

# Going Without: Measuring Child Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ireland

Liz Kerrins, Sheila Greene & Síle Murphy

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## **Abstract**

Based on a review of Irish and international research on children's experiences of poverty and living standards and small-scale exploratory interviews with children and young people, this paper explores the development of a direct measure of child poverty in Ireland. The proposed new measure locates the experience of poverty within the state of childhood itself. Currently, Ireland's official poverty measure – the consistent poverty measure – gives us an imprecise picture of child poverty since it conceptualises and operationalises child poverty as household-level deprivation. This measure does not tell us exactly what poor children go without in low-income families. The paper is developed as phase 1 of a wider potential research project, and it explores possible dimensions of child deprivation and social exclusion that could be used in future research in Ireland to assess child necessities and provide data on children's living standards and levels of deprivation. It is suggested also that indicators of public service exclusion of children should be included in measures of child poverty and that children and young people should be active participants in the development and application of child poverty indicators. This study was completed in 2008.

## **Key words**

Children, young people, child-centred, deprivation indicators, poverty, social exclusion

### **Disclaimer**

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## **Abbreviations**

CSO	Central Statistics Office
EU-SILC	EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions
GUI	Growing Up in Ireland
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School-aged Children
MCS	Millennium Cohort Study
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
OMCYA	Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
OSI	Office for Social Inclusion
PSE survey	Poverty and Social Exclusion survey (UK)

# **1. Aim, rationale and context**

## **1.1 Aim and rationale**

The purpose of this paper is to explore the development of an explicitly child-centred, direct measure of child poverty in Ireland. The paper explores possible dimensions of child deprivation and social exclusion to support the further development of children's poverty indicators in Ireland.

Generally, countries measure poverty using income thresholds, but Ireland pioneered an official poverty measure based on an income poverty threshold and the deprivation of basic household necessities due to low-income – the consistent poverty measure. The consistent poverty measure gives an imprecise picture of child poverty as it conceptualises and operationalises child poverty as being effectively the same as household-level deprivation, and relies on deprivation indicators that are more relevant to adults' lives. It does not tell us what poor children go without due to family poverty and presumes an equal sharing of living standards amongst household members. For these reasons, we need to develop direct measures of child deprivation that can be applied and monitored periodically alongside the household consistent poverty measure.

The focus on improving Irish child poverty measurement using the existing monetary-based framework has been criticised as short-sighted and technocratic, emphasising, as it does, poverty measurement rather than the understanding of poverty (Lister, 2004). Poverty is manifested non-materially as well as materially, impacting on child well-being and well-becoming. Child poverty can and probably should be understood and measured within a broader child well-being framework. However, the rationale for this paper's focus on improving the consistent poverty measure is its status as the official Irish poverty measure, used in policy development and the monitoring of poverty, at least in Ireland. It is also the indicator of economic security used in the report on child well-being in Ireland produced biennially by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2008).

We need a more precise child poverty measurement because the findings of Irish poverty surveys impact on the understanding of poverty by the general public, by politicians and by

key decision-makers and often provoke intense public and media debate. Consistent poverty data are used by non-governmental organisations, opposition politicians and the government in considering policy options, lobbying, and assessing success in meeting policy targets and social goals.

Child-centred approaches to understanding and measuring child poverty and exclusion locate the experience within the state of childhood itself (Ridge, 2004). The current paper takes this approach in considering better Irish child poverty measurement: deprivation and social exclusion are experienced relative to the norms of childhood, accepting the difficulty of defining such norms. The paper argues that child poverty measurement should take account of children's basic needs and wants that may go unsatisfied due to low family income. The development of indicators of service exclusion of children is also considered.

This paper also suggests that children's and young people's participation is required in poverty measurement in Ireland. Data using the consistent poverty measure are provided by one adult household member. While Irish poverty research has previously directly measured deprivation for children (Nolan and Farrell, 1990; Cantillon et al, 2004) and estimated the household expenditure required for families to have quite minimal standards of living by developing intricate budget standards (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004; 2006), children and young people have not participated in the research used to determine material necessities for children. Children have not participated in generating these indicators and budgets, nor have they participated in the application of the indicators. This is not unusual in the international context.

## **1.2 Irish child poverty and policy context**

Through the 1990s, the Republic of Ireland moved from being one of the poorest countries in Europe to (for a time) one of the richest in the world. While consistent poverty rates for households with children, measured using the consistent poverty measure, have fallen from 17 per cent in 1997 (Nolan, 2000) to 7.4 per cent in 2007, children continue to experience higher poverty rates than working-age people (4.7 per cent in 2007), or older people (2 per cent in 2007) (CSO, 2008). These figures led Ireland's Central Statistics Office (CSO)

(2008) to conclude that 'children remain one of the most vulnerable groups in society' and that the presence of children in a household has a clear impact on the likelihood of experiencing deprivation. One in five households with children lives on an income 60 per cent below median national income (CSO, 2008). This income poverty statistic was a key reason why Ireland was placed 22nd out of 25 countries on material well-being in UNICEF's (2007) influential report card on child well-being in rich countries, and why Ireland remains within the block of countries with the highest 'at risk of poverty' rates in the European Union (Eurostat, 2005). The economic downturn is very likely to have exacerbated this situation. Ireland has a high degree of economic inequality when compared with other OECD and European Union countries (Nolan and Maître, 2007). For analyses of why families with children in Ireland continue to experience poverty and deprivation, the reader is referred to Sweeney (2007), Nolan (2000), Daly (2007) and Nolan and Maître (2007).

In the 'National Anti-Poverty Strategy' (NAPS) (Government of Ireland, 1997), the revised NAPS (Government of Ireland, 2002), the 'National Children's Strategy 2000-2010' (Government of Ireland, 2000), and more recently in 'Towards 2016' (Department of the Taoiseach, 2006) and the 'Agenda for Children's Services' (OMCYA, 2007), the Irish government has pledged to eliminate child poverty and ensure economic security for children and families. Ireland has also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which guarantees children the right to an adequate standard of living. The Irish government's only target to reduce child poverty rates was set in the 2002 revised NAPS, aiming 'to reduce the numbers of children who are consistently poor' (Government of Ireland, 2002), i.e. the proportion of households with children experiencing low income and material deprivation, to below 2 per cent by 2007, and, if possible, eliminate it altogether. The assessment of success in meeting this target has been muddied by the changeover in the surveys used to measure poverty in Ireland and Europe. New household deprivation indicators were added to the Irish version of the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). The household consistent poverty measure has been changed and is now based on a new household sample. The Irish government has however asserted that it would 'be clear that the target would have been met had the change not occurred'

(Government of Ireland, 2007:25). Ireland's current anti-poverty strategy, the 'National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016' (Government of Ireland, 2007), does not contain a target to reduce or end child poverty. Instead a global poverty reduction target has been set, to reduce the proportion of the population experiencing consistent poverty to between 2 per cent and 4 per cent by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty for all by 2016.

### **1.3 Structure of paper**

Section 2 sets out the methodology used to develop this paper. Section 3 provides some contextual data on child poverty in Ireland and explores some of the issues that arise in developing child deprivation indicators. It further explores the rationale for developing a new direct measure of child poverty in Ireland, and reviews research on the extent to which measuring both child and household poverty sheds light on differences in living standards within families. Section 4 reviews the literature on children's and young people's poverty experiences and living standards to support indicator development. Section 5 explores the inclusion of service exclusion indicators in a child poverty measure. Section 6 summarises the paper and makes recommendations on further research to develop a child-centred child poverty measure and better understand children's and young people's living standards and experiences of poverty and social exclusion.

## **2 Method**

### **2.1 Approach**

This paper has been developed as phase 1 of a larger potential research project to undertake survey research with children, young people and parents in order to further develop and apply a set of children's deprivation indicators. The paper reviews quantitative and qualitative research evidence on children's living standards and experiences of poverty to try to identify dimensions of child poverty and social exclusion relevant to the development of more sensitive and child-centred indicators.

This paper is premised on an understanding of poverty as relative rather than absolute. A child is considered relatively deprived when he or she experiences deprivation of a kind or degree not normally experienced by children in that child's society. This approach obviously requires some understanding of the living standards of all children in Ireland. The paper reviews Irish research in order to identify the dimensions of deprivation and social exclusion experienced by some children. Living standards and poverty surveys in other advanced economies are also reviewed to further understand childhood experiences of both relative poverty and relative affluence.

The findings from the literature review are structured according to the poverty dimensions suggested in the literature. These dimensions are the most obvious basis for selecting potential new indicators and could be used in a larger research project with the public, including adults and children. Such a study could provide further information on children's and young people's living standards in Ireland, and on what the public think are necessities for children – things and services that they should have regardless of family income. Such research would be valuable to the development of more child-centred deprivation indicators.

This approach to developing poverty indicators involves a focus on 'socially perceived necessities'. One of its merits is its democratic nature insofar as the public itself helps determine what constitutes necessities for people. It is helpful in resolving public debates

about the items and activities that everyone should be able to afford (Lister, 2004; Gordon et al, 2000). Taking such an approach may enhance the public credibility of a measure of children's poverty.

There is precedence for using this kind of method in child poverty indicator development. It was used in the United Kingdom (UK) in the influential Small Fortunes (Middleton et al, 1997) survey on child poverty and children's living standards, and also in the UK Poverty and Social Exclusion (PSE) survey (Gordon et al, 2000). The method entails arriving at a social consensus on the basic necessities for children and provides information on prevalent living standards of children and the extent of child deprivation in relation to those standards.

The socially perceived necessities approach was selected from a range of possible approaches. There are alternative approaches to establishing a child poverty threshold against which the living standards of households with children can be judged. Budget standards are one such measure. The budget standards method can be used to determine the costs of raising a child at the level of the household or the individual child so as to establish a minimum income standard. Children or households with children living on or below that standard can be considered to be experiencing poverty. Consumption-based budget standards are widely used in poverty research, including previous Irish research by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2006) and Carney et al (1994). The approach involves developing a list of basic items, activities and services that children need that represent minimum or adequate living standards, pricing the items on the list, determining the longevity of items, and using the results as an income standard. Researchers develop the lists, and the public and 'experts' can be involved in validating the lists. Advantages include that: a range of budgets can be created to illustrate different living standards for children; the lists can be comprehensive ranging from child-specific items to the additional costs of electricity and rent attributed to children; the transparency of the budget; and most of all, that it supports the creation of an income standard against which the adequacy of social welfare and wages can be judged. Disadvantages include: the subjectivity involved in the creation of the budget items; the complexity of breaking down the child costs of

household spending in areas such as food and heating costs; determining item longevity; the time it takes to construct a budget which comprises tens or hundreds of items.

For the purposes of improving the measurement of child poverty in Ireland the consumption-based budget standard method has the advantage of providing an income threshold rooted in research evidence on children's lives against which the incomes of households with children in Ireland could be judged to determine their poverty status. This is a more rigorous, and child-centred, way of arriving at an income poverty threshold than the arbitrary cut-off of 60 per cent of median income in the current Irish income poverty measure. Intricate budgets can also provide an accessible and comprehensive picture of the elements of a basic or adequate living standard for children. However, budget standards do not provide data on the extent of child deprivation amongst the population.

Another approach is the expenditure-based approach to developing budget standards for children, which involves surveying households with children to determine their real expenditure on necessities for children and by so doing to create an income standard. This approach shares similar advantages and disadvantages to consumption-based budgets, with the added difficulty that households on the lower end of the income scale may have lower expenditures, and so a low income standard may be reached for them that does not satisfy need or allow social participation. There are also other measures that are used to a much lesser extent than social indicators or budget standards. The first is a subjective measure, where the population determines a poverty income threshold, i.e. how much income they believe they require to avoid poverty. This method could be adapted – parents could be asked how much income they require to meet their children's needs. This approach is very subjective and lacks rigour. It may reflect expectations that are too high or too low. Neither of these approaches brings us any closer to knowing what it is that children are doing without due to low household income.

Developing a set of child deprivation indicators using a socially perceived necessities methodology does have its limitations: indicators lists are not comprehensive as shorter lists tend to be more desirable and manageable than longer lists. There are also issues with

the strength of consensus when deciding on an item's status as a necessity – is agreement amongst 50 per cent of respondents sufficient to be considered a consensus? The limits to this methodology include that researchers/policymakers still decide on an initial set of potential indicators to be put to the public (Lister, 2004).

This paper reports research with children and families undertaken in order to develop a list of possible items and activities that are construed as necessities for children and young people in Ireland. Also a small number of interviews with children and young people aged between nine and eighteen years was conducted for this paper to test some of the dimensions of poverty arising in the literature review, and try to get a better understanding of how children understand and talk about poverty.

A socially perceived necessities assessment was not undertaken in developing the original Irish household consistent poverty measure (Collins, 2006). While the literature review includes some very innovative, child-centred research on experiences of poverty, social exclusion and inequality, no research was found that included children and young people in determining necessities for children and young people. While there are considerable arguments for children and young people taking a more active role in the research process (Ben-Arieh, 2005), challenges may arise when adopting this methodology with them, and these are discussed later.

## **2.2 Literature review**

The literature review covered the following areas: qualitative research studies with children, young people and parents on experiences of poverty and affluence; data on children's and young people's living standards in Ireland; existing children's deprivation indicators used in poverty and living standards research in other countries; and new exploratory interviews with a small sample of children in Ireland.

Irish and international literature was sought that:

- Provided relevant conceptual and theoretical analyses of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, and inequality;

- Analysed and critiqued child poverty measurement;
- Utilised children’s deprivation indicators to measure child poverty, deprivation and social exclusion;
- Provided data on children’s living standards in Ireland; and
- Explored children’s and young people’s subjective understandings and direct experiences of poverty, affluence and social difference.

The literature search was conducted using a wide range of key words: “child”, “youth”, “adolescent”, “young people”, “family” and “poverty”, “disadvantage”, “social exclusion”, “social inclusion”, “subjective poverty”, “children’s experiences of poverty”, “child well-being”, “youth well-being”, “socio-economic”, “living standards”, “deprivation”, “community”, “neighbourhood”, “child deprivation indicators”, “social exclusion indicators”, “hardship”, “consumerism”, “low-income”, “inequality”, “social status”, “mediating factors”, “protective factors”, “resilience”, “risk” and “social difference”.

The literature search strategy involved:

- Searching Trinity College’s copyright library catalogue and online library databases (JSTOR, Web of Knowledge, PsychInfo), and search engines such as Google and Google Scholar;
- Searching the websites of particular agencies with recognised expertise in researching and analysing poverty, deprivation and social exclusion, such as the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (UK), Combat Poverty Agency (Ireland), and the Economic and Social Research Institute (Ireland);
- An e-mail request to Irish key organisations and individuals in the non-governmental and statutory sectors seeking relevant research and analysis; and
- Scanning bibliographies and reference lists in journal articles and reports.

Quality and relevance to the research tasks were the key inclusion criteria, and published and grey literature were included. The search spanned a 20-year time frame from the late 1980s in order to capture the most recent research on child poverty and children’s living standards. A limitation is that the review only includes work published in the English language.

### **2.3 Interviews with children and young people**

Exploratory interviews (n=10) were conducted in spring 2008 with children and young people aged from 9 to 18 years to test some of the findings of the literature review with children and young people and try to get a better understanding of how children understand poverty. The focus was not on their direct experiences of poverty. An individual interview was chosen as this research method provides an environment where participants can feel free to disclose their views confidentially. However, the researchers did have some basic knowledge of their backgrounds based on the information offered by participants themselves, and from the insights offered by the staff members at the services through which the young people were approached.

The participants were drawn from three organisations/initiatives: a School Completion Programme located within a local authority estate in a large town on the east coast, a youth service in a medium-sized town on the north-west coast, and a designated disadvantaged primary school in inner-city Dublin. These organisations were sourced through researcher contacts, and were not meant to be representative of the child population in any way. The participation of children and young people from more affluent backgrounds was sought, but the small sample ended up weighted towards children and young people in lower-income families. Some children came from a household economy that appeared 'comfortable' rather than affluent.

Interview questions were derived from the literature review. At the suggestion of the Children's Research Centre's Ethics Committee, different semi-structured interview schedules were developed for the different age groups as the range of ages was considered too wide for one schedule. Schedules were developed for the 9-12 year-olds, 13-15 year-olds and 16-18 years-olds, each with similar themes and questions but varying in length, language and age-specific content (see Appendices I-III). The interviews were digitally recorded with the participant's permission and fully transcribed. The anonymised data were analysed manually using themes derived from the literature review and issues

identified by the children and young people themselves. The interview schedules are contained in the appendices.

The children and young people were each given a €10 gift voucher, for a store close to where they lived, to thank them for their participation.

## **2.4 Ethics**

Clearance from the Children's Research Centre's (CRC) Research Ethics Committee was received before interviewing. Further details on the CRC's ethics guidelines and procedures and policy on good research practice with children are available at:

<http://www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre/index.php?id=142>.

Age-appropriate information sheets on the project were distributed to children and their parents via the services supporting access to participants. Parents' written consent was received prior to interviewing the children, and individual participants' consent was sought a number of times in the research process: initially when children and young people were asked by a staff member in the service, again when they signed a consent form, and at the beginning of each interview. The contents of the child consent form and the project information leaflet were read through with the interviewee prior to interview commencement to ensure that they understood the purpose and nature of the research and to encourage them to ask questions, which some participants did. It was made clear to the interviewee that their participation was voluntary, that they did not have to continue with the interview if they did not wish to, and that they did not have to answer all of our questions if they did not want to.

### **3. Researching child poverty**

#### **3.1 Why we need to rethink child poverty measurement**

Countries usually measure household poverty levels using income thresholds, but Ireland pioneered ‘consistent poverty’ as an official poverty measure. These indicators are monitored annually through the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) undertaken in Ireland by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Households are in consistent poverty when their household income is below 60 per cent of median national household income and they experience the deprivation of at least two of eleven basic household necessities. The basic household necessities are:

- two pairs of strong shoes;
- a warm waterproof overcoat;
- buy new not second-hand clothes;
- eat meals with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day;
- have a roast joint or its equivalent once a week;
- had to go without heating during the last year through lack of money;
- keep the home adequately warm;
- buy presents for family or friends at least once a year;
- replace any worn out furniture;
- have family or friends for a drink or meal once a month; and
- had a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight, for entertainment.

Irish government targets to reduce or end child poverty are specifically aimed at reducing the proportion of households with children experiencing consistent poverty using the above measure. The consistent poverty measure, however, provides a rather imprecise picture of child poverty as it conceptualises and operationalises child poverty as household-level poverty, using deprivation indicators that primarily relate to adults’ lives. The measure assumes the equal sharing of living standards amongst household members. The adult, household-based poverty concept in Ireland has thus tended to render invisible children’s and young people’s poverty experience. We do not have an adequate understanding of

children's and young people's poverty experience. While the consistent poverty measure does provide some very valuable information on aspects of child deprivation within the context of family deprivation, for example in relation to heating deprivation where 21 per cent of lone parent households had to go without heating due to inadequate income as compared with almost 4 per cent of two-parent households (CSO, 2007), it does not truly measure poverty and deprivation as subjectively experienced by children.

Two different sets of Irish children's deprivation indicators were piloted in 1987 and 1999 in national income and living standards surveys (Cantillon et al, 2004; Nolan and Farrell, 1990). The Irish indicators were innovative in the international context and provided valuable information on child deprivation in Ireland. Both indicator sets were only implemented on a once-off basis and were never mainstreamed into Irish poverty measurement and monitoring. Caution is required with respect to the Nolan and Farrell indicators since they are now over twenty-five years old. However, the literature review indicates that some of their indicators, for example toys and leisure, are still highly relevant, and are widely included in child poverty measures in other jurisdictions.

Developing a new set of indicators to directly measure child poverty on an ongoing basis would allow researchers and policymakers to assess the extent to which children and adults in the same household experience parallel deprivation: it is possible that poor households contain non-poor children, and vice versa. The application of child deprivation indicators would not remove child poverty assessment from the family/household context, but would instead help clarify variations in living standards in the home.

Research in other countries indicates that children and parents do not always experience parallel deprivation (Middleton et al, 1997; Gordon, 2000). The following section examines some of this research and explores qualitative research evidence that may shed some light on resource distribution between parents and their children in households.

### **3.2 Researching child poverty within the context of the household**

Middleton et al's (1997) Small Fortunes study investigated the extent to which children and parents experience parallel deprivation in the UK. A deprivation measure, previously developed and implemented in the UK using a socially perceived necessities methodology, was used to measure parent poverty. Adult deprivation items, that is the standard falling below which indicated deprivation, include: 2 meals a day; meat/fish/ vegetarian main course every other day; weekly roast; presents for friends/family once a year; and hobby/leisure activity. Child poverty was measured using Middleton's children's deprivation indicators contained in Table 4.1 of this paper. Parents and children were defined as poor if they experience the enforced deprivation of 3 or more necessities, and severely poor if they went without five or more. Levels of deprivation for parents were generally much higher than for children, and parents were more likely to be severely poor than their children. Eleven per cent of the children surveyed were poor and 3 per cent were severely poor, while 16 per cent of parents were poor and 7 per cent were severely poor. Half of the poor parents had non-poor children while almost no poor child had non-poor parents.

The UK's longitudinal children's study, the Millennium Cohort Study (Bradshaw and Holmes, 2008) included a measure of family poverty in the wave of data collection undertaken when the sample were aged 3 years. The children's indicators contained in the family poverty measure are found in Table 4.1. The household indicators included: home contents insurance; hobby or leisure activity; able to replace worn-out furniture; holiday once a year, and 2 pairs of waterproof shoes. The children's indicators in the MCS were the ones showing the lowest rates of deprivation. Only 0.5 per cent of children lacked an overcoat for children, 0.9 per cent lacked new, properly fitted shoes, and 0.9 per cent lacked daily fruit and vegetables. These figures compare with 5.5 per cent of parents lacking two pairs of weatherproof shoes, almost 13 per cent lacking home contents insurance, and 18.7 per cent unable to replace worn-out furniture.

Skevik (2008), using the children's deprivation indicators from a representative survey of Norwegian families, examined the extent to which children and parents experience parallel deprivation. In this study, children's and parents' living standards mapped onto each other rather closely. However, key differences between this research and the previously

described research is that the same deprivation dimensions were constructed for children and parents – housing, ownership of consumer durables, financial hardship – although different child- and adult-specific items and activities were indicators of deprivation in each dimension, and the Norwegian study was inclined to include indicators of wider living standards rather than basic deprivation. The children’s indicators are contained in Table 4.1. The household-level adult deprivation indicators were: housing (size, condition, noise, standards); ownership of consumer durables (washing machine, dishwasher and freezer); and financial hardship (could they raise NOK10,000 quickly, can the family make ends meet with current resources?). Overall the research found a strong association between deprivation experienced by parents and that experienced by children. There was an association between child and adult deprivation on consumer items, except in larger households where consumer durables were more likely to be household-shared, and children were less likely to have their own items. Children’s experience of not being given money for activities increases when the parents have no cash margin.

There were further elements of overlap between deprivation for adults and children in Skevik (2008). The chance of children having their own room was unsurprisingly influenced by the family’s housing standard. Fifty-five per cent of children whose parents answered that the family dwelling is too small did not have their own room, but only 17 per cent of children whose parents did not find the dwelling too small did not have their own rooms. The proportion of children who had their own room was also lower when parents reported having a low material standard, problems with draught, damp or cold and problems with noise. Housing problems also affected children’s propensity to bring friends home and there was a correlation between bringing friends home and having their own room. Also the more housing problems mentioned by parents, the less likely children were to bring friends home, suggesting to the author (Skevik, 2008) that while children will bring friends home to a place that has some problems, they are less likely to bring them home to really low-standard housing.

Cantillon et al (2004) found an overlap between household income and child deprivation using the Irish children’s deprivation indicators contained in Table 4.1. Child deprivation

levels were very high amongst households experiencing consistent poverty, although there was a significant minority of households reporting child deprivation with incomes above the 60 per cent income poverty threshold. Irish household poverty data (CSO, 2008) also indicate that some households (with children) with incomes above the poverty line can experience household deprivation, including the deprivation of some very basic items. However, these households are not considered poor under the consistent poverty measure.

In the UK's 1999 PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) children in families with incomes above the poverty line also experienced enforced deprivation. On the other hand, using a poverty threshold of the enforced deprivation of one or more socially perceived necessities, 45 per cent of children in the PSE survey who live in households that were income poor were not necessities deprived. At the higher threshold of going without two or more necessities, almost 65 per cent of children were income poor but not necessities deprived. Applying child deprivation indicators would allow Irish policymakers to identify such households in the Irish context and consider appropriate interventions.

Why do children's and parents' levels of deprivation not map onto each other as closely as we might expect? Why do some children in households with income below the income poverty threshold experience material deprivation while others do not? Why might living in a household with an income above the poverty threshold not guarantee freedom from deprivation for children? It is a complex picture. Explanations include: the depth and persistence of poverty, the reciprocal nature of family life, the desire of most parents to protect their children, children's own agency in income creation, and the effects of persistent poverty and relative poverty on parental behaviour.

### **3.3 Research evidence on the links between household and child poverty**

One of the conclusions in the PSE survey (Gordon, 2000), upon finding that there was not a complete correlation between household income and child deprivation in this survey, is that families with incomes below the poverty line but not experiencing child deprivation may have only recently fallen below the poverty line, or have incomes close to it, and may still be able to provide necessities for children for some time. They may also have savings.

Households with incomes above the poverty line but experiencing child deprivation may have high housing costs not accounted for in the poverty measure, or the families may be just above the income poverty line or have just recently climbed above the line after experiencing persistent poverty (Gordon et al, 2000). Families may also have run down savings (Lister, 2004). Daly and Leonard's research (2002) suggests that some families in Ireland resort to charities and legal and illegal money lenders to make ends meet.

Parental sacrifice is a key explanation offered by child and family poverty researchers (Gordon et al, 2000; Middleton et al, 1997; Daly and Leonard, 2002) as an explanation for varying levels of deprivation between parents and children. Parents make sacrifices and go without themselves to ensure that their children are not deprived or excluded. Middleton et al's research (1994) indicates high levels of parental sacrifice in order to meet the demands of what the authors termed the 'common culture of acquisition'. While the families' fixed incomes allowed for very little budgetary leeway, some parents in Daly and Leonard (2002) told of having some, generally very small, amounts of money left over on 'good weeks'. Any surplus was given firstly to children to buy school lunches or sweets as treats or put aside as savings for children. If a financial emergency arose, an unexpected bill for example, parents were adamant that they would not cut back on food and that children's needs in particular would be prioritised. Parents borrowed money or cut back in other areas in order to provide new clothes and presents at Christmas. Overall children's needs were prioritised and personal spending was curtailed in favour of children's needs and wants (Daly and Leonard, 2002). The children, however, sometimes felt guilty about their parents' sacrifice.

A social class-based explanation is offered by West et al (2006). They suggest that economic socialisation practices may be class-based, with working-class parents seeking immediate gratification and middle-class parents deferring gratification. Economists are looking to time preference theory to understand the links between socio-economic status and why some people value current consumption and immediate gratification over future consumption and later rewards. Other research looks to psychological factors to try to explain parents' responses to the pressures of consumption, and why parents may prioritise such spending for their children. In Middleton et al (1994), both better-off parents

and parents on low-incomes in the UK tried to resist these pressures, albeit for different reasons. Better-off parents tend to limit their children's demands on the basis that it is good for children not to get everything they want, while low-income parents resist as they cannot afford these items, but then feel guilt and regret about this. West et al (2006), in explaining their research finding that young people from poorer backgrounds in Scotland had more money in their pockets than young people from more affluent families, suggested that one of the psychological effects of relative poverty is that poorer parents may try to compensate. Middleton et al (1994) came to a similar conclusion in research on children's living standards and the pressures on parents within a consumer society. After asking children about the items they owned, their favourite items, and their wish-list items, Middleton et al (1994) asked children if they thought they would actually get what they want. Fifty-one per cent said they thought that they would. Children from less affluent areas were more confident that they would (67 per cent) compared with only 42 per cent of the more affluent. Interviews with parents supported the children's opinions. The authors concluded that more affluent parents find it easier to resist their children's demands because they have to say no less frequently than parents with low incomes. Parents with low incomes may try to compensate, but do so in an inconsistent manner due to the unpredictability of household finances. In Daly and Leonard (2002), despite that fact that the children were from some of Ireland's poorest households, almost three-quarters of the children had regular weekly pocket money. The children not receiving regular pocket money were those in two-parent families not solely reliant on social welfare, leading the authors to conclude that parents may try to compensate for other disadvantages by giving some regular pocket money.

Family members other than parents often support children in poorer families. Ridge (2002), Middleton et al (1994) and Daly and Leonard (2002) found that grandparents play a significant role in providing extra resources to children, especially in lone parent families. In Middleton et al (1994), the wider family was crucial to financial survival through giving money and buying costly one-off items, supplying pocket money to children and paying for trips and days out. Van der Hoek's (2005) qualitative study of children's experiences of poverty in the Netherlands found that some parents were 'creative' in inventing solutions to

providing for their children within financial constraint, including going to family members for a hot meal, getting second-hand clothes for children from family, and children being taken out on treats by older siblings, family or ex-partners.

Children and young people often receive consumer items as gifts. In Middleton et al's (1994) research with 130 children from different socio-economic backgrounds, children from low-income families were found to have received their favourite possessions (electronic goods, audio equipment, clothes) as gifts: eighty-three per cent of the poorer children had received their favourite possessions as a gift compared with 67 per cent of the more affluent families. The affluent children were also more likely to have asked for their present.

For young people, having access to their own money means that they are not totally dependent on their family's economic circumstances. The extent to which children have independent incomes from formal employment, jobs in the informal economy, or undertaking household chores is discussed in section 4.

### **3.4 Issues in developing children's deprivation indicators**

Maxwell (1999) identifies a series of important conceptual 'fault-lines' in the international debate on how best to understand and measure poverty, including whether to: measure poverty at the individual or household level; measure relative or absolute poverty; develop measures that reflect the monetary aspects of poverty to examine income and consumption and regard them as a proxy for poverty, or to go beyond these; measure outputs, such as well-being and functioning, or inputs like income and material items; or whether to research poverty objectively, for instance through deprivation indicators, or subjectively. All of these issues are relevant to the development of Irish child deprivation indicators.

### **Children as the unit of analysis, within households**

Perhaps the least contentious issue in the literature on developing a child-centred approach to conceptualising and measuring child poverty is that it should locate the experience within the state of childhood, using deprivation indicators that directly measure child deprivation

and social exclusion (Nolan and Farrell, 1990; Ridge, 2002; Daly and Leonard, 2002; Middleton et al, 1997; Roker, 1998; van der Hoek, 2005; Cantillon et al, 2004; Skevik, 2008; Gordon et al, 2000; Nolan, 2000; Middleton, 2003). Granting children and young people what Daly and Leonard (2002) call conceptual autonomy is not at odds with understanding that they experience poverty within the context of family poverty, but instead acknowledges that children and young people can experience poverty and its effects differently from adults. Applying a child-specific poverty measure alongside the household consistent poverty measure can illustrate some of these effects and expose possible differences in living standards within households.

However, 'children' are not a homogeneous social group. One of the difficulties of developing broad 'one size fits all' child deprivation indicators is that they may not always account for differences in children's living standards and poverty experiences due to gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, or differing abilities. For instance, children and young people with disabilities may require more appropriate indicators in areas like education and health care. Gender influences interest in and possession of different items and activities, often regardless of income (Daly and Leonard, 2002; Middleton et al, 1994).

Nonetheless, asking children and parents what children want but cannot have because their parents' income is too low is important in separating enforced deprivation from choice. The child deprivation measures used by the reviewed, poverty and living standards studies tend to use broad indicators, but there is a case for investigating the poverty-status of particular groups of children using appropriate indicators. Age is one of the few differences between children that has been taken into account in developing deprivation indicators. For instance, toys are an important item for younger children but not for adolescents where leisure activities outside of the home and items that support such participation become more important.

### **Limitations of monetised deprivation indicators**

Any child deprivation measure will only provide some of the research knowledge required to understand children's lives and living standards. Different concepts and definitions of

poverty lead to different measures. Most commonly, a monetised, consumption-based measure is used, but this has obvious limitations. As identified earlier, household income and child deprivation are not always related. This kind of measure treats poverty as primarily an economic condition and can only capture the social-relational dimensions and wider effects of poverty in a limited way. This kind of measure overlooks how poverty and deprivation are experienced and understood by children (Lister, 2004).

Additionally, a poverty measure based on income and consumption-deprivation indicators can only capture social exclusion resulting directly from low household income, and indeed captures only some dimensions of that exclusion. Other poverty-related factors challenge children's social participation such as social inequity and discrimination. Also, monetised deprivation indicators cannot capture the processes by which social exclusion occurs. A child-centred concept and definition of social exclusion has yet to be explored. The National Children's Strategy (2000) definition of social exclusion is the same as the adult definition in the NAPS – defined as cumulative marginalisation from: production (unemployment), consumption (income poverty), social networks (community, family and neighbours), decision-making and an adequate quality of life. Children are excluded from some of these dimensions by virtue of age. Some of the child deprivation indicators described in section 4 can be taken as indicators of social exclusion, or at least the risk of social exclusion, for example exclusion from social networks due to low income. Public service exclusion for children and young people is also dealt with later in the paper.

### **Absolute versus relative poverty measurement**

There is a live debate in Ireland, as there is in many other developed countries, about whether poverty should be conceptualised and measured as absolute poverty, the absence of basic items such as food, clothes and shelter (Lister, 2004), or as relative to prevailing living standards. The Irish household consistent poverty measure comes under fire for being:

too static and not a true representation of the dynamic nature of Irish society and the ever changing set of items needed to participate in Irish society (CORI, 2009);

whereas others assert:

There is no poverty in Ireland today. Some of us are poorer than others, but that is not the same thing, despite what the 'poverty industry' which has a vested interest in keeping the myth of poverty alive will tell you ... When one report is published, then they go off and find a new measurement of poverty so that another can be written .. These days if you aren't included, then by definition you are deprived (*Sunday Independent*, 16 April, 2006).

Translating a relative concept of child poverty into children's deprivation indicators seems unproblematic in a rich country like Ireland where absolute poverty must surely have been eradicated. The move in Irish policy-making away from anti-poverty policy towards social inclusion policy supports the idea that poverty in Ireland is now experienced as 'exclusion from the greatly improved living standards and opportunities that the majority of us enjoy' (Government of Ireland, 2007). Research with children and young people (Roker, 1998; Attree, 2004; Daly and Leonard, 2002; Ridge, 2002; van der Hoek, 2007; Hooper et al, 2007; Olsson, 2007; Crowley and Vuilliamy, 2002; Davis and Hill, 2002; Sutton et al, 2007; Weinger, 2000) also supports this notion, with poverty conceptualised as exclusion from 'the norms and customs of children's society' (Ridge, 2002) and 'the social world of their peers' (Daly and Leonard, 2002).

However, in developing children's indicators, there is a differentiation between a broad conceptualisation of poverty as relative to prevailing living standards and norms, and poverty measurement, which is narrower. Deprivation is generally interpreted as a minimum essential or basic standard of living (Axford, 2008; Bradshaw, cited in Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004; Collins, 2006). The Irish official poverty definition is relative – people are in poverty when they are denied a standard of living considered acceptable by Irish society and are unable to participate in activities considered the norm in society (Office for Social Inclusion, 2007) – as is its operationalisation in the consistent poverty measure, where deprivation is described as 'unmet basic human need'.<sup>1</sup> Measuring poverty is about

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<sup>1</sup> Office for Social Inclusion [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie)

developing 'indicators which separate people suffering from multiple deprivation and hardship from people who live more or less ordinary but not necessarily totally unproblematic lives' (Halleröd et al, 2007, cited in Menton, 2007). This is not to suggest that inequality in living standards is not linked with and does not exacerbate the effects of poverty – it is and it does – but they are distinct conceptually and empirically. Clarity is required about precisely which phenomenon is being measured.

Developing deprivation indicators that reflect children's basic and social participation needs allows for an assessment of the extent to which these needs have been met. Despite arguments that poverty in Ireland has moved away from basic deprivation, Irish data indicate that some children continue to be deprived of basic necessities such as food (Cantillon et al, 2004; Friel and Conlon, 2004). There remain dimensions of basic child deprivation on which we have no data, for example clothing, and thus we have an inadequate empirical basis for stating that children are deprived or not deprived. In our consumer-oriented society, a child could experience periodic hunger yet could also own the 'right' branded clothing, given the importance of clothing in poverty concealment (Olsson, 2007) and in denoting social status. Child deprivation does not have to be conceptualised as an 'either/or' phenomenon. As Sen (1983) contends, even within a context of relative poverty, poverty can have an absolutist core. This is not to suggest that a conceptualisation of child poverty best suited to another century or continent should be adopted for indicator development. While a need such as food may be absolute, the satisfier may not be. Bread and dripping three times daily is not an acceptable answer to food poverty for children in modern Ireland.

But achieving clarity on which items and activities constitute necessities for children and young people, particularly when poverty is conceptualised as relative to the living standards of other children and young people, is not so easy. Determining necessities and the adequacy of a standard of living is somewhat subjective (Corrigan, 2004), a combination of normative judgement and science (Bradshaw, in Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004). Researchers' and practitioners' understandings and definitions of what children 'need' are often developed to identify children whose outcomes and behaviour lie outside of normative

development with a view to service intervention. This task is distinct from identifying minimal material living standards for children and young people generally. But practitioners' definitions are useful in that they focus on children's need for positive child health and development, mainly in physical and psychological domains (Axford, 2008; McKeown, 2008).

For other researchers, the use of the needs concept is itself contested, with Woodhead (1990), for example, questioning the extent to which it relates to the prevailing culture and the personal values of professionals, policymakers and parents. Woodhead argues that while some needs are intrinsic to children, e.g. food and human relationships, others are judgements about childhood experiences that help children culturally adapt or about childhood experiences that are highly valued in society. Need is socially constructed to an appreciable extent – we are increasingly influenced by changing ideas on what constitutes a 'good childhood' and our understanding of the factors impacting on child well-being is continuously expanding. But poverty is not just characterised by an inability to meet physical and psychological needs. It is also a social-relational concept. Poverty and deprivation need to be understood as lived experience. Poverty arises through interactions between children, their families and a wider society where some have relatively more income, wealth, power, and social status – a reality which in itself constrains the social participation of those who have relatively less (Lister, 2004). It is clear that public perceptions on which items are necessities will change over time and this will have a definitive influence on the lived experience of poverty and deprivation.

It is not easy to achieve a consensus on the specific items that children 'need'. Some needs are obvious and uncontroversial and it is reasonably easy to identify an 'objective' line or threshold where poverty clearly becomes non-poverty, and social exclusion (resulting from deprivation) becomes inclusion. In the socially perceived necessities methodology, at least 50 per cent of respondents endorsing an item or activity as a necessity is considered a sufficient level of consensus for that item to become a deprivation indicator. There is an inevitable arbitrariness to such a threshold (Menton, 2007). While political and public debates about how best to understand and measure poverty will

continue, basing indicators on the experiences of children and young people is considered essential to developing indicators that are relevant and accurate (Ben-Arieh, 2005).

### **Outcomes versus inputs**

The data provided by poverty studies do not provide us with a sure-fire way of predicting children's risk of poor developmental outcomes or engaging in anti-social behaviour. To suggest that children may not always succumb to poverty-related risks and that they can be resilient in the face of adversity is not to deny the weight of research evidence suggesting that low household income and material deprivation is associated with poor child outcomes (Brooks-Gunn and Duncan, 1997). A materially-based social investment model – which suggests that parents can buy items and experiences for their children that are transformed into outcomes in areas like IQ and school performance, self-esteem and physical health (Guo and Mullan-Harris, 2000) – is one way of understanding how income and living standards affect child outcomes. There are other mechanisms and pathways through which poverty and inequality influence child outcomes; for instance family processes where poverty and economic pressures impact on non-material parental resources (Gregg et al, 2007; Duncan and Brooks-Gunn, 1997), can have consequences for child well-being.

When asked if poverty might have an effect on children's and young people's hopes and dreams, some interviewees thought it very hard for children to escape a poverty trap because they would be insufficiently educated and would not get a good job, while others saw poverty as a powerful motivator. Some of the children, particularly the most disadvantaged, looked to celebrities, particularly footballers, as evidence that you can escape poverty. In general the children saw the individual as the driver for exiting poverty. A 17-year-old boy experiencing disadvantage believed that a child's poverty status does not always predict its outcomes:

Maybe I think, like if they came from poverty like to having more than anyone that you ever know, know what I mean, it's going to drive you to something I'd reckon, coz you're going to say I'm going to have that one day, or something like that, know what I mean, it's going to drive you or it could be different it could just turn you to

crime or not getting a proper job or just not finishing school or affect your, like not being employed or anything – it could do that.

There was general agreement that parents had a role in mediating the effects of low income on children's well-being, and that money is not the only contribution made by parents to their children's well-being.

I think so, if people are talking to them. Like if, I'm not saying anything bad about some parents, they're trying to be nice to their children by getting money together to buy nice things for them and everything, but while they are doing that they might not realise that they are ignoring their children by accident. So even if they take time out to talk to them..... (female, 16 years).

A 16-year-old boy participating in the exploratory interviews for this paper believed that if they were loved, children whose parents did not have a lot of money could still be happy. The children and young people interviewed were also clear that parents had a role in ensuring child well-being and positive future outcomes by making sure that children go to school and by spending money wisely on items and activities that they felt really mattered.

### **Issues in child and adult participation in poverty research**

Children and young people are increasingly treated as active research participants rather than mere research subjects. It has become increasingly clear that children and young people should be actively involved in research on their well-being on the basis that: we need to understand their daily lives and they are often the best informants in this regard; an acceptance of children as rights bearers means that they should participate in the study of their well-being given its potential influence on their lives; our recent focus on childhood as a life stage in itself means that research should examine the social forces that impact on children's lives and experiences differently from adults; and that in democratic societies, people should give their own accounts of their living standards, including children and young people (Ben-Arieh, 2005). The National Children's Office study involving children and young people in the development of Ireland's set of child well-being indicators (Hanafin

and Brooks, 2005) is a relevant, positive example. Children cited pets as a source of well-being when adult experts consulted for indicator development did not mention pets at all.

However, there are areas where a parent may be the best source of information on the child's indicator status, as children may not have the required information, or may not consider some items important. Given their relative stages of cognitive development and more limited life experience, children's and adults' values and preferences can be different (Hill and Tisdall, 1997, cited in Axford, 2008). Ben-Arieh (2005) also cites areas where indirect information may be preferable; for instance the household economy may be best reported by parents. This suggests that while both parents and children's accounts of deprivation and living standards are required, there may be areas best asked of parents, such as the need for or lack of psychological or medical services.

Ben-Arieh (2005) cites research showing that children from 9 years are reliable sources of information on their lives, including one study with 7- and 8-year-olds where children could understand complex subjects like human rights. Growing Up in Ireland, Ireland's longitudinal child study, includes 9-year-olds as active research participants, marking it out from similar research in other countries. Undertaking research with children and young people on their living standards using the concept of socially perceived necessities is not common – no examples were found for this paper – and so its application in Ireland would be methodologically innovative and a source of learning for researchers. The children and young people participating in the interviews for this paper, although a small sample, understood the concept of 'what children need', could consider questions about children as a group, and understood the concept of poverty. The younger children interviewed, particularly the 9-year-olds, understood that being poor meant not having much money and took a more concrete approach when discussing deprivation. Older children held a more nuanced and relative view. For example, a 17-year-old boy, when asked what he thought of when he heard the word 'poverty' said:

Just deprived, it makes me think that anyone suffering from poverty is deprived of something. It doesn't mean food like, if someone said poverty like, just eh, just not

having essential things that someone not in poverty has, do you know what I mean? It's hard to say, em ... I think someone that wasn't in poverty would have not the best of stuff, but the very standard of stuff and someone who's in poverty would be deprived of that, wouldn't be up, have things a standard that other people have – that's how I think of it

However, participants generally did not use the word poverty – some associated it with Africa rather than Ireland – and used the word 'poor' to describe children experiencing poverty in Ireland. This is interesting given that the adult poverty researcher, Lister (2004), warns against using the word 'poor' as she considers it a device for 'othering' those experiencing poverty.

Perhaps a question for researchers undertaking research on necessities and deprivation with children and young people is whether or not they can understand the concept of a necessity and can differentiate need from want or preference. This is an under-researched area, but some research indicates that they can. Willow's (2001) research is one of the few studies with children that researched children's and young people's understandings of poverty, although a limitation is that the sample only included children experiencing poverty. They were asked what things they thought children need to have a 'basic life'. Food, shelter, warmth were the essential items for all focus groups, alongside social activities. They thought that children and young people needed leisure activities, friends, education and loving parents 'to reach their fullest potential'. In the interviews conducted to inform this paper, children and young people were asked – before the subject of poverty was introduced – what they thought all children and young people need in their lives in order to be happy and healthy. The responses were very similar to those in Willow's research: clothes, shelter/a house, food, and love and care from their family. Some also mentioned friends, education and leisure. A girl aged 9, living in a disadvantaged area, thought that:

They [children] need food, veg, they need their family, food, clothes – things like that.

A 12-year-old boy living in a disadvantaged area thought that every child and young person needs:

Care, a house, clothes, love, money ... just the basics – that's it really.

When asked if children can be happy and healthy even if they come from families where there is not enough money, the same 9-year-old girl thought that 'children can still be happy, as long as they are with their parents'. The children and young people viewed more basic deprivation items and activities as necessities, and viewed consumer items as requirements for social inclusion and important for survival in a competitive, status-oriented world. They also mentioned frequently the influence of the non-material on their well-being, particularly family relationships and feeling loved and cared for by their parents.

Adults, of course, also differentiate need from want or preference. In UK child necessities research, there was strong support amongst parents for basic food items, basic clothing items, developmental and environmental items, and celebratory and leisure activities. In the 1999 PSE study (Gordon et al, 2000), the food, clothing and developmental and environmental items were strongly endorsed as necessities, and were also the ones that children were least likely to go without, indicating some association between perceived necessities and actual living standards for children. On the other hand, some items, such as a television, were not considered necessities, even though the majority of children lived in households with one. Parents also offer differing views on the same items and activities in different studies assessing child necessities described in section 4. In Middleton et al's (1994) UK study developing minimal budget standards for children, parents did not consider designer label clothes, videos or computers as essentials for children. While they conceptualised necessities as the minimum to maintain child health, development and social participation, some parents said that they would have been 'gutted' if these essentials were all their own children had.

There may be reasons for the disjunctures between the various studies on what are considered necessities. Firstly, as a parent in Middleton et al's research (1994) suggested,

research participants may think of 'other' children when considering the question of necessities, rather than the living standards they desire and may even consider necessary for their own children. Secondly, conceptions of poverty and need reflect both absolute and relative dimensions, and people can subscribe to both simultaneously (Lister, 2004). The children and young people interviewed for this paper understood poverty as both the absence of basic necessities and the exclusion from activities that allow them to participate in the social world. Nolan and Farrell (1990), in developing Irish children's deprivation indicators, suggest that the line between the absolute and relative is blurred in that all necessities will inevitably be socially determined since they relate to the lifestyles of the general public.

The 1999 PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) found, in analysing the findings of socially perceived necessities research conducted with adults, that while there was a remarkable similarity between different groups of people in their responses, there were some key differences. Perhaps counterintuitively, relatively deprived groups were sometimes more likely than the more affluent groups to consider certain items to be necessities. On the other hand, as Shropshire and Middleton (1999) argue, people can 'learn' to be poor, and thus lowered expectations are one of the main impacts of poverty for adults and children. A 14-year-old boy living in a disadvantaged area in the exploratory interviews for this paper, when asked if children and young people could still be happy and healthy even if there is not a lot of money at home, articulated these lowered expectations:

Coz they don't know how it feels to have loads of stuff, so it wouldn't bother them – they wouldn't know.

Gender impacted on responses in the PSE survey: men were generally more likely than women to specify some items and activities as essential, particularly those relating to personal consumption. Age affected responses, with people aged over 30 considering, on average, more goods and activities as necessary than people under 30 years. This 1999 survey, when compared with a similar survey in 1983, found that the UK population have generally become more generous in what they consider to be necessities as the average wealth of the population increased and goods that were once luxuries became more usual.

However, the young, according to Gordon et al (2000), have always been harsher in their judgements on necessities, and differences in views by age became more polarised over the 1990s.

## **4. Dimensions of childhood poverty and deprivation**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Poverty is multi-dimensional and is experienced and can be measured across a number of dimensions. This section uses Irish and international research evidence to explore possible dimensions of childhood poverty and deprivation with a view to their usefulness as child poverty indicators.

### **4.2 Sources and categorisation of children's deprivation indicators**

Table 4.1 below sets out children's deprivation indicators used in research with children and families in the Republic of Ireland, the UK, Norway, Sweden and Australia. Nolan and Farrell (1990) and Cantillon et al (2004) in Ireland, Gordon et al (2000) in the UK, Saunders et al (2008) in Australia and the Swedish survey (Jonsson, 2001 cited in Skevik, 2008). All these studies included children's deprivation indicators within national household poverty and living standards surveys. The child deprivation data from the UK's longitudinal children's survey, the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS), is from a report on family poverty when the children were aged 3 years (Bradshaw and Holmes, 2008). Middleton et al's (1997) and Skevik's (2008) indicators are from nationally representative surveys in the UK and Norway on children's living standards and deprivation. Hooper et al's (2007) indicators come from a small-scale qualitative study of family poverty in the UK.

The UK indicators in the table are derived from Middleton et al's seminal Small Fortunes study (1997). This study used a socially perceived necessities approach with parents to determine child necessities and measure child deprivation, with the initial list put to the public derived from previous research. These indicators were subsequently used in the national PSE study (Gordon et al, 2000). Cantillon et al (2004) developed their deprivation indicators using focus groups with mothers. Hooper et al (2007) selected items that they thought children should have, while the indicators in Skevik's (2008) paper were derived from survey data on the living standards of children in Norway. It is not known how the

indicators in the Swedish survey were derived.<sup>2</sup> It appears that children and young people did not participate directly in the development of the deprivation indicators. They participated in the application of children's deprivation indicators only in the Norwegian and Swedish surveys.

The current household deprivation indicators in the Irish consistent poverty measure are also shown in the table to illustrate the differences between that measure and a more child-centred approach and also to map dimensions of poverty.

The categorisation of child deprivation dimensions in Table 4.1 is based on Middleton et al's (1997) research. The literature review on children's living standards and deprivation confirmed the usefulness of Middleton's five dimensions: food, clothes, social participation, developmental, and environmental. A 'children's income and family economic capacity' dimension was added to reflect issues arising in the literature relating to children's pocket money, young people's own income from employment, and parents' capacity to respond to their children's social participation requirements. An educational dimension was also added on the basis that education-related deprivation and exclusion features strongly in children's own accounts of poverty.

Some indicators fit into a number of dimensions; for example not being able to afford school trips could relate to educational, social participation or developmental deprivation. As Middleton et al (1997) point out, the categorisation of indicators differs with age; swimming trips can be considered developmental in younger children, but relate more to their social participation as they get older.

#### **Table 4.1 Summary of existing deprivation indicators (including countries and bibliographic sources)**

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<sup>2</sup> The Swedish children's deprivation indicators are taken from an article by Skevik (2008). English language reports detailing the findings of the Swedish Survey of Level of Living, 2000 – the source of the children's indicators – have not been released.

Dimension	Children's deprivation indicators	Household deprivation indicators – consistent poverty measure
<b>Children's income &amp; family economic capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial hardship – experiences of getting money from parents for events at school, activities with friends, buying birthday gifts etc. (Skevik, Norway)</li> <li>• Pocket money (Cantillon, Ireland)</li> <li>• Lacking a cash margin of SEK 100 (Skevik, Sweden)</li> <li>• Not receiving a weekly/monthly allowance (Skevik, Sweden)</li> <li>• Not working during the summer holidays (Skevik, Sweden)</li> <li>• Money available per month (Skevik, Sweden)</li> <li>• 50 p per week for sweets (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 per cent median household income</li> </ul>
<b>Food/ Nutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked main meal each day for each child (Hooper, UK)</li> <li>• Three meals a day (Cantillon, Ireland; Nolan and Farrell, Ireland; Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• Fruit and veg once a day for child (Bradshaw and Holmes, UK)</li> <li>• Fresh fruit once a day (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• Meat, fish, cheese, vegetarian twice a day (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat meals with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day</li> <li>• Have a roast joint or its equivalent once a week</li> </ul>
<b>Clothes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some new, not second-hand, clothes (Lloyd, 2006)</li> <li>• Warm winter clothes for each child (Hooper, UK)</li> <li>• Warm waterproof coat for child (Bradshaw and Holmes, UK)</li> <li>• New, properly fitted shoes for child (Bradshaw and Holmes, UK)</li> <li>• Warm coat (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• New, properly fitted shoes (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK; Bradshaw and Holmes, UK)</li> <li>• Waterproof coat (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• 4 jumpers, cardigans, sweatshirts (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• New, not second-hand, clothes (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• 7 pairs of new underpants (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• 4 pairs trousers/jeans (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> <li>• 'best outfit for special occasions' (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two pairs of strong shoes</li> <li>• A warm waterproof overcoat</li> <li>• Buy new not second-hand clothes</li> </ul>

## Participation

- Family holiday once a year (Hooper, UK)
- Family day trip once a year (Hooper, UK)
- Trips with a sport team (Skevik, Norway)
- Consumer items – CD player/Discman, mobile phone, skis/snowboard, bike, TV, computer, pet (Skevik, Norway)
- Television (Middleton, UK)
- A party on their birthday with friends (Cantillon, Ireland)
- Lacking material resources – TV, video, games, CD, mobile phone, pet, PC (Skevik, Sweden)
- Computer games (Gordon, UK)
- Celebration on special occasions (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Hobby or leisure activity (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- School trip once a term (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- School trips (Cantillon, Ireland)
- School activities/outings for children (Saunders, Australia)
- Holiday once a year (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Swimming once a month (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- A hobby or leisure activity for children (Saunders, Australia)

- Buy presents for family or friends at least once a year
- Replace any worn-out furniture
- Have family or friends for a drink or meal once a month
- Have a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight, for entertainment

## Developmental

- Basic toys and sports gear (Hooper, UK)
- Bicycle or sports equipment (Cantillon, Ireland)
- Construction Toys (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Bicycle (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Toys or leisure equipment for children (Nolan and Farrell, Ireland)
- Toys (Middleton, UK; Cantillon, Ireland; Gordon, UK)
- Educational games (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Leisure activities (Skevik, Norway)
- Lessons in music, dancing, sport (Cantillon, Ireland)
- Own books (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Playgroup/preschool (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Leisure equipment (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)

## Housing/ Environmental

- Heating whenever you need it (Hooper, UK)
- Having own room (Skevik, Norway)
- Separate bedrooms for different sexes for children aged over 10 years (Nolan and Farrell, Ireland; Gordon, UK)
- Own bed/mattress (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Garden to play in (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Separate sex bedrooms (Middleton, UK)
- Carpet in bedroom (Middleton, UK)
- Separate bed for each child (Saunders, Australia)
- Separate bedroom for children aged 10 and over (Saunders, Australia)

- Had to go without heating during the last year through lack of money
- Keep the home adequately warm

## Education

- Extent child brings friends home (Skevik, Norway)
- Having friends home to play (Cantillon, Ireland)
- Education up to age 20 years for all children (Nolan and Farrell, Ireland)
- All required school uniform (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Computer suitable for school work (Middleton, UK; Gordon, UK)
- Schoolbooks/new clothes for children (Saunders, Australia)

### 4.3 Dimensions of poverty and deprivation

#### 4.3.1 Dimension – Children’s income and family economic capacity

The subject of pocket money receives a lot of attention in research on poverty and living standards. The surveys in Table 4.1 contain indicators relating to children’s pocket money/allowances from their families, as well as to their own income from employment, and family economic capacity – the parental cash margin available to meet the sudden costs of children’s social participation.

Is receiving pocket money the norm for children in Ireland? Cantillon et al’s (2004) research on child deprivation in Ireland indicates that almost 14 per cent of children in 1999 did not receive pocket money because their parents could not afford it, but it is not clear how many do not receive it through parental choice. In Daly and Leonard’s (2002) qualitative account of family life on a low income, three-quarters of the 28 children interviewed had regular weekly money, with pocket money the main source. Amounts were reasonably low, with almost a third receiving €6.30 or less, and the young people often undertook household chores for this money.

Research on children’s economies in other countries supports the view that the majority of children receive some form of pocket money or allowance, but that children in low-income families are relatively deprived in this area.

In Middleton et al (1997), 6.5 per cent of children in the UK lacked even as little as 50p per week because their parents could not afford it. Using this indicator in the Poverty and

Social Exclusion (PSE) Survey in the UK, Gordon et al (2000) found that the proportion of children experiencing this deprivation was much lower, at only 1.6 per cent. Thirty-five per cent of the representative sample of 10 to 18 year-olds in the Swedish living conditions survey did not receive a weekly/monthly allowance (Jonsson, 2001, in Skevik, 2008). The Swedish figure is large, both absolutely and relative to the Irish and UK statistics, but it is not clear if the reason for not receiving pocket money is unaffordability or parental choice.

Shropshire and Middleton's (1999) interviews with 435 children (poor and non-poor, using lone parent status and income support/non-income support as proxies for income) discussed their understandings of the economic world and the effects of growing up poor. They found that three quarters of the 6 to 16 year-olds receive pocket money. In longitudinal research with a representative sample of 444 children aged 7 to 12 years in Scotland (West et al, 2006), almost all children received an income, generally from pocket money. However, in Ridge's (2002) research with 40 children living in families on income support, only 12 received pocket money on a regular basis. In Hooper et al's (2007) research with poor families, the 70 families interviewed spent their budget entirely on basic essentials and there was no spare money for pocket money. It should be noted that the children in Hooper's research were particularly vulnerable, and the research included families where child maltreatment had occurred and families were in receipt of social work or family support services.

Deprivation indicators can tell us whether or not children and young people receive pocket money, but they tend to fail to capture either the amount of pocket money (and it is difficult to set a threshold of adequacy in this regard), the dynamics of these transactions, and the role of economic practices in parenting. Middleton et al (1994) found that rather than viewing pocket money as 'giving' children money, it is often parents' way to limit their children's demands, and so may be a strategy for cost containment. Parents call pocket money an allowance and young people are expected to meet some of their own needs from it. West et al (2008) examined longitudinally the social distribution of pocket money and earnings from paid employment in young people and found what they termed 'a material paradox'. Poorer children had more money at earlier ages, but not from age 15 years when

they were more likely to be earning themselves. Shropshire and Middleton (1999) also found that children in low-income and lone-parent families were more likely to receive pocket money. However, they were more likely than children in two-parent families or families not on income support to receive it irregularly. But when they did get pocket money they tended to get larger amounts. The children in the income support families were also more likely to receive money for snacks and sweets than those that were not.

Do parents and children consider pocket money/allowance a necessity? The qualitative literature with children and young people supports the view that they themselves see pocket money as crucial to their social inclusion and participation. An adult rationale for pocket money is that it teaches children socio-economic competence, autonomy and responsibility, and that not learning about the economic world at a young age can help reproduce economic inequalities (Ridge, 2002; Shropshire and Middleton, 1999). The British research on this topic is inconsistent. Middleton et al (1994) in their work on UK budget standards concluded that parents thought pocket money a necessity and that the majority gave their children pocket money. Yet, only 26 per cent of parents in a later study (Middleton et al, 1997) thought that 50p pocket money per week was a necessity for children. A similar result was found in the 1999 PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000). The Irish budget standards produced by the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (2004; 2006) – developed in consultation with adults only – did not include pocket money/allowances for children in the family budgets. It seems that the question of pocket money/allowances as a necessity for children is one where there is considerable disagreement between children and adults and where involving children and young people in research on necessities could dramatically change findings.

Children's direct income earned through employment is addressed only in the Swedish children's indicators and relates to summer holiday employment. Indicators on the independent earnings and employment of people aged under 18 years may be indicative of their living standards rather than illustrate deprivation. It would be difficult to argue that young people are poor and deprived if they do not have paid employment in the summer. However, Daly and Leonard's research in Ireland (2002) found that children and young

people from low-income families contribute financially to the household economy directly, through giving money to parents, and indirectly by buying their own material goods and paying for their own activities. Low-household income and deprivation and the level of child deprivation are not always commensurate, and this may partly be explained by the independent earnings of young people. Research illustrates that as older children and young people begin to earn money, even small amounts of money from jobs such as babysitting, they are less likely to receive pocket money. Research using the Swedish economic capacity indicators (Olsson, 2007) in Table 4.1 found that having their own economic resources may be more important to young people in poorer homes in maintaining a standard of living for themselves.

Indicators assessing children's capacity to meet sudden participation costs were contained in the Nordic studies. The Swedish study (Jonsson, 2001, in Skevik, 2008) asked children if they could raise SEK100 (€8) in a day, while the Norwegian indicators (Skevik, 2008) measure children's experiences of getting money from parents for events and activities. The purpose of the Norwegian indicator is to assess parental capacity to support children and young people's participation in activities with their friends spontaneously, without having to save for an event (Skevik, 2008). Exclusion from extra-curricular and social activities is one of the ways in which family poverty is negatively experienced by children and young people (Ridge, 2002; Daly and Leonard, 2002; Roker, 1997; van der Hoek, 2005; Skevik, 2008). The Swedish study found high proportions of children aged 10 to 17 years to be deprived as 35 per cent doubted they could raise SEK100 in one day. The Norwegian study (Skevik, 2008) found that 42 per cent of parents with low financial capacity did not have the flexibility to meet children's and young people's unexpected social participation needs.

Indicators assessing participation in extra-curricular, social and leisure activities are the norm in children's deprivation indicators, and they have the advantage of directly capturing children's participation or exclusion. However, the inclusion of an indicator in parent surveys on financial capacity to meet children's unexpected participation needs (and many are unexpected) on a list of potential socially perceived necessities could be considered.

Indicators of financial capacity also give a good indication of households exposed to poverty for some time (Collins, 2006), and may identify an exclusionary effect of persistent household poverty for children. Research with low-income families (Daly and Leonard, 2002; Middleton et al, 1994; Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004) indicates that having to meet sudden costs is difficult when household budgets are inadequate.

#### **4.3.2 Dimension – Food/nutrition**

According to Friel and Conlon (2004), the concept of food poverty, defined as the inability to have a socially adequate and nutritious diet due to cost and access problems, has not figured strongly in discussions on poverty in Ireland due to the emphasis on a relative rather than absolute definition of poverty. While indicators relating to food make up one-quarter of the household deprivation indicators in the consistent poverty measure, it is debateable as to whether they capture food deprivation for children, or the lifestyles of the modern Irish family. The indicator ‘family or friends for a drink or meal once a month’ is a recent addition to the deprivation index, capturing the social participation needs of adult family members. The ‘meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day’ indicator, while very similar to children’s indicators in Table 4.1, is currently applied in the consistent poverty measure at the household level and does not tell us if children specifically are deprived of this item. It is also debateable as to whether the ‘a roast joint or its equivalent once a week’ indicator has the same social and cultural meanings that it once had for Irish children and parents, having implications for the current household consistent poverty measure.

The use of children’s deprivation indicators in Irish poverty research has uncovered food poverty for some children. In 1999, over 7 per cent of 800 mothers surveyed (Cantillon et al, 2004) said they could not afford 3 meals a day for their children. This contrasts with a lower 1987 figure of 1.4 per cent of all households and 3.2 per cent of households living below the income poverty line not able to afford 3 meals a day for their children (Nolan and Farrell, 1990). Irish data in the HBSC survey (Kelly et al, 2008) illustrate the social class gradient in the proportion of children aged 10 to 17 having breakfast every day, with almost 81 per cent of children of professional/managerial parents, 78 per cent of non-

manual/skilled manual parents and 71 per cent from semi-skilled/unskilled having breakfast every day. Breakfast deprivation can be from children's own eating choices or because their parents cannot afford sufficient food, but the HBSC (Currie et al, 2008) indicates that the incidence of eating breakfast daily is associated with family affluence in Ireland, for boys and girls. The Growing Up in Ireland study (Williams et al, 2008) found that 5 per cent of children in the lowest family income groups in Ireland do not eat breakfast compared with 1 per cent in the highest income group.

According to Kelly et al (2008) over 16 per cent of children aged 10 to 17 years in Ireland go to bed hungry because there is not enough food in the house. This is worryingly high and, interestingly, it is children from non-manual/skilled manual backgrounds that are more likely to experience this deprivation. Looking to the findings from surveys using children's indicators in other countries, just under 1 per cent of children in the UK, according to the PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000), were deprived of 3 meals a day because their parents could not afford them and according to Middleton et al's study (1997), 1.5 per cent were similarly deprived. These results indicate food deprivation for a very small minority of children in the UK, and a marginally larger minority of Irish children. However the results from Kelly et al suggesting that around 16 per cent of children go to bed hungry indicate a much bleaker situation.

On the other hand, knowing how many children have or go without 3 meals per day does not signify whether or not parents can afford and do provide appropriate amounts of nutritious food for children. Developing suitable indicators and deprivation thresholds for nutritional deprivation in children's diets is challenging. However, the MCS (Bradshaw and Holmes, UK), the Small Fortunes study (Middleton et al, 1997), and the PSE Survey (Gordon et al, 2000) include some more detailed indicators, such as being able to afford to give children fresh fruit once a day, or a fish, meat/cheese/vegetarian meal twice a day. According to the PSE survey, almost 2 per cent of children did not receive fresh fruit or vegetables at least once a day because their parents could not afford it (Gordon et al, 2000). The equivalent figure in the MCS (Bradshaw and Holmes, 2008) was lower at 0.9 per cent but in Middleton et al's (1997) study 4.5 per cent of children were deprived of fresh

fruit once a day as their parents could not afford it. In the PSE study, 3.7 per cent of children were deprived of meat, fish or vegetarian at least twice a day because their parents could not afford it (Gordon et al, 2000), with 5 per cent experiencing such deprivation in Middleton et al's research (1997). The data suggest that while the vast majority of children in the UK were receiving 3 meals a day, a few parents cannot afford nutritious food like fruit, vegetables or meat and fish based meals. Of course, with these data, it is impossible to rule out entirely that the deprivation is caused by parental ignorance about or lack of interest in nutrition rather than by lack of money. It is possible that fruit and vegetables cannot be afforded because food money has been unwisely spent on junk food. The Swedish and Norwegian studies do not contain basic food/nutrition indicators, possibly because they focus on relative living standards rather than basic deprivation.

The Irish HBSC study (Kelly et al, 2008) provides data on fruit and vegetable consumption amongst 10 to 17 year olds and indicates that fruit consumption every day is not very high amongst children of all social classes (between 19 and 22 per cent consume). Children from manual and unskilled backgrounds were least likely to consume fruit every day. While children from professional and managerial backgrounds were more likely than children from other social classes to eat vegetables more than once a day (20.7%), there was a marginal difference in the proportions of children from non-manual/skilled manual (16.7%) and unskilled/semi-skilled backgrounds (15.7%) doing so. Indeed, 3.5 per cent of children from professional backgrounds say they never eat vegetables, with 6.1 per cent from each of other social classes also never eating them. The extent to which children eat fruit and vegetables every day or more than once a day has also been found to be associated with family affluence in Ireland by Currie et al (2008).

While surveys show that the overwhelming majority of adults agree that three meals a day and nutritious food items are essentials for children, substantially fewer adults (76 per cent in the PSE survey) thought that meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent at least twice a day are necessities for children. However, in that survey 93 per cent of adults thought that fresh fruit or vegetables at least once a day are necessities. Similar results were evident in Middleton et al's (1997) work.

In the exploratory interviews with children and young people conducted for this paper, food was cited as a necessity for health and happiness by many participants, with some participants mentioning specific food items such as vegetables. However, other qualitative research with children and young people in low-income families reviewed for this paper (Ridge, 2002; Daly and Leonard, 2002) did not discuss food poverty with children.

While young people in Roker's UK research (1998) said that their families' income did not affect the food they ate, many of them then went on to demonstrate numerous ways in which they went without food, ate poor quality food, and had an unvaried diet. These findings suggest, on the part of children, a lack of attention to issues of food poverty and this may indicate that they do not consider it to be the most pressing aspect of their poverty, or that they do not understand the importance of healthy food. An alternative explanation is that some researchers focus more on the social-relational effects of poverty when researching poverty with children.

However, health concerns for children were expressed by low-income Irish parents in Daly and Leonard (2002). They were concerned about the content and nutritional value of their children's diets due to not being able to afford good food. According to Crowley and Vulliamy (2002), Welsh children experiencing poverty understood the links between not being able to afford healthy food and children's health. Willow's (2001) research with children in low-income families on their understandings of poverty found that they were aware of other children with 'gut-ache' because there was not enough money in their household for food. They told of children eating out-of-date and unhealthy food because it is relatively inexpensive, and knew of poor children who went without eating breakfast or lunch before and during school, and were hungry during the day. Some told of their own experiences of food poverty. When asked if she thought that children living in poverty were as healthy as children not living in poverty, a young person in the exploratory interviews conducted for this paper said:

I don't think so because they wouldn't have, like, regular meals or a balanced diet because they couldn't be picky on what they would eat – just probably eat what they get. And people, like, who have the money and everything would be buying magazines and watching health and fitness programmes and everything, and they would, like, be really picky with their food and only be eating things with a certain amount of calories. But the ones who don't would be malnourished (female, 16 years).

The above quotation also points to the lack of food choice and variety that characterises poverty. There is no leeway for trying different foods with children as food cannot be wasted in low-income households (Daly and Leonard, 2002). Van der Hoek's (2005) qualitative study with children and their families experiencing poverty in the Netherlands found that one quarter of the 75 families participating could not afford a hot meal on a daily basis for their children due to a lack of money, with some parents encouraging bulking up and avoiding hunger through eating bread as a meal.

#### **4.3.3 Dimension – Clothing**

Some of the children's clothing deprivation indicators contained in Table 4.1 relate to basic clothing items: a warm, waterproof coat, and new, properly fitted shoes (Hooper, 2007; Bradshaw and Holmes, 2008; Middleton et al, 1997). These items are replicas of Irish household deprivation indicators. They relate to a more absolute conception of poverty, epitomised in the phrase 'not have shoes on your feet or a coat on your back'. They also set a low threshold for clothes deprivation – possessing one coat or one pair of shoes is considered sufficient to avoid poverty. Some commentators disagree with the inclusion of the overcoat and shoes indicators at all in the consistent poverty measure on the basis that they represent a conception of poverty that is no longer appropriate in Ireland, and are 'not sensitive to children's needs' and changed societal values (Daly and Leonard, 2002).

Despite these reservations about basic indicators, it is reasonable to ask whether we know if children in Ireland experience such basic deprivation. The EU-SILC indicates that 9 per cent of lone parent households cannot afford a warm, waterproof overcoat for each

household member (CSO, 2008), but given the imprecision of the measure we have no way of knowing if the deprivation is suffered by the child(ren) or the adult. There are no Irish data on clothing deprivation for children and young people, or data on the quantity and types of clothing possessed by Irish children with which to answer whether or not such deprivation exists. Neither of the previous sets of Irish children's deprivation indicators (Cantillon et al, 2004; Nolan and Farrell, 1990) contained clothing deprivation indicators.

However, research indicates that basic clothing deprivation exists for children and young people in the UK. The PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) indicates that a small proportion of children were deprived of basic clothing as their parents could not afford them: 2.3 per cent did not have new, properly fitted shoes and 1.9 per cent did not have a warm, waterproof overcoat. The 2003 MCS (Bradshaw and Holmes, 2008) provides lower figures for such deprivation, with 0.9 per cent of families lacking new, properly fitted shoes for their children and 0.5 per cent who could not afford an overcoat. In Middleton et al's study (1997), 1.9 per cent of children experienced the enforced deprivation of a warm coat, 4.9 per cent of a waterproof coat, and 4.5 per cent of new, properly fitted shoes.

However, measuring children's clothing deprivation only using indicators like an overcoat and a pair of shoes may fail to capture the experience of clothing poverty for some poor children and young people. It can be argued that children need a far broader range of clothing items, and often more than one of each item. Middleton et al's (1997) study developed more expansive and specific indicators that reflect an understanding that underwear, trousers, jumpers etc. are also basic necessities for all children, and that children need more than one pair of underpants, more than one jumper, pair of trousers etc. In the 1999 PSE study (Gordon, 2000) 3 per cent of children did not have at least 4 pairs of trousers, 2.8 per cent did not have at least 4 jumpers/ cardigans/sweatshirts and 1.9 per cent did not have at least 7 pairs of new underpants, because their parents could not afford them. The percentage of children experiencing such deprivation in Middleton et al (1997) was higher than in the PSE survey, with 6.5 per cent of children deprived of at least 4 pairs of trousers, 3.9 per cent deprived of a least 4 jumpers etc., and 2.8 per cent deprived of at least 7 new pairs of underpants.

Parents in the UK studies generally recognised these items as necessities for children. In Middleton et al (1997), 62 per cent of parents thought that 4 jumpers etc. were necessities, and 59 per cent agreed that at least 7 pairs of new underpants and 4 pairs of trousers/jeans were necessities. These figures contrast with a far greater proportion of parents agreeing that a warm coat (94%), new, properly fitted shoes (94%) and a waterproof coat (80%) are necessities for children. Given that children and young people have not participated in any assessment of the status of these items as necessities, we look to qualitative research to understand their views on the importance of clothes.

The qualitative research literature gives some support to the contention that basic clothes items beyond a pair of shoes and an overcoat are child necessities. Underwear as an essential item for children and knowing that poor children who did not have underwear was discussed by some children in Willow's (2001) focus groups with children experiencing poverty. In Irish budget standards research (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2005; 2006), focus groups with mothers deemed jumpers, trousers etc. as necessities for children and included sums to buy them in basic family budgets. The indicator 'buy new not second-hand clothes' is a deprivation indicator for adults in the consistent poverty measure and in children's deprivation indicators. It is important to children that clothes are not shabby, dirty (Willow, 2001) or second-hand (Daly and Leonard, 2002). However, as in the case of food poverty, recent research with children on their experiences of poverty tends not to delve into children's perspectives on the need for basic clothing items or the consequences of the deprivation of such items for their lives. Instead, the literature tends to concentrate on the exclusionary consequences of not being able to afford branded clothing.

Branded, fashionable clothing is not included in any of the sets of children's indicators or socially perceived necessities by the research reviewed here. However, there is qualitative literature indicating that children and young people view such clothing as absolutely vital to their social participation. Clothing denotes social status for children and adults. In the case of children, having the right clothing is particularly important because it seems to provide some protection from bullying and supports inclusion in peer networks (Daly and Leonard,

2002, Ridge, 2002; Willow, 2001; van der Hoek, 2005). Daly and Leonard (2002) describe how having the right clothing can help children get peer approval, while deprivation in this area can result in social exclusion. Indeed, Piachaud (2007) challenges societal acceptance of increasing commercial pressures on children. He contends that, through advertising, the corporate sector can create higher levels of materialism amongst children. He cites research illustrating that children develop materialistic values between ages 7 to 11 years, when they begin to understand how others see them, and begin to believe that material possessions can allow them to enhance their status over someone else. The ownership of consumer goods, including clothing, as a means of status-enhancement for poorer children and families arises frequently in the qualitative literature.

Little research exists that explores the extent to which the public consider fashionable clothing to be a necessity for children and young people. The Small Fortunes study (Middleton et al, 1997) in the UK is the only research to suggest a clothing indicator that might be considered a necessity for social dignity and inclusion – a ‘best outfit for special occasions’. Yet, parents in that study did not regard a best outfit as a necessity, with only 39 per cent of parents believing that it was. Special occasions in Ireland could include a birthday party, or the clothes required for religious rituals. In the exploratory interviews conducted for this paper, when asked what kinds of things children whose parents do not have a lot of money might not have, one boy said:

Like when they are making their Communion, they don't get money for it, their suit and all (9-year-old).

Including indicators on fashionable clothing and clothing for special occasions in Irish socially perceived necessities research could provide useful data on children's and young people's ownership of such items and also on the views of those over and under 18 years of age on whether or not such items constitute necessities. Developing a clothing threshold is challenging; setting it too low may be unrealistic within the context of children's culture, while setting it too high may indicate lifestyle inequality rather than poverty and deprivation. Is having one pair of fashionable runners sufficient to avoid social exclusion? Possibly not,

but how much clothing and what type is required to not be considered poor and avoid being excluded?

Children and young people interviewed for this paper did not generally regard branded clothes as necessities. But they were very clear that not having the right clothing had serious repercussions for children's friendships, social status, self-esteem, and risk of bullying. When asked if she thought that being seen in a certain type of clothes is essential for young people in Ireland today, a 16-year-old girl in our research was critical of the material competitiveness and status-seeking behaviour displayed in Ireland:

... in Ireland, like, everyone is really, really materialistic and, like, the no-uniform day today, if someone hasn't got the fancy clothes they're mocked, and if they haven't got their books they're mocked, and if they don't go out shopping on their [school] trips, they're mocked.

#### **4.3.4 Dimension – Participation**

##### **Family holiday**

Previous Irish children's deprivation indicators (Nolan and Farrell, 1990; Cantillon et al, 2004) do not include family holidays or family days out in their children deprivation indices. The HBSC study (Kelly et al, 2008) indicates that one family holiday in Ireland or abroad per year is enjoyed by a majority of Irish children, with over 79 per cent of 10-11 year-old children, almost 80 per cent of 12-14 year-olds and over 71 per cent of 15-17 year-olds having had one over the previous year. However, a social class gradient is evident, with children from lower social classes more likely to have had no holiday at all. But being part of a family in a higher social class did not guarantee that an annual holiday was part of children's lifestyles as almost 22 per cent of them did not have a holiday. Quinn et al (2008) found that one-quarter of adults in Ireland did not go on holiday once a year as they could not afford it. This is a somewhat higher level of deprivation than shown by the HBSC data. However, one Irish study with children in low-income families (Daly and Leonard, 2002) found that only 2 of the 28 children interviewed had ever gone on holiday.

Is a holiday a necessity for children? According to Collins (2006), holidays are increasingly regarded as a socially perceived necessity in Ireland. This statement is supported in the UK's 1999 PSE survey where 63 per cent of parents thought a holiday at least once a year to be a necessity for children (Gordon, 2000), but not supported in Middleton et al (1997) where only 47 per cent of parents – below the threshold to be considered a necessity – believed so. Even though they did not consider a holiday to be a necessity for children, only 28 per cent of children in Middleton et al's study (1997) were deprived of an annual holiday as their parents could not afford one. This suggests that while parents may not consider an item or an activity to be a necessity for children, they may still consider them important enough to include them in their own family lifestyle. Irish budget standards (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2006), using focus groups with mothers to determine necessities for families, include a domestic one-week holiday in its basket of basic goods for a family.

Qualitative research illustrates the importance of holidays to the lives of children in low-income families. Over half of the 40 children in Ridge's sample (2002) went on a family holiday, and they valued the holiday as it gave them a break away from the immediate pressures of disadvantage. However, for children lacking a holiday, the difficulty relates to not just the loss of a holiday, but the feelings of difference and being left behind that comes through social comparison. Irish research (Quinn et al, 2008) with children and parents from low-income groups and availing of social tourism for children, such as that provided by the St. Vincent de Paul, found that these holidays benefit the child's well-being by 'allowing children to be children', getting them away from socially limited and pressurised worlds, developing their social skills, and helping them make new friends and acquire confidence. When asked, in the interviews conducted for this paper, if he thought that going on a family holiday is an essential activity, a participant from a comfortable background said:

No. I'd say, well, essential? What you're doing on a family holiday is being with your family in a different place. You don't have to go abroad (16 year-old, male).

This quotation raises a recurring issue in the interviews undertaken for this paper: that the value of family holidays and days out for children and young people lies in spending time

with their parents and siblings. For another participant in the exploratory interviews, whose family may have had a low income, a holiday was not an essential but a luxury that parents could consider only when their children's more basic needs were satisfied:

Like, if a family goes on their holiday and they're short on money, like, there's no need for that, do you know what I mean? If they're on a holiday and they needed something in the house that was needed for the kids, like, say, the kids broke their bed or something, you know, they'd need the money for that, rather than going on holidays or going out for meals or something (16 year-old, male).

Quinn et al (2008) describe holidaying as a socially exclusionist activity in Ireland and consider involuntary non-participation an indicator of poverty. However, adding an indicator on holidays to the consistent poverty measure was previously rejected on the grounds that as one quarter of the population cannot afford an annual holiday, its inclusion would have been overly influential in the calculation of consistent poverty.

### **Family days out/day trips**

Indicators relating to family days out did not feature in any of the children's deprivation indicators or the socially perceived necessities research reviewed. The qualitative evidence reviewed for this paper suggests that this may be an oversight given their importance to children and families, and that it is an area where enforced deprivation can occur.

Hooper et al's (2007) qualitative research in the UK was the only study found using the rather minimal indicator, 'family day trip once a year'. Almost half of the parents in the 70 low-income families participating in the research said that they could not afford a family day once a year. The only national representative survey of young people in Ireland exploring their participation in recreation and leisure activities (de Roiste and Dineen, 2005) focused on activities undertaken with friends and alone rather than with their families.

Family days out are not simply related to children's social participation, but also support child and family wellbeing and strengthen families. Young people in the exploratory

interviews, when asked if day trips and holidays with their families are essential for children, said:

Maybe not a holiday, just a family day every month or two weeks is really good because that would stop them [young people] from being anti-social (16 year-old, female)

Yeah. You could just go, like, down, like, anywhere in this country. The point is that you're spending time with your family, doing new things. So it could be anywhere. It could be twenty minutes down the road; it doesn't matter (16 year-old, male).

However, the commodification of family leisure, for example the proliferation of private leisure centres, has had the effect of cutting off children and young people in low-income families from such leisure opportunities (Byrne et al, 2006). Daly and Leonard's (2002) qualitative account of family life on a low income found that even 'free' family days out, like a trip to the beach, are problematic because there is a range of associated costs that cannot be afforded by parents on low incomes – transport, drinks, treats – and so days out may be avoided. Transport availability and costs are particularly problematic in rural areas (Ridge, 2002).

### **School trips/activities**

UK, Australian and Irish children's deprivation indicators include an indicator on parents' ability to afford children's participation in school activities/trips. Cantillon et al (2004) uncovered considerable deprivation in this regard, with 11 per cent of parents in Ireland in 1999 not able to afford school trips for their children over the previous year. By contrast, almost all of the 28 children in Daly and Leonard's (2002) study had been on at least one school trip, though this does not mean they had not been deprived of trips through lack of financial resources, possibly quite frequently.

International living standards surveys indicate that being deprived of school activities is a poverty experience for some children and young people. In the UK's PSE study, 1.8 per

cent of children were deprived of a school trip at least once per term as their parents could not afford it (Gordon et al, 2000). Saunders et al's (2008) survey on poverty and social exclusion in Australia found that almost 7 per cent of children in that country did not participate in school activities or outings. It should be noted that the particular school activities indicator in Saunders' survey measured social exclusion amongst the population rather than deprivation due to income poverty, so parents were not asked if they could not afford the activity for their children but rather whether or not their children participate.

In the qualitative literature, one half of the children in Ridge's (2004) UK research did not regularly go on school trips due to cost, while in van der Hoek's (2005) research on child poverty in the Netherlands, only 2 of the 65 families participating said that their child could not participate in school excursions due to lack of money, with a further 7 per cent saying that they sometimes could not. It seems from this research that children in low-income families may not be entirely deprived of school trips, but that regular participation is very problematic for them.

Is participation in a school activity considered a necessity for children? In the UK PSE study (Gordon, 2000), 73 per cent of people thought that it was, but a far lower number of parents, 50 per cent, held this opinion in Middleton et al's *Small Fortunes* (1997) study. Mothers in Cantillon et al's (2004) focus groups thought school trips a necessity – hence its inclusion in the Irish children's deprivation indicators used in the 1999 *Living in Ireland* survey. A modest sum for school trips is included in the Irish 'low cost but acceptable budget' standard, the most basic of Irish family budget standards developed by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2004).

Exclusion from school trips due to financial constraint is an area that children and young people were acutely aware of and felt strongly about in research on their experiences of living on a low income. So much of childhood is spent in education. It is a site of friendship development and socialisation as well as academic learning. Not being able to participate in school trips can reinforce feelings of exclusion and difference for children in low-income families (Middleton, 1994; Daly and Leonard, 2002; Willow, 2001). Children may have to

stay behind in class when they cannot go on trips. Children are excluded also from the excited build-up and post-event conversations with school friends, and from educational and developmental opportunities. Children cope through avoidance strategies, not passing on information about schools trips to parents and staying away from school to avoid feeling humiliated and different (Willow, 2001; Ridge, 2002; van der Hoek, 2005). In discussing how poverty is experienced, a 17-year-old boy in the interviews for this paper articulated the effects of exclusion from trips due to poverty:

Yeah, well, if a child is going on a trip and the whole class is going and they couldn't afford to go, know what I mean, how are they meant to feel about it? It'd affect them obviously and make them feel left out that they can't have that and 'the whole class is going, why can't I go?' especially if younger like, know what I mean. It's kind of the same thing if you're going out with your friends, you're friends are going out to the cinema and you can't get any money and then they feel left out coz of poverty.

Five hundred and forty schools in Ireland participate in the transition year programme, which is one-year prior to entering the Leaving Certificate cycle, designed to encourage students to be self-directed learners, develop work-related skills, and develop social and people skills. Social activities with classmates are often a part of the year. A young woman from a 'comfortable' background participating in interviews for this paper indicated the scale of costs associated with participating in activities in transition year. When asked if she thought that young people whose family had little money could participate in such school activities, she said:

I wouldn't say so. This transition year we were karting, and ice-skating. We were in [names town in region]; and there's ones going to Alton Towers and everything. That karting was about €170, and so people definitely couldn't go on that, and the ice-skating was, like, €30 a person ..., and then Alton Towers is €440 because they are doing it with a travel agent, and, like, they definitely wouldn't be able to go on that. And then if they might go on the trips, then they also, like, give you about 3 hours for

shopping, and they might be mocked then if they don't have the money to actually buy stuff and go out shopping with the rest of them (16-year-old).

As children age, it seems that the costs of participation can increase.

### **Birthday parties/ presents**

Birthday and Christmas presents and celebratory events are central to children's lives in Ireland. In terms of guiding indicator development, the research literature suggests three ways in which deprivation can be experienced by children: they do not receive the birthday/Christmas present that they want from their parents, they are deprived of a birthday party as their parents cannot afford one, or they cannot participate in other people's parties because they cannot afford to bring a present.

Thirteen per cent of mothers in Cantillon et al's study (2004) reported that they were unable to afford birthday parties for their children in the previous year. In the UK PSE survey, 3.6 per cent of children were deprived of celebrations on special occasions. In van der Hoek's (2005) qualitative research on child poverty in the Netherlands, 12 of the 65 participating families said that they often could not give their child a birthday party due to lack of money, with a further 18 saying that they sometimes could not. It seems that a significant number of children and young people do experience birthday party deprivation due to inadequate household income.

Ninety-two per cent of parents thought a celebration on a special occasion, such as a birthday, a necessity for children and young people in the UK's PSE survey, around the same percentage as believed that three meals a day and books are necessities, but far more than believed at least 4 jumpers/cardigans/ sweatshirts or a garden to play in are child necessities. Seventy-four per cent of parents in Middleton et al (1997) endorsed a celebration to be a necessity for children and young people.

A birthday/ Christmas present indicator was not included in the Irish, UK, Nordic or Australian children's deprivation indicators in Table 4.1. Our understanding of children's

experiences in this area is provided by qualitative research. The literature review did not find any research where children spoke of being denied birthday or Christmas presents as their parents could not afford it. Instead, the literature focuses on whether or not children get what they want, and how children fared comparatively with regard to the generosity of presents. The overall conclusion from the qualitative research literature is that children and young people in low-income households are very alert to their families' economic circumstances and lower their expectations and learn to expect or accept that they may not get what they want (Shropshire and Middleton, 1999; Ridge, 2002; Daly and Leonard, 2002).

However, Middleton et al's (1997) research with a representative sample in the UK found no identifiable relationship between a family's financial position and the type of Christmas present received, with only a minority from the poorest households not getting what they wanted. Daly and Leonard's (2002) research found no relationship between family income and the type of presents received, although this finding is limited by the fact that all of the families in this study were on incomes below the poverty line. We have no sense of how expectations would have differed if the sample had comprised children from different socio-economic groups. Only the 3 poorest of the 28 children interviewed did not get what they wanted for Christmas, but it was found that they had initially curtailed their desires.

An under-researched area is how low income can prevent children from participating in friends' birthday parties, and thus friendships and social networks. A 16-year-old boy participating in the interviews for this paper, who is experiencing disadvantage, highlighted how difficult it is to be invited to birthday parties when growing up. He reported having to avoid them because he could not afford to bring a present. Children in Willow's research (2001) were aware that parents can feel under pressure if they cannot afford good party clothes for their children.

The inclusion of an indicator on whether or not parents are able to afford to give children presents and parties on special occasions in an assessment of child necessities and

deprivation would inform our understanding of the status of presents as necessities for children, and the extent of child deprivation in this area.

### **Hobbies and leisure activities**

de Róiste and Dineen's (2005) survey of over 2,000 young people aged 12 to 18 years in Ireland reports that the majority had some involvement in sport, that nearly two-thirds report one or more hobbies, and that nearly one-third participate in one or more community clubs or groups. Playing a musical instrument, looking after pets, and art were the most popular hobbies. The same research found that the higher the young person's socio-economic background, the more hobbies they were likely to have.

That young people in poorer homes participate less in organised activities, and thus see friends less often than more affluent young people was confirmed in Swedish research (Olsson, 2007) using the Swedish children's deprivation indicators in Table 4.1. Olsson's study found that young people's own economic resources are associated with social support from friends, seeing friends and participating in organised activities. Friendships and social networks are increasingly recognised as important for the well-being of all age groups (Ridge, 2002). Children themselves consider social and leisure activities important for meeting and interacting with people their own age. 'Pleasure', 'fun' and 'happiness' were the kinds of words that children and young people use to characterise their participation in leisure activities in Willow (2001).

Irish children's deprivation indicators do not include participation in hobby or leisure activities, instead focusing on the possession of items that may support leisure and hobby participation such as a bicycle or sports equipment (Cantillon et al, 2004) and toys or leisure equipment (Nolan and Farrell, 1990). The UK PSE study (Gordon, 2000) indicates that deprivation in this area is a poverty experience for children there, with 3.2 per cent of children in the UK in 1999 deprived of a hobby or leisure activity as their parents could not afford it. Seven per cent were deprived in Middleton et al's (1997) survey. Swimming once a month is an indicator in Middleton et al (1997), where 11 per cent were deprived as their

parents could not afford it, and with 7 per cent deprived according to the PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000).

Qualitative research illustrates that as youth leisure becomes increasingly commodified (Ridge, 2002; Willow, 2001; Byrne et al, 2006), e.g. private leisure centres, games and sports complexes and the cinema, children's and young people's access to leisure is threatened, and parents, not just those on low incomes, are under pressure to find the money to support their child's participation. Most of the children and young people in Daly and Leonard's study (2002) could not afford to engage in formal leisure activities and spent their free time 'hanging around' with peers. However, there is an extensive network of free youth spaces and activities in Ireland. Irish research has found that young people are involved in voluntary youth clubs and find them helpful in making friends and having 'something to do' (Byrne et al, 2006; de Róiste and Dineen, 2005). Developing an indicator for leisure activity deprivation where participation relates to income is relatively straightforward. But failure to participate in free activities for various reasons, such as poor access or lack of parental support or disenchantment, somewhat confuses the picture. The inclusion of youth services in a set of Irish indicators of service exclusion for children and young people would provide us with data on young people's exclusion in this area, and the reasons underlying it.

Are hobby and leisure activities considered necessities for children and young people? Eighty-eight per cent of parents endorsed these activities as child necessities in the PSE study (Gordon, 2000), while a lower 66 per cent believed so in the Middleton et al study (1997). Ninety-two per cent of parents in Saunders et al's (2008) exploration of necessities and deprivation in Australia believed a hobby or leisure activity is a necessity for children. In the interviews for this paper, some children and young people included 'things to do' as a basic necessity for children and young people. Swimming as a monthly activity for children was included in the Irish basic budget standards developed by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2004), indicating that some Irish parents do consider it a necessity. The research is inconsistent on this topic. Fewer than 50 per cent of parents in Middleton et al's

study (1997) considered swimming a necessity, which contrasts with the PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) where 71 per cent of parents believed it was.

### **Consumer/electronic items**

The speed of technological innovation, cheaper consumer goods and the rise in spending on consumer items in Ireland has made a range of consumer goods, particularly electronic goods, available to children and young people. The children's deprivation indicators in Table 4.1 list the kind of consumer items owned by children and young people: television, video, computer games, CD player, mobile phone, and a computer, although some of these items such as a CD player and video are already out-of-date, with DVDs and iPods more current. As with fashionable clothing, it is a contentious issue whether or not to consider the enforced deprivation of consumer items an element of child poverty. Are such items indicators of inequality in living standards, or indicators of poverty? If children in low-income and affluent families own such possessions, are such children really poor? Is it harmful for children and young people to be deprived of such items? Paradoxically, the over-use of television, games consoles and computers is a cause for concern with respect to child health and well being. In Middleton et al's (1994) study, parents from different socio-economic groups were aware of the social consequences for their children of not having such consumer items, but they were also aware of the dangers of children using them too much.

Consumer items for children, with the exception of a television, feature only in the Swedish (Johnson, 2001 cited in Skevik, 2008) and Norwegian living standards surveys (Skevik, 2008). These studies do not try to capture basic deprivation but rather wider living standards. Consumer/electronic items were not featured in the Irish or UK children's deprivation indices examined. However, qualitative research evidence indicates that children in low-income households, particularly older children and young people, feel different from other young people when they or their parents cannot afford consumer items. Possession of these items can help children get peer approval (Daly and Leonard, 2002). Questions are being raised as to whether the competition for status among children, often

played out in consumerist ways, should be considered as part of the discussion on poverty and social exclusion (Klasen, 2005). For Cook (2004):

The world created by and through consumption – ... of peer evaluations of children based on goods, media characters and product knowledge – is increasingly coming to stand for the norm to which children and parents must conform if they are to have a 'healthy' social life ... children's consumer culture has become an argument for itself, for its own centrality in daily life.

A consumerist approach seems to have become pervasive in Ireland. Ninety-five per cent of young people in Ireland over 12 years own mobile phones – 87 per cent of 12-year-olds and 100 per cent of 18-year-olds (de Róiste and Dineen, 2005). Almost all households with children over 12 years in the same study had at least one television. Eighty-six per cent of 9-year-olds in Ireland (Williams et al, 2008) live in households with a computer. Computer ownership is related to social class – 93 per cent of families from the highest socio-economic groups had a computer compared with 78 per cent from the lowest. But a computer was the only consumer item in the study which children from higher socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to possess.

Children's and young people's personal ownership of consumer items, as opposed to sharing communal household items, is a change in children's cultures and in family lifestyles. Children are increasingly leading more solitary lives (Piachaud, 2007) and we are seeing the emergence of a 'bedroom culture' (Downey et al, 2007) where children have their own televisions, DVD players, games consoles, and internet access. Indeed, the GUI study (Williams et al, 2008) found that 45 per cent of 9-year-olds have a TV and 35 per cent a video/DVD player in their bedroom. The prevalence was higher amongst children from lower socio-economic groups where 56 per cent of children from the lowest family economic background had a television in the bedroom compared with 29 per cent of children from the highest economic background. One-third of 9-year-olds (Williams et al, 2008) had a games console in their bedrooms, with again a higher incidence amongst

children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. On the other hand, very few children from any socio-economic group have computers in their bedrooms.

The GUI findings echo previous Irish research (Downey et al, 2007) on primary children's use of technology for play, where children from urban, designated disadvantaged primary schools lived in households with a higher than average possession of most forms of technology, with the exception of computers and the internet. The majority of older children in Daly and Leonard's (2002) research with low-income families owned their own televisions. This phenomenon is under-researched in Ireland. Different parenting styles and practices may be one explanation. Alternatively, supporting home-based play and recreation for children and young people may be a necessity for poorer families where there are neighbourhood problems or little flexibility in family income. In UK research (Ridge, 2002; Middleton et al, 1994) television-watching emerges for children and young people in low-income families as a means of finding something to do when leisure is unaffordable or neighbourhoods unsafe, rather than it being described by children as a favourite activity. Parents may prioritise such items for children as a compensation strategy for general economic pressure in their family.

Are consumer items considered necessities for children? Computer games were not considered necessities for children by UK parents in either the Middleton et al (1997) or the PSE (Gordon et al, 2000) surveys. A television was considered a necessity by 40 per cent of parents in Middleton et al's study on child necessities and deprivation, yet only 1.3 per cent of children lived in a household without one. This result runs counter to Middleton et al's (1994) earlier work developing budget standards for children, in which parents included access to a colour television (although not a video player) for the family as a family necessity. A television and video player was considered a necessity for families in basic Irish budget standards (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004), but computers and computer games and hardware were not. However, in later budget standards work by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2006), with advisory focus groups, computers and associated costs including internet access were considered to be a necessity for Irish young people for educational and social inclusion purposes. Irish research on necessities

for children and young people would help arbitrate on whether or not such items should be considered essential.

## **Pets**

Having a pet features in both Swedish and Norwegian child deprivation indices. Children regard having and taking care of pets as a source of well-being (Hanafin and Brooks, 2005). While the 'minimum essential' Irish family budget developed by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2004) does not include pets, the relatively generous 'low cost but acceptable' budget (2006) does. The vast majority of children and young people over the age of 12 years in Ireland own a pet personally or have a pet in their household, with only a small social class differentiation (Kelly et al, 2008). Children's views on and experiences of pets and, more widely, of nature, are very under-researched.

### **4.3.5 Dimension – Developmental**

#### **Toys/Educational games**

Play can be regarded as a necessity for children of all ages (Packer and Quinenberry, 2002), and its absence inhibits positive health, learning, development and well-being. Supporting play includes providing appropriate play materials and activities such as toys that encourage matching, ordering, and comparing, puzzles and blocks for spatial concepts, equipment for imitative play (e.g. dolls, dress-up), and art materials for creativity and conversation.

Parents in the UK consider toys and games to be necessities for children, with 84 per cent in the PSE study believing educational games a necessity and 85 per cent believing toys a necessity (Gordon et al, 2000). These figures are higher than in Middleton et al's research (1997). The 'basic Irish family budget' standard (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004), based on work with experts and parent focus groups, included a substantial number of toys and play items across different age groups, including educational games, art materials, dolls etc. The possession of toys tends not to be covered in research with children and young people focused on poverty and living standard. This is possibly because the

research tends to be conducted with older children and young people, and thus focuses on education, social and leisure activities, and clothing and consumer items.

Nolan and Farrell's (1990) research found that over 13 per cent of households with children in Ireland below the poverty line could not afford toys or leisure equipment for their children in 1987. By 1999 there was little change in this situation, with over 12 per cent of Irish mothers (Cantillon, 2004) saying that they could not afford toys for their children. Both deprivation statistics are very high for items that could be considered to be basic necessities for children. However, enforced toy deprivation in the UK has been found to be far lower, at 0.5 per cent of children in the 1999 PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) and 1.2 per cent in Middleton et al (1997). Such a huge disparity suggests the need for more research with comparable methodologies.

### **Bicycle/sports gear/leisure equipment**

Seventeen per cent of mothers in Cantillon et al (2004) could not afford a bicycle or sports equipment for their children, indicating substantial exclusion from leisure activities for children and young people in Ireland. Three and a half per cent of children in the UK PSE study were deprived of a bike as their parents could not afford one, and somewhat more – 7.8 per cent – in Middleton et al's study (1997).

Do parents agree that these items are necessities for children? Mothers in Cantillon et al's (2004) focus groups believed a bicycle and sports equipment to be necessities and the Vincentian Partnership for Justice's 'basic budget' standards for families (2004) include a child's bicycle and a football. Sixty per cent of parents in the UK PSE survey believed a bicycle to be a necessity for children, but only 32 per cent believed so in Middleton et al's study (1997), and this was below the threshold (50%) to be deemed a necessity.

### **Lessons**

The only research to include lessons in music, dancing, or sport as a children's deprivation indicator is Cantillon et al (2004), where 13 per cent of mothers in Ireland reported that their children did not have lessons because they could not afford them. Overall, this issue does

not arise in the qualitative research with children and young people on their experiences of poverty and social exclusion, which may indicate their status as a non-necessity. Or it may be that researchers have simply ignored the topic. Further research is needed to explore the importance of lessons to children and assess their status as a necessity.

## **Books**

Reading as a hobby bestows a range of benefits on children and young people (Hanafin and Brooks, 2005). Research has repeatedly emphasised the importance of reading to children from an early age and having books in the home as a support to child literacy and educational attainment. Yet book ownership has never featured in Irish children's deprivation indicators. Middleton et al (1997) included an 'own books' indicator and found that 1.8 per cent of children in their survey were deprived of books because their parents could not afford to buy them. The 1999 PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) found that only 0.1 per cent of children were deprived of books. In both the UK PSE study (Gordon et al, 2000) and Middleton et al (1997), the overwhelming majority of parents endorsed books as developmental necessities for children. The Vincentian's 'basic budget' standards (2004) for Irish families include the purchase of some children's books.

While there is high adult endorsement of books as necessities for children, it is, surprisingly, not an area that studies on children's experiences of poverty or family poverty have explored. It is an area that should be included in future research with children and young people.

## **Playgroup/preschool**

One of the few services, other than leisure and education, included in the children's deprivation indicators in Table 4.1 is early years education. In Middleton et al (1997), 5.7 per cent of children in the UK were deprived of playgroup/preschool at least once a week because their parents could not afford it, while the PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000) found that 1.3 per cent were so deprived. Saunders et al's (2008) Australian research on socially perceived necessities included childcare for working parents not as a possible deprivation indicator related to income, but as a social inclusion indicator. Just over 50 per cent of

adults in that study viewed a childcare service as a necessity for working parents, as opposed to a necessity for children.

Is attendance at preschool/playschool a necessity for children? Parents in UK studies agreed strongly that it is – 94 per cent in the PSE survey and 74 per cent in Middleton’s survey. Childcare in Ireland has been funded and characterised as a service to working parents (mothers) rather than to children. Irish ‘basic family’ budget standards (Vincentian Partnership for Justice, 2004) reflect this understanding, with childcare costs for working parents only included.

As is the case with many of the children’s deprivation indicators from other countries, an Irish perspective is required here. Hayes (2008), in exploring the role of early childhood care and education (ECCE) from an anti-poverty perspective, reminds us that when reviewing international evidence in this area we need to recognise the unique features that exist in Ireland. The Irish ECCE system is emerging, is of unknown quality, and has been primarily privately operated. The majority of women with children do not work or work only part-time. Most children are still cared for primarily by parents or extended family. Perhaps, given this context, Irish parents may not consider childcare services to be a necessity for children. Alternatively, the recent emphasis on the developmental benefits of quality ECCE may mean that parents regard a period of time in playschool/preschool settings as beneficial to child development and part of a good childhood. While quality ECCE is a key policy response to tackling child poverty (Hayes, 2008), its status as a necessity for all children is still debated.

#### **4.3.6 Dimension – Housing/environmental**

##### **Beds and bedding**

Previous Irish child deprivation indicators have not included ‘own bed and bedding’ as a deprivation indicator. Middleton et al (1997) and Gordon (2000) in the UK PSE survey include this indicator, with 1 per cent and 0.6 per cent of children respectively experiencing such enforced deprivation in these surveys. While the percentages are small, as they are for so many basic children’s items in the PSE survey, the number experiencing deprivation

is considerable given that there are approximately 12 million children under 16 years in the UK. Unsurprisingly, own bed and bedding for children over 10 years of different sex was endorsed as a necessity by 96 per cent of parents in the PSE survey in the UK (Gordon et al, 2000) and by 94 per cent of parents in Middleton's study (1997). Similarly, in Saunders et al's (2008) Australian research on socially perceived necessities, almost 85 per cent of adults believed a separate bed for each child to be a necessity. Just over 1.5 per cent of children experienced such deprivation in this national survey.

Having their own beds and bedding is another basic deprivation that is generally not discussed with children in qualitative research reviewed, possibly because such deprivation is no longer a poverty experience for most children, and may be considered an experience that belongs to another era. Willow's research (2001) is an exception, where participants told of children and young people being cold or uncomfortable in bed because families could not afford bedding.

There is no Irish data on bed and bedding deprivation and sharing amongst children and young people. This is an area for further research.

### **Own bedroom**

The average number of children per family has fallen from 2.2 in 1981 to 1.6 in 2002 (Central Statistics Office, 2003). Children in Ireland are growing up in much smaller households and in better quality housing than previously, and so do not have to 'share' physical space and material belongings as much as previously. Children's expectations regarding bedroom sharing may have changed over this period, and it seems that many children in Ireland do not share a bedroom.

The Irish Housing Conditions Survey provides guidance on standards of bedroom adequacy (Watson and Williams, 2003), supporting indicator development. People age 10-21 (unless they are part of a couple) may share with one other person in this age group of the same gender, or with a child under 10 of the same gender. It is considered adequate for children under 10 years of age to share a room with another child under 10 of either

gender. Nolan and Farrell's (1990) child deprivation study found that 10 per cent of parents in Ireland with incomes below the poverty line in 1987 could not afford separate bedrooms for different sexes for children over age 10. Households with children were a group found to fall below the bedroom standard in the 2002 Housing Conditions Survey (Watson and Williams, 2003). On the other hand, over 68 per cent of 9-year-olds and 66 per cent of 10-year-olds have their own bedroom in Ireland, with little difference observed by social class (Nic Gabhainn et al, 2009).

Is a bedroom for every child aged 10 years and over a necessity for children? Seventy-six per cent in the UK PSE study believed so (Gordon et al, 2000). Mothers in Middleton et al's (1994) budget standards work agreed that housing should be such as to afford children their own rooms by age 10. However, just less than 50 per cent of adults in Saunders et al's (2008) Australian socially perceived necessities research endorsed this item as a necessity.

In research on children's understandings of child well-being (Nic Gabhainn and Sixsmith, 2005) children identified their bedrooms as spaces that support their well-being and a central location for personal and social activity, particularly for boys. Having their own bedroom was mentioned frequently by the 60 young people in Roker's study (1998) on growing up in family poverty in the UK. They told of a lack of space and privacy in their homes, which they found particularly difficult as they got older. It caused disagreements and arguments, and was made worse by the fact that they had no money for activities outside of the home and spent their free time in their rooms. It seems that for young people in low-income families, having their own bedroom has an additional value given their lack of access to activities outside of the home. The young people felt that all young people should have a room on their own.

In Sutton et al's qualitative research (2007) on social difference with children aged 8 to 13 years from private and state schools, there was a marked difference between the two groups in the importance assigned to their own personal space. While having a big house was considered important for children in private school, those in state schools did not

mention their houses or bedrooms on a list of 'important things'. The study appears to indicate that children's expectations in this regard were associated with their social class and income levels.

### **Garden for play**

Parents' ability to afford a home with a garden for children's play was included in Middleton et al's children's indicators (1997), and the PSE survey (Gordon et al, 2000). Thus private rather than public spaces for play are included in children's deprivation indicators. Sixty-eight per cent of parents in the PSE survey thought a garden to play in to be a necessity for children, with 70 per cent endorsing the item in Middleton et al (1997). Deprivation was low in both studies – 3 and 4 per cent respectively.

However, a garden is just one outdoor space where children and young people play and recreate; they also play in public spaces. Children and young people in the exploratory research conducted for this paper and in Willow (2001) noted that outdoor play is a free resource for children and young people to use regardless of income. However, they should perhaps be excluded from consideration as they may be presumed to be available due to a lack of good quality, safe spaces close to home for play and recreation. This kind of deprivation features strongly in children's and young people's accounts of lives on a low income in Ireland (Daly and Leonard, 2002; youngballymun, 2003; Child Development Initiative, 2005). Lack of access to safe, quality public spaces can, then, be conceptualised and measured as an example of social exclusion.

### **Having friends over to play**

The extent to which children have their friends over to their homes to play features as an indicator in both Norwegian (Skevik, 2008) and Irish child deprivation indicators (Cantillon et al, 2004). Ten per cent of Irish mothers in Cantillon et al (2004) could not afford to have their children bring friends home to play.

Having friends over to visit their homes is a key childhood experience. In the same way that the Irish household consistent poverty measure recognises that not being able to have

friends over to their home for a meal or a drink once a month as deprivation for adults, a deprivation indicator on having friends over to visit can capture children's inclusion in the norms of childhood and their participation in peer networks. Some of the reasons why children and young people do not invite peers to their homes have been found to be income related: inadequate living conditions, or not being able to afford enough food or the right kind of food (Skevik, 2008; Hooper, 2007; van der Hoek, 2007).

Research with adults and children is needed to shed light on the extent to which having friends over to their houses is considered to be a necessity for children and young people in Ireland.

#### **4.3.7 Dimension – Education**

##### **Education age up to 20 years**

Nolan and Farrell's (1990) Irish children's deprivation indicators are unusual in including a public service indicator. This indicator was not replicated in Cantillon et al (2004). The children's public service deprivation indicator focuses on the items required for participation in education, for which income is required.

The Irish state compels parents to send children to school until age 16 and parents can be prosecuted for not doing so. Primary and secondary education, delivered by non-governmental organisations but state-subsidised, is ostensibly free of charge in Ireland, and so the affordability question should not arise, although there is also a considerable number of fee-paying schools. However, there is an issue that requires further investigation. This is the matter of 'voluntary' payments requested from parents by non-fee paying schools. Such payments are quite frequently requested annually from parents and can range from small amounts to hundreds of euro. The affordability of requests for 'voluntary' contributions may cause great difficulties for some financially-constrained parents, above and below the poverty threshold. This is an issue impacting on child deprivation that should be considered in further research with parents.

##### **A required school uniform**

The 1999 PSE survey (Gordon, 2000) and Middleton et al (1997) are the only poverty studies using children's deprivation indicators to include a school uniform indicator. Eighty-eight per cent of parents in the Gordon et al (2000) study and 79 per cent in the Middleton et al (1997) study believed that a required school uniform is a necessity for children. Some children in these studies were found to be deprived using this indicator: 2 per cent in the PSE survey and 4.8 per cent in Middleton's work.

It is surprising that a school uniform indicator has not featured in previous Irish child poverty indicators given the mandatory nature of school uniforms in many schools. It is also surprising as research with children and young people in low-income families indicates that not having the full school uniform is a disciplinary issue for them, and is also social exclusionary because it marks them out as being different. In Ridge's study (2002), while the children recognised that a uniform provides some protection from having to have the 'right' clothes, being able to buy all of the required uniform was an issue. Irish research conducted by Barnardos (2006) found that the 2005 average costs for basic uniform, sportswear, shoes and textbooks for a primary school pupil was €225.60, and €408.75 for a secondary school child. Buying school uniforms challenges low-income parents as they have to find a substantial amount of money for them (Middleton, 1994). Despite government income support for school clothes and footwear for low-income families, children in Ireland may still be deprived of a full school uniform. Developing and implementing an indicator in poverty research would identify the extent of such deprivation in Ireland.

Daly and Leonard (2002) asked children in Ireland about the cost of their uniforms and where their parents got the money to buy them, but not about their affordability. The children commented that even in schools requiring uniforms, the pressure to have fashionable clothing remained because it transferred to branded runners and school bags. Research with 773 children in Northern Ireland (Schubotz, 2007), on the impact of poverty on the school experiences of 16-year-olds, found that the greatest difficulty with meeting school-associated costs was the cost of school trips and school uniforms. Those children

whose families were not well-off and had difficulties meeting costs were more likely than young people from relatively well-off families to report negative school experiences.

### **Computer suitable for school work**

Possession of a home computer was not contained in either of the Irish research studies using child deprivation indicators. The extent of household computer ownership in 1987 when Nolan and Farrell's child deprivation indicators were applied was probably quite low. However, the relative affordability of a home computer more recently has meant that many households with children have them. The extent of computer ownership in families was dealt with in an earlier section.

Is a home computer for school work a necessity for children and young people? This item was not endorsed as a necessity by UK parents (Middleton et al, 1997; Gordon et al, 2000). It was also not considered a necessity in 'basic Irish budget' standards developed by the Vincentian Partnership for Justice (2004). However, advisory focus groups in this project later considered computers and associated costs, including internet access, to be a necessity for Irish young people for educational and social inclusion purposes in all but the most restricted budget (2006). It is not an issue that arises often in the qualitative literature reviewed, though it is briefly mentioned by Willow (2001). Irish research with children and adults would be useful to clarify its status as a necessity for children.

### **School books and stationery**

Surprisingly, the enforced deprivation of national curriculum school books does not feature in any research using children's deprivation indicators. However, Saunders et al's (2008) research on necessities and deprivation in Australia includes the indicator 'school books/new clothes for children', with 4 per cent of children experiencing such enforced deprivation. Eighty-nine per cent of parents in Australia thought school books/new clothes to be necessities for children. Developing an indicator containing two such disparate items, however, makes untangling the findings difficult.

It is not just school textbooks that are required for participation in the curriculum. Both the qualitative research reviewed and the findings of the exploratory interviews for this paper indicate that parents cannot always afford the most basic items required for their children's education: the required school books and basic stationery like copy books and pens. Being excluded from cookery classes because they could not afford the ingredients was reported in Willow's study (2001) and also in Daly and Leonard's (2002) interviews with low-income families. Children in Willow's study (2001) said that they were punished with detention for not bringing in ingredients, while children in the Irish study stayed away from school rather than have to go through the public humiliation of having to tell the teacher that their family could not afford the ingredients. Some of the children in the interviews for this paper also pointed out that the costs of basic stationery items for school is a reality for some with insufficient income:

Say if one copy ran out they mightn't get another one for a while. And like where teachers would say: 'you need a folder for this, and a folder for that' and everything, they mightn't have that and they might get in trouble for not having that, and stuff like that. I think they can do well if they have the books and, like, educationally they just pay attention to it (16-year-old, female).

## **5 Public service deprivation/exclusion for children**

### **5.1 Measuring service deprivation for children in Ireland**

Irish public services meet children's basic needs through services such as health care, dental care, education, housing, youth services, welfare and social services, transport and play and recreational amenities and places. It is precisely because these services are considered so necessitous that the state does not leave provision entirely to the market. However, Irish public services for children are provided through a complex public-private welfare mix, and response does not always meet need. Even where children have a need for basic services, timely access can still sometimes be based on ability to pay rather than need. Some public services may not be available in poorer areas, may be insufficient, or be of poorer quality and thus less likely to be used.

We do not monitor service deprivation and exclusion for children in Ireland to any great extent. Such indicators are absent from the household consistent poverty measure. However, the EU-SILC collects data on school transport and medical card access. Ireland's child well-being indicators include only two public service indicators, with information derived from administrative data: the numbers of children on hospital waiting lists and the number of households with children on housing waiting lists. *Growing Up in Ireland* (Williams et al, 2008) has provided the first information on children's use of health care and the factors shaping it, including affordability.

The deprivation indicators discussed in the previous section generally do not include public services. One of the reasons why public services are omitted from poverty measurement is the monetary basis of the measure: people are in poverty when their income falls below a certain threshold and they cannot afford particular necessities due to that low income. In the case of public services access is often free or highly subsidised. Two children's service items were included in Saunders et al's (2008) Australian assessment of necessities for children: 'a safe outdoor space for children to play at or near home', and 'a local park or play area for children'. While both items were strongly endorsed as essential for children by

over 90 per cent of the (adult) population, they were not used as deprivation indicators as the 'can you afford to it' question does not apply.

There is an increasing emphasis amongst child advocates and researchers on including public services in the measurement and monitoring of child poverty. UNICEF (2007) suggests that poverty for children can be measured as the lack of some fixed minimum package of goods and services. The UK's 1999 PSE survey was the first to try to operationalise the concept of social exclusion for children within poverty measurement, and it includes indicators of service exclusion for children (Middleton and Adelman, 2003). Conceptualising service deprivation as exclusion would allow for an examination of the extent of such exclusion, and the reasons for it, some of which may be directly or indirectly related to family income. As noted previously, we have yet to develop a child-centred understanding of social exclusion/inclusion in Ireland. The purpose of this section is to suggest a way forward in developing service indicators for further poverty research.

## **5.2 Service exclusion for children in Ireland**

A series of services used by children and young people could be included in a minimum package of services for the purposes of identifying and monitoring child poverty: health care, play opportunities, education, recreation, afterschool, transport, and early childhood care and education. These services tend to be expressed collectively in indicators and, as highlighted previously, groups of children and young people with particular needs may experience deprivation differently. Data are available on children's use and deprivation of some of these services in Ireland, but not others. For instance, no national data are available on children's use of play facilities, after-schools, or public transport, or on the factors that may impede use when required. There is national data on school attendance and attainment. There are other areas on which we have some indication of whether or not income impacts on use when required, such as health care.

According to the Public Health Alliance Ireland (2007) the health system is fundamentally unequal, allowing those who can afford private care to get more rapid access to a better service. For example, while statutory provision provides free dental and orthodontic

treatment for all children up to age 16 years in Ireland, in 2004 waiting times for treatment ranged from six months to two years, and some parents opted to pay for speedy treatment (Power, 2004). If parents cannot afford to pay for treatment, their child remains on the waiting list and their dental health may decline further without prompt treatment. Indeed, GUI (Williams et al, 2008) found that for 9-year-olds, lower income is associated with lower use of dental care, even though those with lower incomes tend to have a greater need for dental care services.

In relation to the use of the GP service, which is generally the gateway to other areas of the health services, children with medical cards, i.e. those living in households on the lowest incomes, tended to visit GPs more often than those without, to an extent not accounted for by health differences. The medical card provides free access to primary and hospital care but often with significant waiting lists for consultations and public hospital care. The EU-SILC indicates that 24 per cent of children aged 0-15 years have neither a medical card nor private medical insurance (CSO, 2007). While the survey indicates the proportion of adults with medical cards and private health insurance who have clear health care needs – chronic illness or health problems – the equivalent data are not available for children. However, GUI (Williams et al, 2008) provides the first data on the use of doctors in hospitals by children, and found that 9-year-olds with medical cards are more likely to have visited a specialist in the previous year, a factor that appears to be explained by their poorer health status. Overall GUI indicates that few 9-year-olds went without medical care because their parents could not afford it, but there were exceptions.

GUI has also provided new data on the availability of leisure services for 9-year-olds in Ireland, which was found to be the least available service in general, and was the service with the greatest social class gradient. Sixty-three per cent of professional /managerial parents and 52 per cent of semi-skilled/unskilled parents reported leisure availability for their children, which is rather low given its centrality to the lives of children. Interestingly, the children participating in the GUI painted a far more positive picture of leisure availability, with 76 per cent saying there were afterschool activities available to them. No social gradient was evident in their responses. This finding supports the usefulness of children

and young people providing data on their own indicator status. On the other hand, a study with older children and young people, a national survey of recreation of children over 12 years of age (de Róiste and Dineen, 2005), found that income impacted negatively on access to recreation.

Children and young people both in the exploratory research conducted for this paper and in Willow's (2001) study noted that outdoor play in public space is a free resource for children and young people to use regardless of income. However, Irish research with children in low-income families (Daly and Leonard, 2002; youngballymun, 2003; Child Development Initiative, 2005) found they can be excluded due to difficulties with community safety and access to good quality, safe spaces close to home for play and recreation. There is no national data on exclusion from play opportunities. In the interviews for this paper, a 14-year-old boy experiencing disadvantage pointed out that a child's neighbourhood can help or be harmful for children experiencing poverty:

Yeah, like, coz if they go into, like a rough part, like, the child would be out on the streets most of the time and he'll end up turning up, when he grows up, all, like, mad and all coz most of the other children will be like that from the place around him.

### **5.3 Child service exclusion indicators in poverty research**

Rather than rely on a monetary-based conceptualisation of service deprivation, Saunders et al (2008) in Australia and the PSE survey in the UK (Middleton and Adelman, 2003) took a different approach, conceptualising service deprivation as a form of social exclusion. The concept of 'service exclusion' allows us to examine the extent of exclusion from services when they are required. Identifying a basic set of services that children in Ireland should have access to and then monitoring the extent of service exclusion would identify the extent of basic service exclusion for children in families due to low income, or due to other exclusionary factors such as geography or service quality. The 1999 PSE survey in the UK, the first to try to operationalise the concept of social exclusion (Middleton and Adelman, 2003), could provide useful guidance for the development of an Irish measure of service exclusion for children and young people.

The PSE survey asked parents if their children had access to a range of services: play facilities, school meals, youth clubs, after-school clubs, public transport to school, nursery/play school. There were five possible responses from which parents could choose:

- used the service, thought it was adequate;
- used the service, thought it was inadequate;
- did not use the service because it was not relevant or not wanted;
- did not use the service because it was unavailable or unsuitable; or
- did not use the service because the parents could not afford it.

Children were considered service excluded if the services were unavailable or unaffordable. Overall, the PSE survey (Middleton and Adelman, 2003) found that poor children were more likely to be service excluded than non-poor children.

The service exclusion measure in the PSE also allows for adult respondents – although children can also participate – to give a perspective on service access and adequacy. There has been little academic research in Ireland on children’s perspectives with respect to their role as public service users and, so, little is known about how poverty impacts on perception and use.

## **6. Summary and recommendations**

### **6.1 Summary**

The purpose of this paper is to explore the potential for the development of a child-centred direct measure of child poverty in Ireland. The paper explores possible dimensions of child deprivation and social exclusion to support the further development of children's poverty indicators in Ireland.

When Irish policymakers set a target to reduce child poverty, they mean reducing the proportion of households with children experiencing low income and deprivation. The current consistent poverty measure gives us an imprecise picture of child poverty as it conceptualises and operationalises child poverty as household-level deprivation. It presumes a sharing of living standards in households and includes indicators that mirror adults' lives and concerns, but does not tell us exactly what it is that poor children go without when their parents have a low income. A children's measure, when used alongside the household measure, would provide data on the extent to which parents and children experience or do not experience parallel deprivation.

Two different indices of children's deprivation have been developed in Ireland: both (Nolan and Farrell, 1990; Cantillon, 2004) were implemented on a once-off basis, have never been used to monitor child poverty in Ireland, and were never considered part of the Irish official poverty measure. This paper builds on and up-dates the work of these authors, exploring possible dimensions and indicators of child poverty.

A new child-centred poverty measure would most appropriately be conceptualised as relative to prevailing living standards rather than to any absolute definition of poverty. So, people are in poverty when they are denied a standard of living considered tolerable by Irish society and are unable to participate in activities considered the norm in society. A child-centred poverty concept locates the experience of poverty within the state of childhood itself, with children and young people deprived of the living standards considered good enough by society, and excluded from activities that are the norm in childhood.

‘Society’ includes children, young people and adults. Children and young people should participate in determining what constitutes an acceptable living standard for children and young people.

The paper suggests dimensions of child poverty: children’s income and family economic capacity; food/nutrition; clothing; participation; developmental; housing/environmental; and education. These dimensions and linked material child necessities were developed through a literature review of existing children’s deprivation indicators in Ireland and other jurisdictions, and exploratory research with children and young people on their experiences of poverty and their living standards. The paper describes the socially perceived necessities methodology used in poverty research to support the development of deprivation indicators through public consensus. Consensus here effectively means that a majority of respondents agree on the items and activities that constitute necessities for children of a kind that all parents should be able to afford.

Much heat has been generated in Ireland in debating the precise items and activities that should be contained in the Irish household consistent poverty index. A similar, contentious debate can be anticipated with respect to developing a child-centred measure. A key issue is how we can ensure that we are measuring poverty rather than inequality in living standards. Should we measure child poverty primarily as the enforced exclusion from a dominant living standard for children and from childhood activities considered the norm, or does poverty and deprivation have a more absolute core?

Arguably, an absolute conceptualisation of child poverty is totally inappropriate in a developed country like Ireland, and deprivation should generally be interpreted as the denial of a minimum essential or basic standard of living defined in terms of prevailing norms. On the other hand, the application of children’s deprivation indicators previously in Ireland and in other jurisdictions identifies that some children do experience the enforced deprivation of items that meet basic needs, such as 3 meals per day, and these kinds of indicators are compatible with an absolutist conception of poverty. Children may not possess all the required school books or the school uniform. Their parents may not be able

to buy toys or books. The children may also be denied the basic activities of childhood required for social participation and inclusion like family days out or school trips. The paper suggests that we should not conceive of child poverty as an either/or phenomenon but should rather attend to both absolutist and relativistic aspects. Also, because a child is not deprived in one dimension, for example on social participation, does not mean that he/she cannot be deprived of items that meet even basic needs, e.g. food.

While indicators of public service deprivation are absent from the current consistent poverty measure, the paper explored the development of indicators of service exclusion for children and young people through which we can measure the extent to which children are denied basic services they require due to inadequate family income, but also for other reasons such as unavailability.

There are strong arguments for children's and young people's active participation in developing indicators on their own well-being. Children's and young people's status as rights bearers appears to demand their involvement. Research actively involving children and young people would result in more appropriate and realistic indicators. And recent research indicates that children can participate in research on quite complex subjects.

However, there may be areas where parents are the best sources of information on children's lives. Given children's stages of development and inevitably limited levels of knowledge in some areas, parental perspectives are indispensable in many areas, for example assessment of service need and use for young children. While the literature review conducted for this paper includes some innovative, child-centred research with children and families on their experiences of poverty, social exclusion and inequality, no research was found that included children and young people in assessing necessities for them. While challenges will be encountered in such research, it is an area in need of further development and ripe for methodological innovation.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

### **1. Undertake research to develop children’s deprivation indicators using a socially perceived necessities methodology.**

This paper argued that Ireland’s consistent poverty measure tells us little about how children themselves experience poverty and deprivation. Potential dimensions of poverty and deprivation for children were explored. With further development these dimensions could form the basis of research, with adults, children and young people determining which items are necessities for children, i.e. the items that they should not go without regardless of family income. Surveys based on these dimensions could also provide valuable data on the levels of child deprivation in Ireland and on prevailing children’s living standards.

There are a number of ways in which this research could be approached. A once-off piece of research using a socially perceived necessities methodology could be conducted. GUI also provides an opportunity for further research.

### **2. Develop a research and policy focus on measuring and describing children’s living standards.**

The paper uses research evidence to explore material necessities for children and young people, the absence of which due to low family income may constitute deprivation. While children’s lives in Ireland are better researched than ever before, a research agenda focusing on children’s living standards is lacking. Within poverty research, current research gaps create challenges in understanding what constitutes a ‘norm’ in children’s and young people’s living standards, and also in understanding relative poverty and deprivation for the purposes of poverty measurement. Understanding children’s living standards is a vital element in understanding their lives.

**3. Develop a wider research focus on understanding experiences of child poverty, not just on measuring the nature and extent of child deprivation due to low income.**

While taking a monetary approach to understanding child poverty through the application of children's deprivation indicators is required in Ireland, measuring the extent of child deprivation does not provide the broad understanding of the experiences and impacts of child poverty that is required for children's and anti-poverty policy development. Daly and Leonard (2002) remains Ireland's only research with children and young people on their experiences of poverty. It began to elicit their subjective understandings of poverty and its effects on their everyday lives. More qualitative and quantitative research with children and young people is required.

There are many potential research questions that could be explored in Ireland: How do poverty and social exclusion make children feel? What are the effects of poverty on children's and young people's orientations towards society and their own futures? What are children's coping strategies in situations of poverty and deprivation? Why do some children experiencing poverty-related adversity thrive and others do not? What factors influence variability in children's outcomes and reactions? What are the mechanisms through which adversity impacts on child outcomes? What factors protect children from such adversity? How do children contribute to parental resilience, and vice versa?

**4. Develop a research and policy focus on the consequences of inequality and social inequity for children and young people.**

The role of consumer goods in maintaining or trying to gain social status was discussed throughout this paper. Ireland is an economically unequal country and there is a political debate around the extent to which this phenomenon is really harmful to people, or indeed may be fruitful economically if it encourages economic risk-taking. There is an official reluctance to engage with the concept or incidence of relative poverty as it is not

considered 'real poverty'. Children's experiences of economic inequality, and the social inequity that can accompany it, are seldom discussed. Their experiences of inequality, and the impacts of those experiences, are also very under-researched in Ireland. The previous sections of this paper discussed how some children and young people in low-income families believe that possessing consumer items can gain for them a social position that they might otherwise not have due to their family's lack of economic and other resources. Ownership of consumer goods is a signifier of social status in childhood. The paper also briefly debated the extent to which we can consider items like electronic goods and branded clothing to be basic child necessities, and thus the extent to which the enforced deprivation of such items can be considered poverty. Whether the public and policymakers believe consumer items to be necessities or not, deprivation can result in exclusion for children from peer networks due to low social status and may impact on children's self-concept. Relative poverty and wider social inequality may well be having a very negative effect on child well-being in Ireland. A far greater research and policy focus on these areas is clearly justified.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

There are challenges to the application of a socially perceived necessities approach to develop child deprivation indicators in Ireland: using an adult quantitative research methodology with children requires further consideration; determining how high or low to set the deprivation threshold is always problematic; deciding on the relative weight to give both child and adult responses on the items and activities that should be considered child necessities requires decision-making; the extent to which indicator selection can be called democratic is a limitation of the method; the size of sample that would be required to ensure its national representativeness presents practical and resource challenges; determining which items and experiences are necessities and the grounds on which they are considered to be so remains subjective.

It may be that the method can only be adopted with older children, for example aged nine years and older, meaning that younger children remain in the position of having necessities defined for them by adults. Allowing adult and child responses the same weight is in line

with a child rights perspective on their participation in issues that affect them, but this still needs to be balanced against children's level of development and life experience. Poverty thresholds remain arbitrary – the socially perceived necessities method is not the only measure to suffer from this limitation. The resources required for a national survey presents a challenge, although there are nationally representative surveys to which a child survey could be attached.

While the development of child deprivation indicators using a socially perceived necessities methodology has its limitations, they move us closer to directly measuring income-related material deprivation experienced by children.

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## Contact Details

Liz Kerrins, [lizkerrins@yahoo.ie](mailto:lizkerrins@yahoo.ie), 00 353 1 8962901

Sheila Greene, [sgreene@tcd.ie](mailto:sgreene@tcd.ie), 00 353 1 8962901

## **Appendix I**

### **A1 Interview Schedule 9-12 year olds**

#### **Exploring Children's Understanding of Poverty**

##### **Introduction to the interview**

We are interested in what children think about poverty. I am particularly interested in your ideas and opinions on whether living in poverty has an impact on children's lives and if so in what way. Also I am interested in how you think being poor might make children and young people feel.

These are some of the things we will be talking about. We are NOT looking for your own personal experiences. We just want to know about children and young people in general. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions – we are just looking for your ideas and opinions. You don't have to answer all the questions if you don't want to and we can stop the conversation at any time.

We are talking to children from different backgrounds and we are going to write up your opinions, along with the opinions of the other children we are speaking with, and include them in a report on how poverty affects children's everyday lives. We will give this report to government. But we won't put your name on your report, or give any information about you that might help people reading the report to identify you.

##### ***Say that interview will be recorded:***

If it is ok with you we would like to tape record this conversation. This is so we won't have to take lots of notes during the interview. The tapes won't be shown to anyone outside of the research team and will be kept safely locked in a filing cabinet in our office. Is it ok if I turn on the tape recorder?

##### ***Consent form***

Ask the interviewee to sign the consent form (if not already done)

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEFINITION OF POVERTY

- **So, when you hear the word 'poverty', what do you think of?**
- **How would you know if a child comes from a family that doesn't have much money?**
- **What do you think are the most important things that a child needs to be happy?**

PROMPT: nice food, nice home, the right clothes, things needed for school, having a birthday party, being able to buy birthday presents for going to other people's parties, activities, days out/trips/holidays with their family, family, friends, nice adults and children who live nearby

- **Do children whose parents don't have enough money have these things?**

Talk through their original answers, i.e. would they have nice food, nice home, clothes, what type of clothes, things for school etc?

## EFFECTS OF POVERTY

- **How do you think being poor makes children feel?**

I have here a list of feelings. Which of these do you think children living in poverty feel?

Sad	Happy
Lonely	Not lonely
Angry	Calm
Different from other children	Same as other children

*For each feeling ask: Why do you think they feel that way?*

- **Can children still be happy even if their parents don't have a lot of money?**

- **Do you think that children whose parents don't have enough money are as healthy as other children?**

PROMPT: Do they have to go the doctor more? Do they miss school because they are sick?

- **Can children whose parents don't have enough money play and have fun in the same way as children whose parents do have money?**
- **Do children living in poverty have all the things that they need to go to school and do well in school?** (PROMPT: uniform, books, materials, sports gear, money for art/home economics)
- **Can they participate in school activities? Can you give me an example?**
- **Do children living in poverty feel safe in their everyday lives?**

PROMPT: in school and in their own neighbourhoods

- **Do children who don't have enough money get on with their mums and dads, brothers and sisters?**
- **Are children who don't have much money treated differently by other children?**
- **Do you think that life will be better for children who don't have enough money when they become adults? Why do you say that?**

**WHO IS EXCLUDING THEM AND WHO CAN SUPPORT THEM?**

- **Let's pretend that you have the power to do one thing for children in poverty:  
What would it be? Who would be responsible for doing it?**

(PROMPTS)

- What about where they live and who lives beside them?
- What about their parents?
- What about other people that children might not know? (prompt: Government, Bertie Ahern)
- It's not just about money. It could be about friends helping out in lots of different ways

## **Appendix II      Interview Schedule 13-15 year olds**

### **Exploring young people's understanding of poverty**

#### **Interview Schedule: 13-15 year olds**

##### **Introduction to the interview**

We are interested in children's and young people's understanding of poverty. I am particularly interested in your ideas and opinions on whether living in poverty has an impact on children's lives and if so in what way. Also I am interested in how you think being poor might make children and young people feel.

These are some of the things we will be talking about. We are NOT looking for your own personal experiences. We just want to know about children and young people in general. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions – we are just looking for your ideas and opinions. You don't have to answer all the questions if you don't want to and we can stop the conversation at any time.

We are talking to children from different backgrounds and we are going to write up your opinions, along with the opinions of these other young people, and include them in a report on how poverty affects children's everyday lives and we will give this report the government. But we won't put your name on your report, or give any information about you that might help people reading the report to identify you.

##### ***Say that interview will be recorded:***

If it is ok with you we would like to tape record this conversation. This is so we won't have to take lots of notes during the interview. The tapes won't be shown to anyone outside of the research team and will be kept safely locked in a filing cabinet in our office. Is it ok if I turn on the tape recorder?

##### ***Consent form***

Ask the interviewee to sign the consent form (if not already done)

## **YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEFINITION OF POVERTY**

- **What are the things that a child or teenager must have in their life in order to be happy and healthy?**

PROMPT: food, decent home, clothes, things needed for school, having a birthday party, being able to buy birthday presents for going to other people's parties, activities, days out/trips/holidays with their family, supportive family/carers, friends, good neighbourhood and neighbours

- **Do all children in Ireland have these things?**

If NO answer, **QUESTION:** Why not? Could it have to do with their parents/carers not having enough money? What do you think they might not have?

If YES answer, **QUESTION:** Do children whose parents may not have a lot of money, and find it hard to make ends meet, have these things? What do they think they might not have?

- **Can children and young people still be happy and healthy even if their parents don't have a lot of money?**

PROBE ANSWER

- **So, when you hear the word 'poverty', what do you think of?**

## **EFFECTS OF POVERTY**

Thank you for your ideas. Now we will focus on the children in poverty who don't have these essentials. We would like to discuss the effects that you think living in poverty might have on their everyday lives. (NOTE: ask reason for answers)

- **Are children in poverty as healthy as children not in poverty? Why do you think that?**
- **Do children living in poverty have all the things that they need to go to school and do well in school?** (PROMPT: uniform, books, materials, sports gear, money for art/home economics)
- **Can they participate in school activities? Can you give me an example?**
- **Does living in poverty affect what they do in their free time?**
- **Is transport an issue for young people in poverty?**

After answer, clarify: **Is this for young people in poverty or for all young people?**

- **Do children living in poverty feel safe in their everyday lives?** PROMPT: in school and in their own neighbourhoods
- **Does poverty have an effect on their relationships within their family?** PROMPT: parents/carers/grandparents/siblings
- **Does poverty have an effect on their friendships and on making friends?**
- **Do you think that living in poverty has an effect on their hopes and dreams for their future?**
- **How does being poor make children feel?**
- **Why do they feel that way?**

**WHO LIVES IN POVERTY?**

- **Are some children and young people more likely to live in poverty than others? If YES: which groups of children?**

### **WHO IS EXCLUDING THEM AND WHO CAN SUPPORT THEM?**

We have already talked about children in poverty often not being able to participate in activities in the same way as those whose families are better off, the effects poverty and exclusion on their lives, and the fact that some children are more likely to live in poverty than others.

We have a list here of who we think are the most important people and organisations in children's and young people's daily lives and we are interested in your ideas on how these organisations and people can or do contribute to making children's and young people's lives better. Have a look at this sheet.

- **Do you think that these are all of the organisations and people that support children and young people in their daily lives?**

[add any changes the young person makes]

- **Who on this sheet helps children and young people in poverty? What do they do to help them?**
- **Who is not helping children and young people in poverty? What are they doing that is unhelpful to children and young people?**
- **What more do you think these different people and organisations can do to help children and young people in poverty?**

### **LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

- **We have been talking about how young people living in poverty may not have the same opportunities to participate in all the things we discussed. Is it ONLY young people living in poverty who do not get to fully participate or can you think of other groups of young people who are left out?**
- **Can you give me any examples?**
- **Can children and young people who may experience poverty do things that can help their situation? PROMPT: money/jobs**

## **THE FUTURE**

- **Do you think young people who grow up in poverty will escape poverty when they are older? Why/why not?**

## **Appendix III      Interview Schedule 16-18 year olds**

### **Exploring young people's understanding of poverty**

#### **Interview Schedule: 16-18 year olds**

##### **Introduction to the interview**

We are interested in children's and young people's understanding of poverty. I am particularly interested in your ideas and opinions on whether living in poverty has an impact on children's lives and if so in what way. Also I am interested in how you think being poor might make children and young people feel.

These are some of the things we will be talking about. We are NOT looking for your own personal experiences. We just want to know about children and young people in general. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions – we are just looking for your ideas and opinions. You don't have to answer all the questions if you don't want to and we can stop the conversation at any time.

We are talking to children from different backgrounds and we are going to write up your opinions, along with the opinions of these other young people, and include them in a report on how poverty affects children's everyday lives and we will give this report to government. But we won't put your name on your report, or give any information about you that might help people reading the report to identify you.

##### ***Say that interview will be recorded:***

If it is ok with you we would like to tape record this conversation. This is so we won't have to take lots of notes during the interview. The tapes won't be shown to anyone outside of the research team and will be kept safely locked in a filing cabinet in our office. Is it ok if I turn on the tape recorder?

##### ***Consent form***

Ask the interviewee to sign the consent form (if not already done)

## **YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEFINITION OF POVERTY**

- **What are the essential things that a child or young person needs in their life in order to be happy and healthy?**

PROMPT: food, decent home, clothes, things needed for school, having a birthday party, being able to buy birthday presents for going to other people's parties, activities, days out/trips/holidays with their family, supportive family/carers, friends, good neighbourhood and neighbours

- **Do all children in Ireland have these essentials?**

If NO answer, **QUESTION:** Why not? Could it to do with their parents/carers not having enough money? What essentials do you think they might not have?

If YES answer, **QUESTION:** Do children whose parents may not have a lot of money, and find it hard to make ends meet, have these essentials? What essentials do they think they might not have?

- **Can children and young people still be happy and healthy even if their parents don't have a lot of money?**

PROBE ANSWER

- **So, when you hear the word 'poverty', what do you think of?**

## **EFFECTS OF POVERTY**

Thank you for your ideas. Now we will focus on the children in poverty who don't have these essentials. We would like to discuss the effects that you think living in poverty might have on their everyday lives. (NOTE: ask reason for answers)

- **Are children in poverty as healthy as children not in poverty? Why do you think that?**

- **Do children living in poverty have all the things that they need to go to school and do well in school?** (PROMPT: uniform, books, materials, sports gear, money for art/home economics)
- **Can they participate in school activities? Can you give me an example?**
- **Does living in poverty affect what they do in their free time?**
- **Is transport an issue for young people in poverty?**

After answer, clarify: **Is this for young people in poverty or for all young people?**

- **Do children living in poverty feel safe in their everyday lives?** PROMPT: in school and in their own neighbourhoods
- **Does poverty have an effect on their relationships within their family?** PROMPT: parents/carers/grandparents/siblings
- **Does poverty have an effect on their friendships and on making friends?**
- **Do you think that living in poverty has an effect on their hopes and dreams for their future?**
- **How does being poor make children feel?**
- **Why do they feel that way?**

#### **WHO LIVES IN POVERTY?**

- **Are some children and young people more likely to live in poverty than others? If YES: which groups of children?**

## **WHO IS EXCLUDING THEM AND WHO CAN SUPPORT THEM?**

We have already talked about children in poverty often not be able to participate in activities in the same way as those whose families are better off, the effects poverty and exclusion have on their lives, and the fact that some children are more likely to live in poverty than others.

We have a list here of who we think are the most important people and organisations in children's and young people's daily lives and we are interested in your ideas on how these organisations and people can or do contribute to making children's and young people's lives better. Have a look at this sheet.

*(insert sheet)*

- **Do you think that these are all of the organisations and people that support children and young people in their daily lives?**

[add any changes the young person makes]

- **Who on this sheet helps children and young people in poverty? What do they do to help them?**
- **Who is not helping children and young people in poverty? What are they doing that is unhelpful to children and young people?**
- **What more do you think these different people and organisations can do to help children and young people in poverty?**

## **LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

- **We have been talking about how young people living in poverty may not have the same opportunities to participate in all the things we discussed. Is it ONLY young**

**people living in poverty who do not get to fully participate, or can you think of other groups of young people who are left out?**

- **Can you give me any examples?**
- **Can children and young people who may experience poverty do things that can help their situation? PROMPT: money/jobs**

## **THE FUTURE**

- **Do you think young people who grow up in poverty will escape poverty when they are older? Why/why not?**

## Appendix 4

<b>Glossary of Terms</b>
<b>Absolute poverty:</b> the absence of basic items such as food, clothes and shelter.
<b>Child outcomes:</b> indicators of how children are functioning; may include indicators of all or any aspects of their behaviour and development – physical, social, educational and psychological.
<b>Child well-being:</b> healthy and successful individual functioning, positive social relationships, and a social ecology that provides safety, human and civil rights, social justice and participation in civil society.
<b>Consistent poverty:</b> relative income poverty combined with the lack of basic items such as a warm coat, sufficient food or adequate heating.
<b>Deprivation:</b> unmet basic human need.
<b>EU-SILC:</b> EU Survey of Income and Living Conditions conducted by the Central Statistics Office, which replaced the Living in Ireland Survey as the major source of poverty data from 2003.
<b>Food poverty:</b> the inability to access a nutritionally adequate diet and the related impacts on health, culture and social participation.
<b>Inequality:</b> this is a comparative or relative concept. It does not measure deprivation or poverty and does not require a threshold. It is possible for inequality to exist with or without poverty. Similarly, poverty can exist with or without inequality.
<b>NAPincl:</b> two-year National Action Plans agreed by EU member states to work towards greater social inclusion.
<b>National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS):</b> the 10-year plan of the Irish Government aimed at tackling poverty.
<b>Poverty:</b> People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.
<b>Relative poverty:</b> having an income that is less than what is regarded as the norm in society, giving a lower than normal standard of living. It is usually expressed as a percentage figure.
<b>Social exclusion:</b> cumulative marginalisation from: production (unemployment), consumption (income poverty), social networks (community, family and neighbours), decision-making and an adequate quality of life.
<b>Subjective poverty:</b> the perception by the individual as to whether s/he lives in poverty, or has what is necessary for a decent life.

**Sources:** <http://www.cpa.ie/povertyinireland/glossary.htm>; OMYCYA, 2008;  
<http://www.socialinclusion.ie/poverty.html>; Lister, 2004; Government of Ireland, 2000