

Treasury Guest Lecture:

The Treasury is pleased to sponsor the following Guest Lecture



Guest Lecturer Susan St John



Improving Policies for Families and Children

Date:

Monday 22 August
2016

Venue:

Reserve Bank Museum
Ground Floor
2 The Terrace
Wellington

Time:

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

RSVP:

Treasury.Academiclinkages@treasury.govt.nz

by Friday 19 August
2016

*For more information
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Kelly Shen

Administrator:

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Programme**

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Abstract:

New Zealand is unusual in having few independent policy think tanks. In other countries, NGOs with a social policy focus engage with policymakers and politicians on a regular basis and influence public opinion through their direct links with the public and research output. Like the Brotherhood of St Laurence in Australia, and Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in the UK, there are often strong links to academics in various universities. Rather by default, and with very limited resources, CPAG NZ finds itself increasingly in the role of offering alternative policy analyses and a counter narrative to prevailing policy directions.

St John will discuss CPAG's current projects including an 18 month 6 part campaign to fix WFF and ongoing work in the redesign of the welfare state for the 21st century. The particular focus of CPAG is the best interests of the child and reduction of the harm of child poverty. Even policies that are about children, such as Paid Parental Leave and Working for Families (WFF), have become disconnected from children's needs and have ended up amplifying distortions in the income and well-being distribution. Children's well-being cannot of course be viewed in isolation from their parents but many policies harm children in part because the impact on them is invisible. With children truly at the centre policies would look very different.

**About Susan St John:**

Susan St John BSc MA, PhD, QSO
Honorary Associate Professor Economics,
Department of Economics, Director of the
Retirement Policy and Research Centre,
University of Auckland. Founding member of the
Child Poverty Action Group, researcher in family
incomes, tax reform, decumulation and

pensions. Current projects include the living wage, section 70 deductions overseas pensions, basic income reforms, and comparative pension and welfare reforms.