

Child Poverty Strategy for Wales 2023



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

A version for young people



Hello

Living in poverty makes life more difficult, especially for children and young people.

The Welsh Government wants all children and young people in Wales to live healthy, happy lives. We want them to enjoy their rights and have everything they need.

But many children, young people and families in Wales are living in poverty.

i **Poverty** — not having enough money to pay for food, clothes, heating and other basic needs.

In 2015 we wrote a Child Poverty Strategy for Wales, but a lot has changed since then:



COVID-19 put families under a lot of pressure.



The cost of food, fuel and housing have gone up a lot.



People's wages haven't gone up enough to cover these costs.



Local authorities have less money to run services, but more people need support.



Wales has less funding because of Brexit.

We must take action and find solutions to reduce poverty in Wales.

This new Child Poverty Strategy will help us fight poverty and create a stronger, better Wales for everyone.

The Welsh Government has a vision:

Wales – a nation that helps all children and young people have their rights, have good wellbeing and fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.

i All children and young people have rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)



Involving people

To write this new Poverty Strategy we had help from over **3,272** people:

- children and young people
- parents, carers and families
- grandparents and great grandparents
- representatives from organisations.

We consulted and **155** people told us what they thought.

People told us:

Poverty affects day-to-day life.

Support should be in the local community so people have help quickly.

Childcare needs to be affordable.

Services should treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Work needs to be flexible and pay well.

Public transport needs to be more affordable.

The benefit system can be difficult to use.

Information and advice from services is important but it can be difficult to get.

The rising cost of living is having a big effect.

The cost of school uniforms, trips and activities is an issue for families.

There needs to be more affordable, good quality housing.

This strategy has actions that will help reduce poverty and help people in poverty.





Goal 1:

To reduce costs and make sure families have enough money for food, heat and meeting their needs.

We want to make sure everyone knows about benefits, grants and support they might be able to get.

We want to make sure families:

- know how to claim benefits so they don't miss out on money
- get support to fill in forms online
- have information and advice in the language they need
- get help with the costs of food, fuel housing, and transport
- get help with the costs of baby clothes, school uniform and winter coats
- get free period products in their communities
- know how to claim emergency funds and support if something unexpected happens.

We also want services and organisations to make it easier for families to get support.

i Some things can only be changed by the UK Government. That includes the benefits people get, taxes and the money we get to help people.

Priority 1:

Helping people get the money they're entitled to – putting money in people's pockets.



Actions

We will:

- develop a Welsh Benefits system that is easy to use and helps people get any money they have a right to
- make sure everyone working with families gives them the advice, information and support they need to claim any benefits they have a right to
- work to lower the costs families pay for education and school life – like school uniforms, school trips, school meals, transport and other costs.



Goal 2:

To help children, young people and families out of poverty.

Helping families out of poverty makes a big difference to their lives.

We want to make sure families have:

- support quickly, in the early years of a child's life
- support into work
- support to claim any benefits they have a right to
- opportunities to develop their skills
- opportunities to get well-paid jobs
- support with childcare and transport costs.

We want to make sure children and young people have:

- the best start in life
- everything they need to grow and be healthy
- the support they need to learn
- support to reach their goals.

We want everyone to have opportunities to get out of poverty. We don't want anyone to miss out because of disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or any other reason.

Priority 2:

Creating a Fair Work nation - leaving no one behind.

Actions

We will:



- make sure everything we do as an employer promotes Fair Work and support a Real Living Wage
- lead the way and make sure everyone has opportunities to gain skills and find work
- find solutions to make childcare and transport more affordable.

i A Real living Wage – the hourly rate needed to afford your basic needs and not be in poverty. In 2023, this is £12 per hour.





Goal 3:

To support families' wellbeing, and make sure children and young people have their rights.

All children and young people have rights, no matter who they are, where they live or what they believe in. These rights are in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Poverty can stop children and young people from enjoying their rights.

We want all children and young people in Wales to have their rights to:

- the best start in life
- enjoy learning, and have the best education possible
- enjoy a healthy life, be safe from harm and treated fairly
- to play and have fun
- be listened to and be treated with respect
- a safe and healthy home and community to grow up in
- have what they need to survive and develop.

i We will make sure this strategy links to other plans we have to protect children's rights.

Priority 3:

Building communities – making sure services work together to meet people's needs.

Actions

We will:



- find ways services in the community can help people get support quickly and get involved in decisions that affect their lives
- support more schools to become community focused schools so they can support families and work with services in the community
- work with others to deliver more community-based sports and activities that are low cost and support health and wellbeing
- make sure our Communities Policy helps services work together to stop poverty without people facing bullying or stigma.





Goal 4:

To make sure children, young people and families are treated with dignity and respect.

Sometimes people are treated unfairly or face stigma because they don't have a lot of money. **We don't want anyone being treated differently because of poverty.**

We want all services and staff to:

- treat people fairly and with respect
- not make life harder for families in poverty.

We want all children, young people and their families to:

- have good support no matter who they are, or how much money they have
- have support from systems that are easy to find and use
- be able to say what matters to them
- have support to take part in activities and other opportunities
- be listened to and involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Priority 4:

Welcoming – kind, open and compassionate services for everyone.



Actions

We will:

- make sure everything we do deals with poverty and supports children's rights
- make sure services know how to help people in the right ways and use the Trauma Informed Wales Framework
- make sure schools, colleges and universities know how to support children and young people in poverty
- make sure everyone gets support and no one is treated differently because of a disability, their sexuality, their culture, or any other reason.





Goal 5:

To make sure everything we do helps services work together regionally and locally.

We want to make sure we deal with poverty across all of Wales. We don't want to leave any community behind.

We can't do this alone, we all have to work together nationally, regionally and locally. That includes local authorities, public services, charities, businesses and others. We will think about children's rights when we are doing this.

Priority 5:

Working together – across Wales and locally.

Actions
We will:



- make sure our funding and policies help services work together to deal with poverty
- help local authorities and services share their good practice and new ideas so they can improve their work and focus on things that need it the most
- find the best ways to deal with poverty across the regions and support everyone to work together
- set up a forum so professionals and services can share good practice and learn from each other
- work with Regional Partnership Boards and others to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, especially those that face poverty.

i **Regional Partnership Boards** are responsible for improving the health and wellbeing of everyone that lives in their areas.





Monitoring our work



We are deciding on the best ways to measure if we are reaching our goals in this strategy.



We will also continue to talk to people across Wales to make sure we are reaching our goals and fighting poverty.



Welsh Ministers report every three years on how well Wales is doing and will check if this Strategy is making a difference.

Thanks for reading this

You can read the full Child Poverty Strategy for Wales here: gov.wales/child-poverty-strategy-wales-2023

