

## Media release

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### Focus on child poverty in Aotearoa NZ on Poverty Day

Ahead of World Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October), Barnardos New Zealand is reminding New Zealanders that the majority of poor people in New Zealand are children. Ending child poverty requires the support of all political parties.

“It is disgraceful that 230,000 children, or 22 per cent<sup>1</sup>, live in poverty in New Zealand. Poverty can lead to developmental delay and illness. It impairs a child’s health and increases the chances of abuse and neglect. New Zealanders need to ask whether we are prepared to live with the consequences of leaving so many children marginalised through poverty,” says Barnardos Chief Executive Murray Edridge.

“We need all political parties and election candidates to commit to ending child poverty in New Zealand. Priority actions<sup>2</sup> include increasing abatement thresholds in the tax and social support system to better support families on low incomes, providing more affordable, accessible and suitable housing for families with children, setting targets for poverty reduction and monitoring progress.

“Addressing child poverty needs to be a national priority so that all children – including those in the single-parent and beneficiary homes that are most likely to suffer poverty – have every opportunity to develop to their full potential”, concludes Mr Edridge.

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<sup>1</sup> (The measure used is 60% of the median income after housing costs)

<sup>2</sup> Comprehensive recommendations for policies that will make a difference are contained in *A Fair Go For All Children: Actions to Address Child Poverty* presented to all Members of Parliament in August this year and available on the Barnardos NZ website [www.barnardos.org.nz](http://www.barnardos.org.nz)