

**CHILD  
POVERTY  
ACTION  
GROUP**  
IN SCOTLAND

## Child Poverty

State of Children's Rights

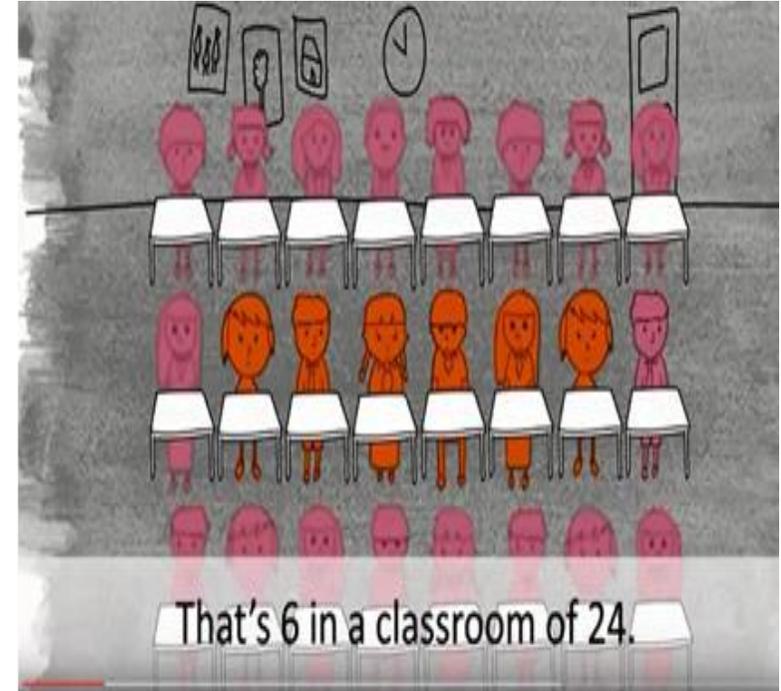
Webinar

July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020



## Context: Scale

- Nearly 1 in 4 children in Scotland in poverty (230 000)
- a poverty line less than 70% of minimum income standard
- two thirds in working households
- affects every part of Scotland
- acute income crisis – foodbanks



## Progress made

- Nothing inevitable about these levels of poverty
- Real progress: 170 000 fewer children in poverty in 2010/11 than in 1996/7 (33% to 19%)
- Historically and internationally unprecedented
- Policy worked – at UK and Scottish level
  - NMW, childcare, child benefit and tax credits, employment support and rights, housing costs
- Child wellbeing improved (e.g. see Bradshaw 2012)

# Scotland child poverty trend (relative, AHC)



Scottish Government, 2019

# Challenges

- UK gov. abandoned child poverty targets and duties
- cuts to UK social security driving massive increases
  - 38% child poverty by 2027/28....?
- Households with children worst affected.
- Key cuts include benefits freeze, benefit cap, cuts to work allowance in UC, two child policy.

# Opportunities

- Child Poverty (Scotland) Act, targets, national and local delivery plans,
- Clear on increasing incomes and reducing costs
- New Scottish social security powers
  - Best start grants
  - Scottish child payment - £10 per week
- UK?- some investment back into UC and increased media/public awareness
- Local child poverty action reports
  - “step change” ?
  - pull in new players – include economic development, procurement, business support, employers

# Coronavirus

- Disproportionate impact on incomes of households with children - 49% in serious financial difficulty or struggling to make ends meet compared to one in three overall (IPPR)
- Out of work family still left 20% below the poverty line despite uplift in Universal Credit
- Increase in Scottish Welfare Fund, free school meal replacement through school holidays
- Scottish child payment prioritised, but delay roll out, no other immediate direct cash support

# Together: State of Children's Rights 2019

## *Scottish Government should:*

- Ensure approach to health inequalities reduces income inequality and poverty, and monitoring mechanisms take account of social determinants of children's health outcomes*
- respond to the recommendations of the Children's Future Food Inquiry – incl. extension FSM, and cash equivalent in holidays*
- respond to Poverty and Inequality Commission report, on benefit uptake, economic growth and employment, enhanced childcare*

## *UK Government should:*

- reverse 2015 cuts in Universal Credit and raise personal allowances, increase work allowances in Universal Credit and reduce the taper.*

# CPAG priorities

## UK

- £10 increase to child benefit, restore value of family benefits
- End two child limit (All Kids Count) & abolish benefit cap

## Scotland

- Maximise impact and ambition of Scottish child payment
- Use existing mechanism to make immediate cash payments
- Maximise take up of financial support
- Support parents into, and to progress in, quality work
- Reduce costs – housing, energy, childcare, school, transport
- Cash and rights based responses to income crisis, end reliance on foodbanks and charity

# Discussion and task

- (a) What are the major children's human rights concerns in relation to child poverty?
  
- (b) Are there any new developments or issues relating to child poverty that have arisen since Together's 2019 report, or anything that is missing?
  
- (c) What needs to happen on tackling child poverty to ensure children's human rights are protected, respected and fulfilled?
  
- (d) From your discussion, what are the **top three issues in relation to child poverty** that Together should include in its report to the UN.