

Fighting Poverty

It was Franklin D Roosevelt who said: “The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much, but whether we provide enough for those who have little”.

Nearly half the world's population live in poverty with incomes of less than \$2 a day. Their struggle however is not just a financial one but one that involves holding at bay the twin perils of hunger and disease. At Family First we believe that the plight of the poor, whether in Australia or in other parts of the world, is a collective responsibility and that “to whom much is given much is required”. We believe that whatever wealth we have, whether as individuals or as a nation, it is a gift to be shared.

At Family First we are committed to policies that alleviate poverty and provide people with opportunities to develop skills that will enable them to provide for themselves on a sustainable basis. Our policies include:

- Recognising that access to education is fundamental to breaking the cycle of poverty. We support and promote initiatives that make education available to those who are poor and marginalised, whether they be in Australia or overseas.
- Supporting Australia’s foreign aid program with a particular emphasis on support for programs that develop the capacity of communities through projects focused on health, infrastructure, education, clean water, farming and micro-enterprise development.
- Promoting policies and programs that develop the capacity of people to gain employment so that they can provide for themselves and their families. These include vocational training, apprenticeship, employment placement and literacy programs.
- Supporting initiatives and programs that provide income security and social supports for those who, due to age, disability or illness, are unable to work.

- Recognising that in Australia the biggest determinant of whether or not a person lives in poverty is housing cost. In many Australian cities and regions those on low incomes and on Centrelink benefits pay up to 60% of their income on housing in the private rental market. Family First is committed to supporting initiatives that will increase housing supply - both rental and purchase, and to working to eradicate those policies of State governments which drive up housing costs to the detriment of first home buyers and low income renters alike.