

PACYP 22

Ymchwiliad i weithgarwch corfforol ymhlith plant a phobl ifanc

Inquiry into physical activity of children and young people

Ymateb gan Plant yng Nghymru

Response from Children in Wales



**Children in Wales**  
**Plant yng Nghymru**

### **Consultation response**

#### **The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee consultation on physical activity of children and young people.**

Children in Wales is the national umbrella organisation in Wales for children and young people's issues, bringing organisations and individuals from all disciplines and sectors together. One of our core aims is to make the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) a reality in Wales. Children in Wales campaigns for sustainable quality services for all children and young people, with special attention for children in need and works to ensure children and young people have a voice in issues that affect them.

For further information on the work of Children in Wales, please see [www.childreninwales.org.uk](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk) and [www.youngwales.wales](http://www.youngwales.wales)

Children in Wales works closely with its member organisations and has established working relationships with the Welsh Government and other funders. A key role for our organisations is to maintain a constructive flow of information between those working to develop policy and legislation and those working directly with children and young people. Our conference and extensive training programme, together with the forums and networks that are supported or managed by Children in Wales, serve as a means for ensuring that our members and Welsh Government officials are kept informed of current and evolving developments in the field, and that these developments help shape policies and enhance practice. Children in Wales

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membership covers a vast array of organisation who work to improve the lives of children in Wales and includes voluntary/third sector organisations, professional associations, local authorities and health bodies, as well as many smaller community groups, schools and individual members. At the time of writing, there are over 260 members

Young Wales is a programme of work that aims to ensure that Children and young peoples' voices, and views are heard by decision makers locally and nationally. The young wales team worked with over 1000 young people during the last year.

Much of the evidence gathered for this submission has been collected either directly or from workers who support young people. The focus of our submission will be on the impact of poverty on children and young people's ability to participate in physical activity.

It has been well established by research that participation in sport is determined, to some extent, by socioeconomic group. Young people living in deprived areas are less likely to participate in sport (particularly sports clubs) than their peers. Demand for sports facilities are lower for young people living in areas of relative deprivation. Research has also identified that children's participation is influenced by whether parents, siblings and peers participate in organised sports activities

There are a number of barriers to accessing sports and physical activities, for people living in poverty, these include:

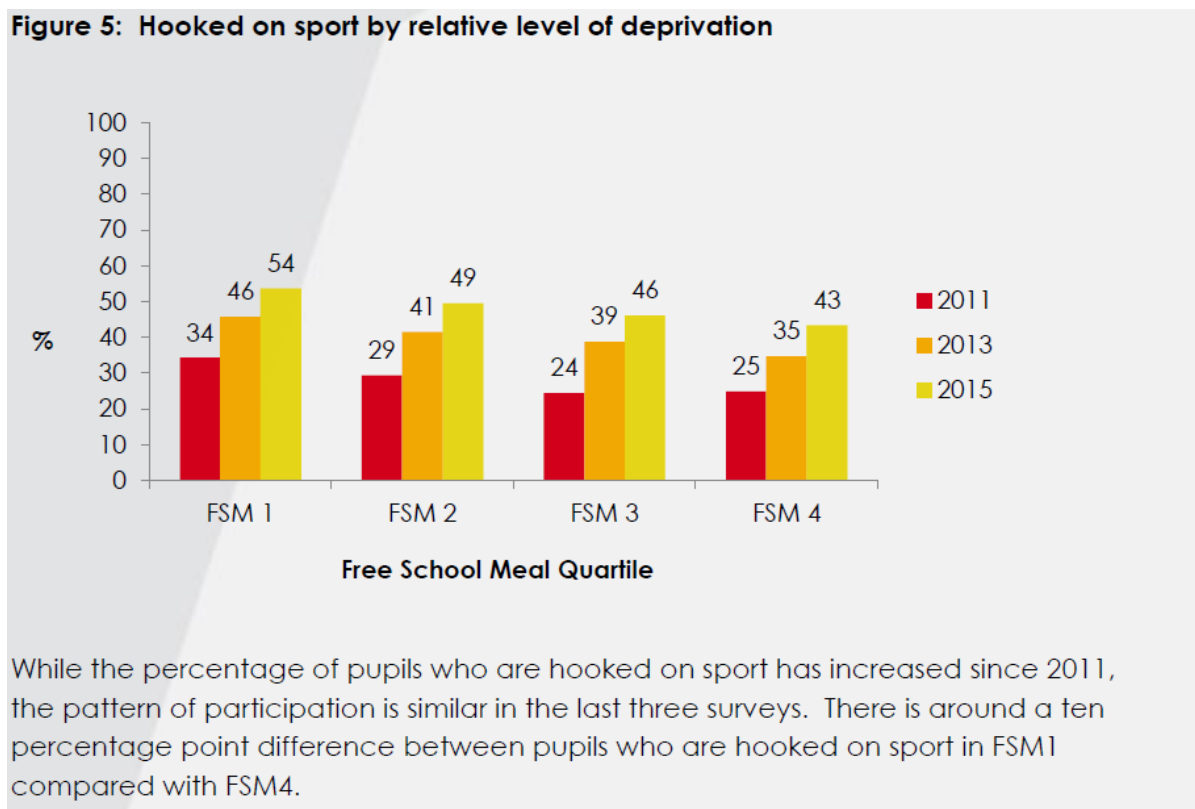
- Unable to afford kit
- Unable to afford travel to games/activities
- Poor or costly transport links to engage in activities
- Unable to afford to join activity groups in the community such as gym classes or football clubs.
- Fear of bullying because of using old/2<sup>nd</sup> hand sports equipment.
- Parents working long or shift hours prohibits involvement or activity, e.g. going to park or playground, taking to extra-curricular activities in school.
- Rurality and distance to travel to activities

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While many Communities First areas provide opportunities for physical activities for children, young people and their families. It is unlikely these will be replaced once Communities First disappears, unless through Children First Initiatives. No other Welsh Government early intervention programme has a specific remit to deliver physical activity; the Healthy Child Wales programme would not replace levels of input that are currently delivered by Communities First programmes.

Sport Wales has its own Child Poverty Strategy and in its State of the Nation Survey<sup>1</sup> gives consideration of poverty and deprivation measured by entitlement to Free School Meals. The table below demonstrates that there is a 10 percent point difference between Quartiles 1 and 4.

**Figure 5: Hooked on sport by relative level of deprivation**



Sports Wales stated:

“This research summary shows that there is a poverty of aspiration amongst young people in deprived communities. Not only are they less likely to participate in sport (particularly in sports clubs), they are less likely to express demand for most sports, and are less likely to have people around them who take part in sport.”

<sup>1</sup> ‘School Sports Survey – State of the Nation’ Sport Wales (2015)

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The evidence presented by the Sports Wales survey was powerfully illustrated at a recent Children in Wales Poverty conference where young people from Caerphilly Youth Forum delivered a workshops on young people's perspectives on child poverty, and what impact does this have on their mental health and well-being? The young people developed an interactive workshop, including a short drama written by themselves especially for the conference, highlighting a day in the life of two very different young people, one growing up in poverty and the other in a more prosperous home. One element of the workshop identified that people living in poverty do not bring their P.E. kit to school, as they do not feel they have the “proper kit” and fear ridicule from other pupils. Thus young people miss out on any opportunities to try out new sports and avoid engaging in physical activity.

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