

Media Release

15 October 2018



Being Left Out Hurts our Kids

Poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage are complex and persistent. Child social exclusion means lost opportunity, disengagement and the risk of leading lives of unfulfilled potential.

Today, at the start of Anti-Poverty Week, UnitingCare Australia in partnership with The University of Canberra's, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, launches a Report which captures the multi-dimensional nature of disadvantage in Australia and its impact.

The report "Poverty, Social Exclusion and Disadvantage in Australia, analyses the 2016 Census and other data using the Child Social Exclusion Index, giving us a unique perspective through the eyes of the child.

"Being excluded hurts children, families and the community. This Report provides strong arguments for holistic, preventative responses so that parents, carers and communities can better play their part in raising our children" said UnitingCare Australia National Director, Claerwen Little.

"Disadvantage is much more than just poverty or lack of financial security. Limited social engagement, connection, access and opportunity are equally detrimental to health and wellbeing" said Ms Little.

This Report identifies:

- ♦ 17.2% or 1 in 6 Australian children aged 0-14 years live in poverty
- ♦ Too many children experience disadvantage on multiple fronts
- ♦ Northern Territory has the highest incidence of children at greatest risk of social exclusion
- ♦ 87% of local communities with the highest risk of child social exclusion in 2011 had no improvement in 2016.

UnitingCare Australia is the national body representing the Uniting Church's community services network, supporting over 1.4 million people each year across urban, rural and remote Australia.

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