



EMBARGOED UNTIL WEDNESDAY 9TH OCTOBER

We have the Agenda – now lets start the action

In June 2002 the Government launched its **Agenda for Children** – which aims to put children at the centre of policy making, and end child poverty. CPAG was one of the community groups that welcomed the **Agenda**, but was concerned about the lack of a plan of action.

CPAG is therefore delighted to be a part of **Making it Happen** - a collaborative effort involving the contributions of 14 children's organisations that has resulted in a comprehensive set of recommendations for action.

Most estimates suggest that a fifth of all New Zealanders are in relative poverty, and this includes three in ten children. "Poverty has a huge impact on children. It is well documented that their early development and education can be detrimentally affected by a lack of resources and support" says CPAG Spokesperson Susan St John.

Making it Happen signals a important development in the fight against child poverty, and includes concrete suggestions for government action in the tax and benefit systems. "Long overdue improvements to the outmoded system of family tax credits would make a significant positive difference to families surviving on low incomes, and particularly children" said Ms St John.

"Money is one important part of the solution. Perhaps the most positive aspect of this report is that it looks at children's issues from a holistic point of view. It addresses many of the facets that can affect a child's development –poverty, violence, housing, and government interventions. There is a lot of goodwill towards encouraging the Government to take the next step and implement recommendations in **Making it Happen** as soon as possible.

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