

Give Me Five:

The Child Benefit
Top-up Campaign



Jenny Duncan
Policy and Parliamentary Officer
CPAG Scotland

What is the Give Me Five Campaign?



- A coalition of third sector, civic society and faith groups calling for an additional £5 per week, paid by the Scottish Government, to 'top-up' child benefit and lift children out of poverty.
- All families in receipt of child benefit would receive a £5 top up per child to their weekly payment.
- Future spending plans, and the 2018/19 Budget should include a commitment to increasing child benefit by £5 per week.
- Currently 1 in 4 children are living in poverty in Scotland.



New Powers Devolved to Scotland



- The Scotland Act 2016 gives the Scottish Government powers to top up existing benefits.
- The Child Poverty Bill has set targets to reduce child poverty by 2030.
- Scottish Ministers must set out in Delivery Plans whether they will use their powers to top up child benefit.
- The Social Security (Scotland) Bill will provide the framework to allow the Scottish Government to top up child benefit.



Scale of child poverty in Scotland



- 1 in 4 children in Scotland living in poverty (260 000) below poverty line
- Over two thirds (70%) of children in poverty live in working households
- Rising levels acute income crisis: Families with children using food banks: 1,861 in 2011/12 increased to 36,114 in 2014/15

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Child benefit top up- facts and figures



- Nearly Universal - 95% take up (2013/14)
- Current rates of child benefit (frozen from 2015/16):
 - Eldest/only child - £20.70 per week
 - Additional children- £13.70 per week per child.
- Child benefit is set to lose 23% of its value over the decade by 2020.
- Increasing child benefit by £5 a week would restore it to 2010 value.
- Complexity, error and delay in delivery of means tested benefits a key reason behind many incidences of acute income crisis.



What impact would a £5 top-up have?



- An additional £5 per week would lift 30,000 children out of poverty.
- Child benefit is spent on children, and supports families both in and out of work.
- Investing in child benefit prevents, as well as reduces poverty.
- An additional £5 per week could pay for seven breakfasts of cereal, milk, fruit juice and a banana and over two months, a good quality winter coat.
- Poverty is not inevitable. By 2011/12, 170 000 fewer children in poverty than in 1996/7 due to policies at UK and Scottish Level.



“I’M GETTING EXCITED THINKING I COULD MAYBE
EVEN MANAGE TO TRY AND SAVE £5 PER WEEK AS
THAT’S £260 PER YEAR AND THAT COULD HELP
GIVE US A WEE FAMILY WEEKEND IN A CARAVAN
SOMEWHERE, MY CHILDREN HAVE NEVER HAD A
HOLIDAY, OR EVEN BEEN OUT OF THIS TOWN,
AND THAT MAKES ME REALLY SAD”



Discussion:



- What benefits could topping up child benefit have in your local area?
- What barriers can you envisage to topping up child benefit by £5 per week?
- How could you support the campaign?



Supporting the Campaign



- Sign the petition and email your MSP:

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/give-me-five-child-benefit-top-campaign>

- Add your organisation's support to the campaign.
- For more info contact jduncan@cpagscotland.org.uk
- Twitter: @GM5Scot #GiveMe5

