



KIN RAISING KIDS TASMANIA (KRK) believes that everyone has the right to a life free from poverty. We write to draw your attention to the adequacy of Newstart. This inadequacy affects many informal kinship carers so KRK urges informal carers to join the campaign to have payments increased.

The Senate Community Affairs References Committee report on the Adequacy of Newstart and related payments found that 'the income support system is not meeting its objective of ensuring a minimum standard of living for working-age jobseekers, as too many are living in poverty'.

The current rate of Newstart, now called the JobSeeker Payment, has not been increased in real terms in 26 years. As a result, more than half of all households receiving Newstart or Youth Allowance as their main source of income, including many with children, are living in poverty. Our safety net is failing to catch those most in need.

The far-reaching impacts of persistently inadequate payment rates are now exacerbated by the coronavirus crisis. Federal parliament recently recognised this and passed legislation to provide a coronavirus supplement of \$275 per week on top of existing payments including Jobseeker Payment, Parenting Payment and others from 27 April for a period of six months.

This is an effective doubling of payments that will have a profoundly positive impact on the lives of people who have experienced significant hardship for years. However, economic modelling and reports from community service agencies indicate the level of people's needs once the pandemic itself has eased are likely to be long-term and unprecedented.

We urge the government to permanently increase social security payments, without conditions, as a key feature of the recovery phase of this crisis.

We strongly welcome recommendations to set a national definition of poverty and to ensure that no person receiving social security payments lives in poverty.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "F. L. Tyers".

Frank Tyers
Secretary, Kin Raising Kids Tasmania.

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