

The Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty

Terms of Reference

Background

1. The extent of child poverty in New Zealand has been well documented. Approximately 20 percent of New Zealand children aged 0-17 live below the income poverty line.¹ Of these children, Māori and Pacific children are particularly over-represented. Children living in poverty experience widely disproportionate levels of social deprivation, poor living standards, poor health outcomes and lower educational attainment.
2. Disadvantage continues throughout an individual's life, particularly in terms of employability, income and mental health issues. As a country we compare poorly in international comparisons with similar nations regarding child poverty and wellbeing outcomes.
3. The Children's Commissioner has identified child poverty as one of his key priority areas for his five-year term.
4. To generate solutions to reduce child poverty in New Zealand, the Commissioner will appoint an advisory group of experts in the various fields relevant to the issue. The advice they provide to him will be furnished to the Government under s12(1)(k) of the Children's Commissioner Act 2003.

Role and Mandate of the Children's Commissioner

5. Under the Children's Commissioner Act 2003, the Children's Commissioner is an independent Crown entity with the statutory mandate to advocate for the advancement of children's rights, interests and welfare.

Scope

6. The Commissioner is seeking advice from the Expert Advisory Group that:
 - Takes a broad definition of child poverty. Advice will not be limited to income poverty, notwithstanding its central importance to the issue. A wider approach examining overall living standards, access to important services and social outcomes will be required;
 - Takes a systemic approach to defining the causes and consequences of child poverty;
 - In addressing the above matters, identifies the specific needs of Māori and Pacific children;

¹ based on a threshold of 60 percent of median household income

- Draws on the best available local and international evidence, including the range of actions taken in similar countries;
- Proposes a series of short-term actions to reduce child poverty and its effects. Such actions need to be realistic, pragmatic, effective, and take into consideration current and likely future fiscal constraints; and
- Proposes a longer-term strategy for reducing child poverty and its negative effects.

Purpose

7. An Expert Advisory Group on Solutions for Child Poverty ('the Advisory Group') will be established to develop and produce advice to the Commissioner on solutions to reduce child poverty and its effects. It will be supported by a small Secretariat.
8. Members of the Advisory Group will be recognized experts, drawn from a range of professional and disciplinary backgrounds and invited to participate by the Commissioner.
9. A Chair or Co-chairs of the Advisory Group will be also appointed by the Commissioner.
10. The Advisory Group will be tasked with making recommendations that:
 - Identify cost effective, readily achievable short term actions to reduce child poverty and its effects; and
 - Identify longer term measures, including legislative changes, designed to reduce child poverty and its effects.

Reporting timeframe and time commitments

11. The Advisory Group report must be completed and published by **Friday 14 December 2012**. An interim report will be provided to the Commissioner six months from the Advisory Group's first meeting.
12. The Advisory Group will meet in Wellington monthly. Each meeting will last one day. Each Advisory Group member will also contribute, as able, to the drafting or presentation of expert background papers and contribute to the interim and final reports.
13. In addition to these meetings, the Advisory Group will engage in community meetings to receive community feedback.

Voices of children and young people

14. It is essential that children's views and voices are included in this process. The voices and views of children and young people will be facilitated by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and be made available for the Advisory Group's consideration.

The Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty

Members of Expert Group

Co-Chairs

Professor Jonathan Boston

School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington

Jonathan Boston holds a Personal Chair in Public Policy at the School of Government, Victoria University. He was the Director of the Institute of Policy Studies and has published widely in the fields of public management, tertiary education, social policy, comparative government, New Zealand politics and climate change policy. He has been a member of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission.

Dr Tracey McIntosh

Sociology Department, Nga Pae o te Maramatanga, University of Auckland

Tracey McIntosh is the Joint Director of the Centre of Research Excellence Nga Pae o te Maramatanga and Head of the Sociology Department. She has a strong record of research in processes of marginalisation and addressing issues that concern Maori. She also undertakes research looking at extreme death experiences (such as war).

Members

Phil O'Reilly

Chief Executive, Business New Zealand

Phil O'Reilly is Chief Executive of BusinessNZ, New Zealand's largest business advocacy group, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes. The group's goal is New Zealand's prosperity through successful business. Phil works with government and other key decision makers on issues of concern to business and the economy.

James Prescott

Senior Lecturer in Accounting & Programme Leader Accounting, Auckland University of Technology

James Prescott is a senior lecturer in accounting and programme leader for the accounting component of the Bachelor of Business degree. His research interests are in SMEs and Micro-enterprise business formation and sustainability and investigating business sustainability among Pacific island owned and/or operated businesses in New Zealand. He has and currently serves on a number of community and government ministerial boards and trusts and is a director on a number of small companies. James has extensive networks with the Pacific island community across a number of sectors including, education, health broadcasting and commerce. Mr Prescott is a Tongan born researcher and is fluent in both Tongan and English.

Professor Richie Poulton

*Director Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit (DMHDRU),
Preventive and Social Medicine, Dunedin School of Medicine
Co-Director, National Centre for Lifecourse Research, University of Otago
Dunedin Study Theme Leader (Cardiovascular Health)*

His major areas of interest and research are developmental psychopathology, gene X environment prediction of complex disorders, and psychosocial determinants of chronic physical disease. He has published over 150 peer-reviewed scientific papers, with many appearing in leading international journals. Richie is the Theme Leader for Cardiovascular Health for the Dunedin Study age 38 assessment phase. In 2007, he established and became a Co-Director of the National Centre for Lifecourse Research, a research centre based at the University of Otago, but with partners located at universities across New Zealand and the world. In 2010, he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand and was the joint recipient of the Royal Society of New Zealand Dame Joan Metge Medal for "excellence and building relationships in the social science research community."

Sharon Wilson Davies

CE, Tamaki Ki Raro Trust

Sharon was raised and educated in Otara. She has 20 plus years owning and operating businesses in the hotel - hospitality industry throughout NZ & Australia. She has been CEO for the past 13 years of the Tamaki Ki Raro Trust and initially set out to assist with the development of Te Puea Marae and to provide commercial, social and cultural stability for the Tainui people in the area. Sharon was a member of the recent Welfare Working Group.

Dr Fiona Cram

Researcher, Consultant, Katoa Ltd

Fiona Cram (Ngāti Pahauwera) has a PhD in social and developmental psychology from the University of Otago. She has lectured in Social Psychology and has also been a Senior Research Fellow within IRI (the International Research Institute of Māori and Indigenous Education), at the University of Auckland. Fiona's research interests include Māori health, justice, and education. The over-riding theme of Fiona's work is Kaupapa Māori (by Māori, for Māori).

Major Campbell Roberts

Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, Salvation Army

Major Campbell Roberts has over 40 years experience relating the work of the Salvation Army to social policy. He is a well known media spokesperson on issues of poverty and housing in New Zealand and has contributed to enquiries, commissions and policy forums on many and diverse social issues. He currently is the Salvation Army Social Programme Secretary for the New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory and is the Director of the New Zealand Social Policy & Parliamentary Unit. The Unit has a mandate to reform New Zealand society and eliminate poverty by influencing and engaging national leaders in politics, business, government, education and the media.

Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman

Deputy Head, Department of Public Health, University of Otago

Professor Howden-Chapman is a social scientist and Deputy Head in the Department of Public Health. She teaches in the area of health and public policy. She is the Programme Director of He Kainga Oranga/Housing and Health Research Programme and New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities; Principal Investigator for the Housing, Insulation and Health Study; the Housing, Heating and Health Study; the Tokelau Extended Housing Study and the Housing (Dis)ability Study. Philippa is a member of the NZ Heart Foundation Scientific and Population Health Committee and on the board of the International Society of Equity in Health. Philippa is also a member of the European Network on Interventions and Policies to Reduce Socio-economic Inequalities in Health.

Dr Bob Stephens

Senior Associate, Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington

Bob Stephens retired as Associate Professor in Public Policy at Victoria University in January 2010. His research has been largely in the areas of social and public policy and tax reform. As a foundation Member of New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project, Bob developed a poverty measure suitable for the current economic and social policy environment in New Zealand. Bob has been involved in several international comparative studies, including the level of financial assistance for dependent children, child support, lone parents, social assistance and transparency of the budget process.

Dr Arini

Head of School, Critical Studies in Education, University of Auckland

Dr Arini has over 20 years experience in education, and 17 years in Higher Education and in University leadership roles. Her major professional and research interests revolve around issues of ethnicity and equity in higher education. She has published on increasing the success of indigenous and minority group students in degree-level studies and professional development for in-service teachers to improve school student learning outcomes in literacy, bilingual education and early childhood education. Between 2004 -2007 she was Associate Dean, Equity for the Faculty of Education at The University of Auckland. She has also been Dean and General Manager of "Faculty Pasifika", at the Auckland College of Education, and Advisor to the New Zealand Government on adult foundation education, adult literacy, minority student achievement in universities, teacher education, national curriculum development, and the establishment of the National Centre for Excellence in Tertiary Teaching. She was also an education research consultant to UNESCO and OECD nations in the Pacific.

Dr Nikki Turner

General Practitioner,

Director of the Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC)

Senior Lecturer in the Division of General Practice and Primary Health Care, University of Auckland

Nikki specialises in immunisation and preventive child health issues. She has a background in the development of Wai Health, the primary healthcare services arm of Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust. She is currently working with the City Mission to develop a new primary care service for the homeless in Central Auckland. She is also an active member and health spokesperson for the Child Poverty Action Group. She represents the Royal NZ College of General Practitioners and the Immunisation Advisory Centre on a number of Ministry advisory committees and is recognised by national and international media as a spokesperson on immunisation and child health issues. Nikki's main interests along with immunisation are in child poverty, and preventative child health.

Professor Mark Henaghan

Dean of Law, University of Otago

Mark is a leading New Zealand authority involved in the cutting edge of international developments in family law. In addition to publishing both nationally and internationally in his specialist area, Mark is frequently called upon by the New Zealand media for his expertise in family law. Professor Henaghan is on the editorial boards of *Child and Family Law Quarterly*, the leading United Kingdom journal on children's issues and *The International Journal of Human Rights*; the leading United Kingdom journal on human rights. Mark's recent projects include his role as Principal Investigator for the Human Genome Research Project, Te Kaupapa Rangahau Ira Tangata - Law, Ethics and Policy for the Future, sponsored by the New Zealand Law Foundation. Mark is currently collaborating with researchers from Australia and the United Kingdom in the international study of family relocation cases and the impact on the parties and their children.