

The newsletter of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services



En gā kaihāpai i ō tātou kaumātua, i ō tatou whānau rawakore huri noa i ngā motu, nei rā te mihi nui ki a koutou mā i te wā Kirihimete kei te haere. Mā te Atua koutou e tiaki.

To those who support our older people, our families in need Christmas Greetings to you all. May God protect and bless you.

Warmest Christmas wishes from us all at the NZCCSS Secretariat

Our Office will be closed from 19 December 2016 to 13 January 2017

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Child Poverty Reduction: can't duck the hard decisions

As we journey towards Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Jesus who brought such joy and hope to the world, the children behind the numbers in the latest Child Poverty Monitor (CPM) Report 2019 are at the forefront of our minds here at NZCCSS.

The annual CPM report is a partnership between the Office of the Children's Commissioner, Otago University's Child and Youth Epidemiology Service and the J R McKenzie Trust.

The CPM Report identifies 148,000 children (13 percent) living in homes which cannot afford basic necessities, while 6% of children (approximately 65,000) experience severe material hardship meaning these homes can afford even less of the basics. This report shows no obvious sign of improvement to the lives of children living at the hard end of poverty. As Commissioner Andrew Beacroft said: *there has been no real change, not better or worse.* Transformation

we are learning takes longer than one term in government.

The government however hasn't been resting on its laurels. Last year a \$5.5 billion Families Package was introduced to lift low to middle income households. The impact of this initiative was not captured in the timeframe of the 2019 CPM report, but the release of the first government evaluation of the Families Package indicated some positive impacts for some families. 2019 also saw the release of the Child and Youth

Wellbeing Strategy setting out a plan to make Aotearoa New Zealand the best place in the world to be a child. The strategy sits alongside the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 which requires child poverty reduction targets to be set.

These initiatives combined with the Families Package are a good start but change to the welfare system is at the heart of achieving the Government's goals for reducing child poverty. Without significant lifts in income for families and

- 1 million New Zealanders warmed by the Winter Energy Payment.
- 36,000 families bank the Best Start Payment in first year.
- 6,000 more families received the Family Tax Credit, 220,600 in total. They receive an increase from an average of \$117 to \$157 a week for Inland Revenue clients, and from an average of \$147 to \$188 a week for MSD clients.
- People receiving the Accommodation Supplement got an average increase from \$71 to \$98 a week.
- 13,500 carers receiving the new Clothing Allowance.

Source: Families Package Modelling Report 2019. Ministry of Social Development.

CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION: CAN'T DUCK THE HARD DECISIONS

whānau reliant on welfare support, especially those on the very lowest incomes (representing 65,000 children), child poverty rates will remain high.

The intergenerational damage done to families and whānau and communities by the 1991 benefit cuts is uncontested across public health academics, public policy analysts, economists, social and health service workers, community workers, and politicians across the spectrum both current and retired (notably Jim Bolger). This social damage arose out of inadequate income to provide necessary food, stable housing, full participation in community life, and other basic material needs essential to human and spiritual development.

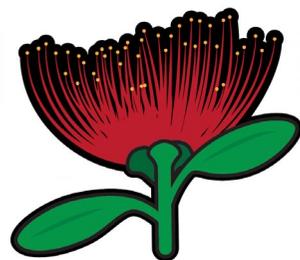
The 2019 CPM report identifies over 30 percent of families and whānau on the lowest incomes are spending more than half of their incomes on housing costs. The Children's Commissioner Andrew Becroft said *families were not able to keep up with the "ever-increasing costs of daily living, like rent and putting food on the table"*. For decades this has been a theme raised by NZCCSS social service members. And as each new report on poverty is rolled out, members working

in our communities report a feeling of déjà vu. When will things change for our poorest families?

Cautious steps simply won't address decades of poverty. NZCCSS, the Children's Commissioner, the Child Poverty Action Group and many other child advocate groups are calling for bold action now. Increasing income levels, including benefits and expanding the state housing supply to provide lower cost quality housing are two critical changes discussed, alongside recommendations proposed in the [WEAG Report](#).

We end 2019 feeling cautiously optimistic the children behind the numbers in the 2019 CPM Report will not be represented in the 2020 CPM report, and that these same children are living in a secure, decent, affordable home, and have parents with sufficient income to provide all of the basics, including a special Christmas lunch and gift under the tree.

Christmas begins with Christ and all the love and hope Jesus brought to the world. At NZCCSS our deepest hope is that every child can access basic material necessities to thrive, with no exceptions, and can grow up feeling Aotearoa New Zealand truly is the best place in the world to be a child.



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Christmas is about food and family, but not for everyone

Helen Robinson, GM of Social Services at Auckland City Mission talks about food insecurity.

A number of years ago, as an employee of the Auckland City Mission, I worked the 'queues': The lines of hundreds of people who would gather daily outside the Mission in the weeks up to Christmas, seeking support for food and presents for their family.

As an Auckland City Mission employee, I see every day, the depth of poverty in our city and am very aware of the difficulty many people have in regularly putting food on the table. Over the last few years, the need has increased. Our most recent information shows a 40% year to year increase in demand for emergency food parcels. I couldn't understand why, in Aotearoa New Zealand – this beautiful land of ours, people simply didn't have enough food and were forced to seek support to feed themselves and their families. The sight of people lining up day after day fueled my passion and set my on my own journey to investigate food insecurity, what that means and how it impacts our community. Food insecurity is about more than hunger. Hunger is a physiological experience caused by a lack of food – a person can feel hungry if they

are running late and skip breakfast. Food insecurity is about not having enough appropriate food. And, as we see at the Mission, there are many Kiwis experiencing this on a daily basis. So we set about understanding this reality. We undertook research, with community partners and the University of Auckland. We surveyed over 650 people who were accessing our foodbank services and what we uncovered was a clear relationship between food insecurity, emotional wellbeing, and psychological distress. We learned that food insecurity is intrinsically linked to poverty and causes distress and reduced wellbeing. We found that nearly 40% of those surveyed have struggled to access enough appropriate food for them and their household for two years or more.

So why was this happening in our country? The reality is, once housing costs are paid, low-income individuals and families are often forced to choose between buying food and meeting other essential costs. When there's no money for food, people either eat poorly or miss meals completely. They have no choice but to

rely on food banks to provide them with enough food. We estimate that approximately 10% of New Zealand's population is affected – that's about 500,000 people. Overwhelmingly, it is women who are bearing this burden, and particularly women raising children alone, Māori and Pasifika peoples.

We have a way to go to understand the effects that food insecurity in New Zealand is having on our community in terms of health and wellness. We know the answer lies in us working together, and are proud of the collective partnership we are part of with the Council of Christian Social Services, The Salvation Army, The Wellington City Mission, Vision West and the Christchurch City Mission and others – *Kore Hiakai, together we are calling for change and redress*. We need an annual survey, we need a national strategy, we need to raise income levels, we need to ensure people have enough appropriate food and receive that in a way that is truly mana enhancing.

For more information about *Shining the Light on Food Insecurity in New Zealand*, follow the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxyjgytj>

Inequality and Poverty: Summary of the 2019 Household Incomes in New Zealand

Max Rashbrooke

The Ministry of Social Development's key annual report, *Household incomes in New Zealand: Trends in indicators of inequality and hardship 1982 to 2018*, by Bryan Perry, makes for depressing if not surprising reading.

Economic inequality remains at the very high level the country was left with in the late 1990s following 15 years of market-based reforms. Very modest progress under subsequent Labour-led government appears to have been undone by National-led governments.

Poverty rates for the general population and children remain high. Relative poverty rates virtually all increased 2008–17. In contrast, material deprivation decreased. Nonetheless, the overall story is the continuing absence of substantial action against economic inequality and poverty, both of which damage individuals and the social fabric alike.

Read Max's full summary of the Household Incomes [here](#).

Significant and Enduring Inequality Needs Urgent Action

Progress Towards Equality – discussion paper

Paul Barber, Senior Social Policy Analyst, Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, Salvation Army

New Zealand is making some progress towards fairness and equality but urgent Government action is needed to counter significant and enduring unfairness that remains. That is a key message of the discussion paper *Progress Towards Equality* released in early December by the Social Policy and Parliamentary

The poorest households, which include some 120,000 children, need at least another \$112 per week to reach adequate income levels.

Unit (SPPU) of The Salvation Army, Te Ope Whakaora.

“Making more progress towards equality will need to include the Government setting a target to reduce income inequality, as has already been done for reducing child poverty,” said SPPU social policy analyst Paul Barber.

“Further action by Government to



directly lift incomes for those who are most in need is an essential part of wider work to change the structures of our housing, welfare, justice and other social systems to make them more inclusive.”

The poorest households, which include some 120,000 children, need at least another \$112 per week to reach adequate income levels. SPPU Director Ian Hutson commented that the “Families Package is helping

New Zealand is making some progress towards fairness and equality but urgent Government action is needed.

but the Government needs to do more for those households in deepest poverty.”

Actively involving those most affected by the housing crisis in decision making is another essential step

towards equality and inclusion, as is adopting Te Ao Māori principles into policy framework.

The paper is the latest in a series by SPPU highlighting housing, the criminal justice system and income and tax rates as areas where not enough is being done to promote equality in Aotearoa. The *Progress Towards Equality* report can be accessed at:

www.salvationarmy.org.nz/towardsequality

Is there some more text I could take out as a pull quote?



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

Tena ra koutou katoa, Nei te mihi mahana ki a koutou nga tauira o te Kunenga ki Purehuroa

As the end of year approaches, it's a good time to think about where you are going with your practice and your career. Considering further study with the School of Social Work at Massey University may be a key strategy to supporting your future. Massey offers the [Post Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Social Work](#), the [Master of Social Work](#), the [Post Graduate Diploma in Social Services Supervision](#), and the [Doctor of Social Work](#) through block and distance education.

Massey's programmes are designed to be studied through distance learning to fit in with your commitments. contact the Massey Contact Centre for more information on enrolment and general questions at 0800 627739. You can also contact Lareen Cooper, Associate Head of School – L.Cooper@massey.ac.nz or myself – for more information or to arrange a time to discuss your study plans.

Child Uplift – Oranga Tamariki Internal review released

The Oranga Tamariki (OT) internal review, into the [attempted uplift of a child](#) in the Hawkes Bay earlier this year, was released in early November 2019. The report was conducted internally but included Ngāti Kahungunu oversight through their appointment to the investigation team of social work educator and leader [Shayne Walker](#) as an independent person. The investigators released what the media called a damning report into the practices used in this attempted child removal. The [report](#) identified, “There were legitimate concerns for the safety of the baby that warranted OT involvement with the parents and whānau” and listed six areas of major areas of deficiency. These were:

- There was an over reliance on historical information and limited work to understand the current situation with the whānau
- The options of parental, whānau, hapū or iwi care should have been more fully explored
- Engagement with this whānau should have been built from a recognition of the values of significance to whānau Māori and the strength inherent in their culture
- The likely impact of prior trauma on the parents' behavior was not

sufficiently well understood and compromised decision making. Opportunities to avoid retraumatization were missed

- Communication and engagement were not effective in building quality relationships with the mother, father, whānau and NGO partners
- Mechanisms to ensure the appropriate exercise of OT duties and powers were in place but did not operate effectively.

In response Minister Martin [said](#), “What came to light in this review was that the practice standards that should have been applied were not applied by the particular social worker in this case”. She went on to [state](#), “In addition, I want Oranga Tamariki to:

- review the subsequent child provisions to make sure there are no unintended consequences from these. I also want to ensure that there is a path back for those parents who have turned their lives around.
- improve the internal complaints process, and
- to drive culture change and better support the frontline.

Unfortunately, since then the Minister has announced the “case in [Hastings is just one case](#), and not

representative of other similar cases”. During a Newshub TV interview she went on to say Oranga Tamariki has reviewed 153 of the 300-odd Section 78s (uplift without notice cases), and they have found “no other case like this case”.

It may be true that there are no other subsequent child uplifts and no-notice removals of children exactly like this (but) there will be many cases where a different outcome could have been achieved if a different approach and focus had been taken. NZCCSS calls for an approach that seeks to work proactively with parents, families, mātua and whānau and the wider family and whānau settings to ensure children are supported to stay with their whānau. We need to work much harder and much earlier with families and whānau within their communities, this will require greater resourcing of NGOs and more support for community initiatives rather than a focus on the removal of children and their subsequent care. In earlier commentary NZCCSS has called for change that, “... will see the focus being on supporting families to be strong and the removal of children being an absolute last resort, not an everyday practice”.

Good news for tenants

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has a new option to help people keep their homes when overdue rent has put their tenancy at risk. A new Rent Arrears Assistance payment is now available. The payment is intended to help some people who don't qualify for other MSD rent arrears support, and risk losing their home because of overdue rent. Go to the [Work and Income website](#) to find out more.



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Have your say on the Dementia Action Plan

Don't miss your last chance to tell us what you think about the draft NZ Dementia Action Plan. Your feedback will help provide a clear view of how we can improve the provision of help and support for people with dementia and care partners. So if you haven't told Alzheimers NZ what you think yet, they would love to hear from you.

[Read the Plan and complete the short survey](#) before Friday 31st January.

Who will care for you in the future?

What really matters to you and who knows the answer to that in your family or whānau? If you can't answer that or are not sure, it might be a good idea to sit down and think about it.

In an unpredictable world, we plan for many unknown things; we insure our houses, cars and even our lives, but how often do we think about our future health and well being?

Advance care planning is a way to help you think about, talk about and share what matters to you for your future health care. Having an advance care plan will help you and those around you understand what is important to you, what treatment and care you would like or would prefer not to have, and who can make decisions on your behalf if you're not able to.

Advance care planning an empowering process for Noel

Noel Tiano says his work as a hospital chaplain, social worker and hospice volunteer showed him the importance of having conversations with loved ones about his wishes for end-of-life care.

Noel is one of six New Zealanders who feature in Kia kōrero | Let's talk, a campaign that encourages people to plan for their future health care,

with a focus on what matters to them.

It features the personal stories of six New Zealanders at different stages of life and wellness.

Noel, manages a number of health issues, including fibromyalgia, which causes joint pain, stiffness and fatigue.

Although he expects to live many more years, he says completing an advance care plan that details his values and wishes for his end-of-life care was empowering and has given him a sense of freedom.

Noel says his anxieties about his end-of-life stage are more about the possibility of pain, discomfort, or other side effects of treatment.

'I'd like to reframe hope not in terms of longevity but rather hope that pain can be manageable and that access to quality palliative care services will be available. As far as the actual death itself, I've come to terms with it. All of us are going to die and we need to embrace our



mortality as part of life. To have that opportunity for one's wishes to be honoured during that very tender moment, provides a way for death to be healing.'

His end-of-life care wishes includes having his wife and two sons around him and, if possible, his cat and to have his favourite 70s music playing.

'Also, I'd like to have a memorial when I'm still around, so I can hear

all the nice things people have to say about me.'

Noel says writing his advance care plan has been a process that began in the mid-1990s.

'I lived near San Francisco in the early 1990s and was a hospice volunteer when many were dying of AIDS. The importance of them being able to have conversations about how they wanted to be treated, their values and what was important to them prompted me to think about my own end-of-life care, because it can happen at any time.'

He's had several conversations about his wishes with his two sons, who were reluctant to discuss it at first, but have now come around.

'We have to normalise these things and talk about death and dying freely so that it loses its stigma.'

You can watch Noel's Story [here](#). Make your advance care plan today.

Order posters in English, te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan and both simplified and traditional Chinese [here](#).

For further information contact Clare O'Leary, ACP Promotions Coordinator, [Health Quality & Safety Commission](#)

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NZCCSS Annual Report



As the end of the year approaches NZCCSS Council has met for its AGM and to reflect on the 2018/19 Financial Year. The NZCCSS Annual Report highlights the wide range of activities and focus areas of the Council over this period. The current year, 2019, is the 50th year since Council was formally formed and celebrating this significant milestone has been a theme for the year. In his report on the work of Council, President Lt. Colonel Ian Hutson, made the following comment,

“The Council has sought to carry out its work based on a hope that is more robust than something akin to wishful thinking. It is based on the idea that somehow God is involved in our world in a positive way and that therefore it is realistic to be optimistic about the possibility of positive change in some of the most trenchant of social problems.”

The first year of the operation of the Labour-led coalition with NZ First and with the Green Party in a confidence and supply agreement led to a high workload for Council, its Policy Groups and the Secretariat. As in many government first-term years there was a high level of consultation, working parties and new legislation. In the report Executive Officer, Trevor McGlinchey, said,

“The staff of the Secretariat, ably supported by the subject experts, the volunteers from the NZCCSS networks who contribute to the work of our three Policy Groups (Child and Family, Impacts of Poverty and Exclusion, Services for Older People), have responded to a very busy workload with passion and expertise.”

The commencement of Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger, a collective approach led by NZCCSS members, The Salvation Army, VisionWest and the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch City Missions along with NZCCSS has been another highlight. This group is working to create an Aotearoa New Zealand that is food secure and where all of us will have sufficient nutritious food. Through the three hui hosted by the group a wider group of food support organisations have expressed interest in being part of this collective and we look forward to engaging with them in the future.

Overall NZCCSS had a very busy and productive year, focussing on the Strategic Imperatives set out in its Strategic Plan, Hope, Positive Change, Lived Experience, Voice and Sustainability.

A copy of the Annual Report can be ordered from admin@nzccss.org.nz

Human Rights Commission Report In-Work Poor Households in New Zealand



Human Rights Commission
Te Kāhui Tika Tangata

A new report *In-Work Poverty* by Auckland University of Technology's NZ Work Research Institute, commissioned by the Human Rights Commission, used census data from 2013 to identify over 50,000 working poor households (7% of total population) in New Zealand. The report provides useful insight into which population groups are more at risk of in-work poverty, and while it raises few surprises – single parents, children, Māori and Pacific peoples, ethnic minorities, households with low educational attainment, disabled people, and renters, have an increased risk of in-work poverty – the report is a reminder not all work lifts people out of poverty, an area covered in depth in the [WEAG Report](#).
Spotlight on key finding in the report

- Amongst working households, the proportion of households in poverty is 7.0 percent as at March 2013. There has been very little change in in-work poverty rates between 2007 and 2017.
- 7 percent of adult females are associated with an in-work poor household, while for men this number is 6.6 percent.
- 10 percent of children living in working households live in poverty, compared with 7.2 percent of adults in working households.
- Role of Working for Families tax credits and the Accommodation Supplement make a sizable impact on in-work poverty prevalence. Without both income sources, the in-work poverty rate rises from 7.0 percent to 9.2 percent. The biggest impact is for single-parent households where this rate rises to 21.6 percent without these two income sources.
- Households with at least one adult with prioritised ethnicity of Pacific peoples experience the highest in-work poverty rate compared with households of other ethnicities.
- Households with at least one disabled adult have a higher rate of in-work poverty of 9.5 percent compared with households without a disabled adult at 6.6 percent.
- The lowest in-work poverty rate is observed for households comprising a couple without children (4.8 percent), followed by a couple with child(ren) (6.3 percent) and single adults (6.4 percent). Higher rates exist for single-parent (12.3 percent) and multi-family households (9.6 percent).
- Having a second worker in the household reduces the in-work poverty risk substantially. For example, for couples with children and only one adult working, the in-work poverty rate is 13.5 percent; this falls to 1.9 percent if there is more than one adult working.

New report on equality and wellbeing of disabled people their families and whanau: Shining a light on inequality

Sam Murray, National Policy Coordinator, CCS Disability Action

Amartya Sen is a famous Nobel-Prize winning economist and philosopher. Sen thought that addressing disability-related disadvantage should be central to work on wellbeing and creating a fairer society. Yet he was amazed that it often was not. Disability is treated as a side topic or ignored entirely. I find this is often the case in New Zealand. In many non-disability specific initiatives, there is just a mention or two of disability without any wider context.

The excuse is frequently because there is a lack of data on disability. This is only partially true. We do lack data in plenty of areas, but there is a considerable amount of New Zealand disability data that is unpublished and/or under analysed. This report uses this data to shine a light on some of the inequality disabled people and their family and whānau experience.

Crucially, this data also shows that this inequality can be reduced. Inequality is significantly lower amongst disabled people over



65 in key areas. Many disabled people over 65 would not have faced disability-related barriers for much of their life. As a result, they are likely to have more financial assets as well as higher social and human capital. This means if we can remove barriers and provide more support, inequality for disabled people under 65 can be lowered to the same amount.

The end goal should be the full elimination of the inequality disabled people experience. As a first step, a measurable and achievable short-term goal is the reduction of inequality amongst disabled people under 65 to the same level as disabled people over 65.

Read the report [here](#).

Budget Policy Statement 2020

The government is building up to its 2nd Wellbeing Budget with the release of the Government's Budget Policy Statement (BPS) 2020 setting out the main priorities for the 2020 Budget.

Finance Minister Grant Robertson has identified [Budget 2020 priorities](#) as a continuation of the 2019 Wellbeing Budget priorities on the grounds these issues are too complex to solve in one budget.

- **Just Transition** – Supporting New Zealanders in the transition to a climate-resilient, sustainable, and low-emissions economy
- **Future of Work** – Enabling all New Zealanders to benefit from new technologies and lift productivity through innovation
- **Māori and Pacific** – Lifting Māori and Pacific incomes, skills, and opportunities

“These priorities focus on long-term challenges and opportunities. They cannot be resolved in one budget, therefore they continue to be the core of the priorities in the 2020 Wellbeing Budget.”

- **Child Wellbeing** – Reducing child poverty and improving child wellbeing
- **Physical and Mental Wellbeing** – Supporting improved health outcomes for all New Zealanders



So far so good. However, the Ministers [second press release](#) on how the government will spend its \$12 billion (forecast) surpluses across four years to 2023/24 has already raised a few eyebrows. Promised welfare reforms do not appear on the list alongside major (and necessary) infrastructural upgrades (hospitals, classrooms, and the superfund).

In the [Child Poverty Action Group \(CPAG\) press release](#), Susan St John, Child Poverty Action Group, astutely notes ‘changes to the welfare system’ appears on page 79 of the document ([The Half Year Economic and Fiscal Update 2019](#)) where along with the words “Consideration of other recommendations is ongoing”.

The [WEAG report](#) was a significant piece of work identifying key recommendations to restore dignity and mana to people living on benefits. A key question going forward to the 2020 Wellbeing Budget is how will the [WEAG report](#) be prioritised?

Legislation update

Minister of State Services Chris Hipkins has introduced a Bill into Parliament that will repeal The State Sector Act 1988 and replace it with a new Public Service Act. Chris Hipkins says “*The State Sector Act 1988 was designed for its time, and since then there have been major social, economic and technological changes, many of them on a global scale. It is no longer possible for a single agency to fix the really big and complex problems New Zealand faces today*”.

It is also not possible for a single reformed public sector to fix the “really big and complex problems” in society without the knowledge and expertise of the NGO sector. Any cross-agency board or venture established must include representatives from community and iwi organisations. NZCCSS will be following the development of this legislation with interest.

End of Life Choice Bill

The third and final reading of the End of Life Choice Bill to allow terminally ill adults to request a medically-assisted death, has been passed in Parliament by 69 votes to 51. A majority referendum result at the next General Election is needed before the legislation can be enacted. Refer to the September 2019 Kete Kupu for references to the Anglican Social Justice Resources on the deeper and broader issues that will come into play if the ‘End of Life Choice Bill’ is legislated, along with other useful links.

Kete Kupu Word Basket

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