**1 in 4 CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY, WITH PICTURE SET TO WORSEN DURING COST OF LIVING CRISIS**

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**Interviews with Dan Paskins, Vice-Chair of the End Child Poverty Coalition and Director of UK Impact at Save The Children UK are available. Images** **available** [**here**](https://we.tl/t-I2qWq1DSNY) **(please credit Save The Children). Local authority and constituency data available at the end of this release.**

* Statistics released by the End Child Poverty Coalition show 3.6 million children\* were living in poverty in 2020/21 or about eight children in a class of 30.
* Child poverty levels have remained alarmingly high over the last decade. The only year child poverty levels reduced by more than one percentage point since 2010 was 2020/21 – a period covering the temporary £20 uplift to Universal Credit which has since been removed.
* Statistics released today come as national poverty charity[, Turn2us](https://www.turn2us.org.uk/), release their own research showing around half [49%] of their service users with children reported having no money to live on every week after covering essentials. Read their full report [here.](https://www.turn2us.org.uk/)
* The charity sector is now warning that without more support from government, there will be a rise in child poverty as the cost-of-living crisis plunges families into hardship.
* Regionally the North East has seen the sharpest increase in child poverty levels at 38%, up 7 percentage points from 2010/11.

* Highest rates of child poverty continue to be in major cities and London boroughs. Over half of children growing up in Tower Hamlets are living in poverty and over 40% of children are growing up in poverty in five more London boroughs as well as Luton, Newcastle, Birmingham, Middlesbrough and Sunderland.
* In 2020/21, two thirds (65%) of children in poverty lived in a working households (where at least one adult is in work\*\* and 40% of children in lone parent households were in poverty (compared to 24% of those in couple parent households).\*\*
* The latest data available\*\*\* shows children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty, at 46%, compared with 26% of children in white British families.

New figures released today show 3.6 million children are still living in poverty in the UK, down 200,000 (-2%) on the year before.

Research carried out by Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that despite the slight overall decline nationally, the North East has seen another year-on-year rise in child poverty in 2020/21 up 1 percentage point from 2019/20. Since 2010 child poverty has risen by 7 percentage points in this region, from 31% in 2020/11 to 38% in 2020/21.

Levels in this region had fallen from as high as 40% to 26% in 2013. However this progress has now been lost.

The analysis released today by the Coalition covers a period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 at which point families were in receipt of the £20 Universal Credit uplift, which experts say is likely to be the reason why the numbers slightly declined in this period. \*\*\*

There is now significant fear that with the £20 removed, next year’s results for the year 2021/22 will see a rise in child poverty levels. Even with the government’s cost of living support package announced in May, some of the measures proposed were temporary and will only remedy the recent price hike in energy bills and rising prices. They do not respond to the real terms cuts families have experienced for years.

Joseph Howes, Chair of the End Child Poverty Coalition, said: “The additional £20 support from the government during the COVID crisis does appear to have affected the figures positively in most areas. This shows that change is possible, these levels of child poverty do not have to be the norm. There will always be conflicting government priorities, but surely the wellbeing of the most vulnerable children in our society should be front and centre, particularly as we go through the most severe period of price rises for 40 years.

“It remains incredibly worrying that at a moment like this there is nothing in the government’s Levelling Up strategy on this issue. I just don’t understand this, we must see a national child poverty strategy created, it is heartbreaking that there isn’t one when we can see evidence that shows change really is possible.

“It still feels like we are on the edge of a precipice. There is significant concern that the numbers of children in poverty will now rise again sharply with families facing huge cost increases in the coming months.”

The statistics released today by the coalition coincide with new research by Turn2us ‘How Many More’ campaign, which found around half [49%] of their surveyed users with children (compared to 47% without), reported having no money, or less than no money to live on each week after covering essential costs. Additionally, seven in ten [71%] Turn2us users who were single parents surveyed reported that they would be using recently announced cost of living measures to repay debt.

The End Child Poverty Coalition is calling on the UK government to continue to find ways of making social security more adequate in the long term so that every family can afford the essentials.

**1) For those on universal credit, deductions should be reduced and the benefit cap removed.**

**2) Improve access to free or affordable childcare.**

**3) Ensure Free School Meals in England and Wales are extended to all children in families receiving Universal Credit.**

Liv Eren, 18, from Halton, in Cheshire, grew up in a family on a low income and is an End Child Poverty Coalition ambassador.

She said: "It would be an oversimplification to look at the overall figures going down and think child poverty is less of an issue than it used to be. When we look at child poverty statistics, we often focus on the most deprived areas in places like London but when you look at small towns like mine you know and you witness it everyday that child poverty is still rife.

"I remember how poverty made me feel. Always being acutely aware of your social position forces you to mature a lot earlier. I remember a group of us telling a teacher that we wouldn't be able to go on a school trip when she wondered why no one had signed up. At 11-years of age and knowing about your parents finances and what they can afford– no child should be in a position to know that. And I missed out on normal things kids were doing after school too. Mum couldn't afford childcare, so we were going to work with her in the evenings then having to be at school for 8am and we were absolutely shattered.

"Although I'm 18 now it really upsets me when I look back at the experiences I've had as a young person you feel it can’t get any worse. And to know it is still getting worse for some children and there are young people who are really struggling at the minute, is just an awful thing.”

Aneita Lewis, 49, from East London is a single parent who has been supported by Turn2us said: “When I was younger we had to sit in the dark with candles because we didn’t have enough money for the meter – how can we as a country still be in the same position 40 years later?

"It's not just me, there are millions of people in the UK that have had to struggle to get by counting every penny.”

Dan Paskins, Director of UK Impact at Save The Children and Vice Chair of the End Child Poverty Coalition said: “It’s an outrage that child poverty figures in this country remain so high, even if the statistics show a slight decrease in numbers overall. Growing up in a home where your parents are struggling to make ends meet can leave lasting scars and we are worried that while levels remain this high, children are at risk of growing up feeling anxious, isolated and lacking self-worth.

“We’ve also seen how Treasury investment in families on low incomes can see children lifted out of poverty – we saw this with the £20 uplift during the pandemic. The former Chancellor’s recent economic package was welcome but has in reality just kept families treading water, all it has done is help with some of the increased costs but it has not prevented a real terms cut in income. There must now be an immediate focus on the Universal Credit system as a means of helping families on the lowest incomes weather the cost of living crisis.”

Commenting on the fact that in 2020/21 40% of children in lone parent households were in poverty, Victoria Benson, chief executive at Gingerbread, the charity that supports single parent families said: “Financial hardship disproportionately affects single parents and their children and it’s clear there is just not enough support in place for them.

“I’ve heard heart breaking tales of parents not eating so that their children don’t go hungry, of parents juggling debts so they can cover basic living costs and of women with multiple jobs still unable to make ends meet. It's clear this government must do more to support families on low incomes and to protect children from growing up in poverty and experiencing the disadvantage this brings.”

**A copy of the full report ‘Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2020/21’:** <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Local-child-poverty-indicators-report-2022_FINAL.pdf>

**The data tables:** <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2021-FINAL.xlsx>

\*Children in this research are age 0 to 15-years-old.

\*\* Calculated from Households below Average Income for the financial year 2020/21. Note that caution should be used in interpreting HBAI statistics for 2020/21 due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. Further information is available [here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021)

\*\*\* <https://cpag.org.uk/child-poverty/child-poverty-facts-and-figures>

[\*\*\* Child Poverty Action Group: Official poverty statistics - government pulled children out of poverty](https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/official-poverty-statistics-government-pulled-children-out-poverty#:~:text=Today's%20Households%20Below%20Average%20Income,UK%20children)%20were%20in%20poverty.).

**Notes to editors:**

* The End Child Poverty Coalition is made up of over 70 organisations including children’s charities, child welfare organisations, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others, and united in a vision of a UK free of child poverty.
* The research was carried out by Dr Juliet Stone at the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University using data released by the Department for Work and Pensions, [*Children in low income families: local area statistics*](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021)*,* adjusted to take housing costs into account, and calibrated to Households Below Average Income (HBAI).
* A statistical model is used to estimate child poverty after housing costs which draws on household survey data alongside local area statistics on private rent levels. The HBAI figures for 2020/21 are less reliable than earlier years due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. This has only a small impact on the statistics released today as a three-year average is used. More information on HBAI is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-for-financial-years-ending-1995-to-2021/households-below-average-income-an-analysis-of-the-income-distribution-fye-1995-to-fye-2021).
Users are advised that the data for individual local authorities and parliamentary constituencies are subject to small statistical fluctuations year-on-year and should be considered within the context of the regional or the longer-term local trend.
* Turn2us is a national poverty charity that offers practical information and support to people facing financial insecurity. It provides a Benefits Calculator to find out what welfare benefits and tax credits people are entitled to, a Grants Search to learn if you might be eligible for support from over 1,500 charitable funds, and a range of information and resources to help those of us who are struggling to get by.