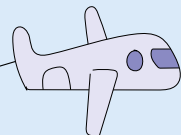
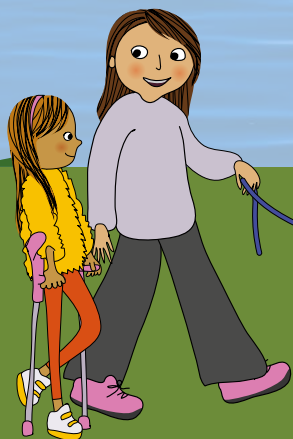


Our Children, Our Future: How the government is helping children and families



Helping children understand the government's
'Our Children, Our Future: Tackling Child Poverty'
strategy and what it means for them



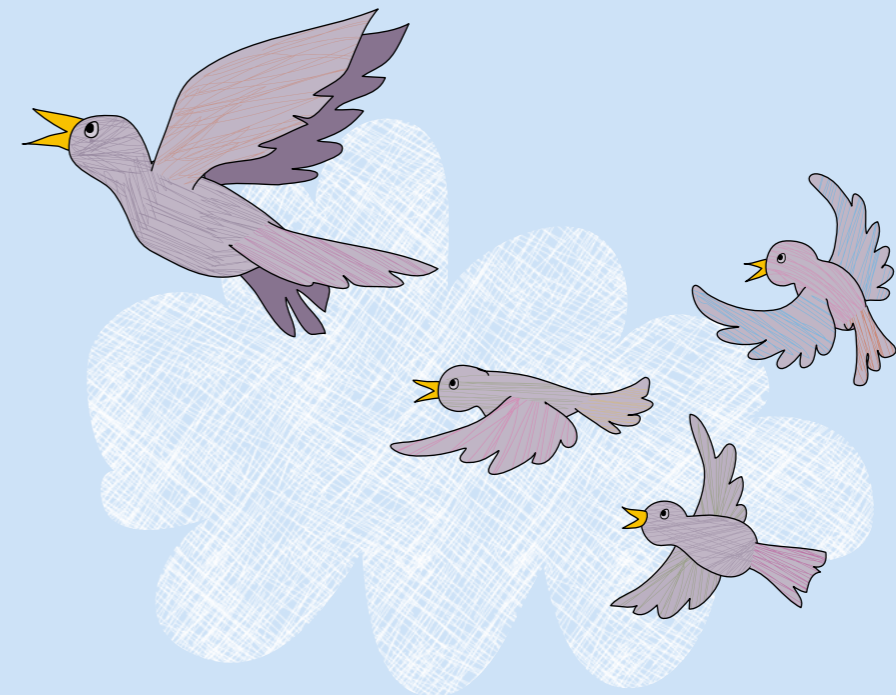
March 2026



UK Government

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A message for you

Hello! This plan is all about making life better for children, and that means you.

It has been written by the government for the United Kingdom. The UK government is a group of adults whose job is to make important decisions, rules and plans to help look after the United Kingdom and the people who live in it.

All children deserve to have what they need to be happy, healthy and do amazing things in life.

Sadly, over the past few years, more and more families have found it hard to afford the things they need. Right now, in a classroom of 30 children, about 10 might be living in a family that doesn't have everything they need, or enough money.

Not having enough money for things like food, clothes, and a safe, warm home can make everyday life harder for families. It can make it more difficult for children to do well at school and enjoy the same chances as other children.

This is sometimes called poverty. It's not fair, and it's not because parents or carers aren't trying hard.

Every child has the right to grow up free from poverty, and so the UK government has made a plan to help make sure that every child has the best start in life. It's a big job, and it will take time, but we are getting started now.

In this plan, we will explain what we are going to do to help families like yours or your friends'. Some things are for children and families across the whole of the UK, and others are just for children and families in England. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, they have their own governments that decide some things for children and families.

This plan is about making sure that every child – no matter who they are or where they live – can learn, play, grow and follow their dreams.

Let's explore together!

Talk together

What makes you feel safe and happy?

What families need

All families are different, but every family needs certain things to be happy and healthy. These aren't special things, they are basic things that everyone should have.

Think about what makes you feel safe, comfortable and ready for each day. **You might need:**

Why is it important to have these things?

When families have the things they need, children like you can do what's most important, like enjoying things that make you happy, keeping healthy, and learning at school.

But right now, some families can't afford all these things. Even when parents and carers work hard, sometimes there isn't enough money to buy everything a family needs. We know that this means some children miss out, and it can make them worried or sad.



How we are helping

Now that you understand what families need, we'll tell you how the UK government is going to work together with schools, hospitals, local councils, charities, businesses, and lots of other helpful people to make sure every family has these things.

We have created a plan with three main parts. Think of each part like a piece in a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece joins together to show how we will support children and their families.

Let's look at each one.



1. Helping families have enough money

Many parents and carers work hard to look after their families. But some people can't work, or can't work as much as they need to, because of illness or looking after other people. And sometimes families' situations change, so even when adults are trying their best, there still isn't enough money to pay for things like a home, food, heating and clothes.



Here is what we are going to do to help these families:

Help bigger families

In the past, some families with three or more children did not get as much help from the government for every child. We are changing this rule. If a family needs help from something called Universal Credit (where we give money to families who need it), they will get support for all their children, no matter how many brothers and sisters a family has.



Help parents find good jobs

Job centres are places where adults can go for help to find work. We are making sure that when parents and carers visit job centres, they get support that works for them and their families.

Make sure there are good jobs with fair pay

We are making sure there are good jobs available and that parents and carers are paid fairly. We have increased the National Living Wage, which is the lowest amount of money people can earn in a job, so when adults go to work, they can earn a bit more.



Help with childcare

Sometimes, parents and carers need help looking after their children. This might be at a nursery, with a childminder, or at a club. We are helping with the cost of childcare, building more nurseries, and creating free breakfast clubs for children in England.

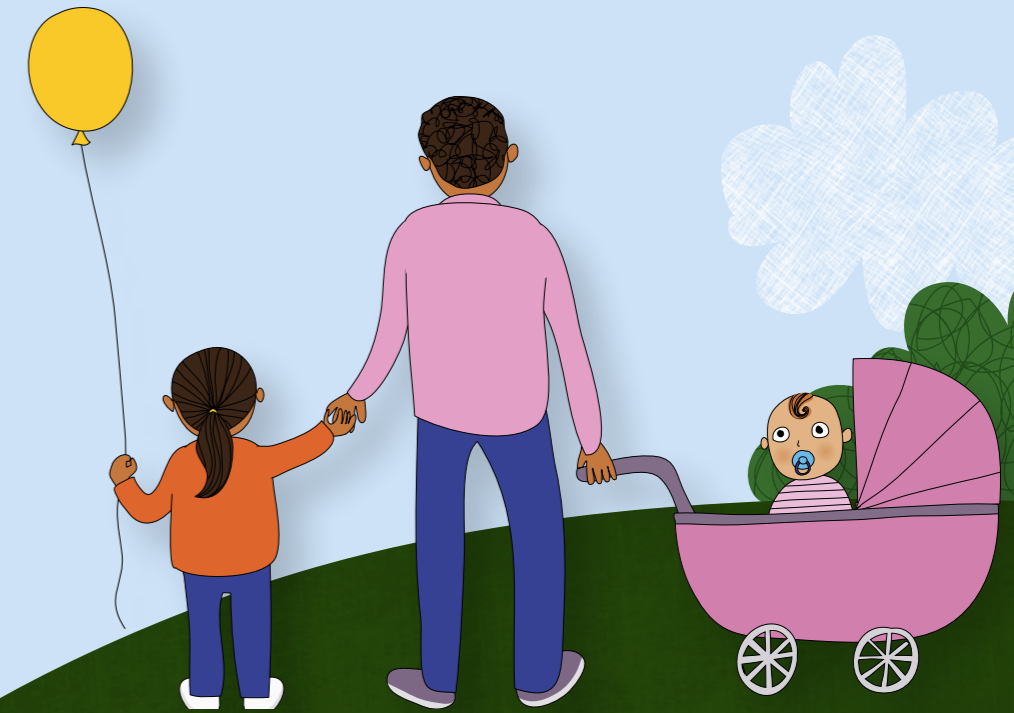


Help single parents

Some children are looked after by one parent or carer. This is called a single parent. We will make sure that when there's a parent that does not live with their children, they still help pay for things like food and clothes.



Did you know that when parents and carers have good, secure jobs, it helps children in lots of ways, not just having more money? For example, when parents and carers feel less worried about money, they might have more time and energy to spend with children, and it can make the whole family feel calmer and happier.



Talk together

What do you think families could do if they had a bit more money each week?

2. Saving families money

Even when families have more money, it can still be hard to pay for the things they need if they are too expensive.



To help bring down the cost of important things like having a warm house, eating enough food, and getting to school, in England we will:

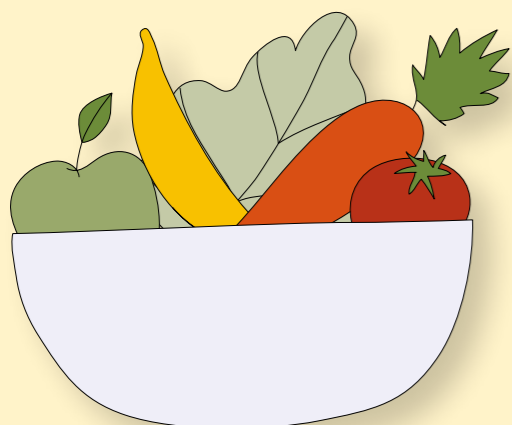
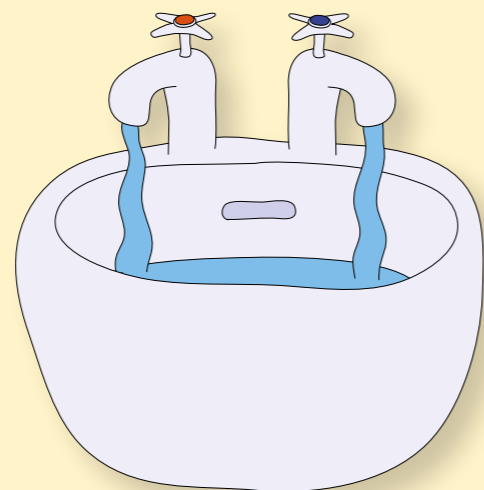


Build more homes

We will build more homes that families can afford. Sometimes families need to live in temporary homes for a short period of time. We will make sure that children who have to do this still get help to stay healthy and keep learning at school, even if where they live changes.

Help families with heating and water bills

Heating a home and having clean water costs money. We are working with heating and water companies to make bills cost less, and make it easier for families to get help paying their bills.



Make food easier to get

To make sure every child has enough food, we are giving more free meals at schools, creating free breakfast clubs, and working with supermarkets to make it easier to get or afford food.

Make going to school cost less

Things like school uniform and school activities cost money. We are going to help families spend less on these things and give families more options to pick from.



Make transport better

Families need transport like cars and buses, alongside good walking and cycling options, to get to important places, like school or appointments. We want to keep ticket prices low and make sure transport works better for everyone.



Help families get online

Today, lots of important things happen on the internet. We will support local projects that help families get online so they don't miss out on things that might help them.

Talk together

Why do you think it's important for children to be able to join in with fun activities inside and outside of school?

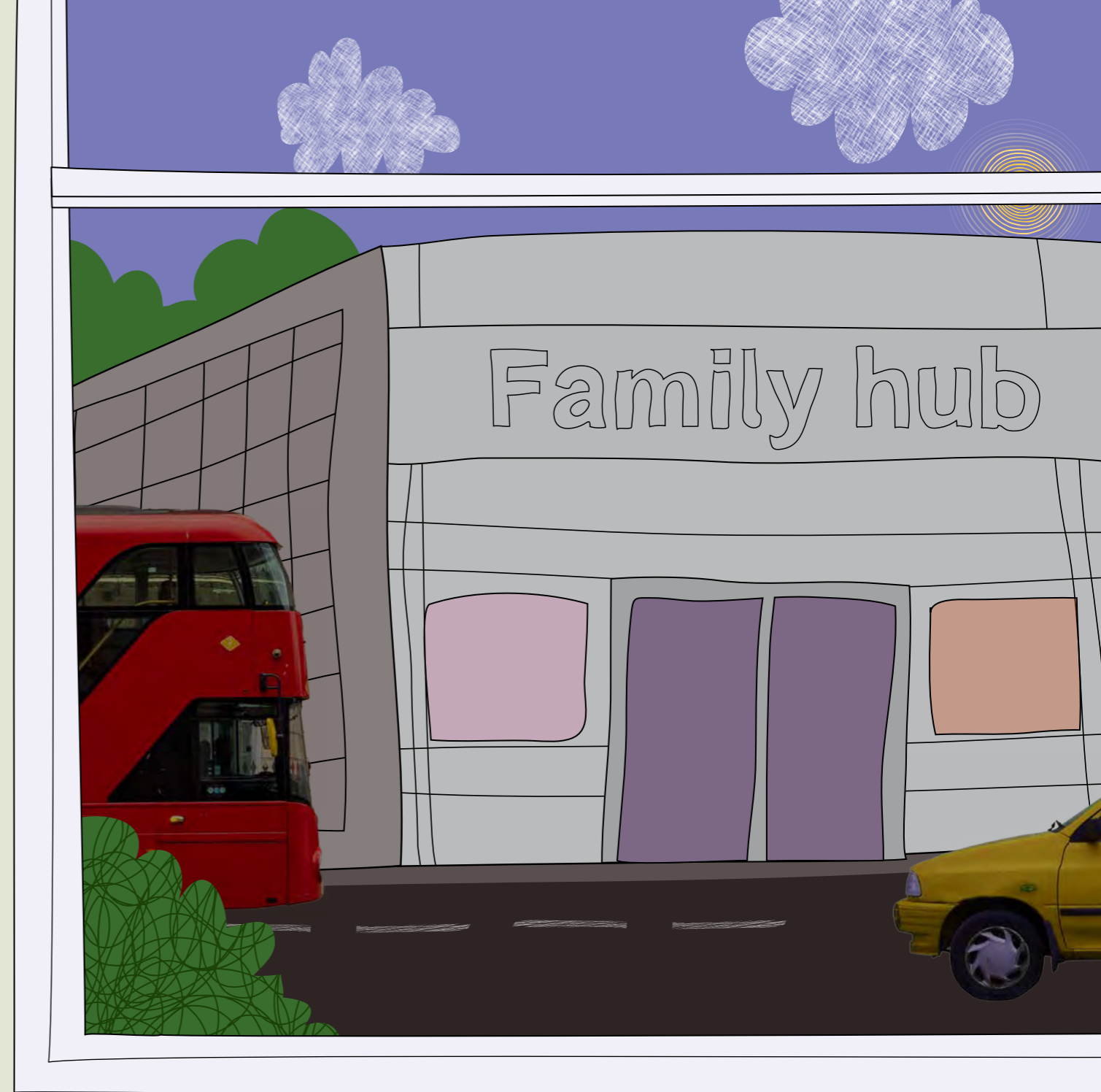
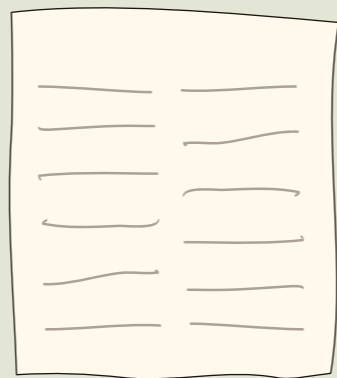
Did you know that when homes, heating, food and travel are more affordable, families worry less about money? This means families can spend more time doing fun things, and everyone feels happier.

3. Making life better for families

Where you live matters. Families need to be able to get help when they need it. This means having doctors and family hubs nearby to help you look after your health. It also means having places where you can play, learn and grow – like schools, libraries and youth clubs.



Waiting room



To help make life better for families where they live, we will:

Set up more family hubs

Family hubs are special places where families can go to get help with lots of different things, like how to look after their health, how to look after babies and children, how to get help with money worries, and how to find local clubs and activities. We are going to create more family hubs across England.



Work with local councils

Your local council helps run the area where you live, looking after the parks, libraries and youth clubs. We will help them so they can make things better for local families.



Help babies stay healthy

We will make sure that families with babies get help from health visitors. Health visitors come to your home to check that babies are growing well and help families learn how to look after their baby's health.

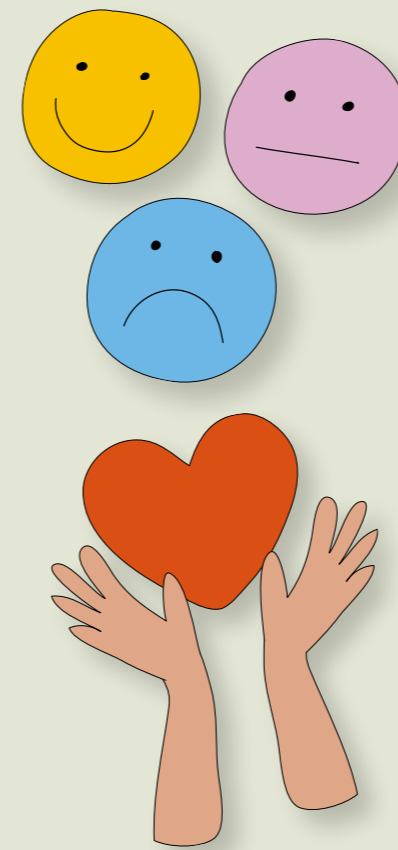
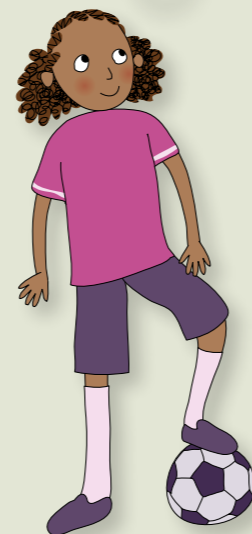
Help families going through hard times

Some families have to deal with very difficult things, like someone being very poorly, or not having a home. These families might need extra help. We have given money to local councils so they can help these families when they need it most.



Support young people

Young people need safe places to go, people who care for them, and a community around them. We are improving youth clubs and building new ones, and making it easier for young people to be involved in activities, including sport.



Improve mental and emotional health

Sometimes children feel worried or sad about things. It is important that children can talk about their feelings, so we are making sure that there is someone in every school who can listen and help you feel better.

Work with charities

A charity is a group of people who work to make life better for other people. We are going to do what we can to help charities keep doing the amazing things they do.

Help areas in need

We will give more money to the areas that need the most help. And the people who live in these areas will decide how to spend that money. They might make shops where food costs less, or places to find school uniforms or furniture for houses.



Try new things

Sometimes we need to try different things to see what works best. We will try new ideas in some places to see if they work. For example, testing ways to help young children with their learning.



Talk together

What places near your home do you like to visit? What new places would you like near your home?

What this means for you

All the changes we have explored in this plan are about making life better for children across the UK, including you.

The government wants every child to:



It will take time to make all these changes happen. But lots of people are working together to make sure that every family gets what they need. This includes the UK government, teachers and schools, doctors and nurses, local councils, and community groups.

Some families will see changes quickly, like getting more money to help with food or bills, or having a free breakfast at school. Other families will see changes more slowly, like building new homes to live in or new places to visit where you live.

The most important thing to know is that we will keep working hard to make life better for families like yours.

Talk together
Let's think about what we have just read.
How did it make you feel?
What are some of the things the UK government is going to do to help children and families?

If anything in this plan has made you feel worried or upset, please talk to a trusted adult, like your parent, carer, teacher, or another grown-up who looks after you. They will help and support you.



Helpful resources

If you would like to learn more, you can look at the following resources with a trusted adult.

1. **Child Poverty Action Group 'Talking about poverty at school – activities'**
<https://cpag.org.uk/education/working-with-young-people/voice-network-activities-pupil-groups-scotland>
2. **End Child Poverty 'Talking about poverty – action toolkit'**
<https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/action-toolkit>
3. **UNICEF 'Know Your Rights – resource for children 11+'**
www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/guidance-assemblies-lessons/know-your-rights-child-rights-education-core-materials



Helpful words

Some words or phrases in this guide might be new to you. These simple explanations will help you understand what they mean.

If there are any other words you don't understand, ask a trusted adult.

Parent and carer

A parent is a mum or dad. A carer is any grown-up who looks after you.

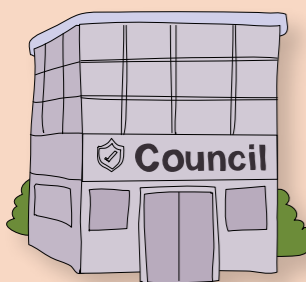


Government

The government is a group of adults whose job is to make important decisions, rules and plans to help look after a country and the people who live in it.

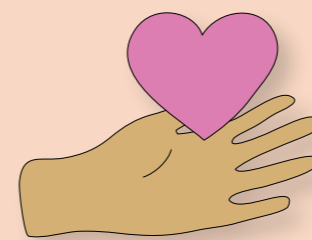
Poverty

Poverty is when a family doesn't have enough money to pay for things they need – like food, a warm home, or clothes.



Local council

Your local council is a group of adults who help look after the area where you live. They take care of things like parks, libraries, bins and roads.

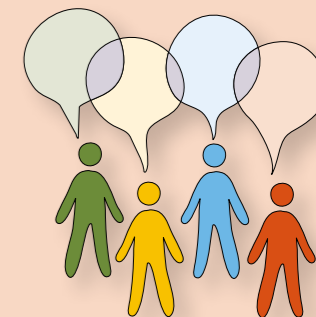


Charity

A charity is a group of adults who work together to help other people. They don't do it to make money like a regular job – they do it because they want to make life better for people in need.

Community group

A community group is when people in your local area come together to help each other or do good things for their neighbourhood.



Family hub

A family hub is a friendly place where families can get help with lots of different things – like staying healthy, looking after children, or getting help with money worries.

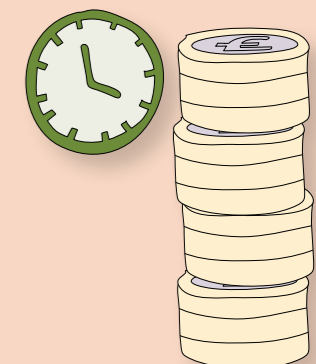
Universal Credit

Universal Credit is money the government gives to some families who need extra help paying for things, like a home or food.



National Living Wage

The National Living Wage is a rule that says people must be paid at least a certain amount of money for each hour they work. It helps make sure that people are paid fairly.



If you have any questions about this resource or want to provide feedback, email: policy.povertycorrespondence@dpw.gov.uk



Family hub