



Child Poverty Strategy for Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.gov.wales



March 2015

A summary for children and young people

Child poverty

The Welsh Government has the ambition to make sure no child is living in poverty by 2020.

Poverty is about not having enough money to buy food, clothing and a safe place to live.

It is important that children and young people in Wales have happy, healthy lives which are full of opportunities.

Poverty stops this from happening. It can lead to children and young people having poor health, not doing as well in school, not having safe places to play and missing out on opportunities that others enjoy.

This booklet tells you about our new

Child Poverty Strategy for Wales.

The strategy sets out our vision and goals for Wales and has children's rights at its centre.

These rights are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which is law in Wales. It says every child has a right to have what they need for life.

Tackling poverty also reduces inequalities.

Some groups of people who are more at risk of living in poverty also face inequalities in other ways. This includes people from different ethnic groups, refugees, disabled people, single parents, older people and young people who are not in employment, education and training (NEET).

This strategy will work with other policies that tackle inequalities and have a focus on helping and supporting people from all backgrounds.



Reaching our 2020 target

We cannot tackle poverty alone.
We need to work together with:

- the people who provide services like health, education and housing
- charities
- voluntary organisations
- businesses
- communities
- families

We also need to work with children and young people themselves and give them an opportunity to have their voice heard and let us know what they need.

This strategy also fits in with other policies and plans we have, including the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan.

There are some things which affect poverty like the tax and benefit system which we do not have the power to change. Some of the Welfare Reforms being introduced by the UK Government may make tackling poverty even harder.

Why do we need a Child Poverty Strategy?

Child poverty in Wales is still too high!

There are still too many families where no one has a paid job and this makes them more at risk of living in poverty.

Even working families are at risk of poverty. This can be as a result of a range of different things, including wage levels, whether people work part-time and how much they spend on things like food, heating and housing.

31%

According to figures for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13, approximately 200,000 children in Wales live in poverty. That is 31% or nearly one in three!



Our goals

In agreeing this strategy we have set 5 goals.

1. We want to ensure far fewer children are living in families where no one goes to work.
2. We want to support parents and young people to have far better skills to help them get better jobs.
3. We want the same opportunities and chances for all children and young people and for nobody to be held back because of poverty. It is especially important we do more to support people to have better health and education outcomes.
4. We want to make sure the economy of Wales is as strong as it can be, so there are more well paid jobs.
5. We want to support families living in poverty by giving them debt and financial advice, stopping the 'poverty premium' and reducing the problems caused by changes to the benefit system.

Poverty premium

Families in poverty often have to pay more (and often pay a greater proportion of their household income) for things like food and fuel.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

These are the things we plan to do to help us achieve our goals.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

To make sure our plans are working, there are numbers we will look at to see whether things are changing and improving for low income families.



1. Reducing the number of families where no one works.

It is important we support parents to get work experience, gain new skills and give them the confidence to get a job.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Youth Engagement and Progression Framework** that works to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.
- **Apprenticeships** so that young people get the skills they need for jobs.
- **Childcare** so parents can go to work.
- **European funding** to help families where no one works.
- **Families First and Communities First** that works with families that face problems because of poverty.
- **Young People's Concessionary Fare Scheme** so that young people get help with transport costs.
- **Lift Programme** that aims to give 5000 training and employment opportunities.

Outcome

- what we want to happen

The number of children living in a family where no one has a paid job is reduced.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of children living in workless households
- Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET
- Percentage of young people aged 19-24 who are NEET

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



2. Increasing the skills parents and young people have.

Skills help people get jobs or better paid jobs. This can make a real difference to tackling poverty in people's lives.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Skills Strategy for Wales** is our plan to make sure Wales has all the skills it needs as a nation.
- **Youth Engagement and Progression Framework** that works to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.
- **Skills Gateway** helps people to find jobs and training easier.
- **Volunteering** opportunities.
- **European Funding** to support people to train and gain skills.
- **Adult and Community Learning** offers courses and learning opportunities.
- **Community Based Learning** so there are different ways for people to learn.

Outcome

- what we want to happen

Parents and young people have more skills to help them to get and keep well paid employment.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of adults with basic skills
- Percentage of working age adults holding qualifications at levels 2, 3 or 4 and above

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



3A. Improving the educational outcomes of children and families living in poverty.



It is important we support families as early as possible so that children can grow up in homes where they can learn, be healthy and gain all the skills they need for the future. Schools and teachers play an important part in this too.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Building a Brighter Future: Early Years and Childcare Plan** supports all children from birth to seven.
- **Parenting in Wales: Guidance on Engagement and Support** so organisations know the best ways to support parents.
- **Rewriting the Future** so schools in Wales are always improving and giving children the best opportunities.
- **Grants for schools** to help pupils who face poverty.
- **Flying Start** which supports children so they have the best start in life.
- **Free School Meals / Breakfasts** giving children healthy meals.
- **Schools Challenge Cymru** giving extra support to schools.

Outcome

- what we want to happen

The inequalities that happen in the education outcomes of children and their families are reduced.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of 7 year olds getting free school meals that reach the goals they should at the end of Foundation Phase
- Percentage of pupils getting free school meals that reach the goals they should at Key Stage 4

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



3B. Improving the health outcomes of children and families living in poverty.



Children and young people who grow up in poverty may also face more physical and mental health problems. This can be because they may live in poor quality housing, are homeless or do not have enough safe places to play outside.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Together for Mental Health Strategy** improves the lives of people using mental health services.
- **Fairer Health Outcomes for All** makes sure everyone gets the best health support possible and no one faces inequalities because of poverty.
- **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill** has goals to improve wellbeing both now and in the future for everyone in Wales.
- **Early years NHS** services to give every child a healthy start.
- **Housing Programmes** that support people to find and keep a home that meets their needs.

Outcome

- what we want to happen

The inequalities that happen in the health outcomes of children and their families are reduced.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of babies born with a low birth weight
- Percentage of children in low income households that reach the health, social and other development milestones they should before they start school

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



4. Making sure that Wales is growing, is financially strong, and there are enough jobs.



Wales needs to keep creating new jobs and new opportunities to get people into work and out of poverty.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Support for economic and business growth** across Wales so there are more better paid jobs.
- **Rural Development Plan** helps support rural communities.
- **National Transport Plan** helps people get to work and support businesses to deliver.
- **Next Generation Broadband** so businesses and communities can grow in Wales.

Outcome
- what we want to happen

Low income families are supported and have better employment outcomes.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of children living in poverty
- Percentage of children living in poverty where at least one adult is working
- Percentage of children living in families where no one has a job

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



5. Supporting people to increase their income and stop the poverty premium.

We do this by having advice services, reducing housing costs and stopping low income families having to pay more for food, fuel, housing and other bills.

Key things we will do to reduce child poverty

- **Fuel Poverty Strategy** helps people heat their homes.
- **Better Advice Better Lives** gives advice for families on Welfare Benefits.
- **Housing (Wales) Act 2014** supports families to have affordable homes in good condition in safe communities.
- **Access to advice** which will support families to make their money go further and cut down on costs.
- **Credit Unions** help people get the financial help and support they need.
- **Free swimming and free museum access** so all children can take part in activities.
- **Free School Meals / Breakfasts** so children and young people can get healthy meals.

Outcome

- what we want to happen

Families are supported to increase their household income and make their money go further.

The numbers we look at to measure the difference made

- Percentage of children living in poverty
- Percentage of children living in in-work poverty

UNCRC at the centre of all we do



Next steps

There are a number of things we want to focus on to help us reach our five goals:

- Helping families understand and get ready for the changes to benefit systems that are coming from the UK Government
- Making sure there is good quality local childcare
- Stopping food poverty
- Stopping in-work poverty
- Making sure there is more affordable, good housing in safe communities

Food poverty is when people are unable to access or afford food for a healthy diet.



Thanks for reading this.

If you want to know more about this strategy then [click here](#):

If you want to contact us:

TacklingPoverty-MinisterialBusiness@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK

or

Tackling Poverty Division
Welsh Government
Rhydycar Business Centre
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1UZ

Checking

We have a group of professionals called ‘**The Tackling Poverty Implementation Board**’. Members of this group make sure this strategy is working. We will report on the indicators included in this Child Poverty Strategy every year.

