

CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

www.cpag.org.nz

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PRESS RELEASE: Room to move against poverty, say child advocates

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is calling on the government to put its latest half-billion dollar windfall surplus to work in children's interests, on Anti-Poverty Day Wednesday 17 October.

"There is something fundamentally wrong with the way we are organizing society when an unprecedented economic boom brings prosperity to many but leaves around twenty percent of children in poverty," says CPAG Director Janfrie Wakim.

The group warns that as economic times get tougher and people not only face cost rises but some even lose their jobs, the worst-off who have children will see their family assistance payments cut in tough new measures entrenched under *Working for Families*.

"All children benefit when we treat all children equally," explains CPAG research analyst Donna Wynd. "If we want to protect children from poverty, all families need to be consistently supported with an adequate weekly payment they can count on. Not one that is only available in full when families can meet a crude paid-work test.

"We are asking government to add the In-Work Payment to the tax credits for all low income families including our poorest children."

"The money is there. CPAG asks the government to remember its 2002 promise to eliminate child poverty," says Wakim.

"We need leaders and citizens who are prepared to back powerful, evidence-based solutions designed to protect all children from needless poverty, because the costs of not doing so are far too high and a child's potential is a terrible thing to waste," concludes Ms Wakim.