

# Child poverty in the East Midlands: identifying what works

Intelligence East Midlands, GOEM & EMRA

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This research will provide an overview of current activity in tackling Child Poverty within the East Midlands region, assess its links to policy and identify effective practice through case studies to inform future action.

## Research overview

- The research will identify regional and local policy levers that are known to be clearly linked to tackling and reducing child poverty.
- Identify and provide evidence of current effective practice in tackling child poverty regionally and best practice from regional pilots and pathfinders addressing child poverty.
- Make recommendations as to how partners can learn from and build upon existing good practice in addressing child poverty within the East Midlands.

## Method and approach

- In-depth scoping including a review of existing activity, indicators and measures and literature both nationally and from within the East Midlands.
- Case studies including interviews with key regional and local stakeholders, delivery leads and end beneficiaries involved in activity and policy aimed at tackling child poverty.
- Analysis against a review framework, production of an overview of current activity and analysis of any management information and independent project evaluations for regional, sub-regional and local pilot projects to assess impacts and outcomes.

## How you can get involved

If you are involved in a project, pilot or pathfinder that contributes to tackling child poverty in the East Midlands we would like to hear from you. We are seeking to establish both an overview of current activity and to develop a number of case studies which raise awareness of effective practice and facilitate shared learning.

Please email us: [abigail.diamond@cfe.org.uk](mailto:abigail.diamond@cfe.org.uk)

Visit our website [www.cfe.org.uk](http://www.cfe.org.uk) or call 0116 229 3300

This summary presents an introduction to and overview of independent research currently underway to identify and raise awareness of current activity aimed at tackling child poverty within the East Midlands.

## Introduction

Commissioned by Intelligence East Midlands, Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) and East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) it aims to provide a greater understanding of effective practice in tackling child poverty, what works, and explore how lessons can be shared.

## Background

Children are classified as living in poverty when their family resources are far lower than the average, with the result that they cannot fully participate in society. The government measures of child poverty consist of three indicators to reflect this, while income is a key aspect of this, it is not the only consideration. The two income indicators measure absolute and relative low income. The relative indicator identifies families whose household income is less than 60% of the median household income. Across the UK 3.9m children, approximately 1 in 3, live in poverty, one of the worst rates in Europe.

In 1999 the current Government made the ambitious promise to halve child poverty by 2010, and eradicate it by 2020. Since this pledge, 600,000 children have been lifted out of poverty. More recently, the government announced the creation of a new Child Poverty Unit, bringing together experts from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DSCF) with the remit of coordinating and developing policy with HM Treasury and across Whitehall to support the ongoing work to end child poverty.

## The East Midlands Context

The Local Government White Paper 'Strong and prosperous communities' set out an ambition for local authorities to develop strategies to tackle child poverty. Local authorities are already involved in child poverty through employment, schools, children services, housing, transport and other service areas. The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and its associated implementation plans prioritise the need to tackle inequality at a regional level. The Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) also prioritises Child Poverty but acknowledges that current trends suggest that the 2020 target will be missed.

Collaborative action amongst regional, sub-regional and local partners must now be a priority as it will only be through innovative activity and effective partnerships that contributions to meeting the ambitious national targets to eradicate child poverty completely by 2020 will be made.

Levels of child poverty in the East Midlands evidently differ sub-regionally, as previous research has suggested sub-regional hotspots of child poverty within the East Midlands are centred on ex-coalfield areas. By combining knowledge of the sub-regional geographic spread and demographical extent of child poverty with details of current activity to address this, CFE aims to provide a better understanding of the impact of current practice.

## Identifying effective practice

CFE recognises that whilst reducing worklessness and providing financial support are crucial to tackling Child Poverty, there is no 'magic bullet'. A key aspect of tackling Child Poverty must be to address poverty in all its forms including poverty of aspiration. Effective practice must therefore improve poor children's life chances and tackle the effects of poverty now, as well as prevent it occurring in the future.

## Evidencing what works

This research will seek to explore effective current activity within the region in terms of four key drivers:

- Increasing employment and raising income: helping people who can work to move into employment and progress in work
- Providing financial and material support: providing additional resources to make sure that work pays and to help families who cannot work
- Ensuring that communities are safe, sustainable places where families can thrive
- Improving children's life chances improving opportunities and outcomes for children from low-