

Child Poverty Forum West Cumbria

CHILD POVERTY:

The impact of COVID-19
on families in West Cumbria



A RAPID RESPONSE PAPER

Friday 29th May 2020

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Child Poverty Forum
West Cumbria



-WESTLAKES-

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Foreword

This report will be the fourth, and by some distance the most urgent, in a series published by West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum with the support and expertise of UCLan. Tackling the potentially devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of our most disadvantaged children and young people requires urgent attention. This report will seek to support those addressing the problem with the clearest possible picture of the emerging advice, information and data at both local and national level.

The COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent societal impacts (such as lockdowns) have had a unimaginable and unprecedented impact around the globe. This report seeks to highlight the potential impact of the COVID-19 on children and young people in West Cumbria, particularly those in poverty or who are otherwise vulnerable.

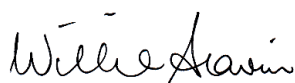
Informed by accounts provided by international literature and local experts, it also makes recommendations to mitigate harm to the most vulnerable children and young people in West Cumbria. It must be noted that this report is a rapid response paper to a situation that is unfolding at the time of writing, and changing on a daily basis. Consequently, this paper provides only a snapshot of the actual and potential impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on children and young people in West Cumbria, but we hope that this can be used to inform the recovery effort, which, according to economic and social science experts around the globe, will take some considerable time.

We would emphasise that the evidence of the effects of austerity across all public services that we have highlighted in our most recent report, *CHILD POVERTY: Moving from a Transactional to a Relational Approach to Meet the Needs of Families (June 2019)*, has made the challenging task of responding to the demands of COVID-19, all the more difficult.

That same report concluded that developing organisational collaboration is an essential ingredient for the alleviation of child poverty.

The Forum is indebted to Suzanne Wilson, Research Fellow for Social Inclusion for her invaluable work and commitment to demonstrating the value of a Higher Education institute working in and with the community. Suzanne has been able to draw upon the invaluable contributions of Forum members, Ian Hinde, Lesley Sanczuk, Julie Friend, Brenda Holden and Joanne Gaffney. Emma Williamson and Cath Clarke have been especially helpful in their guidance in the writing of the report.

A significant feature of this report has been the opportunity to draw upon the work of the West Cumbria Youth Council whose survey speaks with an authenticity and eloquence in giving voice to the unique perspective of the young people of the area. The work of Molly Davies and her peers is worthy of a particular mention.



Willie Slavin
Chair of West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum

Background

West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum

The West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum (WCCPF) exists to highlight and improve the plight of those children in our community who live with the harmful consequences of poverty.

Its initial publication Review of Child Poverty in West Cumbria in November 2010, was updated in 2017 to take account of the continuing economic downturn and the effects of Welfare reform. It was a matter of the greatest concern that gains made in the intervening years to redress the balance had gone into worrying reverse.

For those agencies who make up the Forum's membership, and who have sought to grasp the complexity of the problem, the group's engagement with University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and its Centre of Citizenship and Community is proving immensely valuable.

WCCPF is an un-constituted group which is open to any organisation in the public or voluntary sectors with an interest in a collaborative approach to making a real difference to the lives of children and young people whose lives are indelibly marked by the debilitating effects of poverty. The Forum meets periodically to share information surrounding child poverty on a local, national and international level.

Methodology

Since the COVID-19 outbreak reached the UK, WCCPF monitored the potential impact it could have on children and young people in West Cumbria, particularly those in poverty or otherwise vulnerable positions. Whilst we understand that most children and young people will be impacted upon in some way, this report includes concerns and the voices of children and young people across West Cumbria, who may be in disadvantaged positions other than financial, such as being in the care system or experiencing mental ill health.

This was done using a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative data with accounts from people working with children and young people, and also local children and young people themselves.

Public Data

Public data from a number of sources have been extrapolated to reveal real and estimated figures around children, poverty and COVID-19. These figures can help us to understand the numbers of people impacted by the secondary effects of COVID-19 (such as the number of families accessing food parcels), but these figures must be interpreted with caution. Quantitative data change daily, and thus are soon out of date and perhaps misleading when being viewed at a later date. However, we hope it provides a snapshot of indicators relating to child poverty at the time of publication (May 2020).

Survey Data

Data from a survey conducted by West Cumbria Youth Council has been included in this analysis. There is no demographic data available to understand what proportion of respondents are living in poverty; however, it is estimated that the number of children and young people living in poverty will increase significantly as a consequence of COVID-19, and hence it was felt that the report provided some valuable data.

Ethnography

Ethnographic methodologies were also adopted during data collection. COVID-19 is a crisis that is impacting on everyone in society, in how we work and within our social networks. We are also responding in different ways. As part of Suzanne Wilson's involvement in the community response in West Cumbria, opportunities to observe and engage with different stakeholders were capitalised on, providing a unique perspective to how children and young people and relevant stakeholders are responding and reacting to the crisis. These stakeholders include teachers and school staff, youth providers, elected members, civil servants and members of Cumbria Community Resilience Group, along with children and young people themselves (aged between ten and fourteen years old).

Analysis

Data were triangulated and discussed by all members of WCCPF, drawing on their experience and expertise in the field of child poverty. The report was then sent to all contributors to check for understanding and consent before being published.

Context

Children, Poverty and COVID-19: A National and International Perspective

Globally, an estimated 42-66 million children could fall into extreme poverty as a result of the crisis this year, adding to the estimated 386 million children already in extreme poverty in 2019. (United Nations, 2020). Previous recessions have exacerbated levels of child poverty with long-lasting consequences for children's health, wellbeing, and learning outcomes (Cantillon, et al., 2017). Children in poverty are expected to suffer disproportionality from economic and social impacts of the measures needed to contain the pandemic (Save the Children, 2020), with the OECD predicting that younger households, households with children and households with lower levels of education are the most likely to fall into poverty as a consequence of COVID-19 (OECD, 2020).

“Children are not the face of this pandemic. But they risk being among its biggest victims”
United Nations, Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on children, 15th April 2020

Although the UK Department for Work and Pensions is not currently releasing regular updates of COVID-19 related claims, the Financial Times reported that Universal Credit claims jumped by almost 1 million with benefit applications 10 times the normal UK level as people lose jobs under coronavirus lockdown (Financial Times, 1st April 2020). The Children's Society report that:

Whilst impacting on every child in the country, COVID-19 is likely to have a particularly pernicious impact on the estimated four million children and young people already living in poverty in the UK. Furthermore, we estimate that 1.7 million children aged 10-17 are living in a household with problem debt and an estimated 2.1 million children of the same age are living in a household where there has been difficulty paying the bills.

The Children's Society, 2020

In April this year 1.5 million people in Britain are estimated to have gone a whole day without food on any given day, due to having no money or access to food and some 3 million people said they were in a household where someone had been forced to skip meals (The Food Foundation, 2020). Concerns have been raised about food insecurity, particularly as donations and volunteers become exhausted (Unicef, 2020).

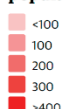
The Children's Commissioner for England reports that children who are particularly vulnerable to the secondary impacts of COVID-19 are those who live in families under increased pressure (children whose parents suffer mental ill health, young carers and children with SEND), children at risk of suffering harm, children in care and children who are at risk of falling behind in education (The Children's Commissioner, 2020). Unicef estimate that 700 million days of education will be lost between now and summer in the UK, which will widen the educational attainment gap. There are also national concerns regarding the physical and emotional health of children and young people, due to the isolating nature of lockdown and strains on health and social care services (Unicef, 2020).

These reports are useful in providing a broader perspective on how COVID-19 has and will impact on the lives of children in poverty. However, the remainder of this report will focus on providing a more focused account of how children in West Cumbria are being or are likely to be affected.

Children, Poverty and COVID-19: A West Cumbrian Perspective

The most recent child poverty (pre-COVID-19) statistics showed that 27% of children in Copeland and 28% of children in Allerdale are experiencing poverty ([End Child Poverty, 2019](#)). However, as previous reports published by WCCPF have highlighted, it remains true that pockets of poverty exist in West Cumbria alongside relative affluence. When these figures are broken down to Ward level, the contrasts are much starker. The evidence emerging from this report suggests that the most effective response to residual problems and to the present crisis is to be found at community level. The failures in the centrally organised FSM Voucher scheme were rescued by the community's response.

Cases per 100k population



Cases data from Public Health England at 10:28 BST 18 May 2020. Population data are the latest ONS mid-year estimates.

At time of writing (May 2020), there were 2,153 confirmed cases in Cumbria, out of a local population of 500,012 and 399 coronavirus-related deaths. In this area 24% of all deaths involved coronavirus between 29 Feb and 8 May. Proportionally, Cumbria has the seventh highest number of cases per capita in the UK (431.6 per 100,000 people) ([ONS, 2020](#)). West Cumbria had 500 confirmed cases of COVID-19 (Copeland 262; Allerdale 238) ([Public Health England, 2020](#)).

The Children's Commissioner for England published [local area profiles of child vulnerability](#) that identify how many vulnerable children there are in each local authority area, and highlights groups at heightened risk during the coronavirus emergency – such as those in overcrowded or inadequate accommodation.

Children in Cumbria are among the most vulnerable in England using a number of measures. Indeed, Cumbria features prominently among the top measures of vulnerability in 26 out of 76 counties (see Appendix A

for a full list of the key vulnerabilities for children in Cumbria). Furthermore, the British Red Cross COVID-19 Vulnerability Index for neighbourhoods in the UK indicates that Cumbria is among the top fifth most vulnerable counties when combined demographic, clinical, economic and social vulnerability scores, other health factors and its geographic isolation, are taken into account. (British Red Cross, 2020).

“People living in more deprived areas have experienced COVID-19 mortality rates more than double those living in less deprived areas. General mortality rates are normally higher in more deprived areas, but so far COVID-19 appears to be taking them higher still.”

Nick Stripe, Head of Health Analysis, Office for National Statistics

While the primary impact of COVID-19 has to be around its implications for health directly related to the virus, the importance of the secondary impacts for vulnerable children and young people, including the socio-economic, educational, and emotional effects, are likely to be of longer-term importance.

The Response in West Cumbria

In response to the COVID-19 crisis local government, at county and local levels and acting within its statutory responsibilities, has established an emergency helpline and five hubs across the county. It was decided early on to create a joint hub covering West Cumbria, taking in Allerdale and Copeland. This was done to create capacity, greater resilience and a recognition that the issues across both areas are likely to be similar, particularly in relation to deprivation.

In addition to the hubs and as part of the strategic, tactical and operational structure, a Community Resilience Group was established in each district. These were separate in Allerdale and Copeland to ensure that the community groups and third sector organisations were able to maximise their contributions at a local level.

The community groups across both districts came from a number of starting points ranging from the well-established, funded and organised working alongside the pop-up Facebook support groups. The hub team have mapped out these groups and identified gaps in provision, working with partners to fill these gaps. The hub has drawn upon these groups to deliver food and medication, do shopping, dog walking and other tasks for individuals and families across both districts. They have not restricted their activities to those who are shielded but to anyone presenting as vulnerable as a result of COVID-19.

Education

The isolated geographic and cultural positioning of West Cumbria leaves communities vulnerable to a feeling that the area has been 'left behind'. This impacts on the aspirations of children and young people as they have limited opportunities for new, enriching and stimulating experiences. This impacts adversely on those who have limited access to transport (Ovenden-Hope, & Passy, 2019).

Following the government's announcement to close all schools on 20th March 2020 all schools across Cumbria have been delivering virtual schooling. Schools are responding individually to meet the needs of their students, but all schools are undoubtedly operating under considerable strain.

From a Cumbria County Council perspective, The Education Tactical Co-ordination Group (a sub-group of the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordination Group) has created a team of officers who are leading the response. They are working to implement national guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) for schools and early years settings. There is close co-ordination with the Regional Schools Commissioner daily and with education system leaders in the county. The main focus has been on supporting the network of school hubs established across the county.

Vulnerable children are reported to remain a priority and schools are working with social care teams and families to ensure they are safe and getting the support they need. The group is also responding to the DfE's scheme to provide free laptops, iPads and 4G routers to households of disadvantaged children in Year 10, vulnerable children and care leavers. **However, we are concerned that the allocation to Cumbria is falling short of demand.** Furthermore, the team is working with Community Resilience Hubs around the county to ensure that there are adequate supplies in place for Free School Meals (FSM). The national voucher scheme is intermittent, and there are gaps in rural areas due to the Co-Op not being in the scheme and a lack of local available alternatives.

There is co-ordination of pastoral support around schools involving Children's Services working with schools to develop wrap around teams when face to face education resumes as it is anticipated that there will be anxieties from children, parents and staff about returning to school. In terms of alternative provision, face to face education is being offered to vulnerable children as defined in the government guidance, which includes children and young people accessing alternative provision. Despite this service being poorly attended, children's social workers are contacting children on a daily basis to encourage attendance. Statutory assessments for Educational, Health and Care Plans¹ are continuing, although working within a revised timeline. School requests to the Local Authority for statutory assessments have decreased by around two thirds since the end of March 2020.

Children's Social Care

All Children's Social Care teams and the Cumbria Children's Safeguarding Hub have remained open, maintaining contact with children and their families and carers. Social Work teams are working closely with School Safeguarding leads to ensure regular contact with families of vulnerable children who are assessed as needing to access one of the county's School Hubs. The Cumbria Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CSCP) continues to meet fortnightly to ensure that partners are focused on issues, that assurances are sought around children's safety, that shared actions are tracked and monitored, and that learning is captured and evidenced.

Youth Work

The lockdown restrictions have forced all youth providers to suspend face to face delivery. Many of these work in areas experiencing significant poverty. However, despite these restrictions, many are continuing to engage with young people in West Cumbria in creative ways (see Innovative Responses). Within Copeland 88% of youth providers who were approached stated that they were engaging with young people. This was mainly through

online groups which included quizzes games and cooking sessions, and through social media platforms such as Facebook. Whilst this was not felt to be an ideal way to engage with young people, youth providers overwhelmingly felt this was a valuable service during this time. Participation rates have generally been below that seen in face to face service delivery, but youth providers are finding that it is the most vulnerable young people who are attending online sessions.

Children's Centres

Children's Centres, operating within Cumbria County Council 0-19 Early Help contract, provided by Family Action are closed. However, some services are continuing to be delivered virtually or over the phone. These include Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) support, resilience support, post-natal support, breastfeeding support, domestic violence support, support for new mums, home learning – alongside the local Family Action Facebook ([Allerdale](#) and [Copeland](#)) pages posting updates on services and hosting interactive sessions for families at home with children.

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1 An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

Findings: Experiences of the COVID-19 Lockdown

Evidence provided from the multiple sources suggest that a majority of children and young people in West Cumbria are coping well, showing remarkable resilience and creativity in how they are adapting to a new way of living.

"I am really proud of them; hope they get many positives from all of this"

However, there are also groups for whom COVID-19 has presented many challenges and it is these children who will remain the focus of this report.

Wellbeing

Physical Safety

Accounts from the police, Children's Services and My Time reveal that there has been a reduction in reports or referrals to all these services. This may be due to the referral system that is currently in place, whereby most referrals are received from schools, which, whilst closed, are only able to contact children over the phone and will not be able to have the same quality of conversations with children and will not know if it is safe for a child to disclose information. The reduction in referrals is raising concerns about families who are currently unable to ask for help and are physically and psychologically at risk. Indeed, domestic abuse cases referred into Copeland Borough Council have decreased by 80% compared with the data from the same period of time during 2019 (23rd March to 11th May). Cumbria is the top eight most vulnerable counties for children in need (CIN) who are also young carers ([Children's Commissioner, 2020](#)), data of which was supported by responses to the youth council survey.

Emotional Wellbeing

Youth practitioners have expressed concerns about increased levels of anxiety and loneliness, along with increased drug and alcohol use. These have been most marked in vulnerable groups, such as those in supported accommodation or in the care system. Furthermore, survey data shows that some young people with existing mental health issues felt that lockdown prevented them using their usual coping strategies, which adversely affected their wellbeing. Young people with anxiety disorders express particular concern about the health of their respective families.



“I just burst out crying and I didn’t even know why” (young person)

A loss of structure, through the closure of schools, is impacting on sleep patterns. Accounts from children and young people themselves, along with youth practitioners show that many are staying up late gaming, which is impacting on their ability to function during the day.

“There are some young people not engaging in any kind of positive activity other than gaming”

Accounts from children and young people reveal that the worst thing about lockdown is missing their friends. Survey data reveals that many respondents reported this factor, with 44.4% reporting that the pandemic had had a negative effect on their mental state, largely due to issues such as loneliness caused by social distancing and separation, rather than by concerns about the coronavirus itself.

“It’s the fact that I can’t do anything outside my house” (young person)

Furthermore, concerns about missing opportunities to have closure have been expressed by both children and young people and practitioners. This relates to enrichment activities such as school trips and also school transition activities, some schools, though not all, having closed without providing opportunities for students to say goodbye to one another. This issue is of some importance for those leaving year 6 or year 11 who have now been deprived of the opportunity to engage in the practices and rites of passage in leaving school.

“Having to stay in the family home and only being able to go out at certain times can cause familial tensions”

Practitioners are concerned that the reduction in safeguarding and mental health referrals indicates a hidden vulnerability that will begin to emerge when children and young people return to education. These concerns relate to neglect, abuse and emotional wellbeing.

“It is difficult for young people to plan their future with so many unknowns”

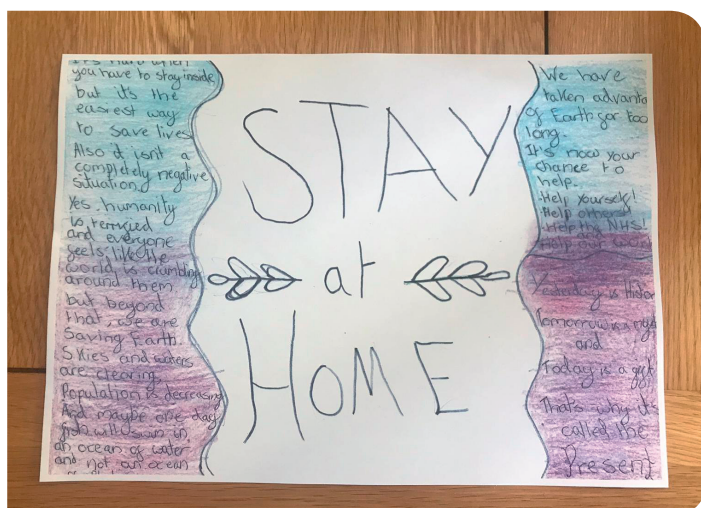
Although children and young people haven’t said they are worried about their long-term impact on their emotional wellbeing, practitioners have indicated that there are concerns about the emotional wellbeing of children and young people across West Cumbria. Specifically, practitioners are concerned about bereavement and trauma, the impacts of a loss of connection with their social networks (and hence fractured relationships) and a worrying increase in substance abuse. In anticipation of this increased vulnerability, the government has released funding to support schools in responding to the growing welfare needs of students. There is an expectation that this will involve partnership working with existing youth organisations and other partners.

Education

The closure of schools is challenging for staff and families alike and not only those who may be considered vulnerable. However, this report seeks to highlight concerns that have been expressed specifically in relation to those who are considered the most vulnerable. Both teachers and young people in poverty themselves have provided accounts of the immediate negative impact the closure of schools is having on their education and learning. These challenges can be summarised in three themes; access to IT; access to teachers (and positive, supportive role models); and the home learning environment.

Access to the internet is a challenge facing Cumbria and disproportionately affects families living with poverty. This is particularly important when education is being delivered virtually. This form of teaching assumes that all children and young people have access to adequate IT equipment at home, while accounts from schools and community groups reveal that this is simply not the case for many families in West Cumbria. Indeed, the Children’s Commissioner’s vulnerability data reveals that children in Cumbria are in the fifth most vulnerable category for having poor broadband access ([Children’s Commissioner, 2020](#)), leaving many children vulnerable to digital isolation ([Almann, 2020](#)). These estimates are somewhat confirmed by the survey data, which revealed that 43.7% of young people do not have a reliable access to the internet, with roughly 40% of these people saying that their internet connection has been notably worse during the pandemic. Schools have provided accounts of delivering physical materials to families who lack the IT resources required for virtual learning, but this does not fully mitigate the inequalities that are being exacerbated by the COVID-19 lockdown.

“it’s just not the same, I can’t ask questions like I could in class” (young person)



Teachers and students themselves have described concerns about the impact of distance learning (in whatever form it may be). This style of learning deprives students of the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarity and also removes opportunities for explorative discussions about the subject matter. Furthermore, it is well documented nationally that for some students, schools can be the principle safe place to go, and are the only place they encounter positive, supportive role models (The Guardian Tue 14 Apr 2020). Teachers and those within the local authority have expressed concern about this on a local level.

“I just don’t like it; I don’t prefer school but I’m not a fan of this either” (young person)

Accounts from practitioners have highlighted that existing challenges experienced by families in poor or cramped living conditions have been exacerbated, with large families struggling for space. Teachers have expressed concern that some of the more vulnerable students do not have the family and support networks to develop these skills, resulting in the gap in learning being likely to increase. There are also concerns that some students’ basic needs are not being met:

“The school has historically acted as a link to see “another way of living and existing” and this experience is vital for those living in environments of poverty and neglect”

Survey data from young people revealed that the workload being set by schools was higher than usual and it was hard to cope with especially when, due to the pandemic, they were having to look after younger siblings. There were also concerns of students with ADHD who struggled to focus by themselves, and some who struggled to teach themselves the content and saying that video lessons would be better. Furthermore, survey results showed uncertainty among students about lack of clarity about what is happening with GCSEs and A-levels and the implications for future study and work.

“Virtual delivery, which includes learning without teachers, is less effective with students who lack metacognitive resilience skills (particularly in younger learners). For example, as soon as a student sees failure they give up”

Educational practitioners are expressing grave concerns regarding the widening of the education gap. It is well documented that children from middle-class families generally perform better academically than families experiencing poverty (Carter-Wall & Whitfield, 2012). In Britain, the educational attainment gap between ‘disadvantaged’ 16-year-old pupils and their middle-class peers at the end of secondary school is currently 22.6 months, despite considerable policy and practice focus (Education Policy Institute, 2019). The anticipated economic downturn will lead to a significant increase in children who are considered disadvantaged. This means that fewer families will be able to provide the additional resources needed to thrive academically and, from a school perspective, additional financial pressures will be placed upon the Government’s Pupil Premium funding allocation².

“The landscape as know it will never be the same”

Concerns have also been expressed regarding attendance once schools reopen, particularly in relation to students who had poor attendance prior to COVID-19, had an existing mental health issue and those who may now be expressing anxiety as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

² The pupil premium is a grant given by the government to schools in England to decrease the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children, whether by income or by family upheaval. For each pupil who is eligible for free school meals, their school receives £1,320 or £935 (Department for Education, 2019).

Hardship

Despite the Government launching its Free School Meal voucher scheme, many households have been experiencing food poverty. The online scheme has been difficult for schools and parents to access, and for the first month of being operationalised was only available through a discrete number of larger supermarkets. This posed a significant challenge to our rural communities and families who were unable to travel to town centres to do their shopping.

As part of the community response, food pantries have been established across West Cumbria. In Copeland alone 321 food parcels have been distributed between 23rd March and 5th May 2020. Many of these were to families, most of whom had never used Foodbanks or food pantries in the past. The most common reasons for seeking this support was due to financial hardship, whether that be from being unable to access FSM support (living in a low-income home pre-COVID) or facing new financial difficulties due to employment.



“I have been in awe regarding the communities’ response to the current crisis but have also been deeply concerned about the increasing demand surrounding food. It broke my heart to hear the joys of a child when the food parcel arrived, and it contained a piece of fruit. No child should go without basic nutrition regardless of the crisis”.

Howgill Anonymised Case Study

Janet is mum to two girls, one who is severely disabled due to a congenital condition that has made one of her legs 13cm shorter than the other. This child needs surgery every 12-18 months to break her hip and leg and put on a fixator which needs turned every day for 6 weeks to lengthen her leg. She is also deaf and has two hearing aids. Janet herself has severe Crohn’s disease and has an ileostomy bag fitted. She also has multiple additional health problems. Her partner has been furloughed and his wages reduced accordingly. They are currently covered for rent through their Universal Credit. However, they are struggling for food, as she has to eat a very carefully controlled diet to manage her condition. School is sending free packed lunch bags for the girls which is a help. Unfortunately, Janet and her family do not meet the criteria for Early Help and local funders will not fund individuals. Howgill have been able to provide a small grant so that they can deliver essential supplies to support Janet and her family during this difficult time.

Citizens Advice Allerdale have seen the need for their service not only initially increase but the issues people are requiring help with have also changed. There has been a sharp increase in advice and support regarding benefits, employment and requests for food vouchers and assistance to top up energy prepayment meters due to reduced, and in some cases, no current income. Between 23rd March – 24th April 2020 Citizens Advice Allerdale helped 389 clients with 1269 issues plus 183 simple queries (sign posting/basic information). Furthermore, there were 129 requests for help with food vouchers issued, 520 benefit queries and 121 queries relating to employment issues.

The number of Universal Credit claimants (including those not required to seek work and those claiming whilst in work) in April in Cumbria was 28,441, a rise of 8,659 (44%) from March.

The economic implications of COVID-19 are yet to be realised. However, Cumbria Intelligence Observatory have analysed ONS data to reveal that the claimant count in Cumbria (this is those on JSA/UC available and actively seeking work) on 9th April was 12,530, an increase of 5,595 from March which is an 81% increase compared to 67% nationally. This increase is the highest since data first became available for Cumbria in January 1986.

Cumbria's claimant count increase is the 15th highest % increase out of the 38 LEP areas in England.

The table below provides some emerging data on the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, outlining the monthly percentage increase in Universal Credit claims and the percentage decrease in job postings ([Cumbria Intelligence Observatory](#)).

	UK	Cumbria	Allerdale	Copeland
Universal Credit Claims (March to April 2020)	+40%	+44%	+32%	+23%
Job Postings (Feb-April 2020)	-53%	-54%	-74%	-39%

The biggest increase in claims is in those aged below 34-year olds. When looking at these figures it must be noted that there could be a greater increase Universal Credit claims in the next months' figures (June) as the above data only show claims up to 9th April, which was only 3 weeks post lockdown starting. Nonetheless, this data strongly indicates that the number of children experiencing financial hardship is rising significantly, particularly in younger families.

With a large number of the population of West Cumbria experiencing furlough, redundancy, or unemployment, it is predicted that the anticipated economic downturn will hit families in Cumbria particularly hard. This will affect a significant proportion of the population, both professionally and personally, impacting on individuals' physical and emotional capacity to respond. During the first 6 weeks of lockdown Citizens Advice Copeland recorded a 500% increase in queries around employment.

Child practitioners have stated that when the initial lockdown measures were introduced most nurseries were forced to close and some of these are at risk of permanent closure due to the financial impact of the lockdown. As families are encouraged to return to work the reduced capacity of independent childcare providers may prevent some families from doing so, having further detrimental impacts on some families' abilities to make ends meet. Children's Services have expressed concern about how this is disproportionately impacting on women in employment.

The risk of significant long-term impact transcends the poverty families may experience through parents' and family's loss of income; it could potentially impact children's own employability in the future, particularly in relation to the leisure, service and tourism economy, all of which are industries critically important to the West Cumbrian economy.

Innovative Responses

Organisations have shown remarkable resilience in responding with innovative schemes to serve the needs of children and young people in Cumbria during the first stage of lockdown. This section provides just a small summary of these responses.

Phoenix Youth Projects: Innovative Ways to Connect

"The DJing session was aimed at some of the older lads who haven't accessed the virtual youth club very often or even at all. Music was the way to get through to them and then have a craic with them and see how are they doing as we have them online with us for an hour. One of our youth workers DJ's whilst another chats to the young people. This session has proved the most popular. Overall, we believe we have a well-balanced range of sessions for our young people to access. But none of this is as good as being in the youth club and we can't wait until the day we can re-open those youth club doors and get back to normal."

Paul Rowe, Project Manager.

FRIDAY NITE PROJECT (FNP)

Are you aged 12 – 19 years old and want a fun packed Friday? If so, our virtual youth club is the place to be every Friday 5pm – 8pm.



5PM – 6PM HOUSE MUSIC MIX & CHAT – DJ PAUL ROWE – MIXCLOUD

6PM – 7PM CLEATOR MOOR FNP VIRTUAL YOUTH CLUB - ZOOM

7PM – 8PM FRIZINGTON FNP VIRTUAL YOUTH CLUB – ZOOM



South Workington Youth Partnership: Bespoke Learning Packages

"We have put out a comprehensive kit to all of our youth club and disabled members. We continue to add to this on a weekly basis and have an online virtual club 7 nights per week with quizzes, games and challenges. Our items are tailor selected to facilitate the activities we are delivering. We have two walk in food pantries per week and we deliver between 30 – 50 people daily. Our virtual groups include our disabled project who meet twice weekly, a youth project every night and ladies' group."

Angela Good, South Workington Youth Partnership Manager

West Lakes Academy: Resource Hubs in the Community

We were aware from our recent student surveys and communications with students that we are getting to a stage where some students need some extra resources to complete their home learning tasks. We have been working with local businesses to position 'resource hubs' in our local community so that these resources can get to our students whilst also adhering to government guidelines. There will be 'resource hubs' in the following locations over the next couple of weeks: We welcome our families taking exercise books (both lined and square) and any resources they need as they visit these shops. We will continue to 'top' these up over the coming week."

Melissa Relph, Vice Principal



Facebook mutual aid groups: Rapid Community Response

"Communities in West Cumbria were incredibly quick to respond to challenges that the lockdown brought. Within days, they had organised themselves into Facebook mutual aid groups and were coordinating groups of up to 60 volunteers themselves. Through working with the Community Resilience Hub, a weekly food pantry has been set up, supporting struggling families in their community. The community groups have also been collecting shopping and prescriptions for residents who are shielding or self-isolating. A local youth group have also made positive posters to try to bring some happiness to people who are socially isolated."

Emma Williamson, Copeland Community Resilience Group

Westfield Housing Association: Partnership Working

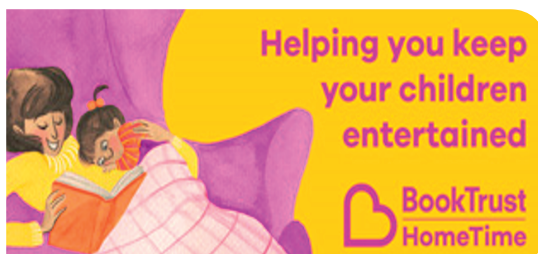
During the lockdown we have made welfare calls to all our tenants and for those tenants in need of support we have made referrals to local authority support and engaged with community voluntary groups in order to enable the families to access basic essentials like food and fuel e.g. gas and electric."

Susan Duxbury, Westfield Housing Association

Cumbria Youth Alliance (CYA): Resilience Resources

"Our staff are working and supporting young people, many of whom are unemployed and CYA has been helping many apply for Universal Credit. We are providing an online training resource with Embrace Resilience which is available to anybody over the age of 14 in Cumbria. This covers over 90 modules including emotional resilience but also more general information such as food hygiene and first aid. We are also working with Share Foundation in London to open up their basic skills programme to any young person in Cumbria. Almost all young people who use CYA are still engaging with staff through open/distance learning, 1-1 virtual contact and group activities that are being set up online."

Cath Clarke, CEO, Cumbria Youth Alliance



Libraries West Cumbria: Outreach

"Two thousand five hundred children's book and activity packs have been gifted to West Cumbria Libraries from national charity Booktrust. These have been distributed to the Covid-19 Emergency Response hub, local community centres, foodbanks and partners in Allerdale and Copeland responding to the pandemic. The packs are intended to help every child and their families through these challenging

times with additional family packs due to launch in the coming weeks. Booktrust are now despatching dual language books to support our refugee resettlers and families whose first language is not English in addition to resources provided by libraries to provide an inclusive service."

Lizzy Shaw, Allerdale Area Manager, Cumbria County Council

Cumbria County Council Schools: Donation of Sanitary Products

"Following a donation of sanitary products from Primary and Secondary Schools to the Cumbria County Council Covid-19 Welfare Hubs in Allerdale and Copeland, work has already begun to distribute the supplies within the local communities to reduce cases of period poverty. So far donations have been distributed to Aspatria Rainbow Response, Workington Rotary, Moorclose Community Centre and Maryport Community Emergency Resilience Group, which has enabled us to get the sanitary products into the areas of most need."

Lizzy Shaw, Allerdale Area Manager, Cumbria County Council

Cumbria Community Learning and Skills: Free Online Family Learning Courses

"Cumbria County Council's Community Learning and Skills service recently launched a new programme of online classes including 25 Family Learning courses running throughout May and June. The courses have been designed to provide additional support for home schooling parents with a wide range of Family Learning courses up to Key Stage 2. Courses are free, friendly, and accessible and offer fun opportunities for adults and children to learn both independently and together."

Liam Darby, Cumbria County Council

Discussion and Recommendations

COVID-19 is a global crisis that is impacting on children and young people of all backgrounds. Accounts from key practitioners working with children and young people in West Cumbria acknowledge this, and that most children in the area will be affected in some way. However, the table below presents an overview of the groups of children and young people who are the most vulnerably open to being affected by the crisis, categorised here as the 'Existing Vulnerable' and the 'Newly Vulnerable':

Existing Vulnerable	Newly Vulnerable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living in poverty• Looked after children and care leavers• Living in abusive or neglectful households, including households experiencing domestic violence• With special educational needs• Experiencing substance abuse issues• Experiencing existing poor mental health• Young carers• Those at risk of being NEET or excluded from education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experiencing a bereavement• Experiencing unemployment• Experiencing new financial hardship within the home• Experiencing poor mental health associated with the COVID-19 crisis

The indicative findings of this report suggest that critical aspects of the lives of children and young people in West Cumbria, particularly those who are in some way vulnerable, have been, or will be, affected by COVID-19. These have been categorised into three core themes:

- Wellbeing
- Education
- Hardship

The lists above are not exhaustive, and we don't yet understand the full impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable children and young people and the population as a whole. One thing that does seem certain however, is that as the crisis continues, the allostatic load³ of the lockdown will impact on West Cumbria's most vulnerable families. It is anticipated that the household stressors experienced during the lockdown period will trigger relationship and marital breakdown. Concerns have been expressed by some about the impact this may have on family pets, for example, when food is scarce it may be pets go without food or have to be given up, which could potentially add to the distress experienced by children and young people.

A number of factors need to be considered in the light of the experiences of families in West Cumbria. Many families will be experience multiple, not just one, of the vulnerabilities outlined above, and it must be remembered that before the lockdown 70% of families in poverty were working families ([Child Poverty Action Group, 2019](#)). As the nation is encouraged to return to work and education, we must also be mindful of the challenges that are associated with this. Are nurseries and childcare facilities equipped to cater for the new demands placed on them? Are schools ready to support their staff and families who will be experiencing anxieties regarding returning to face to education?

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³ Allostatic load is "the wear and tear on the body" which accumulates as an individual is exposed to repeated or chronic stress. The term was coined by McEwen and Stellar in 1993. It represents the physiological consequences of chronic exposure to fluctuating or heightened neural or neuroendocrine response which results from repeated or prolonged chronic stress.

These are all factors that require consideration, both in the immediate and in the long-term. In reflection of these, the following recommendations are made:

1. A Shared Vision for West Cumbrian Families and Communities

The initial COVID-19 lockdown measures prompted a co-ordinated community response in the form of Cumbria Community Resilience Forum and the local Community Resilience Forums. The Cumbria Strategic Hub provided an opportunity for West Cumbria to be presented collectively, with Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils working together. A desire across sectors has been expressed for a collective vision and plan for children and families in West Cumbria, for the purpose of identifying gaps in provision and to enable collaborative working to access funding. **Indications are that our Local Authorities and partner agencies are committing to this formidable challenge.**

The local Community Resilience Hubs enabled organisations across all sections to work effectively together. Local Authorities, social housing, Health, Police, Children's Social Care, Social Services, Schools and Community and Voluntary Groups have readily responded and committed to the challenge. **Given that there is every indication that this will be a long-term recovery project, we unhesitatingly call for all services to learn from this resilience group framework and commit to developing a COVID-19 Ten Year Recovery Plan.** Indications are emerging that, by reflecting on factors that have led to this improved coordination and collaboration, such a visionary outcome is a possibility.

***“This is about West Cumbrian families...
it's how we harness the expertise and skills amongst our community”***

Furthermore, the lockdown developed a culture of neighbourliness and reciprocity within communities, with people developing new businesses and innovative solutions to the challenges presented (exemplified in the Scrub Hub, where members of the West Cumbrian community collectively manufactured scrubs for NHS staff). During the lockdown stage the Community Resilience Hubs worked with communities, to provide support and encouragement, respecting the local skills, knowledge and expertise of community groups. **We call for all parties to consider how any perceived barriers between services, communities and individuals may continue to be removed, building strong, respectful relationships as the county hopes to move into the recovery stage of the crisis.**

2. Parity of Care for Health and Wellbeing for Children and Young people

For decades there has been discussion about parity for health and social services, acknowledging the importance of all services contributing to the wellbeing of the nation. The well-established link between poverty on one hand, and health inequalities on the other, has been calling out for a unified approach to solving the conundrum. Is there ever going to be a better time for a radical approach?

Many of the impacts of COVID-19 are not directly related to the virus but they are going to shine a light on the existing health inequalities in society many of which are determined by socio-economic conditions.

We would wish to emphasise that success will be dependent upon the effective implementation, on a long-term basis, of the encouraging multi-agency, cross sector approach demonstrated already in West Cumbria. This will, by necessity, include statutory services working alongside and utilising the uniquely valuable contribution of the voluntary and community sector. In this context, essential early help and preventative measures, for both the existing and newly vulnerable groups, is one area in which the voluntary sector is uniquely qualified.

While it is immensely encouraging to witness to the public recognition of the key roles played by so many professions and jobs in dealing with this emergency, **we call for local and national recognition that it will only be by publically acknowledging the value of everyone's contribution that we will consolidate the network of services that we envision above.**

We encourage those working with children and young people to think about ways technology can be provided and utilised to support our most disadvantaged groups. **Research into the effectiveness of IT supported learning during the lockdown has the potential to identify innovative practices that can supplement traditional methods. We offer this as a recommendation to the education community.**

Some nationally acclaimed schemes whereby individuals and businesses have donated essential IT equipment to children unable to access lessons at home, allow us to wonder if there is an unrealised solution to local difficulties in our own area. We can envisage a collection hub; cleaning and refurbishment of equipment; donating to families; supporting broadband access and provision of training as the essential steps. **If we could combine this challenge with our previous recommendation, West Cumbria has the potential to lead the country in IT supported learning for disadvantaged children.**

There is a growing awareness that economic uncertainty and anticipated unemployment will draw families, hitherto secure, into poverty. Those experienced in the field testify to the necessity of work on de-stigmatising poverty for these people must not be underestimated. Those involved must be encouraged to seek the help and support they are entitled to. **Building emotional wellbeing and resilience for all ages must be seen as an essential ingredient of effective support.** The early success Howgill's pilot 'Time to be Me' project, which provides a vital service to support young children in local schools, is indicative of the value of such interventions

3. Focused Anti-Poverty Policies

Despite the financial support packages that have been offered by the Government to support families around Britain, the Child Poverty Action Group claim that more needs to be done to support families, including emergency support for families with children, with a £10 increase in child benefit as the top priority plus the removal of the benefit cap and the two-child limit, changes to universal credit and legacy benefits that will directly benefit families; and more money to local authorities so that local welfare assistance schemes are able to provide cash support ([Child Poverty Action Group, 2020](#)). The [Joseph Roundtree Foundation \(JRF\)](#) recommend an extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to all workers taking time off work because of underlying health conditions, and extending the Scheme to those reducing working hours, and also extending eligibility for Statutory Sick Pay to low earners. They also recommend a temporary increase the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) to cover median rents and lifting the national LHA cap to ensure that people in all areas of the country receive extra support to meet their housing costs ([JRF, 2020](#)). **We call on national and local government to critically reflect on their policies and review these to ensure that the welfare of our most vulnerable families is protected as much as possible.**

4. Role of schools

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the wider and essential role of schools beyond the teaching/learning exchange. Providing a safe space for vulnerable children, presenting positive role models and encouraging secure relationships are critically important to their sense of wellbeing. We commend all the schools who have reached out to children and families in greatest need during the enforced school closure period. **We would encourage schools to use this experience to further strengthen home school relationships with these vulnerable families.**

We also call for local authorities and third sector organisations to consider ways in which they can work with schools to develop strong joint working partnerships to ensure that the needs of all children and young people in West Cumbria are met and that those who are vulnerable to 'falling through the net' are supported.

5. Promoting Youth Citizenship

As citizens and future leaders, young people need to be included in the recovery response to COVID-19. Community groups and local authorities need to include young people in the community response, believing in and entrusting the capacity of young people, helping to build generational resilience (see Appendix C for UCLan's recommendations to include children and young people in the recovery response to COVID-19).

Well led service provision is going to be vital in reconnecting young people following this crisis, even allowing for schools and youth services having to operate with diminished capacity to do so. Disadvantaged young people's ability to access opportunities for active citizenship and to realise their economic prospects are likely to be negatively affected as a result of education being disrupted and employment options and opportunities shrinking.

Having already witnessed to the ability of our young people to produce the excellent survey that we have highlighted thus far in this report, we would confidently propose that the eventual reconstruction of our society, post-COVID-19, must engage with the generation whose future depends upon the eventual outcomes. Their close involvement is the surest way of ensuring the emergence of resilient, engaging and empowered citizens committed to a more sustainable and equitable society.

Summary of Recommendations

1. We want partners to join us in recognising that evidence of the effects of austerity across all public services has made the challenging task of responding to the demands of COVID-19, all the more difficult.
2. We urge partners to develop organisational collaboration as an essential ingredient for the alleviation of child poverty.
3. We ask partners to consider the likelihood of longer-term importance of secondary impacts for vulnerable children and young people, including the socio-economic, educational, and emotional effects.
4. Given that there is every indication that this will be a long-term recovery project, we unhesitatingly call for all services to learn from the local Hubs Resilience Group framework and commit to developing a COVID-19 Ten Year Recovery Plan.
5. We call for all parties to consider how any perceived barriers between services, communities and individuals may continue to be removed, building strong, respectful relationships as the county hopes to move into the recovery stage of the crisis.
6. We call for local and national recognition of the value of everyone's contribution to the network of services that we have highlighted as crucial to recovery.
7. Research into the effectiveness of IT supported learning during the lockdown has the potential to identify innovative practices that can supplement traditional methods. We urge partners in the education community to build on this opportunity.
8. To support our previous recommendation, West Cumbria has the potential to lead the country in IT supported learning for disadvantaged children and we would ask the wider community of partners to enable this through their support.
9. We believe and recommend building emotional wellbeing and resilience for all ages must be seen as an essential ingredient of effective support.
10. We call on national and local government to critically reflect on their policies and review these to ensure that the welfare of our most vulnerable families is protected as a priority.

11. We would encourage schools to use this experience to further strengthen home school relationships with these vulnerable families.
12. We also call for local authorities and third sector organisations to consider ways in which they can work with schools to develop strong joint working partnerships.
13. Having already witnessed to the ability of our young people, we would propose that the eventual reconstruction of our society, post-COVID-19, must engage with the generation whose future depends most upon the outcomes. Their close involvement is the surest way of ensuring the emergence of resilient, engaging and empowered citizens committed to a more sustainable and equitable society.

What Next?

This report seeks, as an interim measure, to present a number of recommendations for local authorities and third sector organisations to action in support of children and young people in response to COVID-19. At the time of writing a number of lockdown measures remain in place which are impacting most severely upon the lives of our most vulnerable families. It is our wish and intention that this report will be a call to join the action in support of those most in need.

WCCPF intend to publish a more complete report at the appropriate time in which we will seek to provide more data, share further examples of best practice and identify gap in provision. We will be alert to opportunities to facilitate consultative roundtable events which will focus on the key themes emerging from the community's on-going work. However events unfold in the coming months, WCCPF will continue to keep child poverty at the forefront of the recovery agenda.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Contributors

Allerdale and Copeland Youth Council
Allerdale Borough Council
Allerdale Community Resilience Group
Citizen's Advice Allerdale
Citizen's Advice Copeland
Copeland Borough Council
Copeland Community Resilience Group
Copeland Youth Network
Cumbria Community Foundation
Cumbria County Council (Education, Children's Services, My Time)
Cumbria Youth Alliance
Family Action
Howgill Family Centre
Moorclose Community Centre
Phoenix Youth Projects
South Whitehaven Youth Partnership
West Lakes Academy
Westfield Housing Association

Appendix B: High Ranking COVID-19 Child Vulnerability Indicators for Cumbria

Indicator	Estimate	Rate	Percentile rank amongst LAs*
Modelled prevalence of children aged 0-1 in households with any of so called 'toxic trio'	804	184.1 per 1000 0-1 yr olds	72
Modelled prevalence of children aged 0-1 in households where parent suffering domestic abuse	342	78.3 per 1000 0-1 yr olds	66
Modelled prevalence of children aged 0-1 in households where parent suffering severe mental health problem	544	124.5 per 1000 0-1 yr olds	66
Live births to mothers under 18	37	0.4 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	67
Children in households where no home broadband above 2mbps is available at the premises	763	8.2 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	95
Children in households where no internet above 10mbps (neither home broadband nor mobile data) is available at the premises	2,904	31.4 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	94
CIN episodes for children aged <1 at 31st March 2019 with domestic abuse identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	93	21.3 per 1000 under 1 yr olds	66
CIN episodes where a child has mental health of parent/someone else in household identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	1,305	14.1 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	72
CIN episodes where a child has mental health of parent/someone else in household identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	1,305	14.1 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	72
CIN episodes where a child has self-harm identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	204	2.2 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	71
CIN episodes for children aged <1 at 31st March 2019 with mental health of parent/someone else in household identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	100	22.9 per 1000 under 1 yr olds	88
CIN episodes for children aged 0-4 at 31st March 2019 with mental health of parent/someone else in household identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	420	17.5 per 1000 0-4 yr olds	83
CIN episodes for unborn children at 31st March 2019 with mental health of parent/someone else in household identified as a factor at CIN assessment	23	0.2 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	66
Children with an open Child Protection Plan	551	6 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	80
Children aged <1 at 31st March 2019 with an open Child Protection Plan	42	9.6 per 1000 under 1 yr olds	75
Children aged 0-4 at 31st March 2019 with an open Child Protection Plan	178	7.4 per 1000 0-4 yr olds	81
CIN episodes where a child has young carer identified as a factor at CIN assessment (excluding looked after children)	248	2.7 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	92
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (aged 0-4 years)	405	168.29 per 10000 0-4 yr olds	85
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (aged 0-14 years)	910	118 per 10000 0-14 yr olds	82
Children withdrawn from school to be home educated	255	2.8 per 1000 0-17 yr olds	83

(0 = Lowest rate, 100 = Highest rate)

Source: The Children's Commissioner for England [local area profiles of child vulnerability](#)

**THE CENTRE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION**

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School of Social Work
Care and Community

**Building on Rainbows: Supporting Children's
Participation in Shaping Responses to COVID-19**

See full report [here](#)¹

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has recently restated that children's views should be inform responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is not a luxury, it is a protective measure. This research, led by Prof Cath Larkins, University of Central Lancashire, shows, across Europe:

- Exposure to additional challenges for care-experienced children, young Roma, migrant children, children with experience of vulnerable family situations, poverty, disability, violence, CSE and trafficking.
- Of the 95 professionals, from 16 sectors and 20 countries, surveyed in one week in April 2020, 30% provided examples showing children's participation in promoting wellbeing, information design, shaping services and critiquing practice. They reported little evidence of children's views informing public decision-making.



The research highlights the need to:

1. **Provide Recognition.** Commit to children's participation in shaping responses to COVID-19. Celebrate children's everyday contributions. Challenge age-based judgements.
2. **Support Individual Children:** Enable child participation in decisions and their meetings. Improve the coordination between adult professionals. Ensure children have regular direct contact with named individuals, in education and social care, and respond in line with children's views.
3. **Support Collective Influence:** Increase opportunities for children to collectively highlight concerns, inform decisions, and hold decision-makers to account. Share safe, accessible platforms for children's digital participation. Ensure that decision-makers engage with these. Also use paper, post, face-to-face, phone, television and radio.
4. **Promote Inclusion:** Adopt a critical Children's Rights Based Approach, guided by marginalised children (including children in care and care leavers, young Roma, migrant children and children with experience of vulnerable family situations, poverty and disabilities).
5. **Coordinate Digital and Offline Solutions:** Ensure provision of digital equipment, electricity, access to data and internet safety information. Upgrade professionals' digital skills and guidance. Provide personal support in use of digital equipment in situations where parents do not have these skills. Provide print copies of materials.
6. **Resources for Professionals:** Safeguard professionals' time for participation activities. Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for individual case work. Provide secure funding to grassroots and youth work organisations to maintain direct relationships with marginalised children and communities.
7. **Public Health Inclusion.** Ensure children's inclusion in formal processes for community and public engagement, ensuring their involvement in governance of, children's services, public health and other structures.
8. **Economic Measures.** Promote children's best interests in economic decision-making, learning from children about how to achieve this. Promote actions to support children and families financially, access to high quality services, and their participation in decision-making. Ensure immediate and long-term provision of nutrition, medication, housing and essential services, for children and families in vulnerable situations, and an adequate minimum income, to promote conditions in which children can access opportunities, participate and thrive.

¹ https://msuclanac-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/clarkins_uclan_ac_uk/Efwy5JzXonJOltP4WklybJkBlde1TSpuXVtGM12zulk6jg?e=0AWN0Z

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