

**Childhood only happens once.**

**By helping children now we  
also set them up for the future.**

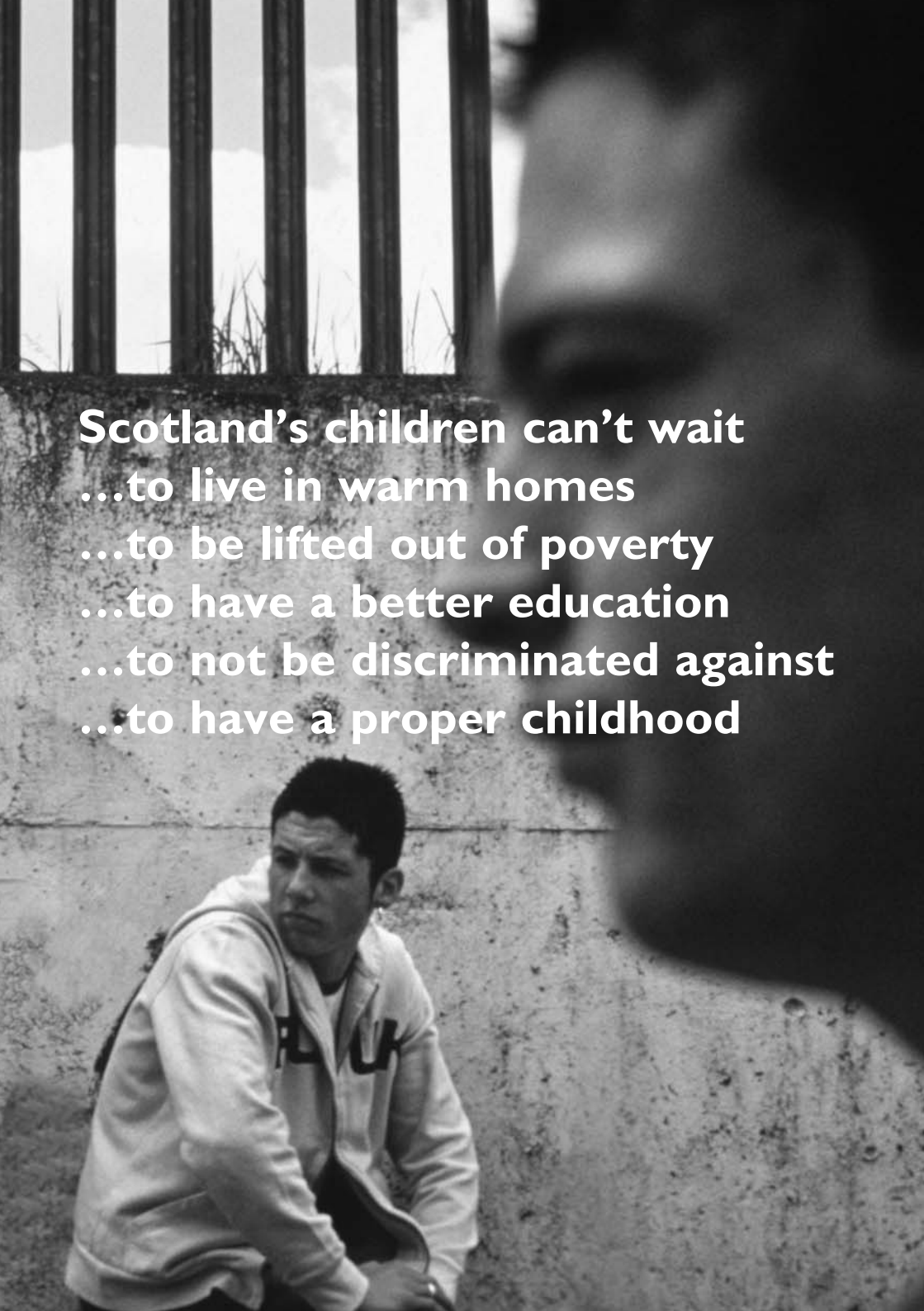
**Children can't wait.**

**CHILDREN  
CAN'T  
WAIT**

**Our priorities in Scotland**



**Save the Children**



**Scotland's children can't wait**  
**...to live in warm homes**  
**...to be lifted out of poverty**  
**...to have a better education**  
**...to not be discriminated against**  
**...to have a proper childhood**

## **This guide outlines Save the Children's priorities for Scotland's children over the next four years**

Save the Children's aim is to inspire dramatic change for the poorest and most vulnerable children around the world. We work in Scotland and over 40 countries worldwide.

*"Make everyone aware that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure children have their rights"*

### **Of the 1 million children in Scotland:**

- 250,000 live in poverty.
- An estimated 3,500 are asylum seekers and refugees.
- 92% of Gypsy/Traveller children and young people in Scotland have been bullied, picked on, or called names because of their ethnic identity.
- Pupils from the most deprived areas have higher levels of absence, lower levels of attainment and are more likely to leave school without qualifications.

### **Changes for children**

Save the Children wants Scottish government policies to work better for children. Our key policy calls are:

- An end to Scottish children living in severe poverty by 2015.
- Treat asylum seeking and refugee children the same as any other child in Scotland.
- Education that delivers for the poorest and most vulnerable children in Scotland.
- An end to the discrimination faced by young asylum seekers, Gypsy/Travellers and children living in poverty.

## An end to Scottish children living in severe poverty by 2015

*“Just cos we don’t have as much money as other people doesn’t mean we should get by on less”*

*“Designer clothes don’t matter, in winter you’re just happy to have something warm to put on”*

- **90,000 children in Scotland live in severe poverty.**
- **There has been no change in this number over recent years.**
- **For a single parent with 2 children, severe poverty means having to survive on less than £8,000 a year.**

It is disgraceful that child poverty exists in Scotland today. Children who live in severe poverty do not enjoy the basic living standards that their peers take for granted. The effects of severe poverty are devastating and complex. Experiencing poverty in childhood may have lifelong consequences.

Save the Children is concerned that current Government actions to reduce child poverty are having no effect on the poorest. Unless attention is diverted to the poorest, child poverty will persist in Scotland.

Poverty is not just an issue for the UK Government. The Scottish Parliament can and must do more to play its role in ending child poverty.

### Save the Children is calling for:

- 1. A cross party commitment to the eradication of severe child poverty by 2015.**
- 2. Action to ensure that support services and initiatives actually reach the children and families who need them most.**
- 3. Joint working between the Scottish and UK Governments to develop solutions that will end child poverty.**

## Treat asylum seeking and refugee children the same as any other child in Scotland

*“I like to play but it was war in Kosovo but I came to Scotland and I can play”*

*“You just want to go somewhere you’ll be safe and your children will be safe. You don’t think of bureaucracy, you think of peace, freedom”*

- **There are an estimated 3,500 asylum seeking and refugee children living in Scotland.**
- **2,307 asylum seeking and refugee pupils are enrolled in Scottish schools.**
- **More than 1,100 pre-five asylum seeker children live in Glasgow.**

All children living in Scotland are recognised as having rights to care and protection. However, asylum seeker children face limited access to services such as pre-5 education provision, further and higher education, and protection for children who are separated from their parents. This is unacceptable.

Asylum seeker children are also subject to a range of legal and policy restrictions that diminish their rights. It is of great concern that asylum seeking children have limited access to adequate legal representation. Save the Children condemns the threat and practice of ‘dawn raids’ and detaining children for immigration purposes. The effects on children can be devastating - exacerbating an already traumatic time in their lives. Detention is unnecessary. Viable alternatives exist.

The Scottish Parliament can take action to support these children and ensure that they have a proper childhood during their time in Scotland.

### Save the Children is calling for:

- 1. Equal access to improved children’s services including child protection and guardianship systems.**
- 2. Equal access to pre-5 education services and further and higher education.**
- 3. An end to the detention of children for immigration purposes.**

## Education that delivers for the poorest and most vulnerable children in Scotland

*“I’ve always been brought up to believe that when you are at school you are developing into the kind of person you are going to be and you can’t make everybody fit into the same mould”*

- **26% of all school absences take place in the 15% most deprived areas.**
- **Pupils registered for free school meals, on average, have significantly lower educational outcomes than those who are not.**
- **Save the Children estimates that less than 20% of young Gypsy/Travellers regularly attend secondary school in Scotland.**

Although the Scottish education system caters well for the majority, it fails to deliver for the most vulnerable children in our society. We want all children to have access to a quality education and learning opportunities that support them in reaching their full potential.

To achieve this, we believe it is crucial that children should shape their own education and the life of their school and community. This is happening in some Scottish schools through partnerships involving children, parents, teachers and professionals from other areas of children's services.

Gypsy/Travellers are one of the most marginalised and socially excluded groups in Scottish society. Young Gypsy/Travellers face multi-faceted discrimination. Racism is not always overt, it often goes unnoticed in daily life and therefore is rarely reported. The impact on their childhood, including their educational experiences, can be severe.

### Save the Children is calling for:

- 1. Dramatically improved educational outcomes for the most marginalised children and young people.**
- 2. A more flexible education system that meets the needs of all children regardless of their social or cultural background.**
- 3. Children, young people and their parents to be actively involved in decision making within schools.**

## About Save the Children

We demand justice for the poorest and most vulnerable children in Scotland and around the world.

We're always looking for new and better ways to help children, drawing on different perspectives and experiences around the world – especially those of children themselves.

We never give in to those who think big changes are impossible.

Save the Children looks forward to a world

...which respects and values each child

...which listens to children and learns

...where all children have hope and opportunity

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