



Media statement

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Littlies Lobby research highlights parents' views

In the first of an annual series of research commissioned by the Littlies Lobby¹ and seeking the views of parents with small children, parents have identified a range of policy measures that would assist families.

Children's Commissioner, Cindy Kiro said, "Our research highlights some of the measures governments could take in support of families, as well as providing valuable insights into parents' experiences and opinions. The findings will enable us to gauge the issues of concern to parents and, over time, identify any changes in parents' views about the social and political issues impacting the parenting environment.

"The most important issues identified by parents are 'spending quality time with their children', followed by 'providing housing and food.' For many parents, the challenge of juggling paid work with parenting takes its toll on the quality of time spent with children and meeting the basic cost of living is difficult for many, whether or not they are working," she said.

Asked about the policy measures likely to be of assistance to families, parents said most helpful are continuing free health services for under six-year-olds; and most helpful would be removing GST from basic food items; extending paid parental leave from 13 weeks to a year; and a universal tax credit system for families.

"The research also highlighted the challenges associated with accessing day-care; the sources of advice and help that parents access most regularly; and opinions on the best methods for guiding children to behave well. These are all issues that directly impact the day-to-day environment for families and the wellbeing of children.

"A significant number of those accessing paid day-care said they experienced problems getting back-up for last minute emergencies, finding day-care for a mildly sick child, and finding affordable, quality day care was also a challenge.

"Perhaps the most exciting and interesting result from the research highlights the awareness among parents that the most effective ways to guide children to behave well are positive parenting strategies," said Cindy Kiro.

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¹ Littlies Lobby is a joint initiative of Plunket and the Children's Commissioner. The project is designed to increase awareness of the importance of the early years of a child's life and promote the well being of children and their families.

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