

CHiLD
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Newsletter

Kia ora

How are you faring? We know that many are feeling disheartened as news of policies that will sweep more children into poverty rolls in, and we are sharing in those feelings. But we are taking solace in our community and in our collective ability to hold the government to account. We are also concentrating on what we are best at: research and advocacy.

My name is Georgie Crow and I have recently re-joined CPAG as the Communications Advisor. I am proud to share with you our latest research and media highlights.

If you are on social media, please follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Your likes and shares help to amplify our voice to those who need to hear it.

With much gratitude and hope,

Georgie

New rental research

In July we released the latest in a series on [rental housing and affordability](#). The research, undertaken by Greg Waite, found

significant declines in affordable rentals for low-income working families in 12 out of 16 regions between 2018 and 2023.

We are grateful to Greg for his important mahi highlighting the need for greater monitoring of rental stock and increased public housing builds. As he stated:

'The government must continue to build public housing at scale. Leaving the supply of affordable housing "to the markets" like this means leaving house prices and rents to a particular type of market, one designed to extract more profit from homeowners, renters and government tax subsidies. New Zealand needs better policies from local and national governments to ensure there is enough affordable housing and protect families from being trapped in poverty by their housing costs.'

As well as discussing his research on the RNZ Panel, it was also picked up by [Susan Edmunds \(RNZ\)](#), [The Spinoff](#), [bFM](#), [Waatea News](#), and the [Otago Daily Times \(twice!\)](#).

Food security research

Last week we were also pleased to tautoko [research](#) completed by GP Dr Joanna Strom that showed the cost of groceries has risen at historically high rates over the past six years, making it virtually impossible for low-income families to feed their children a healthy diet.

Dr Strom modelled the costs of a weekly food basket that met healthy eating guidelines for children. She found those food-basket prices increased by 35 percent between 2018-2023. That figure increased to 54% when the costs of additional food needed for growing kids was taken into account.

We are proud to say this work was advised by two long-term CPAG members, Dr Elaine Rush and Dr Innes Asher, and that CPAG income

adequacy modelling was used to show the household deficit related to food.

In collaboration with the University of Auckland, AUT, and Health Coalition Aotearoa, Dr Strom's research was widely picked up by the media, including on Breakfast television.



You can watch some clips of the program [here](#).

CPAG commentary

Finally, CPAG's voice has continued to be sought after on a range of recent policy changes.

CPAG EO, Sarita Divis, was interviewed on [RNZ](#) about the government's move to quietly reduce the child poverty reduction targets.

POLITICS / INEQUALITY

Minister defends lowered child poverty targets as 'achievable'

10:10 am today

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Photo: RNZ / Samuel Blakome

lesser target."



child_poverty_action_group_nz
Original audio



child_poverty_action_group_nz We are shocked that the govt has chosen to quietly soften the targets for reducing child poverty.

The previous govt set a target of reducing the children in living in material hardship at 9%. This govt has quietly increased that to 11%. They did this without any public statement.

In fact, they did this without mentioning it to us face-to-face at a meeting we had with the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction Louise Upston just last week. As you would expect, the topic of child poverty reduction targets was front and centre of the conversation.

To say we are shocked and bitterly disappointed is an understatement.

Our EQ, Sarita Divis was interviewed on RNZ this morning. Here is some of what she had to say.

Edited · 2w

View insights

Not approved



Liked by drbexgraham and 111 others
July 26

Add a comment...

Post

Our [policy recommendations](#) for food security were highlighted by the [Spinoff](#).



The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) [released a policy briefing](#) ahead of the 2023 election, with some more ideas for reducing food insecurity in Aotearoa, especially for children. Some of the suggestions included funding food programmes for the school holidays, when free school meals aren't available, increasing the ability to buy or get food from non-supermarket options like markets and community gardens, and to work with iwi, hapū and local communities to create regional and national food security policies. The briefing also notes that other measures to solve poverty as a whole, like ensuring that everyone has a liveable income, will reduce food insecurity. This would also help New Zealand meet its targets for the UN Sustainable Development Goals which include ending poverty, ending hunger, ensuring good wellbeing for all and reducing inequality.

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And CPAG spokesperson Jane Lee, highlighted some of our [concerns](#) over newly announced benefit sanctions.

Q BENEFIT SANCTIONS



She said there needed to be an understanding that someone needed to look after children.

"It's individualising the problem to say parents need to get out and work. Paid employment is four weeks' leave but there are 12 weeks of school holidays to cover. Our whole employment system, school system, is not set up structurally to support paid employment. We need to move away from this rhetoric that people don't want to work - they do but they want to make sure their children are cared for as well."



Read full article at RNZ



Looking forward, we are strategically assessing where to focus our research efforts. One thing is certain: we will be requesting more information from Minister Upston's office about the development of these recent policies. Specifically, what advice she sought regarding whether more children would be pushed into poverty.

Thank you once again for your support. You have enabled CPAG to achieve incredible impact over the past 30 years, and together we will continue until all children in Aotearoa can flourish, free from poverty.

Mauri ora,

Georgie

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