

Media statement
29 April 2008

Barnardos New Zealand welcomes the report "Left Behind" published yesterday by The Child Poverty Action Group and it supports the call for an end to child poverty in New Zealand by 2020.

"It is a simple fact that children raised in poverty suffer negative impacts on their health and development that can stay with them for a lifetime. New Zealand needs an agreed standard to measure poverty and Barnardos would like to see the adoption of a poverty line set at 60% of the median household income after housing costs," says Murray Edridge Chief Executive.

"In addition to an agreed poverty line, we need targets for poverty reduction and policies that will enable us to reach those targets.

"The report released last night calls for a much larger slice of the national health budget to go to children, and a range of other measures to help mitigate the impacts of poverty. We support public investment being directed to children because it makes good economic sense to do so, and it is also the just thing to do.

"Barnardos also urges the Government to consider urgently the disparate assistance provided to children of beneficiaries compared with those children with parents in work. It is simply not fair to discriminate on the basis of the work status of parents. Failure to provide adequate assistance to those children will cost us dearly in the long-term," concluded Mr Edridge.

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