



# Media Release

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## **Time for action: the child poverty figures are a disgrace (latest MSD report)**

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) says the Ministry of Social Development's latest household income report confirms the urgent need for attention to incomes and housing for families with children.

The report shows that the slight improvement in the Gini coefficient (a measure of income inequality) of last year has been reversed, and that income inequality remains a major problem in New Zealand.

CPAG spokesperson Alan Johnson says that the report clearly shows rates of hardship for children have been climbing since the onset of the global financial crisis in 2007.

"Despite claiming to be addressing child poverty, these figures clearly show children have been left behind by this government. After 5 years, it is evident that the little growth we have had enjoyed has not benefited the most needy.

"Not only are children suffering the most, but families on low and middle incomes are going backwards, signalling an increase the depth of poverty. As poverty deepens it becomes more entrenched and much harder to fix. These figures show that the incomes of those at the bottom must increase as a matter of urgency," said Mr Johnson.

CPAG says the Greens' Bill to extend the In-Work Tax Credit is an opportunity for all political parties to come together to make a commitment to improving incomes for the poorest households, and reducing New Zealand's growing inequality.

"The government has a Children's Results Action Plan. It should include concrete measures to improve incomes and housing for children. Its own figures show the need for this is now urgent.

"The report is long and detailed, and will take time to digest. We will be considering the implications of the findings over the next few days," concluded Mr Johnson.

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