



Proactive Release

Submissions on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

August 2019

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has released the following submission received during its public consultation on the child and youth wellbeing strategy.

Some of the information contained within this release is considered to not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- Where this is the case, the information has been withheld, and the relevant section of the Act that would apply, has been identified.
- Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes and their reference to sections of the Act:

- **9(2)a** – Section 9(2)(a): to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

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From: 9(2)□(a)

Sent: Tuesday, 4 December 2018 10:28 AM

To: J Ardern (MIN) <j.ardern@ministers.govt.nz>

Subject: Child poverty in New Zealand

Dear Jacinda Ardern

We are four Wellington High school students who are writing to express our concern about child poverty in New Zealand. We're doing this for a social studies project involving youth action and the power that teenagers can have while making change. As four middle class Wellingtonians, we feel strongly about this because it's not fair that some kids don't grow up with all the same privileges we have.

This issue is important to focus on because no one should have to live without proper housing, food, and healthcare, let alone children. Our country should work harder to make child poverty less of an issue as we are a well off country. This is also important because the children of New Zealand are the future of our country. If one in six future New Zealanders are stuck in poverty, unable to get jobs from a lack of education, how does that set up our country for the future?

The kids in New Zealand living in poverty are real children, just like us, our siblings and our friends, we are all people that deserve to grow up with the essentials. There are around 290,000 kids struggling each day without the basics. There has been an increase of child poverty in New Zealand from 14% of children living in poverty in 1982, to 28% of children living in poverty in 2016. If we don't do something the problem will only get worse.

We had some ideas to tackle this problem and hopefully you will be able to consider doing them.

Our first idea we had for preventing child poverty is providing healthy school lunches for all decile 1-2 schools. This would be really beneficial to students who don't normally get three proper meals a day. Kids often come to school with nothing or just a packet of chips. This isn't healthy and doesn't give students the nutrients they need throughout the day.

A second idea to help more students attend school is lowering the price on sanitary items like tampons or pads and making them more accessible for people. Too often girls living in hardship will miss school on their period, because they can't afford sanitary items. They would then miss out on almost a ¼ of a school year of education. A lack of education makes it harder for people to get well paying jobs, and pay living costs for them and their family.

The third idea is enforcing companies and employers to all pay the living wage. Also, making wealthier people with higher income pay more tax, so there is more money for the government to spend on benefits and/or helping poor communities.

All of these are suggestions of ways to create change in our country. We hope that you take these into consideration and know that Aotearoa supports you in ending child poverty!

Sincerely,
9(2)□(a)
