



NEW ZEALAND

Affiliated with the International Federation of Business & Professional Women

BPW
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New Zealand Federation of Business
and Professional Women Incorporated

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11th April 2012

SUBMISSION

Re: Social Security (Youth Support and Work Focus) Amendment Bill

Introduction

1. This submission is from the New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women Inc.

Our organisation

2. Our organisation's aims are to link professional and businesswomen throughout the world, to provide support, to lobby for change and to promote the ongoing advancement of women. We work for equal opportunities and status for all women in economic, civil and political life and the removal of discrimination in all countries. We promote our aims and organise our operating structure without distinction as to race, language or religion.

Our structure is comprised of a National Executive, branches located nationwide between Kaitaia and Southland, with a number of individual members in areas where there is no branch. We are a non political organisation.

Our interest in this bill is because we are a women's group who are committed to ensure safety for all working women through advocacy, education and mentoring. We submit our views on the Welfare Reform Bill as we have policy that encourages women to be empowered and financially independent.

BPW NZ have always supported the premise that if work is available and accessible giving a person the ability to travel to their place of work economically and where child care is affordable then people should be encouraged and supported to work in part time or full time work. We agree that sole parents with children 5 years and older should be encouraged to work part time, if all of the conditions above are in place.

The same goes for sole parents with children of 14 years and older being encouraged to partake of full time work if it is available.

The concern is, that if there is no work available in the area that a sole parent lives, they will be "encouraged" to move from the area they are familiar with to look for or take up work away from their support structure (family). This could have a negative impact on the sole parent and their children, causing stress and contributing to breakdowns within the family unit.

BPW NZ Would like to see a larger emphasis on teaching our children how to handle money, how to budget and more emphasis on how to manage meals that are nutritious, a return to the economics of cooking a meal as against taking the "easy" option of takeaways.

BPW NZ think the impact of the proposal to install a managed system of payments with essential costs like rents and power paid directly, and providing an allowance and a payment card for living costs, although on the face of it a good idea, could be damaging to the morale of the young people and teens it is aimed at.

BPW NZ would like to see a strong support system which teaches these young people to budget on their own, so they that learn to stand on their own two feet. As long as they do not have to take responsibility for the everyday bills such as rent and power, they will never learn to budget properly, and when that is stopped they will not know how to cope with the added costs as they have never had to.

BPW NZ agrees with the proposal for guaranteed Childcare assistance payments to encourage young parents to continue their studies.

Thank you for the opportunity to have our say and we hope that our comments are of use to you.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noeline Reisch', written in a cursive style.

Noeline Reisch
Vice President Issues
BPW NZ