

**New life expectancy data bad news for Maori children – PHA
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New life expectancy data shows Maori children and young people are falling through the cracks, says Public Health Association (PHA) National Executive Officer Dr Gay Keating.

Statistics New Zealand today released figures for 2005-2007 showing a newborn girl can expect to live 82.2 years and a boy 78.0 years – an increase of 1.0 years for females and 1.7 years for males since 2000-2002.

“While the overall trend of improving life expectancy is positive, it is alarming to see that, for some Maori young people, things have been going backwards.”

Dr Keating says the life expectancy of Maori children and young people under 20 has barely changed over the past few years.

“Worse than that, life expectancy for Maori girls aged 10 to 19 has actually reduced.

“These children and young people are paying a high price for living in cold homes, having insufficient nutritious food and a family income that is extremely low. They are far more susceptible to conditions such as asthma and respiratory tract infections.”

Dr Keating is calling on the incoming Government to improve the health and life conditions of these groups.

“This data is extremely up-to-date, so we will be able to tell in three years’ time just how much of a difference the new Government has made to those who most need its help.”

For further information:

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