

KickStart and KidsCan – continuing to improve child wellbeing

As part of the Wellbeing Budget, funding is continuing for a further two years to help the existing KickStart Breakfast Programme and contribute to the KidsCan Charitable Trust.

Budget 2019

● There are no other programmes with the national reach or administrative support of KickStart or KidsCan.

- \$3.2m for a further two years' funding of KickStart and KidsCan programmes.
- The KickStart Breakfast Programme currently provides Sanitarium Weetbix and Anchor milk in over 1,000 schools across New Zealand, reaching 30,000 children.
- KidsCan provides support to children in low-decile (1–4) schools with Food for Kids (eg tinned fruit and muesli bars), and essential clothing such as raincoats, socks and shoes, and hygiene products.
- An evaluation by Waikato University of a pilot programme with Early Childhood Education centres and KidsCan is also included in the initiative.
- The New Zealand Household Economic Survey 2016 identified 20 child specific items that indicated children living in material hardship. These included children with no access to a waterproof jacket, fresh fruit and vegetables, two pairs of good shoes or two sets of warm winter clothing.
- Contributes to the following Budget 2019 priority:
 - Reducing child poverty and improving child wellbeing, including addressing family violence.

The benefits of this funding include:

- KidsCan supports children in low-decile schools identified as experiencing material hardship, while KickStart has a more universal approach by providing breakfasts in schools wishing to establish a breakfast club.
- The universal approach captures those children experiencing deprivation but without the stigma of being individually identified.

Further comment:

- Current MSD funding for these initiatives ends on 30 June 2019.
- The initiative is part of a child wellbeing package aimed at reducing child poverty, led by the Child Poverty Unit (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet).