

# **Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success**

## **PREFACE**

Poverty continues to impact upon a significant minority of children and young people in Wales. It manifests itself in underachievement and social exclusion; in poor health; and in limited opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is damaging to individual children, to families, to communities, and to society as a whole. That is why this Assembly Government has given such prominence to tackling child poverty.

The lead for co-ordinating and taking forward the child poverty agenda sits within the Social Justice and Regeneration portfolio - as eradicating poverty is a fundamental component in achieving social justice. In 2005, I asked my Deputy Minister, Huw Lewis AM, to lead on the implementation of the Assembly Government's Child Poverty Strategy, "A Fair Future for our Children".

Earlier this year, the Deputy Minister presented his Implementation Plan to Cabinet and the Social Justice & Regeneration Committee. The Plan comprises a range of cross-cutting general and specific proposals aimed at combating child poverty in Wales. Proposals which are being implemented in this financial year include child poverty proofing all Assembly Government strategic policies, bending resources towards the needs of the poorest children and increasing family income. The Plan also contains a commitment to develop a range of cross-cutting 2010 milestones and 2020 targets to monitor Wales' progress in tackling child poverty through the next decade and a half.

Although good progress has been made in recent years, it is clear that the scale of the problem in Wales requires a radical re-think of our policy agenda across the Assembly Government. There is also a need to focus on outcomes and to measure our progress year on year. It is in this context that the milestones and targets in this paper should be viewed. Some of the targets are aspirational and those, particularly to 2020, are being set in order to highlight clearly the direction in which we as a Government need to travel.

I trust that we can all sign up to these targets and work towards making them a reality by significantly reducing rates of child poverty in Wales.

**Edwina Hart AM MBE**  
**Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration**

## **FOREWORD**

Labour's mission to eradicate Child Poverty by 2020 is a leap of political faith not matched in generations. We do not pretend to have in place all the policies that will deliver that goal, but we are already making progress. We have seen and overseen a 21% drop reduction in Child Poverty in Wales since 1999, but that only represents a reversal of the damaging deterioration inflicted in the 1980s. Our ambition to give all children a fair start in life and thus permanently reshape this nation, still remains before us.

We have to seize the chance which falls to us of succeeding in this mission. It centres on everyone in Wales – from all political parties and all walks of life – putting Child Poverty reduction at the top of their agenda. Our goal is complete national buy-in to the idea that every child deserves a flying start, and complete national buy-in to the implications that will have on resources and policies.

A national journey towards child poverty eradication requires the widest possible participation of the people of Wales. We cannot succeed through government spending or government action alone. The Welsh Assembly Government will need to work with the UK Government in Westminster, Local Government and the private and voluntary sectors if we are to succeed in reaching our target.

This document sets out, department by department, just what our Government aims to do. The First Minister and the whole Cabinet have shown total commitment and enthusiasm in drawing up this ambitious range of milestones and targets to monitor our progress in eradicating Child Poverty.

Though these numbers alone will never tell us about how people experience poverty, about the physical and psychological damage it inflicts, without meaningful and regular measurements of how our country is changing we cannot react to successes and to failures. These indicators will help us understand, better than ever before, where there is a need for new policy and for sharper targeting of resources.

These targets and milestones will be subject to change, depending on their usefulness, but our overall aim – equal chances and an end to poverty for all children by 2020 will remain as one of the most important goals this administration has ever set.

**Huw Lewis AM**  
**Deputy Minister, Social Justice & Regeneration**

## **ERADICATING CHILD POVERTY IN WALES - MEASURING SUCCESS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is no simple definition of poverty. In order to create the policies that will give our children the best start in life, we must first better understand the nature and extent of the problem.

A child in poverty lives in a family with resources that are so significantly below the average, that they cannot be seen by others and by themselves to be participating fully in society. This is both in the sense that the family does not have the income to participate and that the family experiences poorer access to services, or other disadvantages such as poorer quality housing and neighbourhoods or lower levels of assets.

When the statistic that one in four children in Wales is living in poverty is used, what does it mean? This figure refers to the most simple and most commonly used indicator of income poverty - that one in four of the children of Wales live in a household where the income is below 60% of the median household income for an equivalent type of household.

### **UK Data**

The statistics used to measure poverty in the UK are based on the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data published by the Department for Work and Pensions.

In 2004/05 there were 2.7 million children in Great Britain living in relative low income (2.8 million in the UK). Since 1998/99 this represents a decrease of 700,000 children. Since there was strong average income growth over the period, this is significant progress, but it was not enough to meet the UK Government's Public Spending Agreement (PSA) target to reduce the number of children living in relative low income by a quarter. Therefore, to meet its 2010 target, the UK Government has accepted that much more progress needs to be made.

### **UK Targets**

The UK Government's position on measuring progress towards achieving its child poverty targets is as follows:

- Halve the number of children in relative low-income households between 1998-99 and 2010-11, on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020. (shared by the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Treasury)

Data will be reported in the annual Households Below Average Income (HBAI) statistics published by DWP.

- Relative low income - Progress will be reported against the 1998-99 baseline. The GB baseline figure for 1998-99 is 3.4m. The target for 2010-11 is 1.7m.
- Material deprivation - the UK Government will also set an additional target in the 2006 Spending Review to halve by 2010-11 the number of children suffering a combination of material deprivation and relative low income by comparison with their number in 1998-99. Material deprivation will be combined with a higher threshold for relative low-income, measured as incomes below 70 per cent of the contemporary median.
- Absolute low income - the UK Government will also monitor progress against an absolute low income indicator. Absolute low-income households are defined as those with incomes below 60 per cent of median income held constant in real terms from a 1998-99 baseline. It is an attempt to measure the numbers living in poverty as defined in 1998-99 despite the generally strong growth of incomes since that date. Those children (and their families) would therefore not have been participating in the prosperity of society at large in 1998-99 and would not have participated either in the general advance of prosperity since then. They have therefore fallen further behind the general standard of living of society. In 2002-03 there were 1.6m children in absolute low income, less than half the number in 1998-99 on a GB basis. The target for absolute low income will be to make further progress so that there are fewer than 1 million children in absolute low income by 2010-11, compared with 3.4m in 1998-99.

The UK Government is committed to making progress on all three tiers. The choice of three indicators was the result of a consultation process concluded by the DWP in December 2003.

## **Wales**

The latest Households Below Average Income report, published by the Department for Work and Pensions on 9th March 2006, shows that for the three-year average 2002-03 to 2004-05, after housing costs, 28 per cent of children in Wales were living in households in relative income poverty. Thanks to sizeable falls in recent years this is equal to the average for Great Britain. Wales has a lower rate of relative child poverty than London, the North East, the West Midlands, the North West and Merseyside, and Yorkshire and the Humber. The relatively strong performance of the labour market in Wales is likely to be a key cause of this improvement, since it has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of households that are dependent on benefits as a result of unemployment, ill-health or any other cause of economic inactivity.

In terms of absolute poverty, if we compare the proportion of children living in households in 2002/03 to 2004/05 that are classified as below the 60%

medium income threshold of 1996/97, held constant in real terms compared with the children living in households classified as below the 60% medium income threshold in 1994/95 to 1996/97, then the falls in poverty in Wales have been dramatic:

- a 20 percentage point decrease (after housing costs) from 37% in 1994/95 to 1996/97 to 17% in 2002/03 to 2004-05; and,
- an 18 percentage point decrease (before housing costs) from 30% in 1994/95 to 1996/97 to 12% in 2002/03 to 2004-05.

At the same time, the gap between Wales and rest of the country has narrowed.

In 1994/95 to 1996/97 there were 37% of children in Wales living in households with less than 60 per cent of 1996/7 median income held constant in real terms (after housing costs) compared with 34% in England, 33% in Scotland, and 34% across Great Britain as a whole. By 2002/03 to 2004/05 the gap between Wales and Great Britain as a whole had completely disappeared, with levels of child poverty being recorded at 17% in both areas. Figures in Scotland were 2% lower at 15%.

In 1994/95 to 1996/97 there were 30% of children in Wales living in households with less than 60 per cent of 1996/7 median income held constant in real terms (before housing costs) compared with 29% in Scotland, 25% in England and 25% across Great Britain as a whole. By 2002/03 to 2004/05 the gap between Wales and Great Britain as a whole had almost disappeared, with levels of child poverty being recorded at 12% in Wales compared with 11% across Great Britain as a whole, as well as England and Scotland individually.

### **Severe Poverty**

There is work ongoing to measure severe poverty in Wales – less than 40% median income - and it is understood that the methodology is currently being tested by academics. The Assembly Government will consider the outcome of that work and its use in measuring progress in combating severe poverty.

### **Policy Response**

The Strategy of the Welsh Assembly Government, “A Fair Future for Our Children”, reaffirms the Assembly Government's commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020 and to halve child poverty by 2010, compared with 1997 figures. The Strategy proposes adopting the DWP tiered approach to measuring child poverty, rather than income poverty on its own. This covers:

- Absolute low income – Children living in households with incomes below 60 per cent of median income held constant in

real terms from a 1998-99 baseline. The baseline is the same for relative and absolute low income as absolute income is held constant in real terms from the 1998-99 baseline year.

- Relative low income - children living in households with an income below 60% of median equivalised household income before housing costs. This is the most widely used indicator in the EU.

Relative income poverty analyses include adjustments to household incomes to take account of different household compositions. This process recognises the fact that different types of household need different levels of income in order to achieve the same standard of living. So, for example, a single adult household requires a lower income than a two adult household with two children in order to achieve the same living standards. As a result, the actual income which relates to the 60 per cent median income threshold depends on the household composition.

For example, in 2004-05, a household with 2 adults and no children were classified as living in relative income poverty (AHC) if they had a weekly income of less than £183 per week. A household consisting of a couple and one child under the age of 1 were classified as living in relative income poverty with a weekly income of less than £196 per week (or 1.07 times that of a couple with no children).

- Material deprivation - children living in households that lack certain goods and services and have an income below 70% median equivalised household income. This attempts to measure living standards as well as relative income. This higher threshold will capture children in families with high unavoidable costs such as housing or childcare which can adversely impact on living standards and leave people with low disposable income even if income is above the 60 per cent median line. This will capture a significant additional aspect of poverty. This measure might also be expected to capture regional dimensions of poverty.

The Department for Work and Pensions intend to publish a new measure of material deprivation in March 2007.

In addition to these three main indicators, in April 2006, the Deputy Social Justice Minister's Child Poverty Implementation Plan proposed the development of a set of key targets and milestones against which the Assembly Government's commitment to eradicate child poverty can be measured and assessed. The text below sets out four major policy area where this approach will be applied, and identifies a number of key target

areas. It highlights the current position, and sets a medium term milestone (2010) and long term (2020) target, to which the Assembly Government will commit itself.

Progress towards achieving the child poverty milestones and targets will be monitored annually through the Assembly Government's Social Justice Report.



## **A. INCOME & WORK**

### **1. Number of children in relative low-income households**

The most recent figures available show that child poverty in Wales has now fallen to the level where it is equal to the average of the UK as a whole. Wales has a comparatively lower rate of child poverty than London, the North East, the West Midlands, the North West and Merseyside and Yorkshire and the Humber. The following milestone will be set to reduce this proportion further, in line with the commitment to abolish child poverty by 2020.

Baseline\* - 35%; Current – 28%

2010-11 Milestone – 17%

2020 Target – To have matched the lowest child poverty rate in Europe

\* 1998-99 HBAI After Housing Costs

If Wales were to meet the child poverty target set for the UK, on an after housing costs basis, that would mean around 100,000 fewer children in poverty in 2010-11 than in 1998-99.

### **2. Proportion of children living in workless households**

The percentage of children living in workless households in Wales has fallen sharply in recent years and has converged with the rate for the UK as a whole. The challenge now is to maintain this downward trend and to at least match the UK performance over the coming years. In Spring 2006, 15.5% of children in Wales lived in workless households.

The following milestone and target will be set to reduce the Welsh figures further.

Baseline - 15.5%

2010 Milestone - 13.5%

2020 Target – to be re-assessed in 2010

### **3. Lone Parent Employment**

Within the framework of the DWP's Incapacity Benefit Reform Green Paper, "*A new deal for welfare: empowering people to work*", for the ten year period 2006 – 2016 we will:

- reduce by 75,000 people the number of people reliant on incapacity benefit in Wales
- help and support 18,000 lone parents into work in Wales

The Green Paper also includes a UK Government target of a 70% employment rate for lone parents. Based on Labour Force Survey data from the last 3 years the current Wales baseline rate for lone parent employment is 55.6%. We are committed to achieving the UK target for lone parent employment by 2016. Such an achievement would mean:

- an increase of 14,000 lone parents in employment in Wales resulting in 24,000 more children with a parent in employment
- of these, around 20,000 children lifted out of poverty in Wales

#### **4. Access to Registered Childcare places**

More childcare places are needed to reduce barriers to work. The poorest communities currently have the lowest number of childcare places because it is so difficult to get a market going. The following milestones will be set to increase the overall pool of childcare places and to give priority to the poorest communities.

- high quality part-time care provided for 16,000 2 year-old children living in the areas of greatest disadvantage in Wales;
- all children to have access to a free part-time education nursery place from the term following their third birthday;
- increase childcare places by 7,000 in the West Wales and the Valleys Objective 1 Convergence area and to increase childcare places by 1,500 in the East Wales Objective 3 area by 2008.

#### **5. Child Trust Fund**

Children from least well-off families have much to gain from asset based welfare policies and policies that promote the financial inclusion of families have a major impact in tackling child poverty. Working in partnership with the credit union movement, we will seek to:

- increase the investment rate of Child Trust Fund vouchers, particularly amongst low-income families, as a means of increasing financial education and encouraging such families to invest wisely for the future benefit of their children.
- continue to support the development of credit unions across Wales so that every low-income family has access to a credit union.

## **B. EDUCATION**

Ensuring that all children – but particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds – have the best start in life and are able to fulfil their potential requires good quality education. We know that educational attainment, even from a young age, is extremely important in determining children’s likelihood of escaping poverty later in life.

In addition, we will set and publish new milestones and targets for participation and achievement in both further and higher education, so as to ensure that young people from the whole of Wales have more equal chances of making the most of their talents and abilities.

We also want to improve the quality of people’s experience at work and offer help to improve their chances of boosting their earning power, particularly amongst the low paid. We will return to this and publish new milestones and targets, involving trade unions and employers.

### **1. Early Years**

We have recently established and will continue to develop the Flying Start programme for 0 – 3 year olds in the most deprived areas of Wales, with a renewed focus on early years intervention for those children living within school catchments areas identified by local partnerships as representing the most deprived communities, with the aim of reducing the social and educational ‘risks’ associated with deprived communities. We will roll out the radical Foundation Phase programme to all primary schools in Wales, to build further on the investment which Flying Start will have provided. The free breakfast initiative is being rolled out to all primary schools that want it.

### **2. Attainment in primary schools**

The percentage of 11 year olds reaching the expected levels of attainment provides a powerful indicator of later success. Through our investment in early years and primary education, including Flying Start and RAISE we have set the following forward outcome indicators in The Learning Country 2 to increase the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (Level 4 or above in Welsh or English, maths and science in combination) through teacher assessment at Key Stage 2\*. In addition, LEAs are required in their Single Education Plans to set local targets, based on targets set by the individual schools they maintain for the core subject indicator. Junior class sizes will be maintained at 30 or less.

Baseline - 2004 - Percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (Welsh or English, maths and science in combination) through teacher assessment by the age of 11 – 74%
--

2010 Milestone – Percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (Welsh or English, maths and science in combination) through teacher assessment by the age of 11 to be 80%

2020 Target - Percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator (Welsh or English, maths and science in combination) through teacher assessment by the age of 11 to be 86%

### **3. Attainment in secondary schools**

Through our investment in secondary schools, including RAISE, we have set the following forward outcome indicators in The Learning Country 2 for improved performance by 15 year olds.

Baseline – 2005 - Percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator through teacher assessment by the age of 14 - 58%

Milestone –Percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator through teacher assessment by the age of 14 to reach 65%

Target – Key Stage 3 teacher assessment: percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator to reach 72%

Baseline – 2006 – 53% of 15 year olds achieved 5 GCSEs or vocational equivalent at grades A\*-C

2010 Milestone – Percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 GCSE A\*-C or equivalent to reach 60%

2020 Target - Percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 GCSE A\*-C or equivalent to approach 67%

Baseline – 2005 - 2.2% of pupils left full time education with no recognised qualification

2010 Milestone - No pupil to leave full time education without an approved qualification

Baseline – 2006 - Key Stage 4: percentage of 15 year olds achieving the core subject indicator to reach 39%

2010 Milestone - Key Stage 4: percentage of 15 year olds achieving the core subject indicator to reach 45%

2020 Target - Key Stage 4: percentage of 15 year olds achieving the core subject indicator to reach 51%

#### **4. Number of 16-18 year olds not in Employment, Training or Education**

Young people not in employment, training or education are concentrated in particular communities and are disproportionately drawn from disadvantaged backgrounds. The following forward outcome indicators have been set in The Learning Country 2 to reduce the proportion of young people in this position in Wales.

Baseline – In 2002-03, an estimated 13,100 (11%) of 16-18 year olds (89%) were not in education, employment or training

2010 Milestone - Percentage of 16-18 year olds in employment, education, or training to reach 93%

2020 Target - Percentage of 16-18 year olds in employment, education, or training to reach 95%

Baseline – data not available

2015 Milestone – 95% of young people, by the age of 25, to be ready for high skilled employment and/or further or higher education

2020 Target - 97% of young people, by the age of 25, to be ready for high skilled employment and/or further or higher education

#### **5. Educational attainment for looked after children**

In the year to March 31 2005, only 35% of looked after children in Wales achieved 2 GCSEs. 58% of looked after children leaving school in the same year failed to achieve a single GCSE or equivalent qualification. The additional £1 million set aside within the RAISE programme for improving the educational attainment of looked-after children is expected to reduce those social and educational barriers to achievement by looked-after population, and enable a subsequent increase in attainment.

The Assembly Government has set up a Stakeholder Group which will look at this aspect as part of an overview of all areas of the education of looked after children. Consideration will be given to setting new targets as part of this process.

## **6. Educational attainment amongst adults**

Living conditions for children depend most crucially upon the earning power of their parents. Adult earnings, in turn, depend most closely upon the skills which parents can use to obtain employment and command an income. We have set the following forward outcome indicators in The Learning Country 2 to reduce the number of working age adults in Wales with no qualifications and to increase the participation rates in adult learning.

Baseline – 2004 – Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in literacy – 75%

2010 Milestone - Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in literacy to be 80%

2020 Target - Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in literacy to be 85%

Baseline – 2004 – Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in numeracy – 47%

2010 Milestone - Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in numeracy to be at least 55%

2020 Target - Percentage of working age adults with level 1 or above functional basic skills in numeracy to be at least 63%

Baseline – 2004 - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 2 or above – 66%

2010 Milestone - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 2 or above to be at least 70%

2020 Target - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 2 or above to be at least 74%

Baseline - 2004 - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 3 or above - 45%

2010 Milestone - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 3 or above to be at least 50%

2020 Target - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 3 or above to be at least 55%

Baseline – 2004 – Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 4 - 26%

2010 Milestone - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 4 or above to be at least 30%

2020 Target - Percentage of adults of working age with a qualification equivalent to an NVQ level 4 or above to be at least 34%

## **C. HEALTH**

Despite recent improvements, Levels of ill health remain high in Wales compared with the rest of the UK, and there are sharp variations in the average levels of ill health between the resident population of different local authority areas.

The Assembly Government is committed to reducing health inequalities and improving services, and this operates at many levels. Various actions are being taken to remove barriers to better health. The following section contains calculated targets and milestones to measure progress in eliminating the effects of poverty on child health.

### **1. Infant mortality rates**

Infant mortality rates in Wales have been below those in the other three UK countries, for some years now. The following milestones and targets will be set to improve the infant mortality rate for the most deprived fifth of the population by 2020 to the current rate among the most affluent fifth of the population:

Baseline - the baseline Infant Mortality Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population is 6.67 per thousand live births, and the most affluent is 4.12 per thousand live births, ratio 5:1 = 1.61 (61%) (1998-2001)

#### Milestones:

By 2010, the Infant Mortality Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 6.16 per 1,000 live births, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, there will be at least a 7.6% reduction in the Infant Mortality Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, the ratio of Infant Mortality Rates between the most deprived and most affluent fifths of the population will be no more than 1.49 (49%) being one fifth of the target reduction

#### Targets:

By 2020, the Infant Mortality Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 4.12 per 1000 live births

By 2020, there will be at least a 38.2% reduction in the Infant Mortality Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population

By 2020, the ratio of Infant Mortality Rates between the most deprived and most affluent fifths of the population will be no more than 1.3 (30%)



## 2. Low Birth Weight

Babies with low weight at birth are known to be at higher risk of a range of problematic health outcomes. We will set the following milestones and targets to improve the Low Birth Weight Rate (less than 2500g) for the most deprived fifth of the population by 2020 to that of the middle fifth of the population now:

Baseline -the baseline Low Birth Weight Rate (less than 2500g) for the most deprived fifth of the population is 9.0 per thousand live births and the middle fifth is 7.3 per thousand live births, ratio 5:3 = 1.23 (23%)(1998-2002)

### Milestones:

By 2010, the Low Birth Weight Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 8.7 per 1000 live births, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, there will be at least a 3.8% reduction in the Low Birth Weight Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, the ratio of Low Birth Weight Rates between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be no more than 1.19 (19%) being one fifth of the target reduction

### Targets:

By 2020, the Low Birth Weight Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 7.3 per 1000 live births

By 2020, there will be at least an 18.9% reduction in the Low Birth Weight Rate for the most deprived fifth of the population

By 2020, the ratio of Low Birth Weight Rates between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be no more than 1.12 (12%)

## 3. Teenage Conception Under 16

Wales has higher levels of teenage pregnancy than in the UK as a whole and rates are highest of all in the most disadvantaged areas. The following milestones and targets will be set to improve the teenage conception rate for each local authority to at least the average for the whole Welsh population by 2020:

Baseline - the baseline rate of teenage conceptions under 16 years old for the local government population area with the highest rate is 14.5 per 1000 girls aged 13-15 years, and 9.0 per 1000 girls aged 13 – 15 years for Wales, ratio highest to mean 1.61 (61%)(1999-2001).

**Milestones:**

By 2010, the rate of teenage conceptions under 16 years old for all local authority areas in Wales will be no more than 13.4 per thousand girls aged 13-15 years, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, the ratio of teenage conceptions under 16 years old for all local authority areas to the average for Wales will be no more than 1.49 (49%)

**Targets:**

By 2020, the rate of teenage conceptions under 16 years old for all local authority areas in Wales will be no more than 9.0 per thousand girls aged 13-15 years

By 2020, the ratio of teenage conceptions under 16 years old for all local authority areas to the average for Wales will be no more than 1.3 (30%)

#### **4. Childhood Obesity (10-15)**

Childhood obesity is becoming more common not only in Wales, but throughout the developed world. As new data becomes available we will set milestones and targets to reduce the prevalence here in Wales.

#### **5. Levels of dental decay amongst children living in Wales**

There is a widening gap between the oral health of children from the least well off and the most well off families in Wales. We will set the following milestones and targets to reduce that gap, building on the successful dental fissure sealant scheme and other oral health initiatives. The objective would be to improve the mean decayed missing filled teeth (dmft) and the %dmft>0 for the most deprived fifth of the population by 2020 to that of the middle fifth now.

#### **Dental caries in 5 year old children**

**Baseline:**

The mean dmft for the most deprived fifth of the population is 3.1 and for the middle fifth it is 2.4 (2003-04). Ratio 5:3 =1.29

The % dmft>0 for the most deprived fifth of the population is 61.8 and for the middle fifth it is 55.3 (2003-2004). Ratio 5:3 = 1.12.

**Milestones:**

By 2010 proportionate progress towards the 2020 target would require a mean dmft of 2.9, being one third the required reduction by 2020

By 2010 proportionate progress towards the 2020 target would require no more than 59% of 5 year old children to have experience of dental decay

**Targets:**

By 2020 the mean number of decayed, missing and filled teeth of the 5 year old children of the most deprived fifth of the population will be 2.4

By 2020 the percentage of caries among the 5 year old children of the most deprived fifth of the population will be 55.3%

### **Dental caries in 12 year old children**

**Baseline:**

The mean DMFT for the most deprived fifth of the population is 1.3 and for the middle fifth it is 1.1 (2004-05). Ratio 5:3 = 1.18

The %DMFT>0 for the most deprived fifth of the population is 52.6 and for the middle fifth it is 46.2 (2004-2005).Ratio 5:3 = 1.14

**Milestones:**

By 2010 proportionate progress towards the 2020 target would require a mean DMFT of 1.2 being approximately one third the required reduction by 2020

By 2010 proportionate progress towards the 2020 target would require no more than 50% of 12 year old children to have experience of dental decay

**Targets:**

By 2020 the mean number of decayed, missing and filled teeth of the most deprived 12 year old children of the most deprived fifth of the population will be 1.1

By 2020 the percentage of caries among the 12 year old children of the most deprived fifth of the population will be 46.2%

## 6. Childhood Accidents

Accidents in childhood do not occur at random across the population. Children from poorest homes are most likely to suffer from accidents, both within the home and outside. Accidental injuries are a serious health risk, particularly road accidents where the position in Wales has been improving steadily over the past few years, though levels are still higher than in England. We will set the following milestones and targets to improve the child pedestrian injury rates for the most deprived fifth of the population by 2020 to that of the middle fifth of the population now:

Baseline - The baseline rate of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police for the most deprived fifth of the population is 69.9 per 100,000 persons per year, and for the middle fifth is 49.6 per 100,000 persons per year, ratio 5:3 = 1.41 (41%) (1995-2000)

### Milestones:

By 2010, the rate of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 65.8 per 100,000 persons per year, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, there will be at least a 5.8% reduction in the rate of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police for the most deprived fifth of the population, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, the ratio of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be no more than 1.33 (33%)

### Targets:

By 2020, the rate of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 49.6 per 100,000 persons per year

By 2020, there will be at least a 29.0% reduction in the rate of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police for the most deprived fifth of the population

By 2020, the ratio of child pedestrian injuries reported to the police between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be 1.20 (20%)

In addition, we will set the following milestones and targets to improve the child pedestrian injury rates for the most deprived fifth of the population to that of the middle fifth of the population by 2020:

**Baseline:**

The baseline child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rate for the most deprived fifth of the population is 39.3 per 100,000 persons per year, for the middle fifth is 26.3 per 100,000 persons per year, ratio 5:3 = 1.49 (49%) (1997-2002)

**Milestones:**

By 2010, the child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 36.7 per 100,000 persons per year, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, there will be at least a 6.6% reduction in the child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rate for the most deprived fifth of the population, being one fifth of the target reduction

By 2010, the ratio of child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rates between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be no more than 1.40 (40%)

**Targets:**

By 2020, the child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rate for the most deprived fifth of the population will be no more than 26.3 per 100,000 persons per year

By 2020, there will be at least a 33.1% reduction in the child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rate for the most deprived fifth of the population

By 2020, the ratio of child pedestrian hospital inpatient episode rates between the most deprived and the middle fifth of the population will be no more than 1.25 (25%)

### Child Road Safety

The Assembly Government's Road Safety Strategy for Wales recognises that the occurrence of child pedestrian casualties is strongly linked to social deprivation. Further research is required to understand the links but many of the risk factors for child pedestrians are related to the geographic and land use characteristics of the areas where they live and play including high traffic volume and speed; high housing density; a lack of suitable play areas and safe routes and a need to cross a higher number of roads to access facilities such as shops and schools. The Strategy has a range of measures in place to reduce casualties such as safe routes to school, 20mph zones and education campaigns and the following targets have been set.

2010 Milestone – 50% reduction in the total number of child killed or seriously injured casualties.

Data published in June 2006 showed that progress has been good and that there has been a 53% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured in Wales. In the light of this reduction the Assembly Government will consider the development of a new 2020 target.

### Further Research

There are clear correlations between the health and the educational attainment outcomes for children living in poverty. The Assembly Government will engage with further research activity to explore the links and inter-relationship between the two policy areas with a view to assessing how one affects the outcome of the other.

## **7. Children's Environmental Health**

Member States from the European Region of the World Health Organisation have recently signed up to two documents - the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) which sets out a framework for tackling children's health issues in relation to environmental factors, and a ministerial declaration to deliver the Action Plan. The Children's Environment and Health Action Plan sets out four "Regional Priority Goals", namely safe water and adequate sanitation; protection from injuries and adequate physical activity; clean outdoor and indoor air; and environments free of damaging chemicals. We will take account of new indicators that are being developed to support this work around children's environmental health.

## **D. HOUSING**

The Assembly Government's National Homelessness Strategy sets out its objectives in tackling homelessness, including the need to reduce the length of time people spend in temporary accommodation, and ending the use of Bed and Breakfast for housing families. During 2005 the Assembly Government reviewed and revised the National Homelessness Strategy to cover the period 2006-8. The revised Strategy reflected increased emphasis on prevention and joint working, and the Assembly Government has continued to support the Strategy through funding, guidance and legislation.

### **1. Number of families with children living in temporary accommodation in Wales**

In 2004-05 there were 9,856 households accepted as homeless. 4,638 (47per cent) were households with dependent children or a pregnant household member.

There were 3,349 households in temporary accommodation in Wales at the end of March 2005 compared with 2,890 a year earlier. 1,688 of these households had dependent children or a pregnant household member, compared with 1,309 at the end of March 2004. Within this total there were 761 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation (up from 691 households at end March 2004); 242 of these households were families with children.

The Assembly Government has published the following targets on homelessness:

- Prevent homelessness among 50% of households who considered themselves as at risk of homelessness, who approached or are referred to the local authority and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation.
- Reduce the number of homeless households found to be unintentionally homeless and in priority need by 20% from 9856 in 2004/5
- Reduce the numbers of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation by 50% from 761 in 2004/5
- Reduce the average length of time spent in temporary accommodation by 20% from 2004/5

The following milestones and targets will be set to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children and thereafter to reduce the reliance upon temporary accommodation more generally:

### B&B Accommodation

Baseline - 242

2010 Milestone – Less than 50 families

2020 Target - B&B eliminated for families with children

### Temporary Accommodation

Baseline - 1,688

2010 Milestone – 1,000

2020 Target – Families in Temporary Accommodation below 500

## **2. Number of Children living in Overcrowded Conditions**

Within Wales there are overcrowded living conditions in all sectors of the housing market which can make life intolerable for families and individuals. Although a multifaceted problem, subject to the dynamics of housing supply and demand, overcrowding does not occur in all geographical areas but is mainly confined to large urban centres. However, compared to other parts of the UK, notably London, overcrowding is not perceived to be a significant issue in Wales. Nevertheless, the 2004 Living in Wales survey indicates that there are 24,000 households with dependant children living in overcrowded conditions in the country.

The Assembly Government wishes to address this issue and has set indicative targets aiming for a reduction in the overcrowding level for households with children to 20,000 by 2010 and 13,000 by 2020. The Assembly Government will seek views on these targets, an indication of the scale, concentration and tenorial nature of the problem by area as well as measures local authorities, working in conjunction with partners, can take to make these targets achievable. Among such measures to be considered are current enforcement powers under Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System under the Housing Act 2004, local authorities' allocations and lettings policies (including nomination arrangements), as well as supply-side factors such as more affordable housing and a freeing-up of under-occupied stock.

### Overcrowded Conditions

Baseline - 24,000

2010 Milestone – 20,000

2020 Target – 13,000