



I'm
hungry

Emergency Food Provisioning to Families with School Age Children (FWSAC)

Methods:

- Data collected through guided interviews with 47 individuals from 38 organisations involved with providing emergency food provisioning to families with school aged children during the lockdowns.
- Guided interview included prompts to discuss the following themes including activities of organisations before the lockdowns; services provided to FWSAC including during the school holidays; perceived needs of FWSAC during lockdowns; met and unmet needs of FWSAC during lockdowns; supports received from authorities and the community; further supports liked; Implications for supporting FWSAC in the future and for supporting FWSAC during school holidays

Key findings

- Lockdowns and school holidays exacerbate existing problems related to inadequate level of welfare provisioning for those on benefits.
 - The lockdown has highlighted really, and I think the hope that the government will recognise this going forward, that the current level of support they provide to families on a low income or on social security is entirely totally inadequate [Daisy, Community Flat Manager]
- FWSAC on low wages may be vulnerable to food insecurity should there be even the smallest fluctuations in income and/or expenditure
 - What we've seen several of is large families with five or six kids, where inevitably the mum is at home as you know looking after the kids, dad's working and before the pandemic, you know they're not living high on the hog and incomings are probably just about covering outgoings, but if the dad is furloughed and they have to take a 20% income drop then it's is a big enough of a drop in income to make them need the likes of ourselves. [Des, Local Authority Worker]
- Middle and high income families could be vulnerable to food insecurity should there be any redundancies as welfare provisions may not cover debts and they may lack knowledge of how to negotiate the welfare system.
 - The fear of universal credit hit hard after summer last year because a massive thing is that people are scared of applying for universal credit because they just don't understand it. So my advice on universal credit after summer specifically to families and young families or low paid families or families where one person's been laid off, that advice skyrocketed. There was so many people applying for universal credit after summer last year. [Mark, Foodbank Manager]
 - But if somebody's paying quite a high mortgage and they lose their job and they've probably also got a car on HP, the benefit system doesn't touch the sides. And they're immediately in a very, very precarious financial situation. So we've seen a lot of people who never in a million years would have thought they'd need the services of people like us, suddenly needing them. [Des, Foodbank Manager]
- The additional supports during the lockdowns provided by the Scottish Government have met some of the needs of FWSAC during these times and could prove useful during school holidays and future lockdown. However, it also shows that more needs to be done if a right to food in Scotland is to be realised.
 - As I say we've been really kind of lucky with the way our council just took it on-board and the way they kind of responded. We've received wellbeing packs from them as well and packs for kids. So they really have been going above and beyond. I know that's not been – I've spoken to other foodbanks in different areas, and I know that's not been the experience of everybody. But I really can't fault our council at all. They've been a great support. [Cathy, Foodbank Manager]
 - Blooming right the council should have given us more funding because if it wasn't for us they would have to pay for the food themselves or else deal with destitute families. So we're saving them so much money and so much grief and so much manpower. Yeah, no, we don't get a bean. Well that's not true, we got money for a computer, which was £800 or something, and financially that's it. I mean I suppose the Council... yeah, no, they haven't given us anything [Karen, Foodbank Manager]
- Furthermore, given that the lockdowns simply exposed existing problems and precarious groups, the additional supports required should be put in place at all times rather than only during school holidays and should there be a lockdown in future.