

Child poverty in Scotland: The Facts

More than 1 in 5 children in Scotland are growing up in poverty

170 000 (17%) children in Scotland live in poverty in Scotland (before housing costs) and **220 000** (or more than 1 in 5) children living in poverty (after housing costs). **130 000** (13%) children in Scotland live in low income and material deprivation.

At least **50 000** more children will be living in poverty by 2020.

Children are more at risk of living in poverty than other age groups. The highest levels of poverty in Scotland can be found in families with young children.

Almost every local authority in Scotland contains wards where more than 1 in 5 children live in poverty. Nearly half of Scottish local authorities now have wards where over **30%** of children live in poverty.

Poverty is defined as a family of 4 living on less than **£17 200** per year or **£330** per week or a single parent with 2 children getting by on less than **£13 500** or **£258** per week.

90 000 of these children are growing up in severe poverty

9% or 1 in 9 children in Scotland is living in severe poverty. This figure has remained stubbornly static in the last few years.

15 local authority areas in Scotland have a rate of severe child poverty above the Scottish average.

We define severe poverty as a family of 4 living on less than **£14 300** a year or **£275** per week or a single parent with 2 children living on less than **£11 250** a year or **£216** per week.

Child poverty costs the public purse in Scotland

Between **£0.5 & 0.75 billion per annum**. Underachievement in schools costs public services another **£1 billion a year**.

Children growing up in poverty in Scotland are:

- **Missing out on the things that many other children take for granted**
 - According to a recent survey by Save the Children 61% of parents living in poverty said they had cut back on food; 14% of children living in poverty said they lacked a warm winter coat and 19% of children living in poverty said they were missing out on going on school trips.
- **More than twice as likely as their better off peers to suffer developmental difficulties as they reach school age**, facing challenges with early language and communication, physical health and social skills.
- **Less likely to reach their potential at school**
 - By three years old, children from deprived backgrounds are already **9 months behind** the average development and 'school readiness'.
 - By six years of age, initially low-achieving children from more advantaged homes will tend to outperform initially high-achieving children from less advantaged homes.
 - By P7, the gap in reading attainment levels between pupils living in poverty and their peers is 22%, and the attainment gap in maths is 15%.
 - By S2 only half as many pupils from deprived backgrounds are reaching expected levels of reading as their classmates and a mere 17% of disadvantaged pupils are reaching the expected level in maths, half of the average.
- **More likely to experience lower health outcomes**
 - Children living in low-income households are nearly 3 times more likely to suffer mental health problems than their more affluent peers.
 - Three year olds in households with incomes below about £10 000 are 2.5 times more likely to suffer chronic illness than children in households with incomes above £52 000.
 - Ill health during childhood has long term consequences. A child born in Lenzie North, a more affluent area of Glasgow can expect to live 28 years longer than a child born in Calton, a more deprived Calton area of the same city.
- **Less likely to reach their potential in adult life**
 - In 2010/11, 1 in 5 school leavers from deprived areas of Scotland went straight into unemployment upon leaving school - compared to an average of only 1 in 10.
 - In deprived areas of Scotland 11% of pupils leave school without any qualifications as against 3% for the rest of Scotland and 8% of pupils had no exam entries as against 4% for the rest of Scotland.

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