



## Media Release

### **SAVE THE CHILDREN URGES PARENTS TO SPEND TIME NOT MONEY AT CHRISTMAS**

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The glitz and glamour of Christmas can hide the real stresses and reality that Christmas can be a tough time for many families. Whilst we are bombarded with multiple images of glittering Christmas trees piled high with a bounty of presents, for many families this is not the reality.

Save the Children NZ (SCNZ) Advocacy, Strategy and Research Director Jacqui Southey said, “We all know that Christmas can be a stressful time for families with increased financial costs, and juggling multiple commitments. Added to this, long car trips, tired children, tired and stressed parents, and feeling pressured to buy a multitude of presents can leave parents feeling strung out.

“The evidence shows that when people are under too much pressure there is a greater likelihood of poor behaviours which may include lashing out at those we love. Statistics show family violence episodes increase over the holiday period, and sadly children are caught up as victims and or witnesses to this violence. We encourage parents to take some time to look after themselves and each other so they are better equipped to deal with these pressures, including demanding behaviours of children who may also be feeling Christmas pressures.

“Spending time together and having fun as a family is more important than expensive material gifts. Spending time versus money is good for the whole family as it can reduce the financial burdens of Christmas and mean that the focus can shift toward having fun together.”

Ms Southey said, “In a large-scale consultation with around 1200 children across New Zealand, children overwhelmingly told us that family and experiences with their family were most important to them. This is a valuable reminder that pressure to buy expensive gifts does not come from children, but from big business and mass advertising coming at parents from multiple avenues.

“For those that feel it is all too much or getting beyond their control, we encourage parents reach out to organisations that can give advice such as PlunketLine and Parent Helpline; or take time out and remove yourself from the stressful situation.”

**ENDS**

#### **About Save the Children**

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In New Zealand and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children’s unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

For more information please contact: Ally Clelland, Communications Specialist, Save the Children NZ, phone 022 531 9514 or email [ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz](mailto:ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz)