



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales: Child Poverty
Milestones and Targets Update 2009
Date: 24 November 2009
By: Brian Gibbons, Minister for Social Justice and Local
Government

Statistics have today been published on the Welsh Assembly Government's ['StatsWales'](#) website, which show the latest information available on the indicators monitoring progress against our child poverty strategy targets set out in *"Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales: Measuring Success"*, published in October 2006.

I am pleased to announce that, despite the effects of the recession, the statistics show an improvement in half of the indicators for which we have sufficient data available for an assessment to be made.

The main improvements have been in the field of education, with the numbers of both young people and adults gaining qualifications increasing. Other improvements include a reduction the numbers of people living in B&B and temporary accommodation and a reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured in road accidents.

This demonstrates the impacts of the actions we and our partners have been taking to tackle poverty of experience and opportunity and improve the lives of our most disadvantaged children.

Where the indicators have not shown an improvement and there is sufficient information for an assessment to be made, there has been little or no change in all but one case. The only indicator to have shown a deterioration is the number of children living in workless households. This shows an increase of

the number of children living in workless households. Unfortunately, this is not surprising as one would expect this economic indicator to perform worse during a recession than they would during times of economic growth. We know that work is highly protective against the risks of poverty, particularly severe child poverty, this reaffirms the need for us to take continued action to address worklessness in Wales.

It is important that we continue to work closely with the UK Government on employment policy and progress our range of 'Wales only' policies, such as ProAct, ReAct, Want2Work and Genesis, which will complement these efforts in the face of the recession.

We know that we must not be complacent. Eradicating poverty and improving the life chances of our children is at the top of the list of priorities for the Assembly Government Cabinet and for me in my capacity as Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.

On 10 November, the National Assembly passed the Children and Families (Wales) Measure. The Measure makes statutory provision to take forward the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment in terms of child poverty, provides for greater support to families where children may be at risk, and strengthens regulatory enforcement in child care settings.

The Measure will require Welsh Authorities, including Welsh Ministers, to publish a strategy for contributing to the eradication of child poverty in Wales. It reflects our understanding that, in order to make faster progress, we need to draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of public bodies in Wales. On 5 October 2009, Children and Young People Cabinet Committee members agreed the proposed framework for the new child poverty strategy, which sought to identify those policy areas that it will be particularly important to our new child poverty strategy.

Central to the Welsh Assembly Government's child poverty policy is improving outcomes for children and young people living in disadvantaged families in Wales. Building the new strategy around the 13 broad aims outlined in the proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure and the Welsh Assembly Government's seven core aims will facilitate tackling the causes and effects of income poverty through a range of cross-cutting policies and programmes. The strategy will be published for consultation early in 2010.

The Assembly Government remains committed to measuring progress against the challenging child poverty targets that we have set ourselves. Through the establishment of the Statistics Wales bulletin and the publication of the Children and Young People's Wellbeing Monitor for Wales, we have now established robust arrangements for reporting on our progress. As part of its development over the next few weeks we will consider how the child poverty targets that we have in place align with our new child poverty strategy.

In addition, an Outcome Measures Framework is being developed by the Assembly Government to provide a set of measures for each of the Seven Core Aims that will underpin local Children and Young People's Plans. The Framework will consist of both national and local indicators.

The Framework is being designed to also incorporate indicators that will enable reporting on the 13 Broad Aims set out in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure.