**New data shows that unfair two-child limit on benefits hitting Welsh families hard**

**EMBARGOED: 00:01, Monday 4th December 2023**

**Startling new data obtained by the End Child Poverty Coalition reveals that more than one in ten children living in Wales are affected by the two-child limit to benefits.**

New data obtained by the End Child Poverty Coalition has revealed just how significant the impact of the unfair two-child limit on benefits is in Wales. More than 65,000 children in Wales are affected by the two-child limit, 11% of all children.

The two-child limit affects families entitled to benefits who have had a third or subsequent child after 6 April 2017. These parents are denied £3,235 per year per child compared with families who have a third or subsequent child born before that date.

Reacting to the data, Dr Steffan Evans, Head of Policy (Poverty) at the Bevan Foundation said:

 *“The two-child limit on benefits is an unfair policy. People would rightly be outraged if schools or hospitals turned away children because they have two older siblings, yet this is what the two-child limit to benefits does. To see that so many children in Wales are affected by this policy is highly concerning.”*

The two child-limit is affecting children all over Wales. More than one in ten children are affected by the two-child limit in every Welsh local authority bar three (Monmouthshire, the Vale of Glamorgan and Powys). Denbighshire is the local authority where the highest proportion of children are affected by the two-child limit with one in seven children in the local authority affected. Cardiff meanwhile is the local authority where the highest number of children are affected, with 9,250 families affected by the two-child limit.

Dr Steffan Evans added:

*“The two-child limit is having an impact on families in all of our communities. Across Wales there will be families dreading Christmas, worrying about how they are going to heat their home and feed their children rather than looking forward to what should be a magical time of year.”*

The publication of the new data follows on from the publication of a report earlier this year that highlighted that children from larger families are significantly more likely to live in poverty.[[1]](#endnote-1) In 2021/22, the UK poverty rate among children with two or more siblings was 42 per cent, compared with 23 per cent and 22 per cent among children in families with one or two children. Research suggests that scrapping the two-child limit is one of the most cost-effective ways of addressing child poverty.

With so many children living in poverty, the need to take action has never been greater. Dr Steffan Evans added:

*“At a UK level the End Child Poverty Coalition is calling for the two-child limit to be scrapped, given the clear link between the policy and child poverty rates in larger families.*

*In Wales, the Wales Expert Group on the Cost of Living Crisis called on the Welsh Government to establish an emergency payment to all households with children with extra for large households to help families through the coming months. The new data shows why the creation of such a payment is more important than ever.”*

Ends

**Notes to editors**

* The data on the two-child limit was obtained via Freedom of Information requests to the Department of Work and Pensions, HMRC and the Department for Communities Northern Ireland. You can download the full spreadsheet of data here: <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/>
* The Local Child Poverty data is calculated each year by Loughborough University, for the End Child Poverty Coalition, and can be found here: <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>.
* You will be able to access the data from Monday morning here - [https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/**two\_child\_limit**/](https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/?page_id=4313&preview=true)
* The End Child Poverty Coalition is made up of over 100 organisations including child welfare groups, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others. Together with a group of Youth Ambassadors we all believe that no child growing up in the UK should live in poverty. Together we ask that this and future governments commit to end child poverty. Further information on the Coalition can be found [here](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yljl9ie7e6hnq3x/AAAL1KZKpzNahRhIWLnX2RJQa?dl=0&preview=End+Child+Poverty+Policy+Positions+Designed.pdf).

**Contact**

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**About the Bevan Foundation:**

The Bevan Foundation is Wales’ most influential think-tank. We create insights, ideas and impact that help to end poverty and inequality. We are independent, informed, inspiring and inclusive in everything we do.

1. Juliet Stone, *Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2021/22* (Loughborough University, 2023) available here - <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Local-indicators-of-child-poverty-after-housing-costs_Final-Report-3.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)