January found that just 4.2 per cent of those polled described the family discipline issue as likely to influence their vote.

Despite its stated mission to 'remedy' abusive family relationships, Family First is continuing to pour many thousands of dollars into its campaign to reinstate a law which historically provided a defence for assaults on children.

Any implementation problems with the new legislation can only be exacerbated further, as they may already have been to date, by public hysteria whipped up by sensationalist campaigning.

For its part, Child Poverty Action Group has initiated a legal case which will proceed this year to the Human Rights Review Tribunal. The case alleges discrimination in family assistance policy on behalf of around 185 000 children who are ineligible for the bulk of Working for Families support because their parents have insufficient paid work hours.\*

Child Poverty Action Group urges attention to the poverty and discrimination facing too many children. Action to address that will make a real difference to the lives of tens of thousands.

### **For more on the CPAG legal case:**

[http://www.cpag.org.nz/campaigns/Child\\_Tax\\_Credit\\_IWP.html](http://www.cpag.org.nz/campaigns/Child_Tax_Credit_IWP.html)

\* Half of those who miss out are tamariki Maori and Pasifika, as CPAG has shown

<http://www.cpag.org.nz/news/cpag-news/nr1144551903.pdf>