



# The child poverty checklist

How to use guidance

## Background

CWDC is committed to supporting the workforce in reducing the effects of poverty and disadvantage on the lives of children, young people and their families.

This checklist builds on the following previous poverty work undertaken by CWDC:

- The work commissioned by CWDC in 2010 and completed by DMSS Research and Consultancy: [A Review of the training and materials which aim to support the children's workforce to reduce the impact of childhood poverty and disadvantage](#)
- The findings and recommendations highlighted in the [poverty training gap analysis](#). This was undertaken in early 2011 and identifies the awareness, skills and expertise alongside the national and local infrastructure that are required to ensure the workforce is able to intervene effectively to reduce the damaging effects of poverty and disadvantage.

[The Child Poverty Act 2010](#)<sup>1</sup> is the legislative framework requiring central government to develop a national Child Poverty Strategy. It also requires every local authority to undertake a Child Poverty needs assessment, and to work cooperatively to develop and deliver a Child Poverty Strategy. The Child Poverty Act 2010 set targets to halve child poverty by 2010/11 target and eradicate poverty by 2020 (where 'eradicate' is defined as being 'among the best in Europe'; 5 -10 per cent).

This should be expected to lead to better coordinated and coherent integrated responses to child poverty at a national and local level which are so essential to make effective progress toward eradicating child poverty.

The Frank Field Review -The Foundation Years: Preventing poor children becoming poor adults<sup>2</sup> published in December 2010 advocates a shift in emphasis to parenting and education as the most effective routes out of poverty. Poverty is a key determinant in child well being affecting the child and young person's opportunity to reach their potential through childhood and into adult life.

Child Poverty is not new but is a new discipline for the workforce with a significant focus at the national and local level. The opportunity for the workforce to make an impact on child poverty makes it everybody's business across the children and families workforce, a significant need for employers and therefore key training focus for CWDC.

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/contents?view=plain](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/contents?view=plain)

<sup>2</sup> See [www.frankfield.co.uk](http://www.frankfield.co.uk)

## **What is the poverty and disadvantage checklist?**

This checklist has been provided to support the awareness raising, skills and expertise needed by the workforce to identify the needs and issues affecting children, young people and their families and take action to reduce the effect of poverty and disadvantage on their lives.

## **Who is the checklist for?**

The poverty and disadvantage checklist is for all practitioners who want to know about poverty and disadvantage and take action to reduce the effect of poverty and disadvantage on the lives of children, young people and their families.

The checklist can be a particularly useful resource for strategic and operational managers who have responsibility for developing a Child Poverty needs assessment, implementing subsequent Child Poverty strategies, and improving the outcomes for children.

## **How to use the checklist**

The checklist is a tool that can be used to ensure that the resources, activities and products that you use in the workplace fully consider poverty and disadvantage. It provides you with a medium to record how you are mitigating the effects of poverty and disadvantage as well as reflect on how you could improve your resources, activities and products.

The checklist also provides direction for support, links to organisations, information and resources on local and national developments in the field of poverty and disadvantage. These can be accessed as required after carrying out the checklist to meet any identified learning and development needs and/ or make a follow up discussion with your poverty and disadvantage lead.

Organisations are encouraged to adapt this checklist to reflect local processes and priorities.

## Glossary

### Child poverty

A child is said to be living in poverty when they live in a family/environment that lacks the resources to enable the child to participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities that are 'ordinary'. The Child Poverty Act 2010 defines a child as being poor if the equivalised net income for the financial year of the household in which they live is below 60 per cent of median equivalised net household income for the financial year (median income is the household income of the individual in the middle of the income distribution, taking into account household composition) (the poverty line). This may therefore be mathematically represented as:

Number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent median income

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Total number of children in the area

It is a relative measure of poverty because the poverty line moves in line with median income each year; it is a headcount measure (counting the number of children who are poor), and takes no account of depth of poverty.

Child Poverty Indicators are provided in Annex A of the national Child Poverty Strategy 'A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives' [www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/CM-8061.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/CM-8061.pdf). These indicators demonstrate where progress towards the long-term goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020 will be measured.

### Child poverty products

Any and all resources that may be produced to train or support the workforce in raising awareness, skills and expertise needed to identify the needs and issues affecting children, young people and their families and take action to reduce the effect of poverty and disadvantage on their lives.

### Child poverty needs assessment

An evidence-based assessment of the needs of children living in poverty in a local area. It is part of a range of activities undertaken to reduce and respond to child poverty and a tool to support the

design and delivery of services for families locally. The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires local authorities to conduct a child poverty needs assessment as part of its duties to reduce child poverty.

#### Child poverty risk factors

Children are more likely to be in poverty if they are in a family:

- Headed by a lone parent.
- With three or more children.
- With a disabled family member.
- Headed by a black or minority ethnic parent.
- Living in overcrowded accommodation.

(National Child Poverty Strategy 'A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives' [www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/CM-8061.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/CM-8061.pdf).)

#### Child poverty stakeholders

A person, group, organisation, or system who affects or can be affected by child poverty and disadvantage.

#### Child poverty strategy

A plan/ approach that sets out how child poverty and its effects will be reduced and mitigated. The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires local authorities to respond to addressing child poverty locally by leading partnership working in their area through the development of a local child poverty needs assessment and strategy.

#### Child poverty work

Any and all activities done that may directly or indirectly impact upon the poverty and disadvantage of children and young people.

#### Digital engagement

The use of technology for a social benefit or greater social impact. This might include supporting disadvantaged people to get online, use of technology by central and local government to improve digital engagement, and use of media to encourage organisations to work more effectively.

#### Evidence based practice

A combination of practitioner expertise and knowledge of the best external research, and evaluation based evidence. It involves a careful, clear and thoughtful use of up-to-date evidence when making decisions about how to work with individual families. Evidence based practice also includes steps which a practitioner or service can use to ensure that everything they do is evidence based.

## Procurement

The range of activities relating to purchasing or acquiring goods, services and works.

## Early intervention

The process or act of providing support or services when a child or young person, of whatever age, shows signs of having difficulties. Early intervention aims to ensure that individuals and families receive the help they need as soon as possible, thereby preventing a problem escalating and becoming more difficult to deal with. It is often used when referring to action in relation to a child in their early years but is not exclusively confined to that age group. It can refer to prompt action at any point designed to address emerging difficulties.

Notes:

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) supports local areas to drive sector-led improvements so the millions of people and volunteers working with children and young people across England are able to do the best job they possibly can.

We want England's children, young people and families' workforce to be respected and valued for the positive difference it makes to children, young people and their families.

We work in partnership with lots of different organisations, support workers and employers who want the lives of all children and young people to be healthy, happy and fulfilling.

For more information please call 0300 123 1033  
or visit [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk)

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11 Albion Street, Leeds LS1 5ES  
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Contact us to receive this information in a different language  
or format, such as large print or audio tape.

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