

Child Poverty in the UK

With the cost-of-living crisis worsening each month, the people who feel this the most are the most vulnerable, particularly children. There are currently [3,900,000 children](#) living in poverty in the UK.

Whilst there are echoes around Parliament about levelling-up, and minimising the divide between the rich and poor, there's still a long way to go.

For example, the North East of England has seen a nearly [50% rise in child poverty](#) in just six years. This highlights the immediate need to tackle wealth disparities around the UK so that all children can grow up with opportunity.

The Effects of Child Poverty

Seeing the stark statistics surrounding child poverty is certainly concerning, and the effects are no different.

Firstly, suffering from poverty can have a detrimental effect on children's health. From higher infant mortality rates to having weaker immune systems due to poor diets, children's physical and mental health are greatly affected.

What's more, people who live in the most deprived areas of the UK will likely [die nine years younger](#) than those living in the richest areas in the country.

Reports of higher stress and anxiety are also common in children in lower income families. Seeing parents struggle financially can have a huge impact on children's emotional and physical wellbeing as they learn to navigate through constant distress.

Moreover, poverty-stricken families are at a higher risk of experiencing adverse childhood experiences. Common factors include domestic violence, becoming victims of abuse and growing up surrounded by drugs and alcohol use.

Having these experiences at such a young age can be damaging to children's development, leading them to struggle further as they enter education.

The Children's Society state that children who receive free school meals [are less likely to achieve A-C](#) in their GCSEs. This disproportionately affects not only their education, but their future, as they struggle to find higher paid jobs and social security.

What's more, children from low to middle income families obtain poorer vocabulary compared to higher income families. A poor vocabulary leads to poor comprehension, poor cognitive ability and behavioural issues. Resolution Foundation report that being just [five months behind](#) on vocabulary skills at primary age can affect children as they grow into adulthood.

Is There a Solution?

Thankfully, poverty and its impact can be reformed. With the right funding, resources and support, child poverty can be reduced, if not eradicated, and every child can grow with opportunity and prosperity.

Yet, whilst the Scottish government continue to prioritise reducing child poverty, in 2015, the UK government removed all four child poverty income targets from legislation.

But [by prioritising intervention and making structural changes](#) in government, each part of the country can receive enough funding to support *every* child in the UK.

[Action for Children](#)

[Child Poverty Action Group](#)

[Resolution Foundation](#)

[The Children's Society](#)

[Public Health Scotland](#)