

## FOREWORD

Social development affects people's lives in many ways. This is reflected in the scope of the policy issues addressed in the *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*. The papers in Issue 22 touch on health, justice, social capital, community-based programmes, welfare benefits, employment and retirement. The authors write from the perspectives of policy development, research strategy, impact assessment, programme evaluation and survey analysis.

At the heart of Issue 22 is the theme of child poverty, addressed by almost half of the papers here. Some examine patterns of child poverty, and others look at the impact of poverty on children's lives.

Bryan Perry's paper forecasts the impact on child poverty of the Working for Families benefit reform package, targeted at low-to-middle income families with dependent children. His paper is particularly topical in that Working for Families was introduced in this year's Budget.

An analysis of Household Labour Force Survey data, by Suzie Ballantyne, Simon Chapple, Dave Maré and Jason Timmins, examines the trigger events that move children into and out of poverty. Their paper compares patterns in New Zealand with those in Britain and West Germany and is aimed at achieving a better understanding of the causes of poverty.

Tim Maloney uses data from the longitudinal Christchurch Health and Development Study to identify the effects that poverty in childhood will have on people further down the track, when the child has become a young adult. These effects include unemployment, early parenthood, offending and substance abuse.

We also have a paper by Tim O'Donovan, Karen McMillan and Heather Worth that looks at the health of children of Domestic Purposes Benefit recipients. The authors compare these children's health problems and unmet needs with those of New Zealand children overall, and discuss how these affect their parents' efforts to enter paid work. This paper is part of a programme of research concerning women on the Domestic Purposes Benefit, funded by the Health Research Council and featured in Issue 21.

Two other papers are oriented toward work with young people.

Marie Connolly describes a collaborative process used to develop a research framework in the area of child welfare. Commissioned by the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, this was a strategy for research and evaluation aimed at testing how well the department provides statutory care.

From the United States, a paper by Sanjeev Sridharan and Elizabeth Lopez discusses methodological issues that emerged from the process evaluation of a youth justice programme. The lessons learned from the evaluation centred on the complex nature of comprehensive community initiatives, which are designed to promote horizontal collaboration between agencies and to influence outcomes at multiple (vertical) levels.

Working-age people are studied by Paul Callister to better understand how they manage their work and family lives. He analyses data from the Time Use Survey to look at when and where New Zealanders work, and cautions against overly simple indicators of work–life balance.

Proceeding along the age continuum, Bev Hong and John Jensen look at older New Zealanders to determine whether they have been able to maintain their earlier living standards into retirement. Their paper also discusses income and other factors that influence living standards, and examines the outlook for future retirees.

Ann Walker takes up the need for joined-up government and intersectoral collaboration, and turns the concepts and theoretical frameworks of social capital to the problem of improving the quality of social networks of government officials and service providers. She identifies the Strengthening Families case management process as a model for interagency work.

Two reviews round out this issue of the *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*. Charles Crothers reviews Peter Saunders's *The Ends and Means of Welfare*, and Anne Kerslake Hendricks summarises the keynote addresses and panel discussions of the Strengthening Family Relationships Conference held in Wellington last year.

I hope that you find Issue 22 to be a stimulating and informative read.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Jackson', with a long, sweeping underline.

Anne Jackson  
Acting General Manager  
Centre for Social Research and Evaluation  
Te Pokapū Rangahau Arotake Hapori