

# One in four parents in poverty 'can't afford to work'<sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

More than one in four parents on low incomes have been unable to get or keep a job because they can't afford to pay for childcare, a new poll for Save the Children has revealed.

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In a survey by YouGov, 28% of parents who have children under 18 and a net income of under £15,000 said they have been unable to get a job or continue with an existing job because the cost of childcare was too great. The figure for parents with an income of over £15,000 was just 9%.

The findings come on the same day that research by the Daycare Trust reveals the cost of childcare in Britain has risen by 8% in the last year and now costs an average of £87.43 per week.

"Many parents on low incomes simply can't afford to go to work," said Jason Strelitz, UK poverty spokesman for Save the Children. "The costs of childcare are so high that by going to work they lose more money than they make. Many parents have to leave their jobs to look after their children.

"The majority of parents in poverty want to work, but with no-one to look after their children they can't."

Dr Strelitz added: "We want the government to increase the take-home pay of parents, by raising the working tax credit or by increasing the minimum wage."

The research highlights the huge financial burden on parents during the summer holidays, when their children are not being looked after at school. The Save the Children survey showed that 62% of people agreed that the summer holidays are one of the most expensive times of year for parents.

"Summer is an extremely expensive time for all parents, but particularly for parents in poverty," Dr Strelitz said. "They have to keep their children entertained with activities that cost money. Many are also missing out on the free meals they receive during term time.

"Save the Children wants the government to introduce seasonal grants for the poorest families, of £100 per child in summer and winter, to help parents cope with these expensive times of year. This should be part of the £3 billion investment needed for the government to keep its promise of halving child poverty by 2010."

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## About the survey

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,055 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 8th - 10th July 2008. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+). For the purposes of this survey 'parents in poverty' is understood to mean those with children under 18 living at home with a net income of less than £15,000 per year. 'Parents' is understood to mean those with children under 18 living at home.

**Region:** Europe<sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** affordability<sup>[3]</sup>

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