

Child poverty: Changing children's occupational patterns to realise their potential

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Finding: The Experience of Child Poverty: Occupational Perspective

- Children sustain their aspirations to participate in a wide variety of occupations; “[I want to play] league... soccer... playing netball... join my basketball team... join a music class and art class... play games with friends... [go to] the mall, shops... travel and get a job.”
- Poverty limited opportunities to experience these occupations.

[Tamariki/children in Fernlee & Riverfield Neighbourhoods Focus groups]



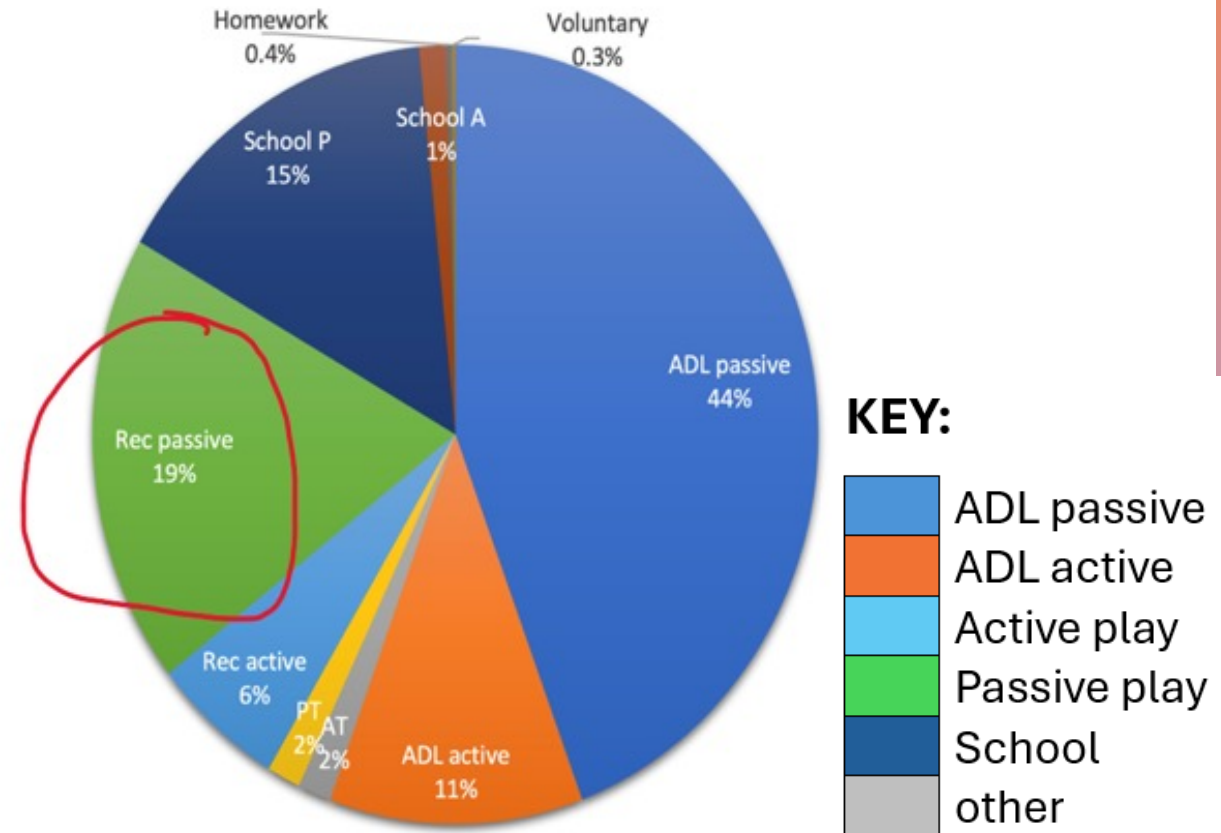
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Finding: Poverty resulted in impoverished routines/habits

- That do not support health – sleep patterns and family mealtimes
- That do not support development – lack of homework, and variety, challenge in occupations
- Dominance of sedentary occupations – TV, online activity – is a health risk
- Restricted social network – does not support mental health or job seeking

“We don’t do nothing [in the weekend], we just sleep...I don’t...go to the park.”

[Miriam, 11 year old girl]



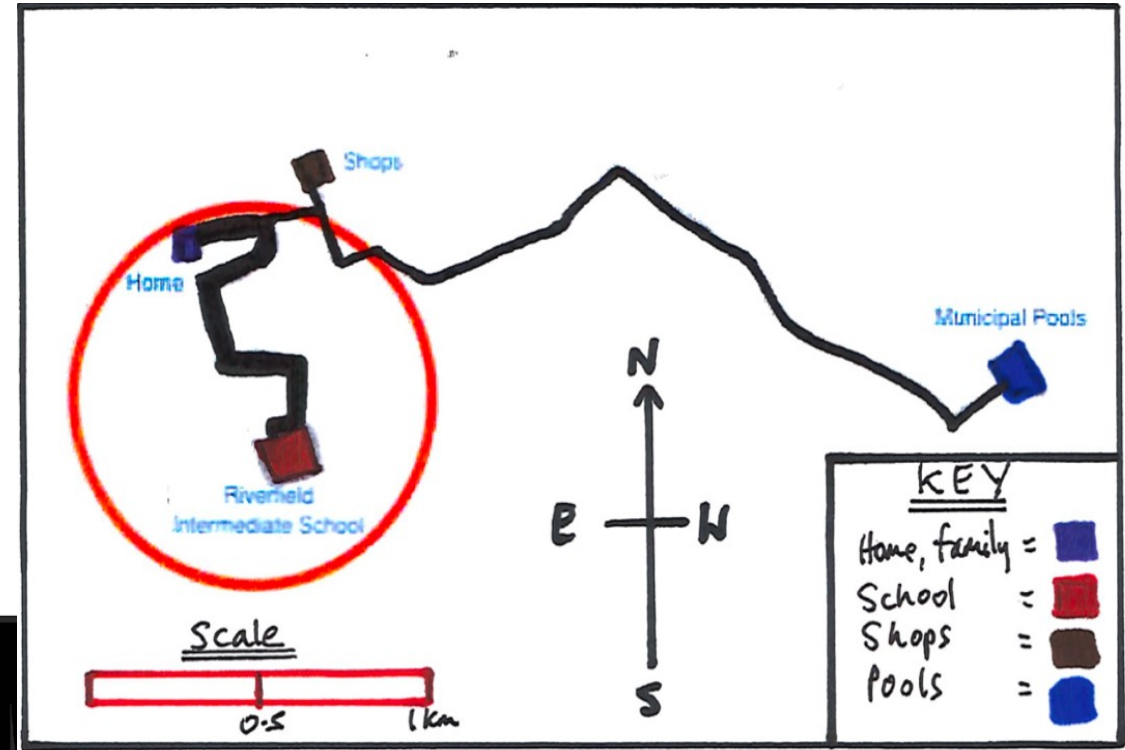
Finding: Poverty constrained children's participation in occupations

- Recreational & cultural occupations
- Social occupations
- Productive occupations

“There’s nothing for him to do... There are things like the community centre... just across the road... for young teens... they’re the only ones that I really know of.”

[Tui, Jarad’s mother]

Mapping Jarad’s Occupations



Key: Thicker black lines indicate regular, daily access and the thin lines indicate occasional access. The red circle shows a 1km radius around his

Family and community were vital in helping to mitigate impacts of poverty on children's participation – but were under resourced

Family supports: Nurturing home, instilling cultural values, prioritising children's occupational needs, tuakeina-teina (reciprocal support between siblings), support from extended family

Community supports: (For example, schools, churches, community centers, NGOs) – Creative solutions to support children's occupations (free school bus, afterschool programmes, voluntary/civic and vocational activities)

However, **communities lacked sustained funding**

“There's so much need... But you see the problem is... [we] just don't have the resources... so these kids could have some access to after-school activities.”

[Sue, Riverfield school & community centre volunteer]



Study Assertions

- **Child poverty is occupationally unjust** (i.e., missing out on children’s activities due to unfair socio-economic factors)
- **Results in occupational deprivation for children** (i.e., deprived of important children’s activities)
- **Child poverty breaches the rights of children – UNCRC.** (e.g., educational, play/recreational, social, cultural activities)

Ref: (UN, 1989; Hocking et al, 2022; Leadley et al., 2020; Leadley, 2023).



Innovative Futures: Occupational, Transdisciplinary, and Public Health Solutions for Child Poverty

- ✓ **Collaborate**
- ✓ **Advocate**
- ✓ **Transdisciplinary approach**
- ✓ **Public Health approach: Tiered approach:**
 - ✓ Tier 1– Policy level: Funding for occupations of children living in poverty
 - ✓ Tier 2– Community level: Support occupational opportunities
 - ✓ Tier 3 – Individual interventions: Children with health-related conditions

Refs: Hocking et al. (2022); Lysack, et al. (2024); Reitz & DeLany, (2024).



Inspiring Change: Sustaining Hope for a Better Future

Dreams and Aspirations of Tamariki/Children

*My goal is to be a basketball star...make my family proud...
graduate from school and get a job...own a business...
be a plumber...be a social worker.*

What helps me achieve my dreams

*People encouraging me...others believing in me...support...
family, friends...learning.*

[Tamariki/children in Fernlee & Riverfield Neighbourhoods Focus groups]

Khàawp khun



<https://images.app.goo.gl/iYJVK8moMc5Khqe89>

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