



# Giving 2 Kids – 3: Getting the most out of education

Education is fundamental to good outcomes in life such as having a sense of belonging to a community and getting a good job. Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to do badly at school. Children in poor areas are more likely to go to school hungry, be frequently sick, move house and schools multiple times and live in overcrowded homes with inadequate space to do homework. Communities can fill the gaps for children in poverty to improve their educational opportunities, so children attend school ready to learn, participate in all school activities and to achieve their potential. Schools can also offer safe, convenient community hubs for other children's services such as health and recreation.

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target age
5.1	<b>Fund Early Childhood Education (ECE) subsidies for younger children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Subsidise or fund Early Childhood Education (ECE) to encourage vulnerable children to take part from an earlier age.</li></ul>	ECE is a core government role, but there are gaps in funding for the most deprived young children. For example, 'free' ECE is only available for children aged 3 to 4 years (apart from limited supports for younger children at-risk or in state care). Quality ECE from an earlier age, e.g. 16 months, provides a greater benefit to children living in poverty. It can provide a positive, healthy learning environment where teachers model behaviour and offer play opportunities that help both toddlers and parents.	2 to 4 years
5.2	<b>Fund more culturally appropriate ECE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Subsidise or fund local ECE centres with a Māori or Pasifika emphasis. This may encourage access to ECE by those Māori and Pasifika children in poverty and/or who desire more culturally-relevant centres.</li></ul>	There is a gap in participation in ECE among the lowest socioeconomic status groups, particularly Māori and Pasifika. There are many reasons for this - including cost, transport issues and lack of culturally-appropriate services available.	2 to 4 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target age
5.3	<p><b>Fund or deliver food in schools programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with low decile schools to run 'food in schools' programmes and/or garden to table programmes that support healthy nutrition and create opportunities to learn new skills.</li> <li>Download the <a href="#">Guidelines for Food in Schools</a> to get ideas on how to progress your initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Children learn better on a full stomach – their behaviour improves and they can concentrate more easily. Quality nutrition is important for physical health and cognitive development.</p> <p>Programmes for food in schools can be good ways to involve families/whānau and communities in school life and teach children about production-to-plate e.g. through growing food on school grounds. Meals in schools can help low income neighbourhoods create a better sense of community – with the involvement of parents who may be able to contribute time rather than money. Refer to the full <a href="#">guidelines</a> for food in schools programmes.</p>	5 to 12 years
5.4	<p><b>Provide nutrition education for children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with low decile primary and secondary schools, and community centres, to deliver activities that will improve children's nutrition.</li> <li>Work with youth groups to promote food preparation and cooking as fun activities that young people can do to help their families and stay healthy.</li> </ul>	<p>Education about good quality nutrition, along with programmes that help children to use that knowledge (such as cooking), can help reduce the obesity epidemic. The prevalence of low quality, energy-rich foods and the expense (in time and money) of producing high quality, balanced meals means families on lower incomes are more likely to become obese.</p> <p>Reducing obesity reduces the chances of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer. Maintaining a healthy weight also makes it easier for children to walk or cycle and take part in physical recreation.</p>	5 to 18 years
5.5	<p><b>Provide exercise activities to improve child health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with low decile primary and secondary schools and community recreation centres to develop and deliver exercise programmes or activities for children.</li> <li>Include proven incentives or programmes for children so they get active in their daily lives.</li> <li>Help children in poverty to pay for sports fees.</li> </ul>	<p>Low decile areas tend to have fewer opportunities for sport and recreation due to less investment in play infrastructure. Also, families living in poverty often can't afford the cost of children's participation in sports teams.</p> <p>As children get older they have more control over their diets and daily exercise. Exercise is a key factor in reducing obesity. Obesity is known to reduce educational attainment due to poor self-esteem, and to limit employment opportunities because of prejudice against obese people.</p>	5 to 18 years
5.6	<p><b>Help children with disabilities get what they need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with primary and secondary schools to provide additional supports and services for young people with disabilities. This will help them get an education, qualifications and skills that lead to jobs.</li> <li>Advocate for children in poverty to receive their full entitlements, by strengthening the advocacy effort of their parents.</li> </ul>	<p>Children who are disabled have additional needs that can be costly. Parents in poverty have limited means to address these costs, which can increase stress and impact on the parenting behaviours that are needed for disabled children (such as extra patience).</p> <p>Children living in poverty need advocates to ensure they get full and correct entitlements to disability services. Sometimes parents feel disempowered by the system to do this alone.</p>	13 to 18 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target age
5.7	<p><b>Fund ways for children to participate in school and life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with schools and businesses to make sure children have what they need to participate in school or extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>Sponsor school trips, provide uniforms, raincoats, shoes, transport to school sport events and sponsor sports fees.</li> <li>For example, those with sporting skills or a relevant business could coach sports teams or sponsor uniforms in low decile schools/areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Supporting children to participate in ways that do not stigmatise requires careful consideration. The approach either needs to be universal – for example, providing raincoats to all children in a deprived area – or sensitively targeted to those that need the most assistance.</p> <p>Some schools have discretionary funds to help families who struggle to afford the optional expenses (such as swimming lessons, school camp). This means those children can still participate with their peers despite their disadvantaged background.</p>	5 to 12 years
5.8	<p><b>Promote ways to keep children engaged in school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with low decile schools to deliver programmes that make sure children are actively involved in school life, and attending regularly.</li> <li>Engagement through cultural or sporting activities can increase the chance they will stay at school and achieve academically. Other proven incentives such as rewards for regular attendance at school may make programmes more effective.</li> </ul>	<p>Children who feel stigmatised by poverty can disengage from school. Disengagement from school can result in disruptive classroom behaviour, which brings on a cycle of disciplinary action, and negative consequences.</p> <p>Truancy and absence removes the opportunity for children to learn (and occurs more among children of lower socioeconomic status). Breaking this cycle is necessary to ensure young children re-engage in school, learn and attain qualifications.</p>	5 to 12 years
5.9	<p><b>Help young people re-engage in education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with low decile secondary schools and tertiary providers in areas of high deprivation to develop programmes that help young people re-engage in learning and achieve school qualifications.</li> <li>This could include alternative learning opportunities, mentoring programmes, and re-engagement programmes to keep young people and adults involved in learning until they graduate.</li> </ul>	<p>Gaining a qualification is a fundamental step to successful transition to work. NCEA Level 2 is deemed a minimum requirement for successful employment. However, those who suffer the most poverty are less likely to achieve this qualification.</p> <p>In order to open doors to employment young people excluded from school, or who leave early, may need to be encouraged (e.g. via polytechnics or iwi tertiary organisations) to re-engage with learning and complete minimum qualifications, even as adults.</p>	13 to young adults 24 years

#	Ideas for investment	Why this matters	Target age
5.10	<p><b>Help young people in poverty to access further education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholarships or loan repayment awards can help young people in poverty overcome financial barriers to access further education.</li> </ul>	<p>New Zealand has a student loans scheme and fee waivers to try to help disadvantaged young people to participate in tertiary education. However, many young people do not meet the criteria for fees waivers, and yet are unable to access, or manage, student loans (e.g. due to previous debt problems). For other potentially promising students, the fear of managing debt becomes a barrier to attending tertiary education.</p> <p>Scholarships are traditionally targeted at the highest performing students, who may be well-off. However, there is a role to support those who have been disadvantaged due to poverty for whom funding could make a greater difference.</p>	Young adults 19 to 24 years