

Speaker's notes:

Charmaine Pountney

Educator, formerly Dean of the School of Education, University of Waikato and Principal Auckland Girls' Grammar

Child Poverty Action Group

in association with

University of Auckland, Department of Paediatrics and
Department of General Practice & Primary Health Care presents

***Budget '07:
Budgeting for Children -
More or Less?***

**The Seventh Annual CPAG Post-Budget
Breakfast**

Are children visible in this year's budget? Will their lives be better as a result of the government's spending and economic plans? What relief, if any, is there for our poorest children? Special guest speakers comment on this year's Budget and the government's policy directions for the new financial year.

Speakers:

- **Dr Teuila Percival** Pacific and International Health,
School of Population Health, University of Auckland
 - **Charmaine Pountney** Educator, formerly Dean of the School of
Education, University of Waikato and Principal Auckland Girls' Grammar
 - **Donna Wynd** Economist and Child Poverty Action Group
Research and Policy Analyst
- MC: Dr Ian Hassall** Institute of Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology

**Friday 18 May 2007, School of Population Health
Tamaki Campus, University of Auckland.**

Summary of main points about education in the Budget from a child poverty perspective:

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Good points:

- more money for early childhood education (which is the best area for dealing with issues of poverty, health, culture, etc - and which has the best curriculum statement and bicultural commitment)
- continuation of and small expansion of environmental education and Te Kotahitanga programmes
- continuation of social workers in schools scheme

Weaknesses:

- not enough funding for Maori education, especially kura kaupapa - this needs expanding and resourcing hugely, with support for teacher education and professional development too
- nothing to provide for education of tauwi about Treaty issues - or for dealing with racism in schools (this has never been mentioned in a budget under any government, although it continues to be a pressing issue related to educational underachievement)
- no expansion of social workers in schools programme (in spite of demonstrated success of such programmes for integrated family support)
- no new teacher education initiatives
- no recognition of the need for Decile One and Two schools to be developed as centres of excellence for learning rather than problems
- no vision - no commitment to transformation of schools into centres of community development, supporting families

In summary:

This is not a bad budget, just a disappointing one. We would hope for next year's to include practical support for schools dealing with issues of poverty - eg provision of funds for food, school nurses, social workers etc as of right, not just in selected trial programmes. And I'd like to see New Zealand take a lead in developing innovative approaches to the education of the children of the poor - breaking the cycle of poverty, illness and underachievement through targeted empowerment of families based in schools as community centres.

Charmaine Pountney

charmaine@earthtalk.co.nz

www.earthtalk.co.nz

ph/fx: 64-9-2351375