

Protecting our vulnerable populations – women, babies, children.

The role of policies

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CHiLD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP





Adult health is affected by early childhood adversity



Toxic stress resulting from early childhood adversity (including poverty and racism) can lead to:

- lifelong impairments in learning, behaviour and both physical and mental health
 - eg increases cardiovascular disease, viral hepatitis, liver cancer, asthma, COPD, autoimmune diseases, poor dental health, depression
- adoption of unhealthy lifestyles as a coping mechanism
 - tobacco use, illicit drug use, obesity, promiscuity, gambling



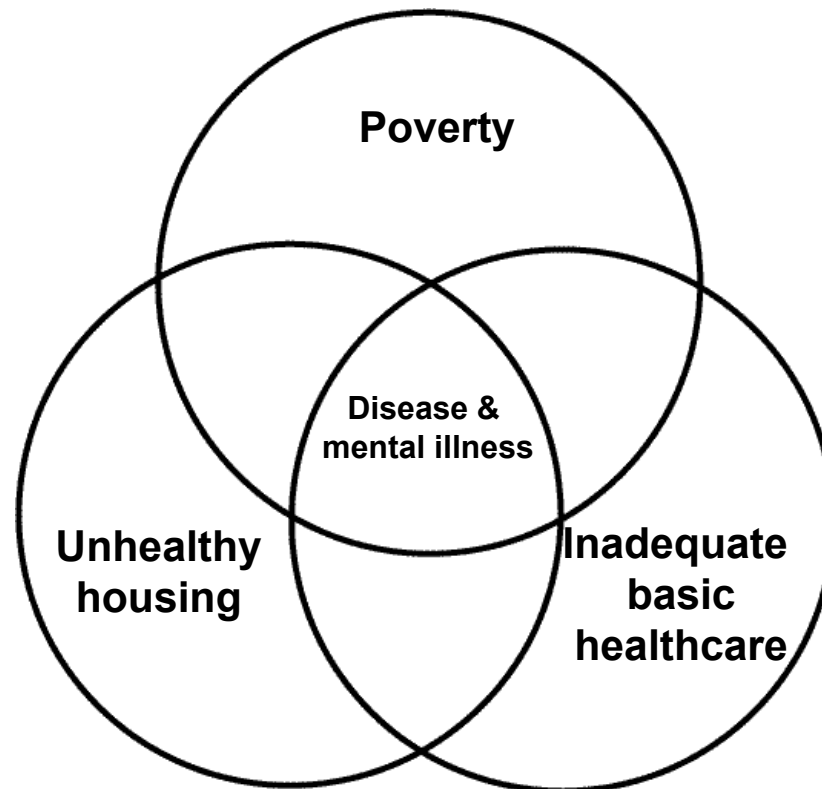
Adult health is affected by early childhood adversity



**Early childhood adversity can be
worsened by bad policies and
lessened by good policies**

New Zealand's triple jeopardy for preventable diseases and mental illness

All of these influenced by policies



**Turner N, Asher I. Child Poverty and Health in 'Our children, Our Choice'
Child Poverty Action Group Policy Series 2014**

Obstetric case 2014

11 year old girl with bronchiectasis, followed by Starship Bronchiectasis clinic.

NZ born Tokelauan girl, one of 9 children.

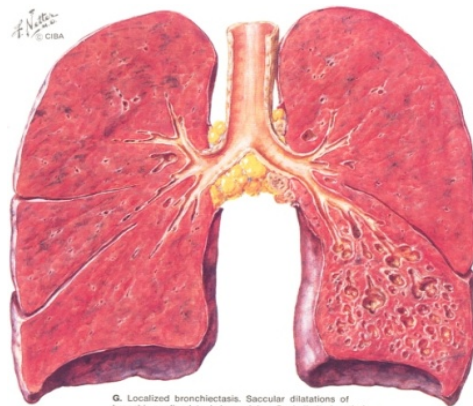
Her 45 year old mother, in late pregnancy, noted to be breathless walking upstairs between Levels 9 & 10 in Auckland Hospital - bronchiectasis diagnosed.

Bronchiectasis hospital admissions in 0-24 year olds. Risk by Ethnicity 2006-2010

European	Māori	Pacific	Asian/Indian
1	7.51	11.2	1.30

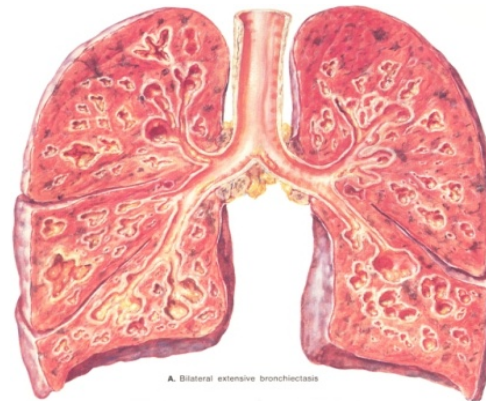
Bronchiectasis

- Caused by repeated or severe pneumonia
- In NZ is 8-9 times commoner than UK and Finland
- In NZ average age at diagnosis is 3 years
- Most NZ children with bronchiectasis have more than half their lungs damaged



©. Localized bronchiectasis. Saccular dilatations of bronchi, confined to 1. lower lobe. Such limited pathology may be amenable to surgery

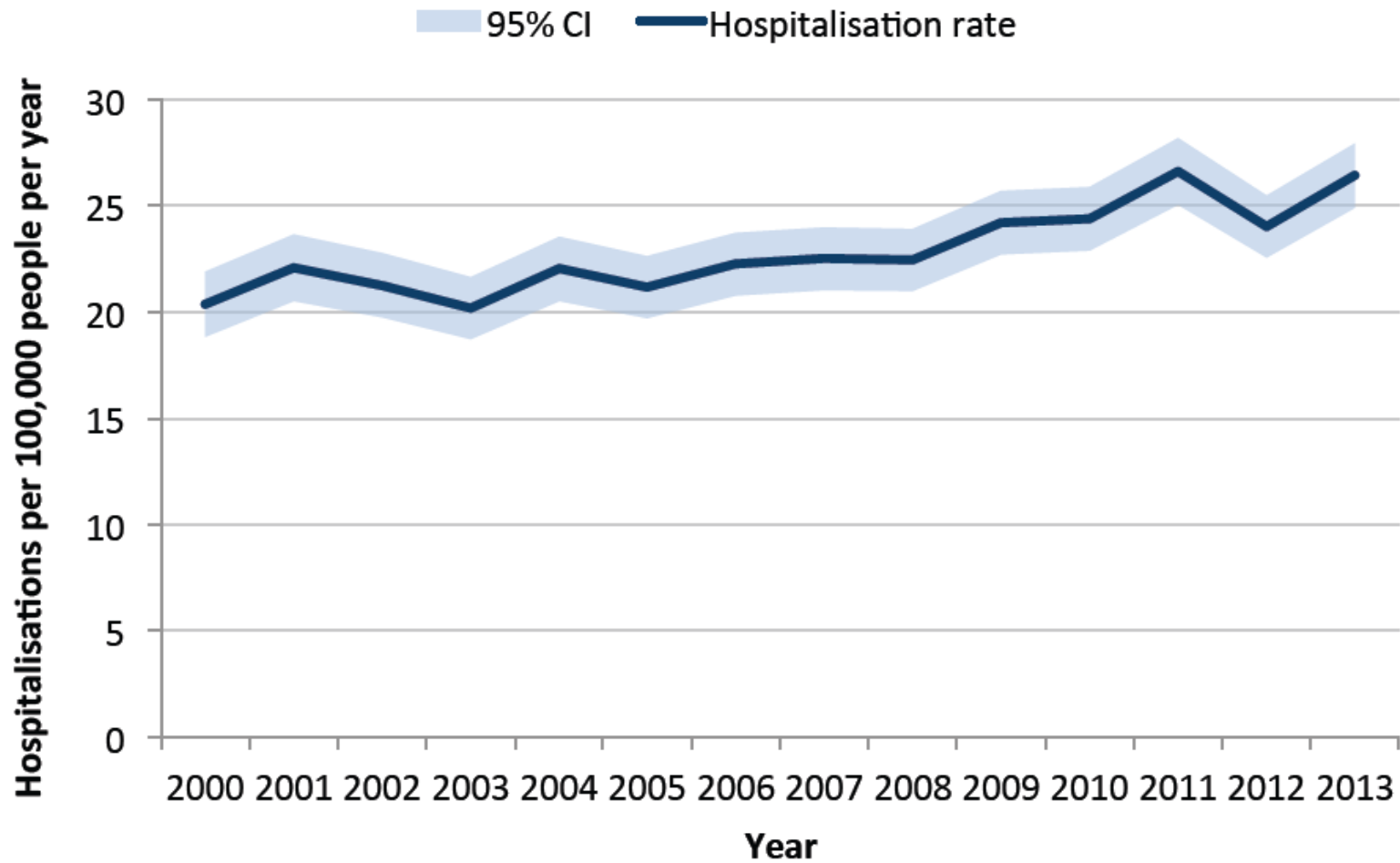
Normal lungs with
bronchiectasis
on bottom right



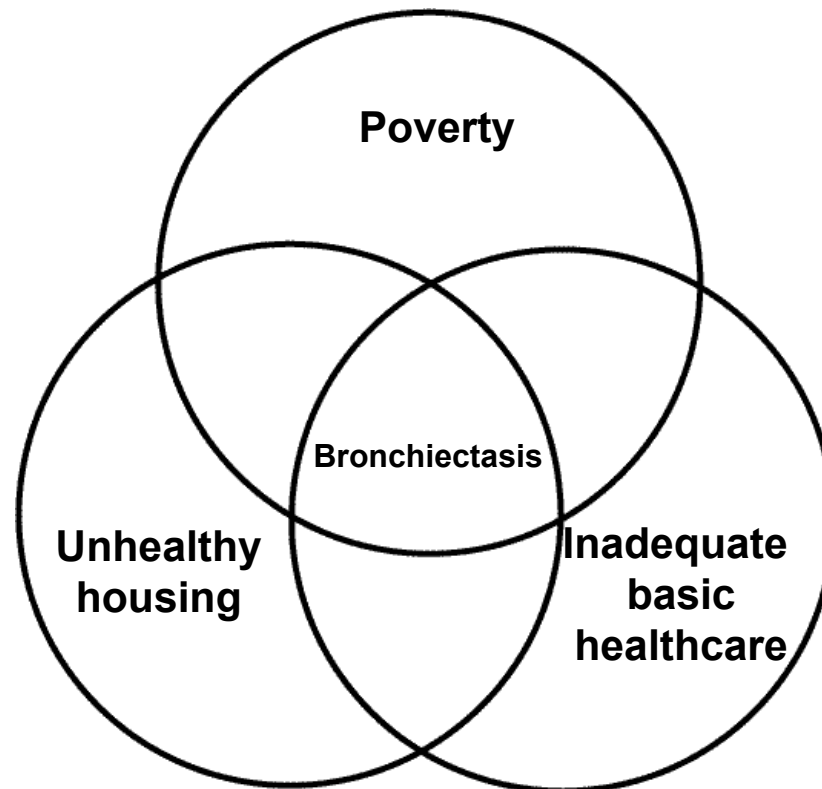
A. Bilateral extensive bronchiectasis

Bronchiectasis
all areas of the lungs

NZ Bronchiectasis hospitalisations All ages 2000-2013



New Zealand's triple jeopardy for preventable diseases and mental illness



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Unhealthy housing – key health issues in NZ



- **Crowding – private rental too expensive or unavailable**
- **Poor quality – cold, damp and mouldy**
- **Fuel – unaffordable or unhealthy**
- **Intervention on these issues improves health**

Howden Chapman P, et al 2007 and 2009

Jackson G. et al.2007

In NZ some pregnant women and families live in cars



[NZ Herald 4 Oct 2014.](#)

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11336725

In NZ some pregnant women are homeless



Policy steps needed to reduce unhealthy housing



- **Warrant of Fitness for all rental properties – private, State and social housing**
- **Subsidies to improve quality of private rentals**
- **Rapidly increase the number of State houses and social housing**
- **Create State emergency housing (we have none)**

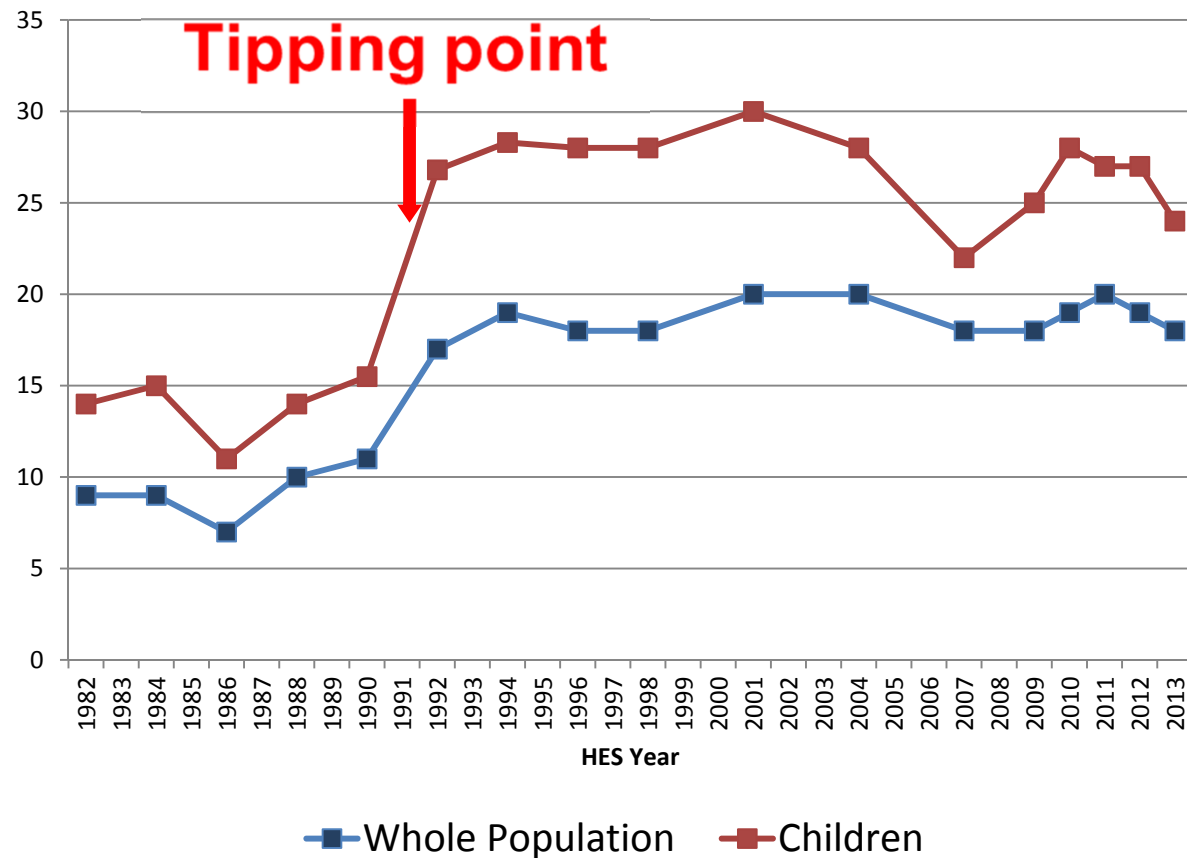
Policy steps needed to improve access to basic healthcare



- **Free doctors visits 13 -17 years in and out of hours**
- **Free prescriptions 13-17 years**
- **Free GP visit in last 3 months of pregnancy**
 - **Connect with GP**
 - **Screen for depression**
 - **Pertussis vaccine**
 - **Vitamin D 1000IU/day in winter and Spring**

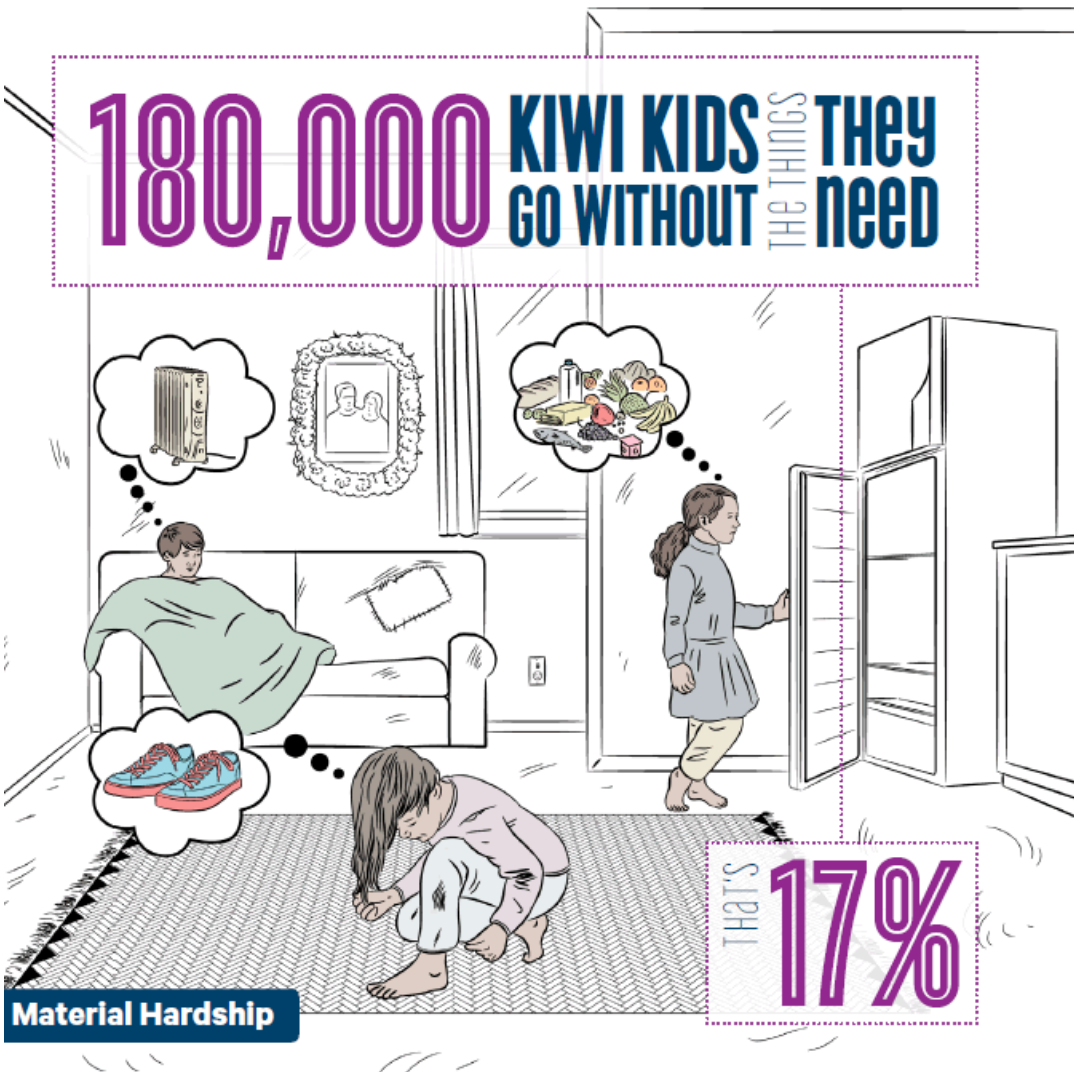
NZ Poverty: child vs whole population 1982-2013

(<60% median disposable household income after housing costs)



Perry B. Ministry of Social Development, 2014, p133 Table F.4, p137 Table F.7.

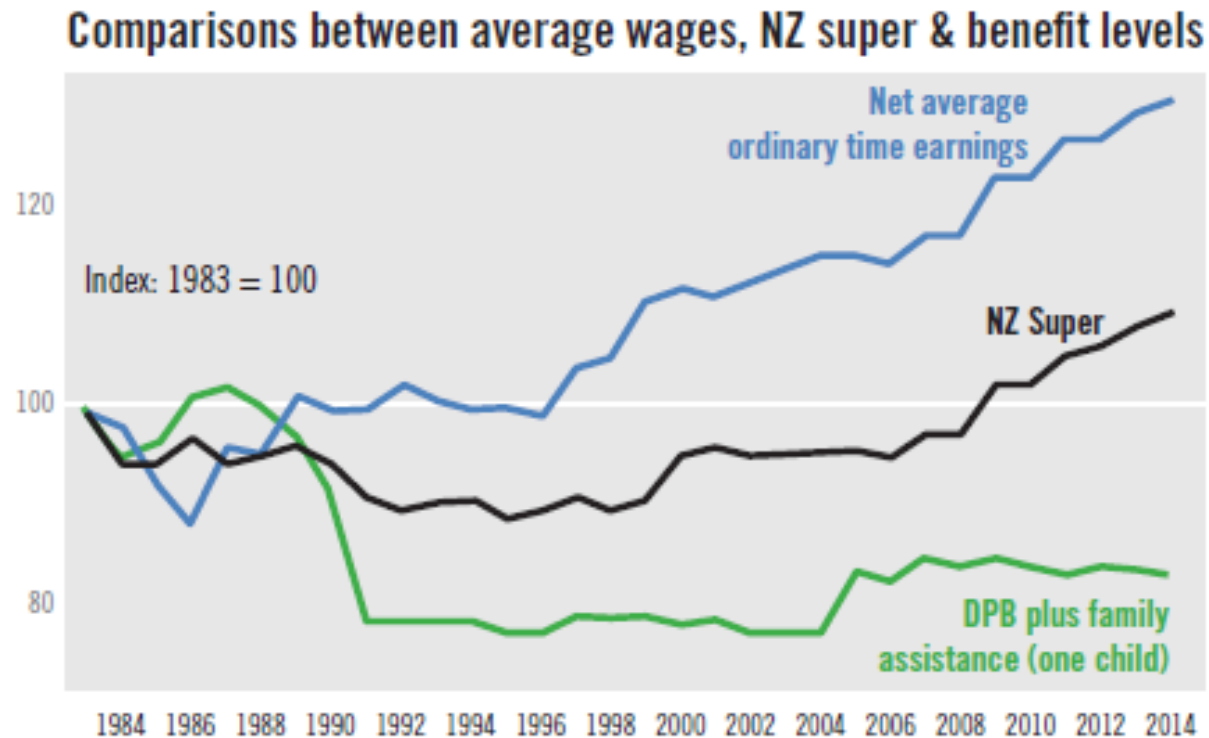
Material Hardship = Deprivation of essentials



Child poverty figures, under 18 yr (2013)

Child poverty figures in NZ	No. of children	% of children
Total number of children 0-17 yrs	1,060,000	100%
Income-poverty (<60% median after housing costs)	260,000	24%
Severe income poverty (<50% median after housing costs)	205,000	19%
Material hardship (Material Wellbeing Index)	180,000	17%
Severe income poverty AND material hardship	95,400	9%

Safety net for children is inadequate: relativities 1983-2013



Adapted from Perry B. Ministry of Social Development, 2014, page 82, Figure C.8A

15,000 newborns/yr miss out on income support



Parents on a benefit miss out on this income support for their babies:

- **They don't get Paid Parental Leave (PPL) (max \$7,401 net)**
- **They don't get In Work Tax Credit (\$3120/yr 2015, \$3770/yr in 2016)**
- **They don't even get the Parental Tax Credit (PTC) (\$2,200 net) meant for those who don't get PPL**

Policy steps needed to reduce income poverty



- **All adult benefits - increase significantly**
- **Include ALL poor children fully in Working for Families income support**
- **Properly index Working for Families to wages**
- **Make sure ALL new-borns get extra support**