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## **Barnardos Calls for Targeted Supports for Struggling Families** **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/114406>)**

### **Barnardos Calls for Targeted Supports for Struggling Families in response to concerning CSO SILC Statistics**

Barnardos children's charity is calling on the Government to provide targeted supports such as increased child support payments and expanding the fuel allowance for struggling families. The calls come on the back of the latest CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) statistics published. The findings show that more than one in five children are living in enforced deprivation – having to go without basic necessities, such as clothing, adequate nutrition and heating in their homes in 2024.

For children living in one parent families this figure was again much higher, with more than two fifths (46.3%) experiencing deprivation.

These statistics mirror what Barnardos is seeing across their services. Families are struggling to provide their children with fundamental basics required for a decent childhood. For far too many their quality of life has continued to worsen. Their incomes are squeezed further to the point of being forced to wait longer to buy new clothes; getting cheaper but inadequate footwear; cutting out all extracurricular activities, among other difficult decisions.

The cost of living measures introduced in previous budgets have helped prevent more children and young people from experiencing deprivation. Once off measures in the budget have clearly gone some way to helping families, providing some respite. As have more permanent measures like extension of hot school meals and free schoolbooks. However, they have clearly not gone far enough. The Government needs to prioritise providing additional targeted supports such as expanding fuel allowance as well as increasing thresholds in order to protect children most at risk of going without basic essentials.

#### **Barnardos CEO Suzanne Connolly said**

*'The latest statistics demonstrate little to no progress was made last year in tackling enforced child deprivation, confirming what we are seeing across the country in our services. Too many children are living in homes with parents struggling daily to provide their children with absolute basics. The Government needs to continue targeting supports at families most at risk of being pulled into further deprivation. Action needs to be taken to ensure all children have equal access to necessities like heating, clothing, activities. The things needed for a decent childhood. The longer children experience deprivation the bigger an impact it has on their current and future health, development and overall wellbeing – because childhood lasts a lifetime.'*

#### **Region**

Nationwide

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