

January 2012

A New Year's Resolution to End Child Poverty

Write to your MP today

Join young people across the UK today and ask your MP to make a New Year's Resolution to end child poverty by 2020.

What is poverty?

The UK Government says children are living in poverty if the family they live in earns less than 60% of the 'normal' national income.

This is the equivalent of two children living with a single parent/carer who earns less than £256 per week (most of these households earn £427 per week) or two parents/carers who earn less than £348 per week (most of these households earn £580 per week).

Children can live in poverty even if their parents/carers have a job. 57% of all children living in poverty live in a family with at least one working adult.

Millions of children in the UK still live in poverty every day

Three out of every ten children, 3.8 million, currently live in poverty.

Find out how many children in your area live in poverty at www.byc.org.uk/get-active/end-child-poverty

Growing up in poverty hurts children and the UK

Children in poverty:

- Are more likely to suffer ill health and develop life restricting illness such as asthma - they are also ten times more likely to die suddenly as babies
- Don't achieve their potential in school - 69% of children who are eligible for free school meals don't get 5 GCSEs at grades A* - C
- Can't afford to do things that help them learn and make them happy - 15% can't afford to have friends round for tea once a fortnight, 9% can't celebrate special occasions like birthdays, 14% can't have a hobby and 10% can't afford school trips

Poverty is not simply about going without luxuries - it's about being denied good health, education, housing, and respect. Poverty is an unfair, unacceptable state and our Government and Members of Parliament need to work hard to eradicate it.

When children in poverty fail to reach their potential, this reduces the amount of skilled workers for the future, and affects our economy. A study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that child poverty costs Britain at least £25 billion a year.

Ask your MP today to keep the promise to end child poverty by 2020

In 2010 the UK Government promised to end child poverty by 2020. This was laid down in law in the Child Poverty Act. Targets were set to reduce child poverty to 10% by 2020. With only 8 years left to keep this promise, the Government are on course to miss this target by a wide mark. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated that unless action is taken child poverty will still affect 24% of children in 2020.

We need our Members of Parliament (MPs) to not break their commitment to ending child poverty by 2020 and ensure the Government makes this issue a priority. Use this letter to write to your MP today.

Join our campaign - together we can keep the promise to end child poverty.

Join young people campaigning at:

Web: www.byc.org.uk



British Youth Council

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**CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP**

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Address of your MP

(You can find out their name with just your postcode on www.theyworkforyou.com/)

House of Commons,
London
SW1A 0AA.

Your postal address / email address

(so you get a reply to your letter)

_____ January 2012
(date)

Please make a New Year's Resolution to end child poverty

Dear _____

I am writing to ask you to keep the promise the end child poverty and make it one of your New Year's Resolutions.

My letter is part of a campaign supported by the British Youth Council and Child Poverty Action Group to empower children and young people across the UK to ask their Member of Parliament to take action to end child poverty. I am supporting this campaign because I believe it should be a Government priority to tackle the serious problem of 3.8 million children living in poverty in the UK. Children shouldn't be growing up without a warm, dry and safe home, a nutritious and balanced diet, access to books and computers, and a safe place to grow up. Every child deserves a fair chance to learn and a fair chance of health and happiness. Yet the UK is in danger of breaking our promise, set in law, to end child poverty by 2020. Urgent action needs to be taken.

As your constituent, I want you to keep child poverty on the political agenda and ensure the Government keeps the promise to end child poverty by 2020. I would appreciate it if you could raise this issue with the Minister of State for Children and Families, with the leader of your political party and your fellow MPs. I would also like you to support this campaign by becoming part of a list of MPs supporting the statement '**I resolve to make sure Parliament keeps its promise to end child poverty by 2020**' on the British Youth Council website. Please reply to me at the address / email above and CC: in the **End Child Poverty campaign, British Youth Council, CAN Mezzanine, 49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH** or campaigns@byc.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

(name)

(age)

Child poverty in my area is:

%

(Find the latest statistics on how many children live in poverty in your local area at www.byc.org.uk/get-active/end-child-poverty)