



Department  
for Education



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

**Consultation**

**Launch Date 15 November 2012**

**Respond by 15 February 2013**

**Ref: Department for Education**

## **Measuring Child Poverty: A Consultation on Better Measures of Child Poverty**

In the Summer the Government announced it would consult on developing better measures of child poverty which include income but provide a more accurate picture of the reality of child poverty today. This consultation asks how we can best reflect the reality of child poverty using a multidimensional measure. A number of potential dimensions are proposed: income and material deprivation, worklessness, unmanageable debt, poor housing, parental skill level, access to quality education, parental health and family stability. We would welcome views on the specifics of each dimension as well as whether we should include other dimensions.

# Measuring Child Poverty: A Consultation on Better Measures of Child Poverty

## A Consultation

**To** Voluntary and community sector, local authorities, practitioners/organisations working with children and families and anyone else with an interest

**Issued** 15 November 2012

**Enquiries To** If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can telephone: 0370 000 2288 or e-mail: [Measure.CONULTATION@childpovertyunit.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Measure.CONULTATION@childpovertyunit.gsi.gov.uk)

## Contact Details

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the CYPFD Team by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

## 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Coalition Government is committed to ending child poverty. It recognises that to achieve this goal we must understand what it means to experience the reality of child poverty in the UK. The consultation document asks how we can best reflect the reality of child poverty using a multidimensional measure.
- 1.2 It is clear that we need to think differently about child poverty. The most recent child poverty statistics revealed a large reduction in the number of children living below the relative poverty threshold. However, this was largely due to a fall in the median income nationally which pushed the poverty line down; absolute poverty remained unchanged and the children who were 'moved out' of poverty were in fact no better off than before.
- 1.3 A multidimensional measure will allow us to draw together our knowledge of what it means to grow up in child poverty. It should tell us the total number of children growing up in child poverty in the UK, show us the severity of that poverty, show us how poverty affects different groups of children, be methodologically robust and be widely accepted by the public as a meaningful representation of child poverty in the UK.
- 1.4 Which dimensions to include in such a multidimensional measure will be

vital to its success, and this question is at the core of this consultation paper. Dimensions suggested are a result of conversations with children, young people and charities, alongside academic evidence regarding factors which affect children's lives and life chances.

- 1.5 This document considers a number of potential dimensions: income and material deprivation, worklessness, unmanageable debt, poor housing, parental skill level, access to quality education, family stability and parental health. We would welcome views on the specifics of each dimension as well as whether we should include other dimensions in a multidimensional measure of child poverty.
- 1.6 As well as what dimensions should be included in a multidimensional measure of child poverty we ask technical questions about how we should build such a measure.
- 1.7 The Coalition Government's vision for the future of the United Kingdom, as set out in the Social Justice and Social Mobility strategies, is ambitious. The circumstances you are born into should not determine where you end up. Building a better understanding of what it means to grow up experiencing poverty is an important part of that vision.
- 1.8 In June, following the publication of the most recent child poverty statistics, the Government set out its intention to consult on better measures of child poverty. The consultation document marks the beginning of the formal consultation period which will continue until 15 February 2013.
- 1.9 The Government is committed to ending child poverty and its plan to do that is set out in the 2011 Child Poverty Strategy. The consultation document does not set out the activities of the Coalition Government in tackling child poverty, but focuses on how we can best reflect the reality of child poverty in the UK using a better measure. This will also enable us to develop better policy solutions to address the causes of child poverty.

## 2 The Proposals

- 2.1 The proposals are set out in the consultation document '*Measuring Child Poverty*'.

Section One reaffirms the Government's commitment to ending child poverty and makes the case for a better measure.

Section Two proposes a number of dimensions that could be included in a

multidimensional measure of child poverty.

Section Three asks a number of questions that will help the Government design a multidimensional measure of poverty.

### 3 How To Respond

- 3.1 You can respond to the consultation by completing the response form and emailing it to [Measure.CONULTATION@childpovertyunit.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Measure.CONULTATION@childpovertyunit.gsi.gov.uk) or sending it by post to:

CYPFD Team, Department for Education, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

### 4 Additional Copies

- 4.1 Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department for Education e-consultation website at:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

Paper copies can be obtained, at a charge of £10.75, on request from The Stationery Office, quoting reference number ISBN 9780101848329:

website: [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk)

telephone: 0870 600 5522

e-mail: [customer.services@tso.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@tso.co.uk)

textphone 0870 240 3701

address: TSO Orders, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN

### 5 Plans for making results public

- 5.1 The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be published on the Department for Education e-consultation website in Spring/Summer 2013.