



Children in Wales Annual Child & Family Poverty Survey Findings 2024: **Parents**

522 parents and carers shared their views, this represented **1084** children

Top 5 ranked poverty related issues

1. Rising cost of living
2. Energy costs
3. Debt
4. Unable to afford food
5. Low wages



of respondents feel that parents/ carers are worrying about being about to afford necessities

"It's absolutely heartbreaking that there's children going hungry. I have gone hungry to feed my kids."

"I manage every single penny. It's exhausting, it's hard to remain positive and I feel guilty that my children are missing out on opportunities because I can't afford them."



of respondents feel that parents/ carers financial situation is negatively impacting their mental health

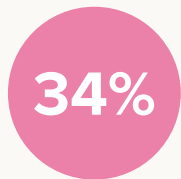
Worry **Stress** **Overwhelmed**
Survival **Anxiety** **Struggle** **Isolation**
Hopelessness **Soul destroying**

Childcare



of parents/carers said that childcare issues stopped them working more hours.

ISSUES - Limited choice, accessibility and not catering to children's additional needs.

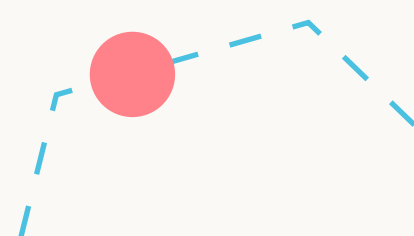


Informal childcare (family and friends) is most used, **34%** said the reason for this was due to 'paid-for' childcare being unaffordable.

"It would not be worth my while working if I had to put my children into childcare."



of families who pay for childcare said it is causing a huge strain of finances, ability to afford basic necessities and putting them into debt.





Impact of poverty

Family life

- Less money for hobbies, activities and days out. Less time together due to working more hours.

“With our busy schedules, there’s little time for family bonding.”

Working families

- Experience the double burden of being time poor due to work commitments and still experiencing financial struggles.

“I work full time, there’s no help for working families... even though we are struggling too financially. There’s no help at all but we pay full for everything.”

Hidden poverty of parents

- Parents are frequently making sacrifices to ensure that their children have necessities.

“I frequently go without new clothes and shoes that are needed to ensure my children are dressed to “fit in” with their peers.”

Life as a parent

- Poverty deeply impacts parents’ sense of identity, often leaving them with overwhelming shame, guilt and a sense of failure.

“I feel ashamed that I can’t provide for my child as I would like to, I feel that I have failed my children.”

Poverty Stigma

- Parents often hide their struggles and avoid seeking help due to fear of judgment.

“Stop making us feel like bad parents because we can’t supply everything that’s expected.”

Education

Uniform, School trips and Events were the most difficult school costs to manage

25%

of parents said their children miss school because of costs.

“I really want my child to go to school trips, to travel to learn as its good for his physical and mental health but the cost so high that I can’t afford it.”



Free school meals



of parents said that their children were benefitting from the free school meal programme.



of parents said free school meals have had a positive financial impact.

"I used the money we would normally pay for school meals on days out with children giving them new experiences."

ISSUES – Small portion size and quality of food.

The barriers to overcoming poverty

Childcare

Rising cost of living

Systems not working

Stigma

"Feel looked down upon for being on benefits."

Suggestions for support

Financial support: employment, reducing cost of living and increase household incomes.

Emotional support: safe spaces, better support services and empathy and understanding

Community focused: activities, support and spaces

Sustainability
Self-reliance
Life skills

**Let's all work together...
'Every parent wants the best for their children.'**

"We need to try and educate and support families to break the cycle without judgement."

Children in Wales would like to thank all of the parents who took the time to complete the survey.