

## **Barnardos Cost of Living Report 2024** **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/108678>)**

- Almost half of parents (47%) said they and their children had gone without or cut down on one or more of heat, electricity, medical and food over the past six months
- Over four in five parents (81%) stated that cost of living issues had negatively affected their children over the past 6 months
- More than a quarter (26%) of parents said they are always worried about being able to provide their children with daily essentials
- 47% of parents said they had had to cut back on social activities for themselves and their children

For the past three years Barnardos has been monitoring the impact of cost of living increases on families and children. The latest Barnardos Cost of Living Report outlines the stark reality on the number of families who are cutting back and going without essentials due to increases in cost of living, the struggles families are facing and the impact it is having on their children.

Barnardos commissioned Amarach Research to carry out a nationally representative survey with 1,000 parents/guardians with children aged under 18 in their care. The survey was carried out in April 2024. We also discussed cost of living issues directly with parents in over 10 Barnardos services across the country. We surveyed and spoke to staff across our services to get their views on cost of living issues facing the families we support.

### **The Amarach research found:**

- Almost half of parents (47%) said they had gone without or cut down on one or more of heat, electricity, medical and food over the past six months
- Two in five parents said they had to cut back on clothing for their children (40%, slightly down from 43% in 2023 but higher than 34% in 2022). Almost half (47%) said they had had to cut back on social activities for their children.
- Lone parents were far more likely to report having gone without or cut back on items. For example, 30% of lone parents said themselves and their children went without or cut back on food, compared to 17% of two parent families.
- Over four in five parents (81%) stated that cost of living increases had negatively affected the children in their care over the past 6 months, with almost two in ten saying it has significantly negatively affected them.
- Seven in ten (70%) parents said they sometimes or always worry about not being able to provide their children with daily essentials. More than a quarter (26%) said they are always worried about it.

Despite slowing inflation, the findings show that families are continuing to struggle to provide their children with essentials such as heating, electricity, food and clothing.

A large proportion of parents remain regularly concerned about being able to provide their children with daily necessities and are worried about being able to afford to meet their children's needs. The vast majority of parents felt that cost of living issues continue to negatively affect their children. For families across the country the cost of living crisis has severely impacted their standard of living and the quality of their children's childhoods.

## **Recommendations**

The Taoiseach Simon Harris stated that he is determined that Ireland will be a world leader in progressively eliminating child poverty, and making sure that every child can realise their potential. Below are immediate steps that the Government should take to help start make that a reality.

1. Increase the Qualified Child by a minimum of €5 for under 12s and €10 for over 12s
2. Benchmark social welfare payments in line with minimum essential standard of living measurements
3. All financially vulnerable families should automatically be placed on lowest energy tariffs

**Barnardos CEO, Suzanne Connolly, said:** 'We see first-hand the impact living in deprivation and going without essentials can have on children's long-term health, wellbeing, education and development outcomes. Staff across our services to are reporting that the cost of living increases are having a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the children in the families we support.'

All children across Ireland should be entitled to a decent childhood, with a standard of living that supports their emotional, social and physical development. Unfortunately, the result of our latest survey show similar levels of children and families going without essentials when compared to last year, when inflation was at an historic high, and the government had put

numerous support measures in place. There is a risk that without additional targeted supports this year, as prices remain high, more and more children will be pulled into deprivation and will go without for longer. Below we outline immediate steps that would go same way to begin to alleviate this situation.'

**Region**

Nationwide

[More Information \(https://www.barnardos.ie/barnardos-cost-of-living-report-2024/\)](https://www.barnardos.ie/barnardos-cost-of-living-report-2024/)

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