



WORD FROM THE CHAIR

As we enter into a new year The Trust looks forward to further engaging with the community to work towards identifying solutions and achieving tangible outcomes for the betterment of New Zealand children and families.

We're pleased to have received further feedback on the social policy recommendations to government. Feedback has been constructive with many of our supporters providing further suggestions as to how we can contribute to effective change within our community.

The Welfare Working Group (WWG) has identified 8 key welfare reforms to reducing long-term welfare dependency. Yes, I am pleased our children have been considered, but can anyone else see the correlation between 222,000 children growing up in benefit dependent households, approx 41% of all women receiving the DPB being Maori and 31% of working age Maori being on welfare?

I'm not finger pointing but clearly Maori leadership needs to address the last two matters and no doubt it would reduce the number of children growing up in our welfare system. For the Sake of Our Children, we need to break the cycle of welfare dependency for the next generation.

Aroha Nui
John Sax
FSOCT Chair



SOCIAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



For the Sake of Our Children are pleased to say that we have received steady feedback and support for the social policy recommendations we have made to Government to ensure our children specifically benefit from Government policies.

Many of our supporters have questioned why we, as a charitable organisation, would be interested in this area of social development. Our response is that the Government plays a key role in ensuring the wellbeing of our children and families. A lot of the adverse social issues and challenges many of our children are experiencing are a result of current welfare policies that are in place.

Many of these policies were developed by previous governments and we need to look at how often such policies need to be measured and altered if they don't align or have a negative effect on our children and their family environments.

The policy choices our politicians make affect the ability of this country and its people to reach their potential. FSOCT believe politicians need to get these choices right and sometimes this may mean asking the hard questions, pointing the finger and making

recommendations that may not be to the liking of others.

Our elected leaders owe it to themselves, their communities, our children, and to our children's children, to ask these questions. They need to pose effective positive recommendations to Government, measure progress and implement change if there is a need.

Don Brash recently addressed the Rotary Orewa Branch early February highlighting some positive points about New Zealand:

"We have a great country. A country of wide open spaces, of soaring mountains, of giant kauri forests, of magnificent fiords, with a benign climate.

A country rich in resources - fast-growing forests, rich dairy land, a vast fishery, plentiful water, large deposits of coal and iron sands.

A country which gave the world Ed Hillary, Peter Blake, Katherine Mansfield, Ernest Rutherford, Kiri Te Kanawa, Susan Devoy, Peter Snell, Archibald MacIndoe, Peter Jackson, Jane Campion, Roger Donaldson, Richard Hadlee, Dan Carter and William Pickering.

A country which was the first in the world to grant women the vote, and one of the first to grant all men the vote.

A country where we take it for granted that an election will be held roughly every three years, and that a government will be elected without bloodshed, with the army safely in its barracks."

If you consider yourself an advocate for all the children of New Zealand there is no excuse for throwing this all away by failing to speak up and protect what we consider to be important, our children, our families, our communities, and our country.

Our community action group social policy recommendations derived by FSOCT and leaders across all sectors, is available on our website. Please go to www.forourchildren.org.nz and indicate your support for any of these recommendations. Your comments are welcome. Don't fail to be a voice for the future of our children.



OUR HEART IS WITH THE PEOPLE OF CHRISTCHURCH AND JAPAN....

It has been (and continues to be) an incredibly harrowing time for the residents of Christchurch.

We at The Trust extend our most heartfelt condolences to those who lost loved ones recently. We also acknowledge every one in Christchurch who has lost homes and precious possessions, jobs and work places.

We also remember and acknowledge the children who have been affected by this tragedy.

We hope and pray for a swift and speedy recovery.

Our prayers and thoughts are also with the people of Japan following the earthquake and tsunami.

Our only reflection on this is that we are all but one single nation. One world united. That when there is one region affected by a catastrophe the rest of the world must react....

**Rachel Afeaki
FSOCT Director**



New Zealanders Must Unite / For the Sake of Our Children

For the Sake of Our Children Trust (FSOCT) believe this generation of politicians must do better. We need our politicians to unite together to protect our children in the very best ways possible.

Whilst New Zealand has historically been considered a safe haven for raising children, this image has been shattered by the rising child abuse and neglect statistics over the last ten years.

The United Nations have condemned New Zealand as a country that needs, to 'better recognise the rights of children due to the staggering rates of child abuse and neglect in our country. In the recent OECD report NZ is ranked amongst the countries with the highest neglect and abuse statistics. New Zealand is a great country but we have the potential to be greater, particularly in regard to caring for the wellbeing of our children.

United Nations Children's Fund national advocacy manager Barbara Lambourn said that with social costs arising from child abuse

and neglect estimated at about \$2 billion a year, the Government could not afford to ignore the recommendations. "If we don't look after children now, we'll be looking after them in the justice system and health system later."

We must do better not just for the sake of our children, but also for the sake of society.

The consequences for the children who live through poverty, child abuse, and neglect are long-term and create deep-seated problems for society. New Zealand, we must do better.

There are many young New Zealanders living well, and in safe and protected environments, but as a country with only 4.5 million people, the statistics on child poverty, child homicide, child abuse, and neglect are just too high.

The challenge to us as New Zealanders is to build a national consensus on this issue – one free of political, social and cross-sector difference - to give all our children the best start in life. And what is this best start?

Ideally, if you ask any child they would say, a mum and dad committed to loving and protecting them in an environment that provides every opportunity possible to fulfil their potential.

It is what we would all want for our own children. We must now demand it for every child in New Zealand.

Words of Wisdom

**"E tipu e rea mo nga ra o t u ao. Ko tou ringa ki nga rakau a te Pakeha hei oranga mo tou tinana.
Ko tou ngakau ki nga taonga a o tipuna hei tikitiki mo tou mahunga.
Ko tou wairua ki te Atua, nana nei nga mea katoa."**

Grow up and seek your destiny and stretch forth your hands for the tools of the western world to sustain you.

Turn your heart to the treasures of your ancestors, your plumage, and place your spirit unto God to whom all things belong.

**Sir Apirana Ngata
Potaka School**

Nga mihi o te Aranga



UPCOMING EVENT:

**2011 ASPIRING LEADERS FORUM
JULY 14-17**

Becoming a good leader requires more than an impressive resume and a strong personality; there must be something in you that justifies the loyalty and commitment of those who follow.

The Aspiring Leaders' Forum on faith and values brings together our nation's young people and its leaders to debate and discuss ideas and philosophies of leadership.

While Members of Parliament host the Forum, the focus is not purely politics; it is about encouraging young people to be better leaders in the areas of society that they are engaged in, be it in the community, arts, business, politics or sport.

Over four days in Wellington, the forum discusses how faith and values inform and develop character and leadership.

All young adults who attend the Forum are nominated by someone who believes in them and at the Trust we are delighted to be able to support this by sponsoring a number of young people to attend this event.

If you are interested in gaining support from the Trust to attend this Forum please contact Rachel Afeaki, Trust Manager at Rachel@forourchildren.org.nz.



THE WELFARE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Welfare Working Group was established by Cabinet to undertake an expansive and fundamental review of New Zealand's welfare system. The Group's primary task was to identify how to reduce long-term welfare dependency.

The final report was presented 43 recommendations centred on eight key reform themes to improve life time outcomes for people at risk of long-term welfare dependency.

- 1 A stronger work focus for more people -** sending strong signals about the importance of paid work assuming most people of working age can work.
- 2 Reciprocal obligations –** Those looking for work should be supported and encouraged by policy settings and a responsive service delivery agency to find paid work.
- 3 A long-term view -** The need for the welfare system to recognise the value of investing early to reduce welfare dependency.
- 4 Committing to targets –** The Welfare Group aims to reduce welfare recipients by 100,000 by 2021.
- 5 Improving outcomes for Maori –** The Group will work with Maori leadership and provide great service delivery to reduce the 31% of working age Maori on welfare.
- 6 Improving outcomes for children –** Welfare reform options will need to consider the impact for the 222,000 children growing up in benefit dependent households.
- 7 A cross-Government approach** Cross-Government and community leadership, focused on prevention and early intervention, is critical to develop solutions.
- 8 More effective delivery –** An outcomes-focused delivery agency is proposed that will use new skills and capacity to deliver effective services to people at risk of long-term welfare dependency.



At the Trust everything we look at, read, and do is measured through the statement: "For the Sake of Our Children..." And we were immensely pleased to read of a major reform to the welfare system that specifically addresses the needs of the children.

The social and intergenerational consequences of having 222,000 children growing up in benefit dependent households are deeply concerning.

Welfare reform options must explicitly consider the potential impacts on the well-being of children. Reducing the unacceptably high incidence of child poverty in New Zealand through a particular focus on at-risk jobless households and whanau must be a high priority of any reform.

Assistance through the welfare system should aim to improve the wellbeing of children. Any future policy advice on changes to the welfare system should take into account its impact on child well-being. Once implemented, the actual impact should be monitored and evaluated.

A full copy of the report can be found on our website.



ABOUT US

Trust Vision

Our vision is to see New Zealand become a place where our children:

- are safe from harm;
- have a sense of belonging, of feeling loved and valued;
- have access to the necessities they need to engage fully with life and realise their own unique potential.

Trust Mission

We aim to be a "voice" for the "voiceless".

We do this through educating, promoting and raising awareness of the wellbeing of our children in New Zealand and the need for strong families and communities to support them.

CONTACT US

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10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

- 1 Volunteer your time.** Get involved with other parents in your community. Help vulnerable children and their families. Start a playgroup.
- 2 Discipline your children thoughtfully.** Never discipline your child when you are upset. Give yourself time to calm down. Remember that discipline is a way to teach your child. Use privileges to encourage good behaviour and time-outs to help your child regain control.
- 3 Examine your behaviour.** Abuse is not just physical. Both words and actions can inflict deep, lasting wounds. Be a nurturing parent. Use your actions to show children and other adults that conflicts can be settled without hitting or yelling.
- 4 Educate yourself and others.** Simple support for children and parents can be the best way to prevent child abuse. After-school activities, parent education classes, mentoring programs, and respite care are some of the many ways to keep children safe from harm. Be a voice in support of these efforts in your community.
- 5 Teach children their rights.** When children are taught they are special and have the right to be safe, they are less likely to think abuse is their fault, and more likely to report an offender.
- 6 Support prevention programmes.** Too often, intervention occurs only after abuse is reported. Greater investments are needed in programmes that have been proven to stop the abuse before it occurs - such as family counselling and home visits by nurses who provide assistance for new-borns and their parents.
- 7 Know what child abuse is.** Physical and sexual abuse clearly constitute maltreatment, but so does neglect, or the failure of parents or other caregivers to provide a child with needed food, clothing, and care. Children can also be emotionally abused when they are rejected, berated, or continuously isolated.
- 8 Know the signs.** Unexplained injuries aren't the only signs of abuse. Depression, fear of a certain adult, difficulty trusting others or making friends, sudden changes in eating or sleeping patterns, inappropriate sexual behaviour, poor hygiene, secrecy, and hostility are often signs of family problems and may indicate a child is being neglected or physically, sexually, or emotionally abused.
- 9 Report abuse.** If you witness a child being harmed or see evidence of abuse, make a report to your local police or CYFS. When talking to a child about abuse, listen carefully, assure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling an adult, and affirm that he or she is not responsible for what happened.
- 10 Invest in kids.** Encourage leaders in the community to be supportive of children and families. Ask employers to provide family-friendly work environments. Ask your local and national lawmakers to support legislation to better protect our children and to improve their lives.

Source: Child First Advocacy Center

