



# CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

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## Food in Schools: help make it a reality

CPAG is pleased that the issue of hungry kids has continued to steadily receive media attention, keeping it in the public eye. Our perspective on a range of issues relating to food in schools gained good media coverage in the last quarter of 2012 including items by [Radio NZ](#), [NewsTalkZB](#), [TV3](#), [the Northern Advocate](#) and [the Waikato Times](#). The end of 2012 saw a number of promising developments occurring. [Mana party's 'Feed the Kids' private members bill](#) was drawn from the ballot in November which draws heavily on [CPAG's Hunger for Learning report](#). Further reinforcing CPAG's food in schools recommendations was the [Children's Commissioner's Expert Group on child poverty](#) final report released in December which recommended a government led breakfast in schools programme as an immediate priority. Fonterra also announced it would be extending its Milk in Schools programme nationally.

Particularly encouraging and something which CPAG urges all its supporters, MPs and the wider public to support is the 'Feed the Kids' Bill formally named the Education (Breakfast and Lunch Programmes in Schools) Amendment Bill. This bill seeks to set up breakfast and lunch programmes in all decile one and two schools throughout New Zealand on an opt-in basis, leaving schools with the flexibility to implement practices which work best for them. Schools are also free to continue their existing programmes working with their communities and local businesses.

What the bill will do is ensure that many of our poorest children receive nutritious food regularly on a secure and sustained basis. The current system of ad hoc programmes run by schools, government, corporate sponsorship and charities can mean that many of these children receive breakfast or lunch only a few days per week and these programmes can be highly susceptible to changes in sponsorship arrangements. For example, Countdown's removal of sponsorship from the Red Cross Breakfast programme in 2011 led to the programme ceasing which had previously provided breakfast daily in 61 decile one schools. Moreover, the removal of sponsorship by Countdown also coincided with its new sponsorship of the high profile TV series Master Chef. These schools were then told to apply to the KickStart programme sponsored by Sanitarium and Fonterra which only provides breakfast two days per week.

**Our children deserve better. A national policy initiative that supports hungry children is what is needed. The Feed the Kids bill is an important stepping stone to providing this. At least 61 MPs need to support the bill in order for it to get to select committee stage – where the bill and the wider issue can be discussed in-depth and we the public can have a say via submissions.** While breakfast and lunch may seem ambitious and goes beyond what CPAG has recommended in CPAG's Hunger for Learning report, it does provide the Mana party with some leeway to negotiate if the Bill gets to the select committee stage.

**Join CPAG and many others including: UNICEF, Every Child Counts, PPTA and the NZ Principals' Federation and the NZ Nurses Organisation in supporting this important bill. To find out how you can help please visit:**

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

*"The future of New Zealand depends on the well being of every child"*

- Prof Innes Asher, ONZM

## Say NO to more pokies – choose a healthier future for our kids

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CPAG along with more than twenty other community focused organisations have come together to endorse and promote the Problem Gambling Foundation's No More Pokies Auckland Campaign which seeks a 'sinking lid' policy on pokie machines in Auckland. This means no new licences can be issued and current machines cannot be transferred to a new pub or owner if the venue closes—an effective way to gradually reduce the destructive harm caused by pokies. The campaign will be launched in early 2013 coinciding with Auckland Council reviewing its Class 4 (pub and club pokie machine) gambling policy.

There are many ways you can get involved in the campaign such as writing a submission to Auckland Council, making a verbal submission to the Council, writing letters, volunteering for the campaign and encouraging others to take action too. **Please note: submissions close 28 February.**

To view the campaign video and find out more visit :

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

## Benefit Sanctions hurt kids most

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An important aspect of CPAG's work is monitoring the effect of government policy changes on children. CPAG has expressed much concern over the governments welfare reforms, particularly their punitive approach which places paid work at the centre of policy rather than the well being of children.

Late last year CPAG obtained data under the official information act regarding the number of beneficiaries with dependant children who had their benefits halved for not meeting 'work obligations'. CPAG's press release stating that [Children are bearing the brunt of these punitive sanctions](#) through no fault of their own was well picked up by the media. Watch CPAG's Chair Mike O'Brien discuss this issue further on [TVNZ breakfast](#).

CPAG is currently working on a detailed research report on this matter which will be available in early 2013.

## UPDATE YOUR CPAG CONTACT DETAILS

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CPAG has recently changed its head office telephone number:

**09 302 5260**

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**CPAG thanks its supporters, sponsors, close collaborators, and partner organisations. In particular, thank you to J R McKenzie Trust for its generous funding.**

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## Cardboard House Building Competition

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In November 2012, CPAG along with Anglican Life and Unicef sponsored the Cardboard House Competition organised by the Canterbury Anglican Diocese Social Justice Unit. This innovative education project was designed to raise awareness of the devastating impact cold damp draughty rental housing can have on a child's health using the analogy that living in such conditions is like living in a cardboard house. The initiative was tied to Jazmine Heka's Children against Poverty movement and their petition calling on government to provide a 'Warrant of fitness' for all rental housing. The campaign released media attention including an article in the [Dominion Post](#).

School students from all over the country entered with the overall winners coming from Hamilton Girls High School. Visit <http://www.facebook.com/cardboardHouseCompetition> for some amazing photos and the reply obtained from the Minister for Housing.

Watch Prof Innes Asher, CPAG's child health spokesperson talk to [Campbell Live](#) about the serious and often long term health consequences (including death in adolescence) faced by children growing up in inadequate housing.

## Safe and fair small loans for low income communities

Loan sharks are endemic in New Zealand's low income communities, reaching their highest density in South Auckland. In a "credit society" like New Zealand, consumer access to credit is equivalent to access to utilities, like electricity and water. Consumer loans from 3<sup>rd</sup> tier lenders or "loan sharks" impose an excessive financial burden as there is no interest rate cap with rates legally ranging from 30 to 500%. The reasons for the prevalence of loan sharks are complex, and include poverty; instability in employment; lack of access to mainstream banking options; and lack of financial literacy. A major outcome of reliance on loan sharks for credit is enduring poverty and hardship for those parents and their children.

Providing small, safe, fair no interest loans and improving financial literacy are the social justice objectives of the Nga Tangata Microfinance Trust pilot project in South Auckland. The project is led by CPAG, New Zealand Federation of Family Budgeting Services and New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services in close partnership with Kiwibank and Australia's Good Shepherd Microfinance. Dr M. Claire Dale, a CPAG executive member and chief editor of CPAG's flagship publication: *Left Further Behind*, is also a Director and Trustee of Nga Tangata.

The December release of the Children's Commissioner's Expert Group on Child Poverty final report brought this issue to the public's attention with the recommendation for microfinance loans. Nga Tangata Microfinance Trust featured in the [New Zealand Herald](#) on the [17th](#) and [18th](#) of December.

## 'Bare Your Soles' for Child Poverty Parliament Rally

Coinciding with the release of the final OCC EAG report, [CPAG's Wellington Youth Arm held a child poverty rally](#) outside Parliament on 12 December. Attendees were asked to go barefoot to show the existence of child poverty in our country is unacceptable. Over 100 people bared their soles with many adults and children contributing to the interactive foot print art (see picture) by writing or drawing messages to politicians. CPAG warmly thanks Louis Baker for his wonderful music on the day and guest speakers Deborah Morris Travers from Every Child Counts and Trevor McGlinchey from NZCCSS.



Dr Nikki Turner, CPAG's Public Health Spokesperson and member of the Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Child Poverty speaking at the Bare Your Soles for Child Poverty Rally.



## Children's Commissioner's Expert Group on Child Poverty: Final Report

December 2012 saw the release of this much anticipated report. Dr Nikki Turner, CPAG's public health spokesperson was a member of the Expert Group and also [CPAG made two separate submissions](#), one on a national basis and another focused on the Northland region.

[The recommendations of the report cannot and should not be ignored.](#) While CPAG would have liked to see a firm recommendation to universalise the discriminatory In Work Tax Credit component of Working for Families which we believe to be a practical and just way to reduce child poverty in New Zealand, we are pleased that initial priorities for immediate attention included implementation of a government led food in schools programme for all decile 1-4 schools and introducing microfinance loans with the aim of providing modest low and zero interest loans to help low income families access affordable credit and manage debt.



## A fair go for all kids: Fighting prejudice against 230,000 of our children

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In addition to our extensive research, education and advocacy work, CPAG has been challenging successive governments in court over legislation which unfairly discriminates against 230,000 of New Zealand's poorest children, many of whom live in severe and persistent hardship.

The In Work Tax Credit (part of Working for Families) is a child related family assistance payment that is given only to children of those who are in paid work of required hours and not on a benefit. This means that many low income children – through no fault of their own – do not receive the same financial support as others. The extra \$60+ per week these children miss out on would make a huge difference to their well-being. A child's needs don't change just because the work status of their parent does. We argue that it discriminates against children on the basis of their parents' work status, which is prohibited under the Human Rights Act. Children of those reliant on a benefit have the right to the same support as other low-income children. Removing this discriminatory policy would be one practical and just way to address the appalling level of child poverty in our country.

**Our Goal:**

**\$50,000**

**Amount raised:**

**\$45,000**

**The date of our Court of Appeal hearing has been set for the 28th and 29th of May 2013. Please join us at the Court - your support will be greatly appreciated.**

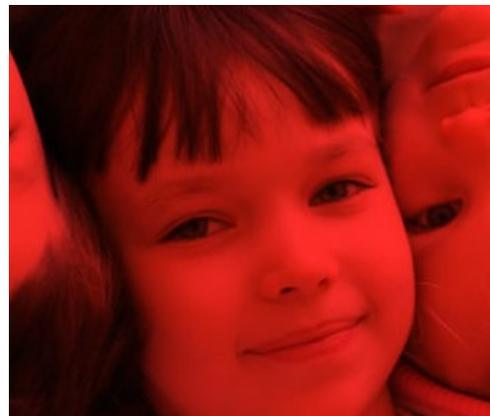
**Thank you to all our wonderful supporters who have generously donated to our Appeal Campaign - we have raised \$45,000 of the \$50,000 needed to continue this important human rights case. Your donations and moral support really mean a lot to our small team—thank you once again. We still have a wee way to go in order to reach our target, so if you have not already, please consider making a donation.**

**DONATE NOW**

**Waiheke Island 'Inside Child Poverty'  
Cinema Screening - March 12**

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Please join us at 7.30pm Tuesday 12 March at the Waiheke Community Cinema, Waiheke Island for a special screening of Bryan Bruce's Inside Child Poverty Documentary with guest speakers Susan St John QSO, CPAG Economics Spokesperson & Frances Joychild QC, CPAG legal counsel. The screening has been set bearing ferry times in mind, so those coming from off the Island can attend. Please email [admin@cpag.org.nz](mailto:admin@cpag.org.nz) for more info.



**An opportunity  
to right the wrong,  
narrowly lost**

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In November, The Green Party's Private Members Bill to extend the In Work Tax Credit to all low income children was narrowly defeated by 61 - 60 votes in Parliament. The Greens, Labour, the Maori Party, Mana and NZ First pledged support for the Bill and it just needed one more vote to reach select committee stage. This would have opened the issue up to public submissions and wider public scrutiny – something the original Working for Families legislation never received. It may have also helped build public awareness that in part, child poverty has been caused by our very badly designed policies and provided a significant opportunity to begin to remedying this.

There was only one vote stopping this Bill going to Select Committee - that of Hon Peter Dunne. Thank you to all CPAG supporters who answered our call and endeavored to persuade MP Peter Dunne to vote in favor of the bill. CPAG wrote multiple times to Mr Dunne, asked for meetings (which were all declined), issued [press releases](#) and was interviewed on [Radio NZ](#). Unfortunately, Mr Dunne still voted against the bill.

While this outcome is extremely disappointing, the support garnered from so many political parties is a step in the right direction.

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***“Imperfect though rights may be, they remain one of the only potentially effective political channels through which the needs of the vulnerable sectors of society may audibly be expressed”*** - Pieterse

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## Publications, Articles & Submissions

- 10 Oct [Office of Children's Commissioner Expert Advisory Group on Child Poverty Submission \(Nationwide\)](#).  
Donna Wynd.
- 10 Oct [Office of Children's Commissioner Expert Advisory Group on Child Poverty Submission \(Northland\)](#).  
Ngairae Rae, Alina Mancini & Sheryl Carne.
- 13 Oct [Letter: Welfare Reforms](#). The Listener. Assoc Prof Mike O'Brien
- 16 Oct [Mike O'Brien: Gathering of data crucial to enrich lives](#), The New Zealand Herald. Assoc Prof Mike O'Brien.
- 1 Nov [Social Security Amendment Bill \(benefit categories and work focus\) Submission](#). Donna Wynd
- 1 Nov [Dopey or what?](#), Article. Assoc Prof Susan St John.

## Forthcoming Research

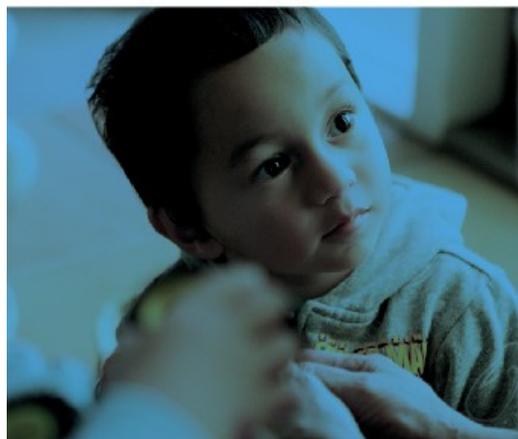
- The links between poverty and child abuse
- Sole Parents on the DPB: Myths and facts
- Charter Schools submission (Education Amendment Bill no.4)
- The impact of benefit sanctions
- Policy monitoring: free after hours health care for children under six years old
- DPB fraud and its impact on children

## A CPAG Blog is coming

CPAG has been working on creating its own blog page in which our experts can engage with a wider audience on a range of issues related to child poverty. In today's electronic world, blogs are an important part of the media landscape - drawing on traditional media outlets but also informing them.

The blog will be up and running in February - please visit:

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



## Press Releases

- 1 Nov [Children's future in Dunne's hands](#)
- 4 Nov [Child related payments to care-givers exclude 230,000 poorest children](#)
- 13 Nov [CPAG challenges Peter Dunne to solve child poverty](#)
- 14 Nov [Child bear the brunt of punitive sanctions](#)
- 27 Nov [Must see child poverty documentary - tonight TV3](#)
- 4 Dec [Safety net whipped away when families need it most](#)
- 6 Dec [Bare your soles for child poverty](#)
- 9 Dec [So many sick Maori and Pacific children - Government must do more](#)
- 11 Dec [No excuse to delay food in schools](#)
- 11 Dec [Children's Commissioner EAG final report: time to act](#)
- 16 Dec [Milk for children great but not enough](#)

**Become one of the 1000's of Kiwis who believe child poverty is NOT inevitable.**

There are many ways YOU can help bring about systemic change.

[www.cpag.org.nz/how-to-help/](http://www.cpag.org.nz/how-to-help/)

Join us in making a difference.

## Public Contact Summary

Type of Exposure (Oct-Dec 2012)	Number
CPAG Articles/Publications/Submissions	4
CPAG Events	2
CPAG Press Releases	11
Guest Presentations	15
Television	3
Print/Online Newspapers & Magazines	20
Other Internet News Sites inc blogs	41
Radio	11
Mentions in Parliament	4
Facebook Likes	2,400
Twitter Followers	500
Total no. of website visits	18,285



## Publication Downloads

## Guest Presentations

- 4 Oct **Tax, benefits and redistribution**, Forum for the future: Between rich and poor—the solutions. Te Papa Inequality Forum, Wellington. Assoc Prof Mike O'Brien.
- 12 Oct **Human rights and children**, Amnesty International Human Rights Day Breakfast. Assoc Prof Susan St John.
- 17 Oct **Child Poverty and the In Work Tax Credit**, Green Party 'Stop child poverty' rally outside Parliament, Wellington. Dr Nikki Turner.
- 19 Oct **Improving the health of New Zealand children: the power of evidence and advocacy**, New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine, Wellington. Prof Innes Asher.
- 23 Oct **Child Poverty in New Zealand**, Bachelor of Social Work guest lecture, Unitec, Auckland. Julie Timmins.
- 18 Nov **Child poverty and child health**, Federation of Graduate Women North Shore branch, Auckland. Prof Innes Asher.
- 20 Nov **Child Poverty in New Zealand**, Mt Eden Village Community Talk series, Auckland. Assoc Prof Susan St John.
- 22 Nov **Child Poverty in New Zealand**, Green Party Pecha Kucha Discussion Series, Auckland. Janfrie Wakim
- 23 Nov **Child Poverty and child health: the facts**, Paediatric Society New Zealand 64th annual scientific meeting, Palmerston North. Prof Innes Asher
- 23 Nov **Child poverty: what can health professionals do?** Paediatric Society New Zealand 64th annual scientific meeting, Palmerston North. Prof Innes Asher
- 23 Nov **Shifting our priorities**, Paediatric Society New Zealand 64th annual scientific meeting, Palmerston North. Alan Johnson.
- 23 Nov **Child poverty in New Zealand**, Inequality Summit, Mangere, Auckland. Janfrie Wakim.
- 10 Dec **Child poverty for health professionals**, Auckland Regional Public Health Service Staff, Auckland. Dr Nikki Turner.

CPAG's most utilised resource continues to be [Left further Behind: how policies fail the Poorest Children in New Zealand](#) with over 2,400 downloads this quarter. Since the reports launch in Sept 2011 over **14,300** have been downloaded in total. A testament to its utility and accessibility.

[Hunger for Learning](#) was downloaded over 850 times over the same period, with total downloads nearly reaching the **5,000** mark.

Interest in [Empty Food Baskets](#) increased in the third quarter with 850 downloads bring its total number of downloads to over **2,200**.

If you would prefer to order hardcopies of our reports [click here](#)

# CHiLD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

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

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