

Home Education Foundation

**SOCIAL SECURITY
(BENEFIT CATEGORIES
AND WORK FOCUS)
AMENDMENT BILL**



Families = Children + Parents Together

This law, if it passes, will require all Children of Beneficiaries to

- attend 15 hours a week Early Childhood Education (ECE) from age 3
- attend school from age five or six
- enrol with a General Practitioner .
- complete core WellChild/Tamariki Ora checks

Do YOU want this?

It is vital that as many people as possible write a submission—not just beneficiaries, but everyone, as this law could soon extend to every 3-5 year old child having to be in an ECE for 15 hours a week.

Make a Submission
Speak to Submission
Make them listen
Make them Reject

Please note: that submissions are due 1 November 2012—they will not accept late submissions

Would you like more copies of this pamphlet?

To order more for your support group, family and friends, email sales@hef.org.nz
Copies are FREE (but donations would be welcomed!)

The [Social Security \(Benefit Categories and Work Focus\) Amendment Bill](#) sponsored by National MP Paula Bennett has been sent to a Government Select Committee.

This means that people like you can make a submission (short or long) and have your say direct to the MP's. And we want to help you every step of the way so as to make the task as simple as possible.

The 1st reading in Parliament showed that only 19 MP's need to change their vote to NO in order to defeat this bill.

It is vital that as many people as possible show their support for beneficiaries to keep their 3, 4 and 5 year old children from:

- **attending 15 hours a week Early Childhood Education (ECE) from age 3**
- **attend school from age five or six**
- **enrol with a General Practitioner .**
- **complete core WellChild/Tamariki Ora checks**

Do YOU want this?

Please encourage others to send in a submission.

Let us protect the children of Beneficiaries

remember this could extend to ALL children if this passes

Major Concerns

- These can help form the basis of your own submission.
- However, try to say it in your own words.

Major Concerns

1. The Jobseeker Benefit

Under the proposed legislation, the jobseeker benefit will replace the unemployment benefit, the sickness benefit, the domestic purposes benefit and the widows benefit for parents with children 14 years or older, and the domestic purposes benefit for women alone. Beneficiaries on the jobseeker benefit, unless prevented by ill health, will be required to look for full-time work.

Result: There is now no domestic purposes benefit. The mother on a benefit who wants to continue caring for her home and family after the youngest turns 14 will now have to choose between receiving the benefit and being with her family.

2. The Sole Parent Support Benefit

The sole parent support benefit will be payable to sole parents and widows with a child under the age of 14. Beneficiaries will be expected to work part-time once their youngest child turns 5 and go on to full-time work once the youngest child turns 14.

Result: Single mothers on a benefit will find it more difficult to home educate their children, especially once the children turn 14.

3. Social Obligations: Education

No matter what benefit a parent receives, if he or she has any dependent children they must attend Early Childhood Education (ECE) from age 3 for the required minimum time (15 hours per week). Then, unless an exemption to home educate is granted the children must attend school (which is already compulsory anyway).

Result: Beneficiary parents who were looking forward to providing stimulating and enriching early learning environments in their own homes for their preschool children will be required to find an approved ECE provider and pay the costs of attendance, whether they wished to do so or not.

4. Social Obligations: Health

Beneficiary parents with dependent children must enroll their children at birth with a GP and must attend all the government-required Well Child checks.

Result: Beneficiary parents who wish to make independent and principled decisions about their child's health care will be subjected to pressure from the governmental health programme, including its 95% immunisation goal.

5. The Sanctions

Beneficiary parents who stand by their convictions about health and education will be contacted three times to encourage their compliance. If they continue to disregard the “social obligations”, their benefit will be cut by 50% and if this fails to produce the desired behaviour the family will experience “intensified case management support”—which, according to the Ministry of Social Development’s Welfare Reform Paper E, will include CYFS involvement and fraud investigations.

Result: A dad who loses his job and desperately feels the need to provide for his young family will have to choose between watching his children go cold and hungry, or signing them over to ECE and compulsory Well Child checks, including heavy pressure to accept all the medical treatments advised by the government at pain of fraud investigation or CYFS interference.



KEY POINTS

- These can help form the basis of your own submission.
 - However, try to say it in your own words.

Key Points for Submissions

Productivity at home is just as important as productivity in the workplace

There are women of all backgrounds who find themselves most fulfilled, busy, happy, and productive as homemakers and home educating mothers. Their investment in the homes and families of New Zealand is priceless. Everyone knows that strong families make a strong society, so why make it more difficult for women to invest in their families like this?

Everyone has a right to choose between productivity at home and productivity in the workplace

Freedom means the ability to choose between responsible, lawful options. Coercion means using superior monetary or physical power to influence someone else's free choice—like, for example, threatening to stop their income to prevent them acting in a lawful manner. So are we going to have a society based on freedom or one based on coercion? Forcing people to choose the workplace over the home is worse than forcing them to choose one job over another.

Parents have a right to choose what kind of education their children will receive

According to the Human Rights Act 1993, “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.” This is a basic human right and it includes an education given at home by loving and supporting parents. Compelling parents to include ECE in their plan for their children's education is an unwarranted breach of their human rights, especially given the already high *voluntary* ECE attendance rates—95% of all children.

Children benefit more from parental interaction than from ECE

Researchers have consistently found that although ECE can benefit neglected children, it is no substitute for constant interaction with parents. According to researcher Dr Raymond Moore:

“Harold McCurdy, a distinguished psychologist from the University of North Carolina and a leading student of genius, says that genius is derived from the experience of children being most of the time with adults and very little with their peers. So when you start assembling children in very large numbers for long periods

of time, you are on the wrong course for producing strong character and intellect. The more children around your child, the fewer meaningful human contacts he will have. Let me give you another example, the matter of adult responses. John Goodlad, Graduate Dean of Education at UCLA, came out with an article in the Phi Delta Kappan in March, 1983. He did a comparison of over a thousand schools and found that the average amount of time spent in person-to-person responses between teachers and students amounted to seven minutes a day. It doesn't take much to see that if your child is one of 20, 25, 30 or maybe more youngsters in a classroom and the teacher is giving only seven minutes a day in responses, that your child is lucky if he gets spoken to once a day. If he is an aggressive or misbehaving child, he might get more attention. But when a child is home with his mother, he may get one, two, three hundred answers to his questions and ideas a day. So you can see right there where we are in terms of the sheer potential there is for the stimulation of intellect in a home."



Parents have a right to make informed and independent decisions about health care

Parents should have the right to choose the health care as well as the education of their children. As medical science forges on, many on the forefront of medical discovery, like Ignaz Semmelweis (the doctor who discovered that hand-washing prevented the spread of germs) are ignored and marginalised by the medical establishment. Parents should have the right to make informed decisions based on the latest research without having to fight government health officials.

For example the NZ Government has a goal of a 95% full immunisation rate by December 2014. According to MP Paula Bennett in a paper on this bill released to the press, she "considered whether to establish an obligation in relation to child immunisation," but decided against it because "immunisation is a medical treatment" and "the decision should remain with parents". Nevertheless, "immunisation is actively promoted through primary Health Care providers and the Well Child programme". Clearly, Ms. Bennett relies on these health obligations to pressure at least 95% of parents into compliance with the government's views on immunisation. What other medical treatments will parents find themselves being pressured to adopt?

This legislation coerces single mums who want to be at home into the workforce

In one press release, Ms Bennett stated, “The valuation tells us those on Unemployment Benefits make up a very small proportion of lifetime costs on welfare (5%) when compared to sole parents (23%) [...] So Unemployment Beneficiaries represent just 5% of the lifetime costs of welfare, but receive the lion’s share of support to get off welfare into work. We can do much better than this, by providing more support to sole parents and others who’ve historically received very little help to get off welfare.”

This makes it clear that the Nationals’ plan to cut welfare spending relies on getting “sole parents”—ie single mothers—away from their homes and children and into the workforce. This would explain why the Bill comes tied to compulsory ECE.

This legislation targets principled and responsible families for the toughest penalties

When it comes to the “Social Obligations” in the Bill, there’s no discrimination made between neglectful parents who don’t care about their children’s health and education and conscientious parents who care so much that they won’t delegate their responsibility to government-approved teachers and doctors. After three stages of “support contact” to deal with lazy and irresponsible parents, the administrative machinery is already in place to report stubborn families to CYFS and fraud investigation services will only tackle the most responsible families who insist on making their own decisions, because only people of conviction will continue to resist the “obligations”.

This legislation doesn’t target bad parents. It targets good parents.

This legislation discriminates against beneficiaries and their children

The Bill breaches the human right to choose education. It ensures that children of beneficiaries get a substandard preschool education. It subjects parents to governmental oversight of health choices. It targets responsible parents for interference by social workers.

And it does all this for just one segment of society: the people with little money and few choices. Welfare beneficiaries. This can only mean one of two things. One, either welfare beneficiaries are somehow less than human, so it’s OK to take away their human rights. Or two, the welfare beneficiaries are just the beginning, and it’ll be the rest of us next.

Families = Children + Parents Together

This legislation must be TOTALLY REJECTED

In 1877 New Zealanders lost the freedom to educate our children at home without applying for permission. Our forefathers let us down by not standing up for their rights.

In 2012, will we be the generation that begins to lose the freedom to preschool our own children, to make our own decisions about health care, or to invest our time in our families above a job?

We say NO

Everything in this brochure is online here
<http://hef.org.nz/beneficiaries/14227-2/>

Things to remember when preparing a submission

1. **We need to remain calm. So at all times, please be positive, respectful and constructive.** We need to highlight the fact that we are completely against this Bill. Please avoid personal attacks, negative labels and angry words.
2. If possible, include a **personal story** about either why you do not want to send your 3 year old child to an ECE or the damage that has happened to your 3 year old child in an ECE etc.
3. **Share research** you have found on the benefit of 3, 4 and 5 year olds staying at home rather than going to an ECE.
4. **We would strongly encourage and recommend that you say YES to appearing before the Select Committee.** Making an oral submission provides you with the opportunity to reinforce what you have said in your written submission. We can help you prepare for this. Appearing before the Committee adds weight to your submission and communicates just how important this issue is to you.
5. When you send the 2 copies of your submission in to the Select Committee, please consider **also emailing or posting a copy to your local MP** (or all MPs). You will find a list of all MPs here: <http://hef.org.nz/beneficiaries/list-of-members-of-parliament-september-2012/>. You can also email your submission through the Government website.
6. It may be **helpful to ask someone to check your submission** before you send it in to make sure it is clear and effective. Please contact us if you have any questions.
7. **Please encourage others to send in a submission.** Let us protect the children of Beneficiaries—remember it could extend to all children if this passes.
8. Even if you think there is zero chance you'll have the misfortune to end up on benefit one day, do you really want a law to exist in New Zealand that says the state can remove a 3 year old child from the protection of it's parents.

Related Links

[Some of the main links](#)

[Comment on Q+A: Social Development Minister Paula Bennett](#)

[Human Rights in New Zealand Today: The right to education](#)

[Raymond S. Moore on Early Childhood Centres](#)

[Should preschool be compulsory?](#)

[TVNZ One this morning Q&A with Paula Bennett](#)

[Maxim Institute: What is best for children?](#)

[HUGE Concerns over the Social Security \(Benefit Categories and Work Focus\) Amendment Bill](#)

[Letter from Paula Bennett concerning beneficiaries and home education](#)

[Toby Manhire on Benefit-slaying Nats starting to look plain nasty](#)

[Linking welfare to preschool attendance a world first](#)

[New Update on: How will the new Social obligations which will be required of all beneficiary parents effect home schoolers?](#)

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Families

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Children + Parents Together

SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE

**The 1st reading in Parliament showed that only 19
MP's need to change their vote to
NO in order to defeat this bill.**

Please note: that submissions are due 1 November 2012
— they will not accept late submissions

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Lawyers help on this please deposit in this account
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send a cheque or visa details to the address below.
Please include your personal details if you would like
a tax deductible receipt.**

Home Education Foundation

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Submission Form

Date _____

POST TO:
Secretariat
Government Administration Committee
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6011

SUBMISSION
Social Security (Benefit Categories and Work Focus) Amendment Bill

Name of Individual / Family / Organisation:

Email Address: _____

I/We wish to appear before the Committee to speak to my/our Submission **YES / NO**
If you circled YES, please provide daytime contact number: _____

SUBMISSION:

I/We OPPOSE Social Security (Benefit Categories and Work Focus) Amendment Bill

Reasons:

Continued over page (if required)

NOTE: YOU NEED TO SEND 2 COPIES OF YOUR SUBMISSION TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE

