

CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

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3 June 2008

Legal case addresses hole in safety net for poorest children

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) says its legal case highlights a significant hole in NZ's social safety net for children.

The case begins today in the Human Rights Review Tribunal in Wellington. It alleges the In-Work Tax Credit discriminates against 220 000 children, on the basis of work status. This discrimination leaves around 150 000 of them in severe or significant hardship by denying their families at least \$60 per week in support for children.

CPAG says policies like the In-Work Tax Credit fail to provide children with security when income from employment is not available or sufficient. Children's needs are the same whether their parents are in work or not.

CPAG research analyst Donna Wynd says "We need to support all low-income families on the same basis. Children in countries which provide secure support for children and their parents have lower levels of child poverty."

CPAG health spokesperson Dr Nikki Turner agrees. "Poverty during childhood harms children's long-term health and prospects, and has high personal and social costs. We cannot afford to neglect these children's economic wellbeing if we are serious about protecting their health.

CPAG is bringing the case in support of the right of all children in Aotearoa New Zealand to grow up safely, enjoying good health and a rich life.

For updates about the progress of the case, visit

http://www.cpag.org.nz/campaigns/Child_Tax_Credit_IWP.html