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There should be no hardship in our “lucky country” yet an ever increasing number of families are doing it tough and with each week that passes more and more are being plunged into poverty.

During National Families Week (15 - 21 May) the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is calling on all political parties to prioritise the eradication of poverty and inequality, two of biggest issues facing a growing number of Australian families.

AASW National President Vittorio Cintio said the National Families Week theme of ‘Stronger Families, Stronger Communities’, is about highlighting the challenges facing families of all kinds and celebrating the special contribution they make to our community.

“Social workers see the vital role that families play in creating resilient, healthy and nurturing communities. In light of the challenges COVID-19 in 2021, National Families Week is an opportunity to raise the awareness and to celebrate the protective and supportive capacity of families.”

“The social work profession takes a ‘person in environment approach’ when working with family members to improve wellbeing, and on a daily basis we see the great diversity and strength of families in the face of major challenges.”

“As a profession we also see the difficulties facing many families across Australia, particularly as supports put in place during COVID-19, such as increased Jobseeker payments are wound back and families are being severely impacted.”

“Our members have told us of parents who sometimes go without meals to ensure that their children have enough to eat. We were incredibly disappointed to see that the recent Federal Budget contained no real increase in the rate of income support payments.”

“As talk of an upcoming federal election begins, the AASW is calling on all sides of politics to address two of the biggest issues facing this nation - poverty and inequality, by committing to raising income support payments, so we no longer have Australian families living in hardship,” Mr Cintio said.

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