

Dr John H. McKendrick

Making sense of poverty as a means to better Restorative Practice in education



Restorative Practices Seminar
University of Edinburgh
October 3rd 2014

Summary

Child poverty in Scotland's is everyone's business.

Child poverty - and the adverse impact of that poverty – will only be tackled when everyone appreciates their responsibilities and the importance of their contribution to this endeavour.

Similarly, child poverty is a 'hidden hand' that compromises the ability of business, and professionals to achieve their goals.

Overview of Presentation

- What brings you here?
- Child poverty in Scotland: *reinforcing what we know*
- What difference can we make?
- Conclusion

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



What brings you here?

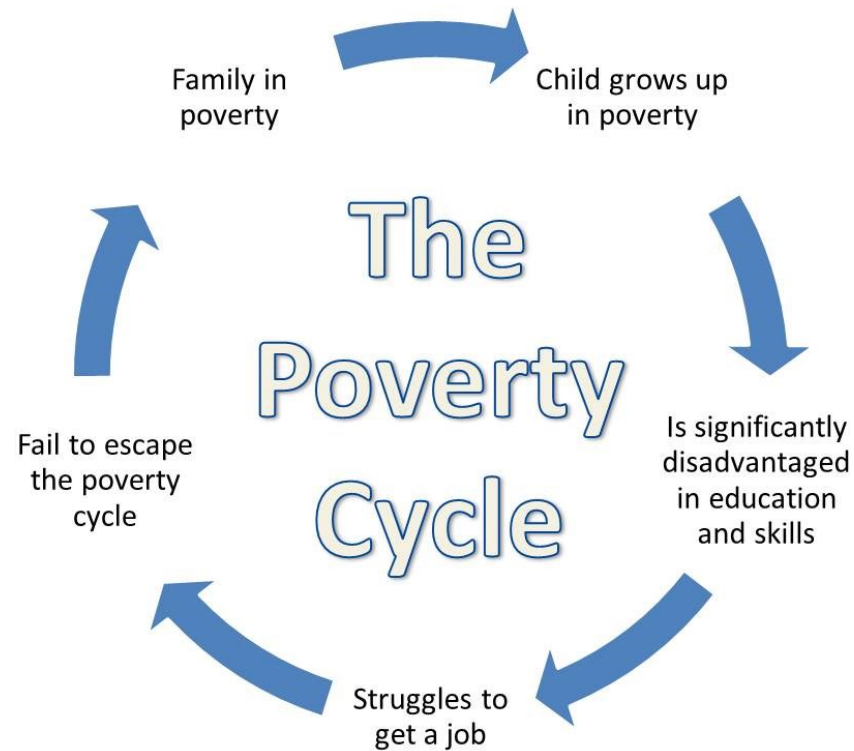
You have an opinion on poverty

- Poverty is a waste of opportunity
- Poverty is a waste of money
- Poverty helps keep wages low, which is good for business
- Some people choose to live in poverty

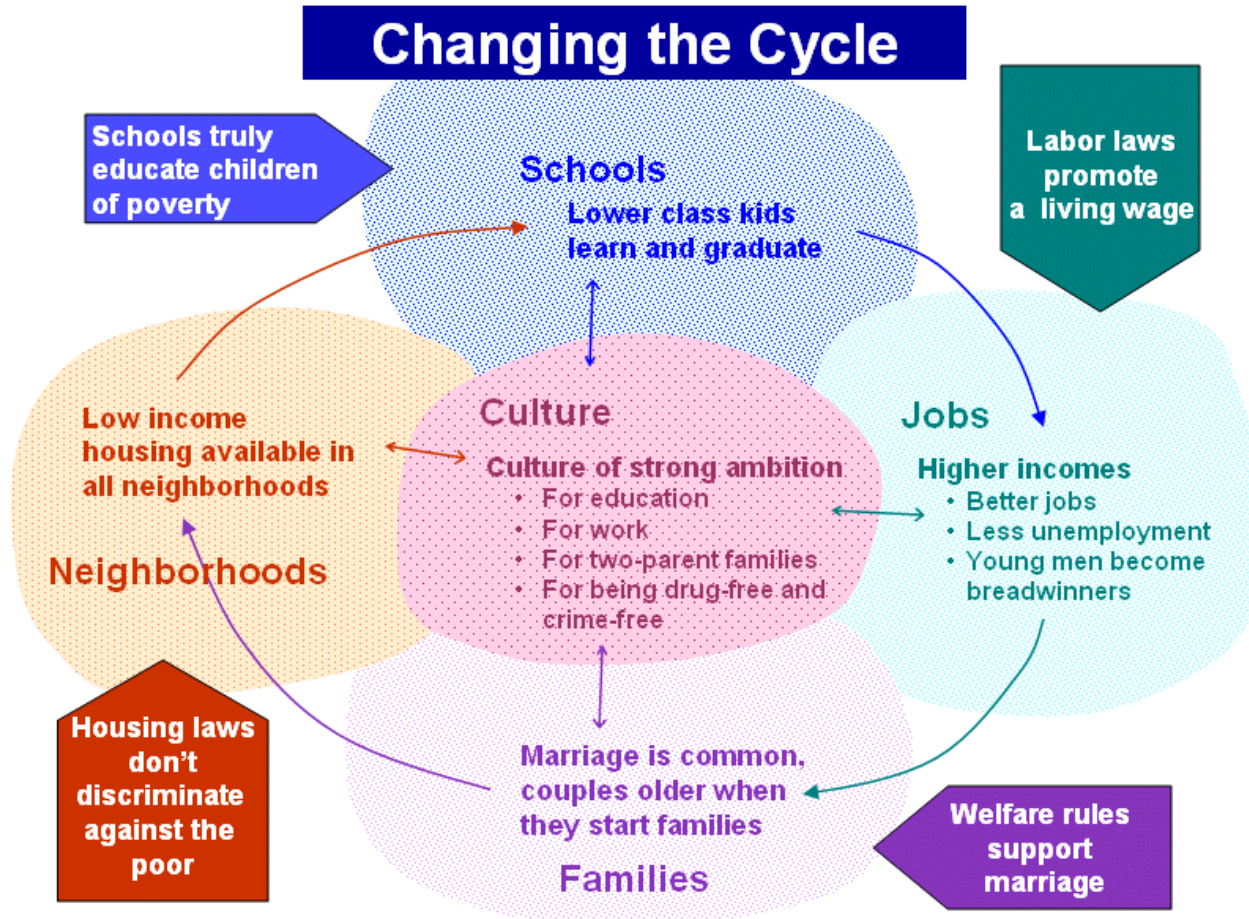
Who we are

- Skilled professionals who have taken one day away from our daily workplace to consider issues pertaining to restorative practice in education
- It's likely that we are inclined to think that poverty is a problem for the education of some girls (and boys) in Scotland
- It's likely that we have a general interest in Scottish society and are broadly aware of poverty issues in Scotland
- We are likely to encounter young people experiencing poverty in our daily working lives (but perhaps not in our wider life)

Poor education as cause/effect of poverty



Education as the solution to poverty



Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



**Child Poverty in Scotland:
*reinforcing what we know***

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



*The poverty that is counted
by Government*

The four measures of child poverty

Absolute income poverty

- Number and proportion of children in households whose equivalised income before housing costs is below 60 per cent of inflation adjusted GB median income in 2010/11. This is a measure of whether the poorest families are seeing their incomes rise in real terms.

Relative income poverty

- Number and proportion of children in households whose equivalised income before housing costs is below 60 per cent of GB median income in the same year. This is a measure of whether the poorest families are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole

Material deprivation and income poverty

- Number and proportion of children that are both materially deprived and are in households whose equivalised income before housing costs is less than 70 per cent of the GB median in the current year. This is to provide a wider measure of children's living standards.

Persistent income poverty

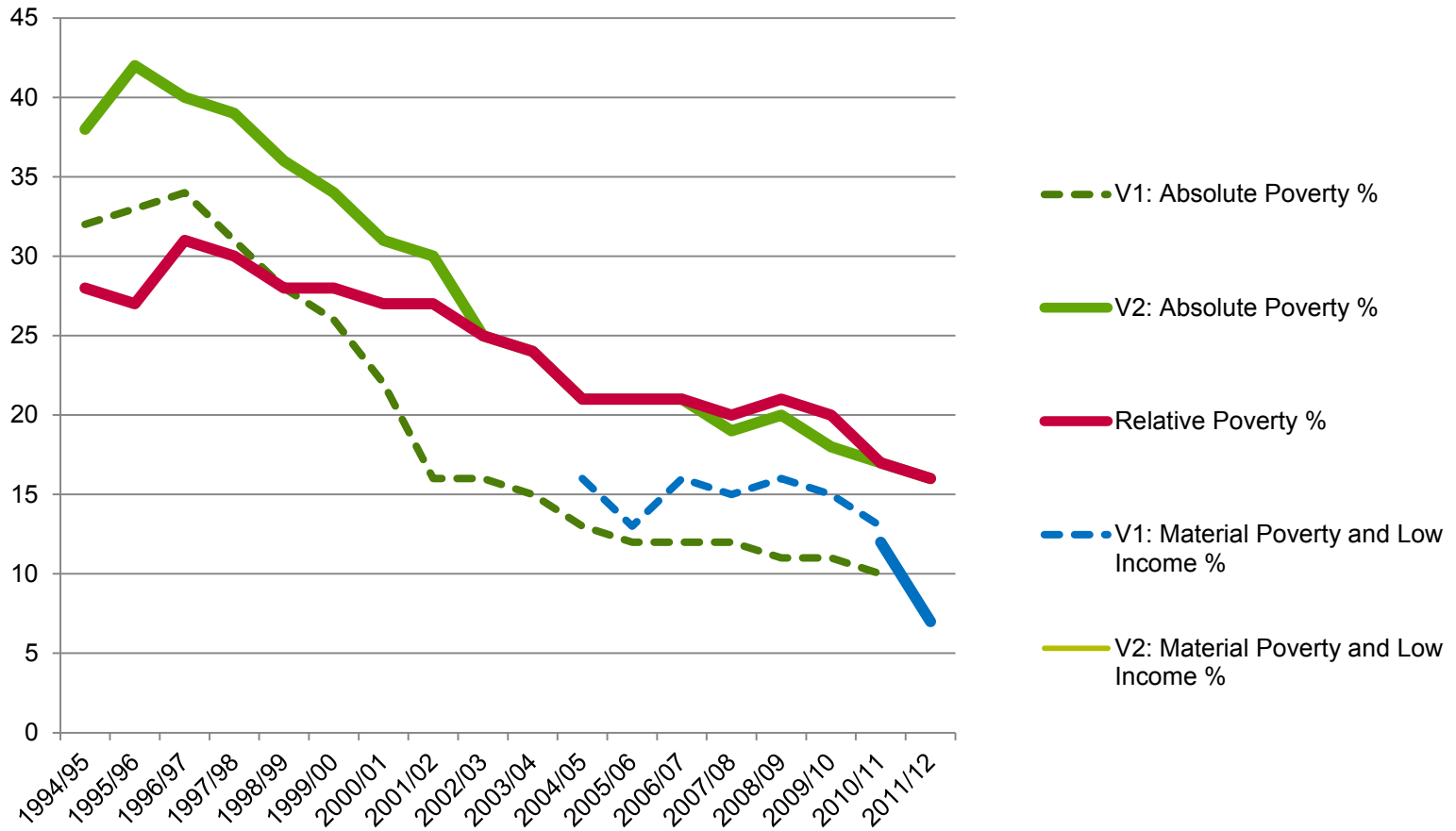
- Reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty (that is to reduce the percentage of children who live in households that have a household income of less than 60% of the median household income for three years out of a four-year period) with the specific target percentage to be set at a later date.

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education

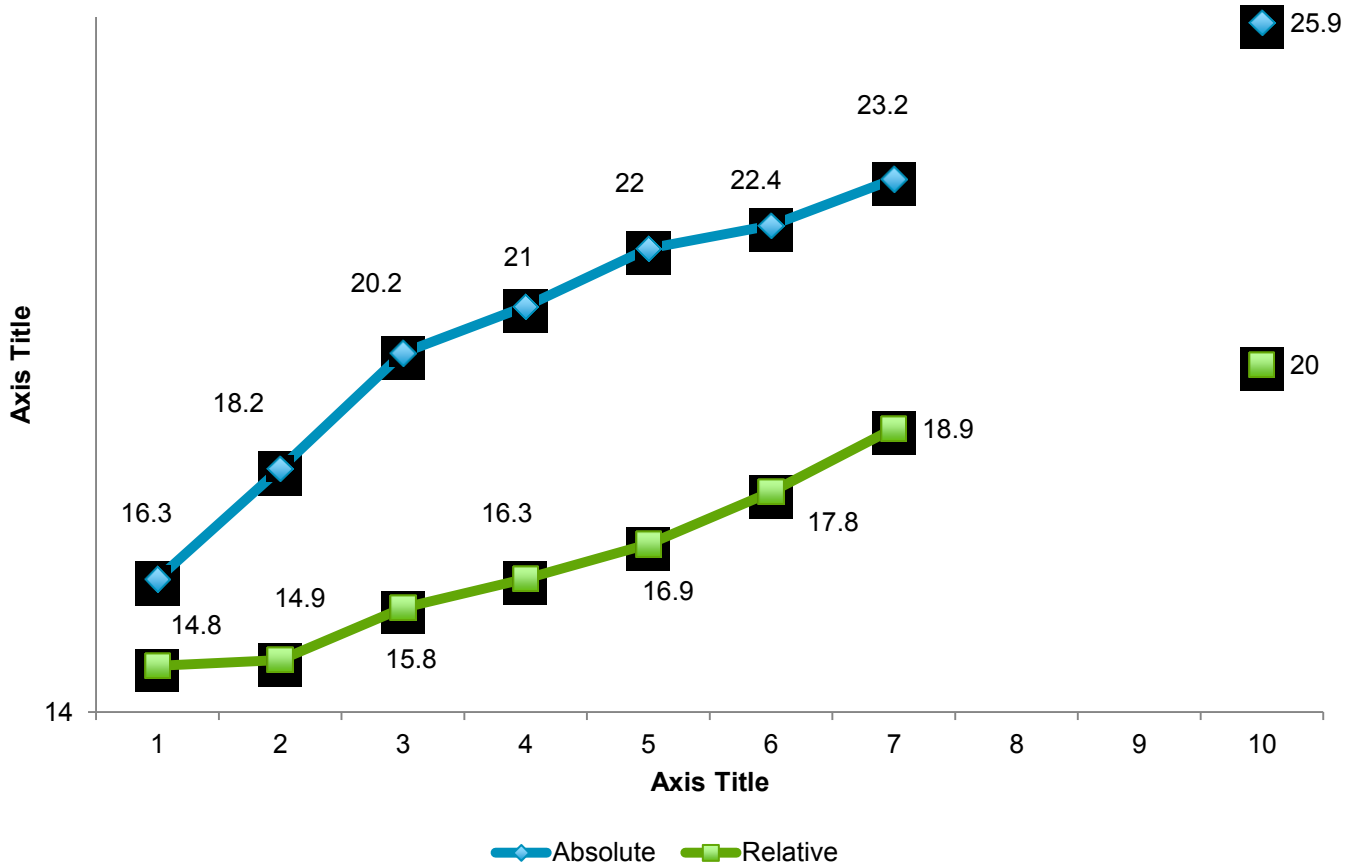


Evidence

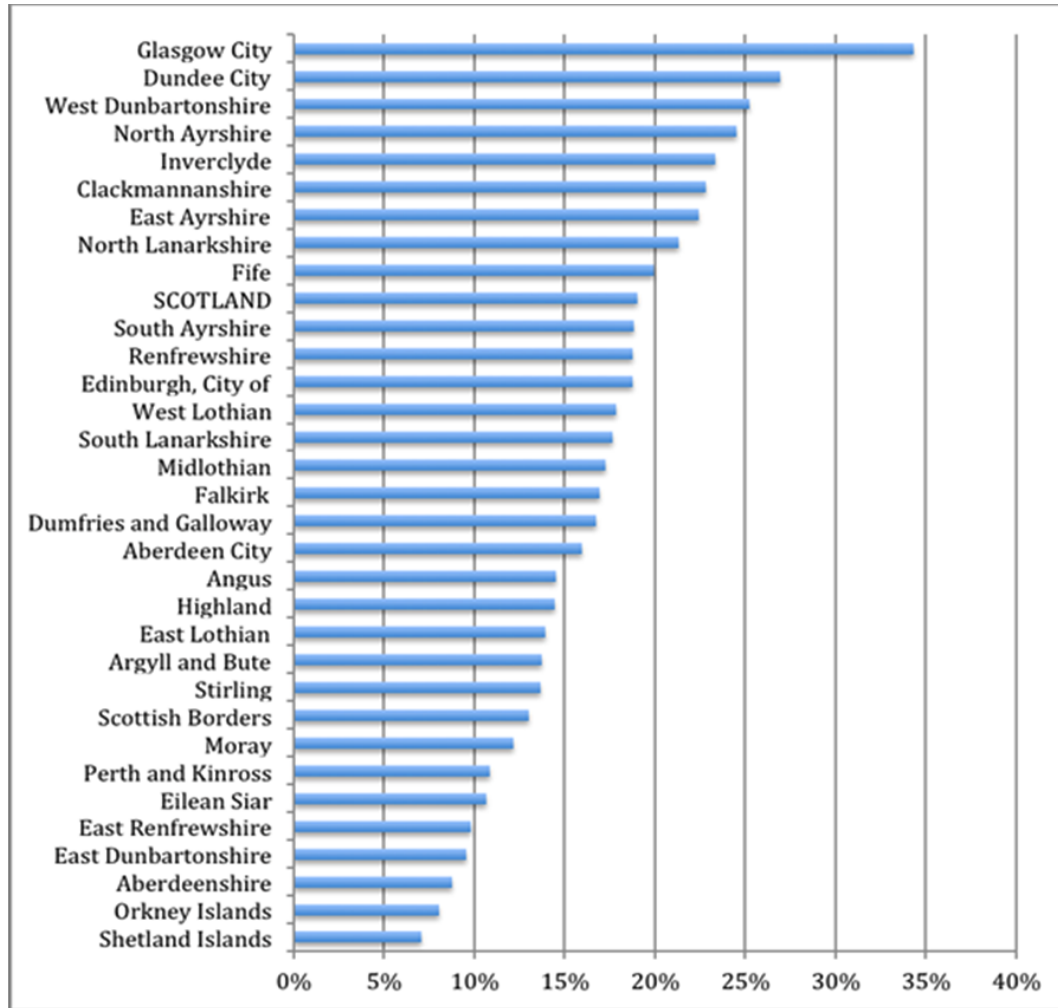
Child Poverty in Scotland since 1994/95



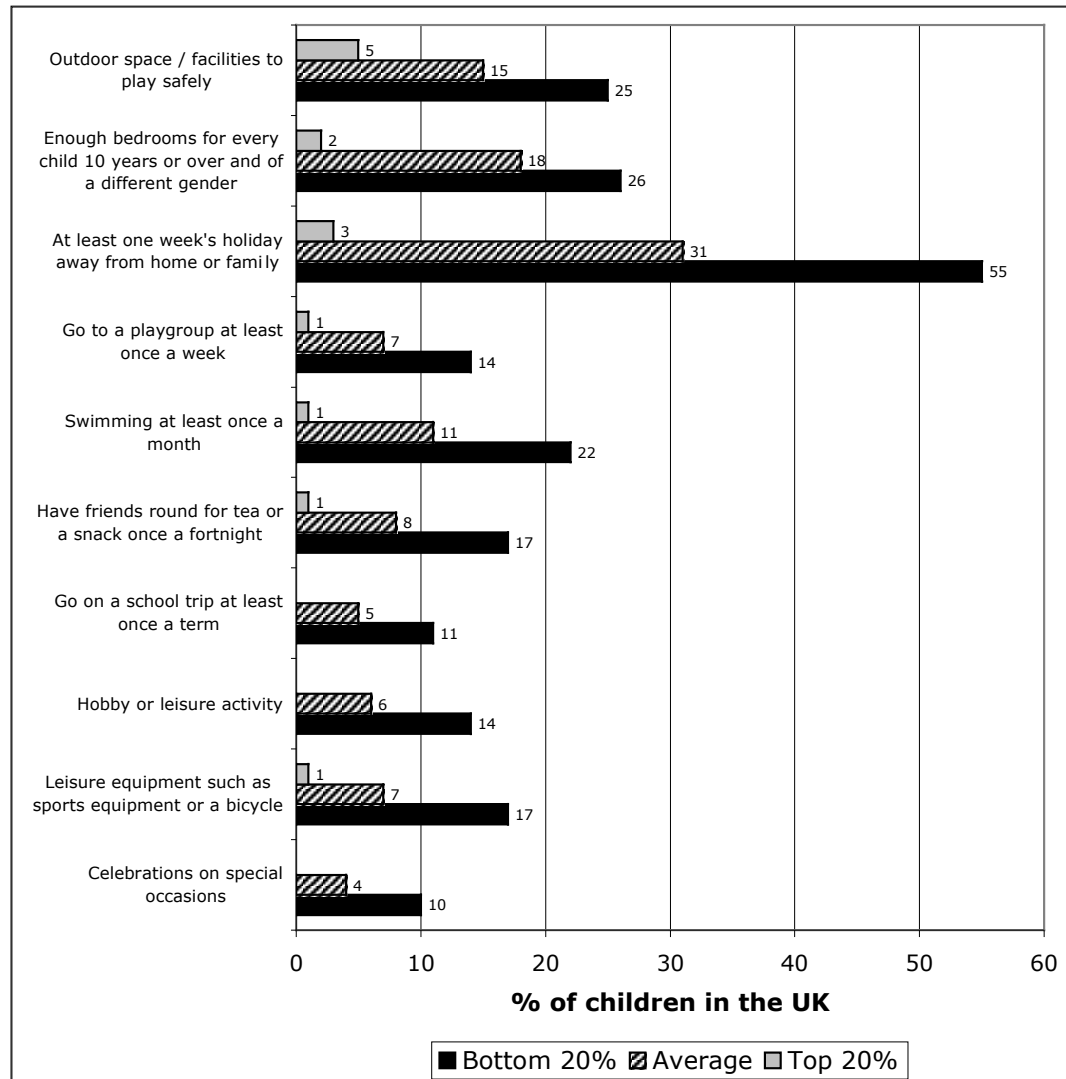
Where we are heading (*children BHC*)



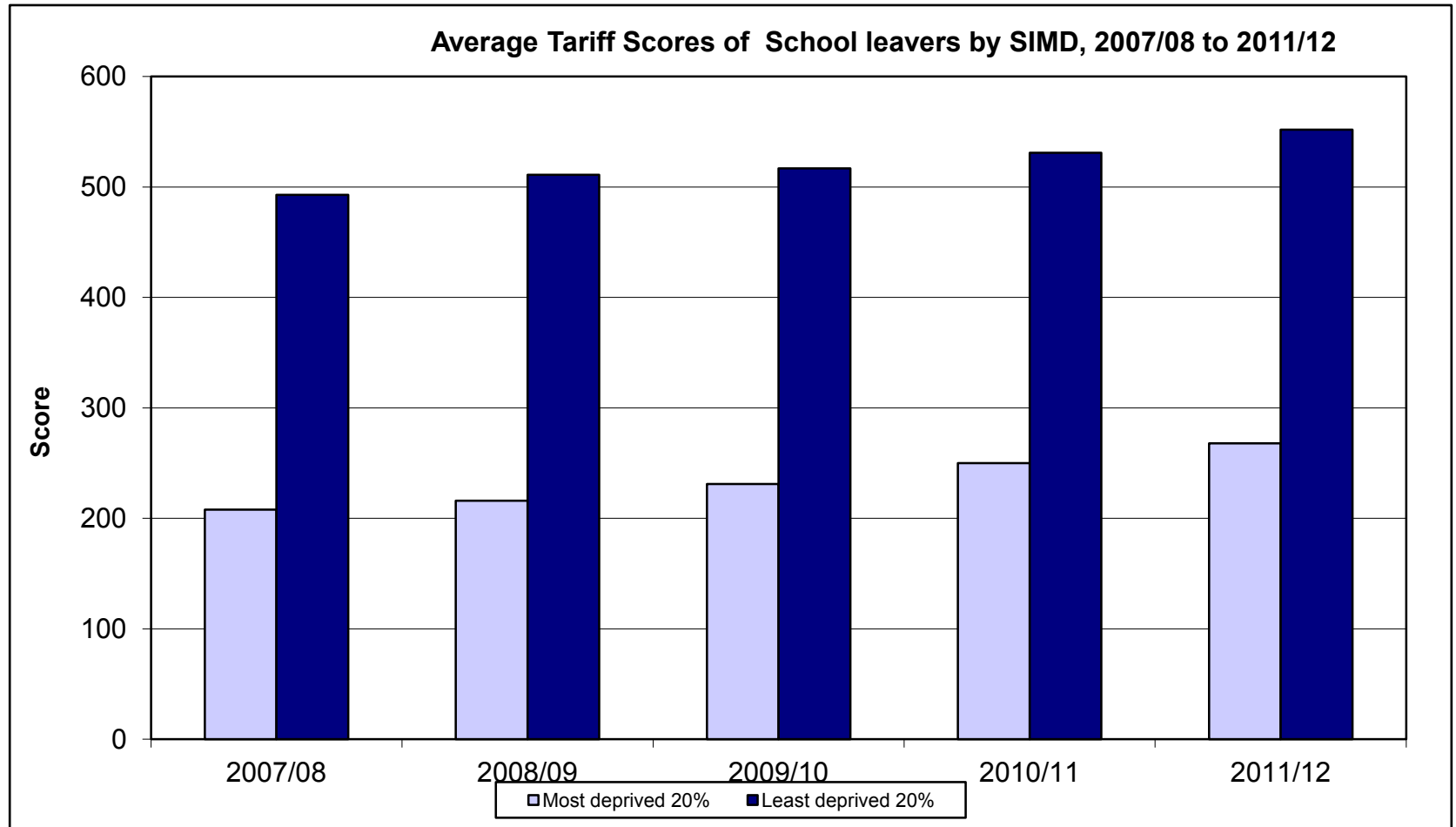
Geography of Child Poverty in Scotland



Child Material Deprivation in Scotland



'Poverty' and educational outcomes



Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Implications

Implications

- No impact
- Hidden impact: Parental well-being (doing without / sense of self)
- Negative outcomes for children
 - Esteem
 - Material deprivation / consumption
 - Bullying
- Negative outcomes for tomorrow's adults

Positive Impact



Scotland's Local Heroes:
Footballers' recollections of growing up in Scotland



Billy Bremner: *Growing up in Raploch*



Career history

Billy Bremner was born on the 9th of December in 1942 and grew up in the Raploch estate on the outskirts of Stirling. He has a place in both the Scottish and English Football Halls of Fame, following an illustrious playing career with Leeds United, Hull City and Scotland. Billy won 54 caps and scored 3 goals for Scotland. With Leeds United, he played in four European finals (winning the Fairs Cup (early version of the Europa Cup) in 1968, as well as winning the FA Cup in 1972, the League Championship (now Premiership) in 1969 and 1974, the Charity Shield in 1969 and the Football League Cup in 1968. The biography (*Bremner: The legend of Billy Bremner*) was published by Andre Deutsch in 1998. Billy passed away in December 1997.

Childhood days in Raploch

Billy Bremner grew up in Weir Street in the Raploch estate on the outskirts of Stirling. In the words of Bernard Bale, his "... pre-school education was all about football. Before he had even heard of the 'three Rs', he was learning football's 'three Cs' - control, confidence and competitiveness". His competitive spirit was clear at the informal games he played in the local swing park on Sundays. His best friend Issy described how "each team put a shilling in the hat and whoever won the most games used to take all the cash - the money came from returned pop bottles and odd jobs. Billy's favourite expression was, "Are we going for broke?" I don't ever remember losing a game (with Billy in the team) so we did all right out of it." One of the major influences on Billy's early football was his father James. As Billy himself observed, "My father used to remind me very often that things did not just happen, you had to work hard to make them happen. He was a great help to me, I could not have wished for greater support from my parents." Although naturally talented, Billy practiced hard to get the best from his talent and what he lacked in inches in height, he made up for in tenacity. At school and with Gownahill Juniors. he played alongside boys who were older and bigger than he was. Size didn't matter to the diminutive Bremner, "I soon discovered one thing about playing against lads who were twice as big as me. I had to make up for my lack of height and weight by getting stuck in just that little bit harder." But it was the work ethic, weaned on the Raploch, that Billy himself attributed most to his success. As he said, "Never give anything less than 100 per cent - in everything that you decide to do. If you want to come out on top you will have to try that little bit harder than the next fellow or you will never make it."

For further information on the Scotland's local heroes series - John McKendrick at j.mckendrick@gcal.ac.uk / 0141 331 8221
Reference: Swanson, S. and McKendrick, J.H. (2009) *Billy Bremner: growing up Raploch*. In McKendrick, J.H. *Scotland's Local Heroes: Footballer's recollections of growing up in Scotland*. Glasgow: SPIU.

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Strategies

Much being done – in the UK

1. UK Child Poverty Target (1999-2020)
 - UK goal to eradicate child poverty within a generation
2. House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee *Poverty in Scotland* report (2008)
3. Commission on Social Mobility and Child Poverty

-
- *Welfare reform as an “anti-poverty strategy”*
 - *Austerity programme*
 - *Re-appraisal of how child poverty is measured*

Much being done – in Scotland

1. Social Justice Milestones (1999-2004)
 - Ten long-term Targets and twenty-nine Milestones across five population groups
2. Closing the Opportunity Gap (2004-2007)
 - Three Aims, Six Objectives and Ten Targets
3. Achieving Our Potential (2008 ...)
 - Discussion paper published on January 31st 2008
 - Framework published on November 24th 2008
 - Aim to Reduce income inequalities
 - Aim to Provide opportunities for economic participation
 - Involve partners in addressing poverty
 - Economic prosperity and reducing income inequality
4. Scottish Child Poverty Strategy (2011-)

Scottish Child Poverty Strategy

- SG published a guide to assist local practitioners, policy makers and managers
- Local areas have responsibility for their own child poverty actions
- Annual report on progress
- The Tackling Child Poverty in Scotland Discussion Paper, which kick-started the development of a 'Scottish strategy' to tackle child poverty, made it very clear that tackling child poverty is a collective endeavour in Scotland:
 - Delivery of the Scottish strategy will rely on all parts of Scottish society playing a part. (p.28)
 - Wider civic society is fundamental to the eradication of child poverty – community engagement and empowerment and volunteering, including working with children and young people, needs to be an integral part of the development of local approaches and their delivery. (p.29)
 - The Scottish strategy will set out further plans for supporting and building capacity within local areas to develop and implement strategic approaches to tackle child poverty, and to encourage local innovation (p.29)

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Gendered child poverty in Scotland

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



What difference can we make?

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



What We Think About Poverty

Sticks and Stones ... ?



- We are brought up to believe that verbal abuse shouldn't bother/harm us
- We are brought up to believe that other abuses (physical) are more important

Sticks and Stones may break my bones ...

- But words will cause me psychological damage
- But words perpetuate misunderstanding
- But words shape the context within which it is possible to make decisions / transitions to improve people's lives

Surely it's all about the action ...

- **Against a backdrop where there was no public outcry about poverty**
- **New Labour introduced concrete measures to tackle child poverty in the 1990s**
- **Did not champion this for fear that it would not garner public support**
- **... was that part of the problem? Do we need to win 'hearts and minds' in order to sustain action (particularly when times are tough)**

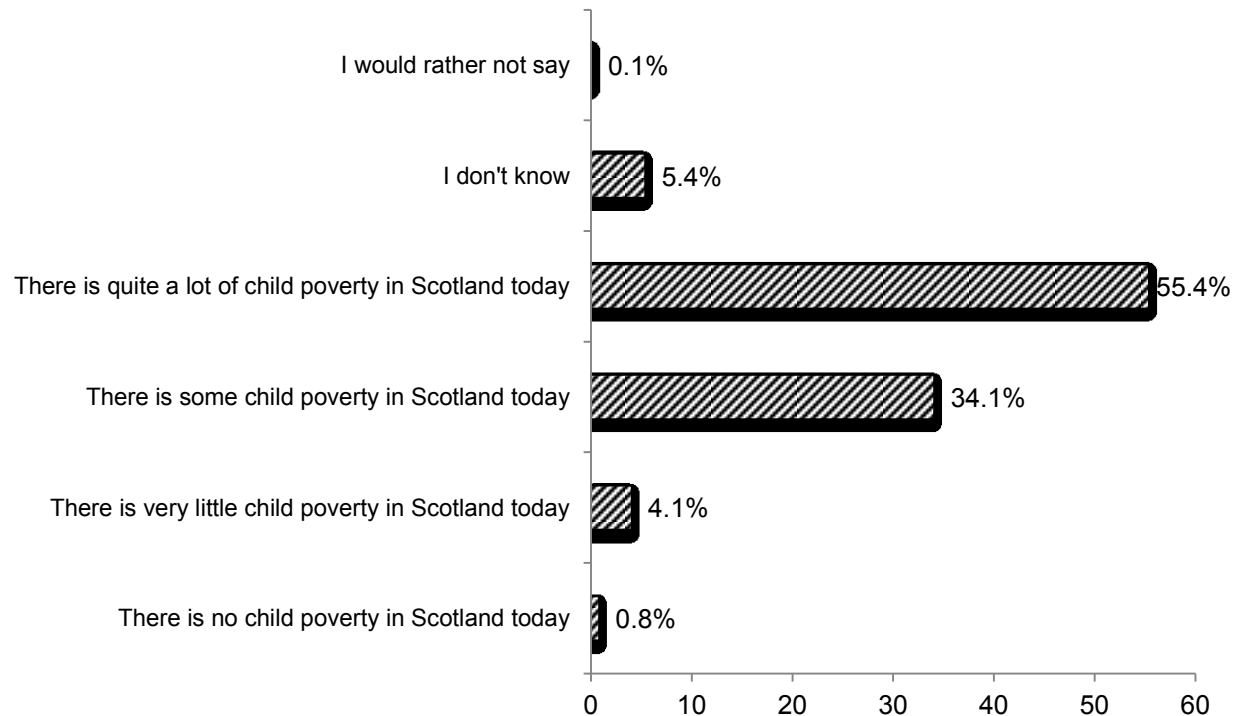
How do we know what Scots think?

- **Collecting evidence of social attitudes toward poverty and other issues for over 30 years**
- **SCOTPULSE survey of 2013 for STV Appeal 2013**
- **PSE-UK work of 2011 and 2012 determining what are necessities**

How much child poverty exists in Scotland?

- **There is quite a lot of child poverty in Scotland today**
- **There is some child poverty in Scotland today**
- **There is very little child poverty in Scotland today**
- **There is no child poverty in Scotland today**

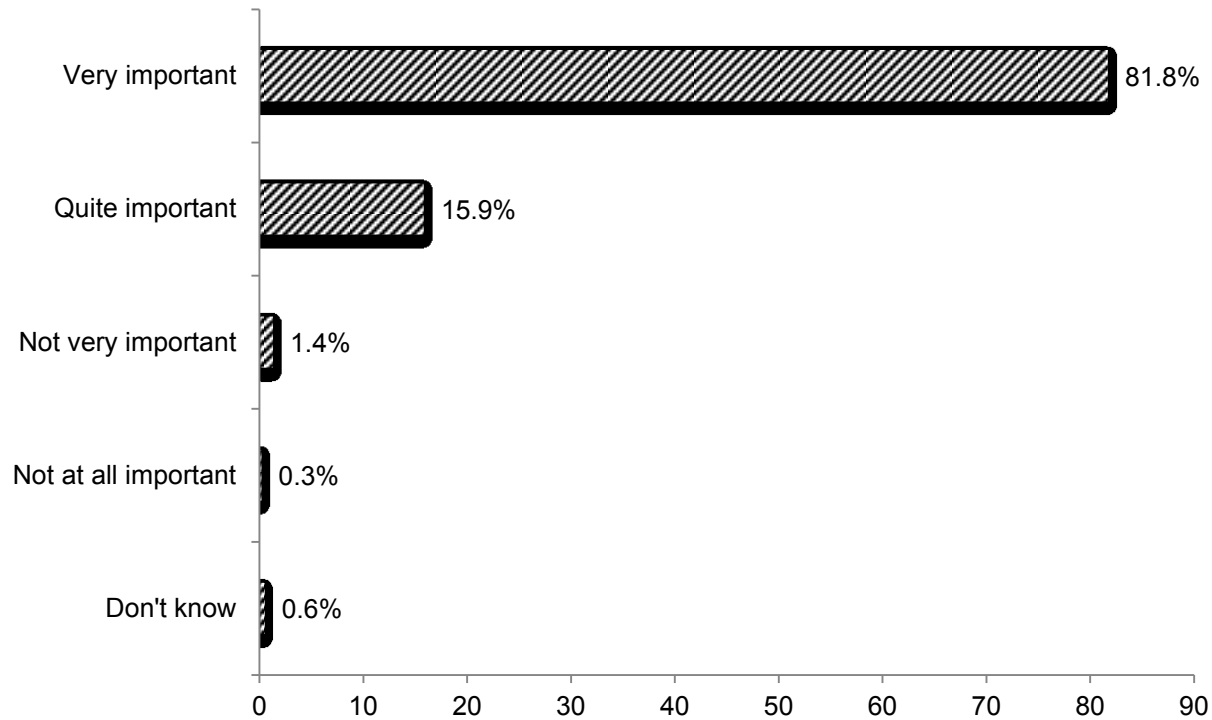
Scots accept that child poverty exists in Scotland



How important is it to tackle child poverty in Scotland?

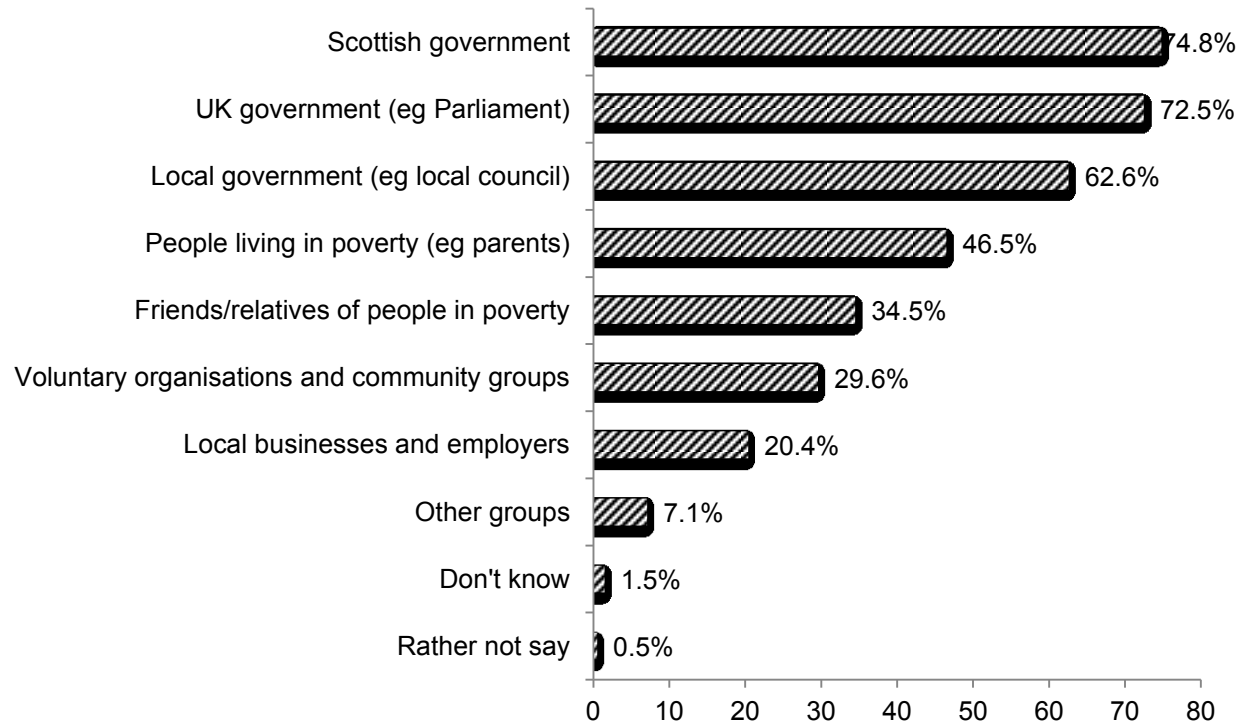
- **Very important**
- **Quite important**
- **Not very important**
- **Not at all important**

Scots think that it is important to tackle child poverty



Who is responsible for tackling child poverty in Scotland?

Scots think many have a role to play in tackling CP



Why does poverty exist?

**Why do you think child poverty exists
in Scotland?**

Why poverty exists

| Reason | Eng 2009 | Wal 2009 | Scot 2009 | Scot 2013 |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Their parents suffer from alcoholism, drug abuse or other addictions | 68% | 65% | 82% | 87% |
| Their parents have been out of work for a long time | 48% | 46% | 52% | 74% |
| Their family cannot access affordable housing | 27% | 24% | 33% | 41% |
| Because of inequalities in society | 24% | 23% | 25% | 41% |
| There are too many children in the family | 46% | 33% | 30% | 45% |
| Their parents do not work enough hours | 21% | 14% | 11% | 28% |

Why poverty exists: MAIN reason

| Reason | Scot 2013 |
|--|-----------|
| Their parents suffer from alcoholism, drug abuse or other addictions | 29% |
| Because of inequalities in society | 16% |
| Their parents do not want to work | 13% |
| Their parents have been out of work for a long time | 10% |
| Their parents work does not pay enough | 8% |
| Their parents lack education | 6% |

Conspicuous in its absence from the top table

| Reason | MAIN Scot 2013 |
|--|-------------------|
| Social benefits for families with children are not high enough | 4% |

Are we different?

- Evidence of UK studies says 'no'
- Maybe more accurate to observe a consistent small scale difference, with Scots having a more 'liberal' leaning
- Some specific key differences in outlook – but not always 'positive' for anti-poverty campaigners and practitioners

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Focus on Girls

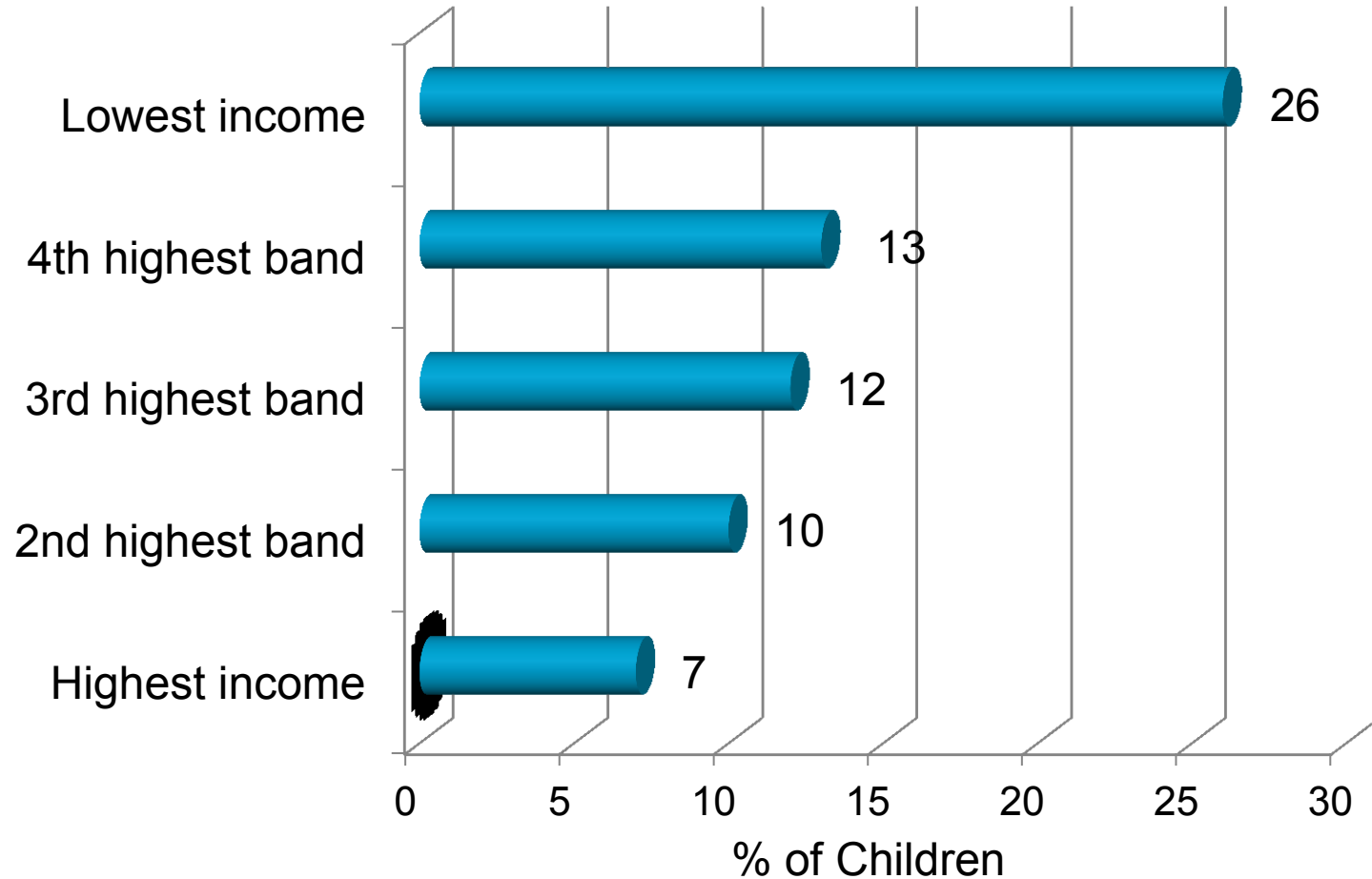
How poverty impacts on girls in Scotland

- **Creates and sustains gendered workload (opportunity costs) and skill set**
 - Family work in children of lone parents
 - Work of child carers
- **Undermines the utility of a key social space (home)**
- **Pressure build up without an 'acknowledged' release**
- **Exacerbates disadvantage**
 - Erodes confidence
 - Withdrawal / hidden problem
- **Localisation / Narrows Horizons**
 - Mindset
 - Lifeworld (protect from danger)
- **Fatalistic outlook**
 - Inevitability / normalisation
 - Lack of control
- **Awareness of injustice / difference**

Resentment



No access to safe play by neighbourhood



Why focus on how poverty impacts on girls?

- **SOCIAL JUSTICE** - Significant numbers of girls are living in poverty / poverty can compromise positive educational outcomes
- **GENDER SENSITIVITY** – Gendered norms suggest that poverty might also be experienced differently by boys and girls
- **HIGH RETURN ON SOCIAL INVESTMENT**
 - Community benefit
 - Family benefit

Delivering anti-poverty practice for girls

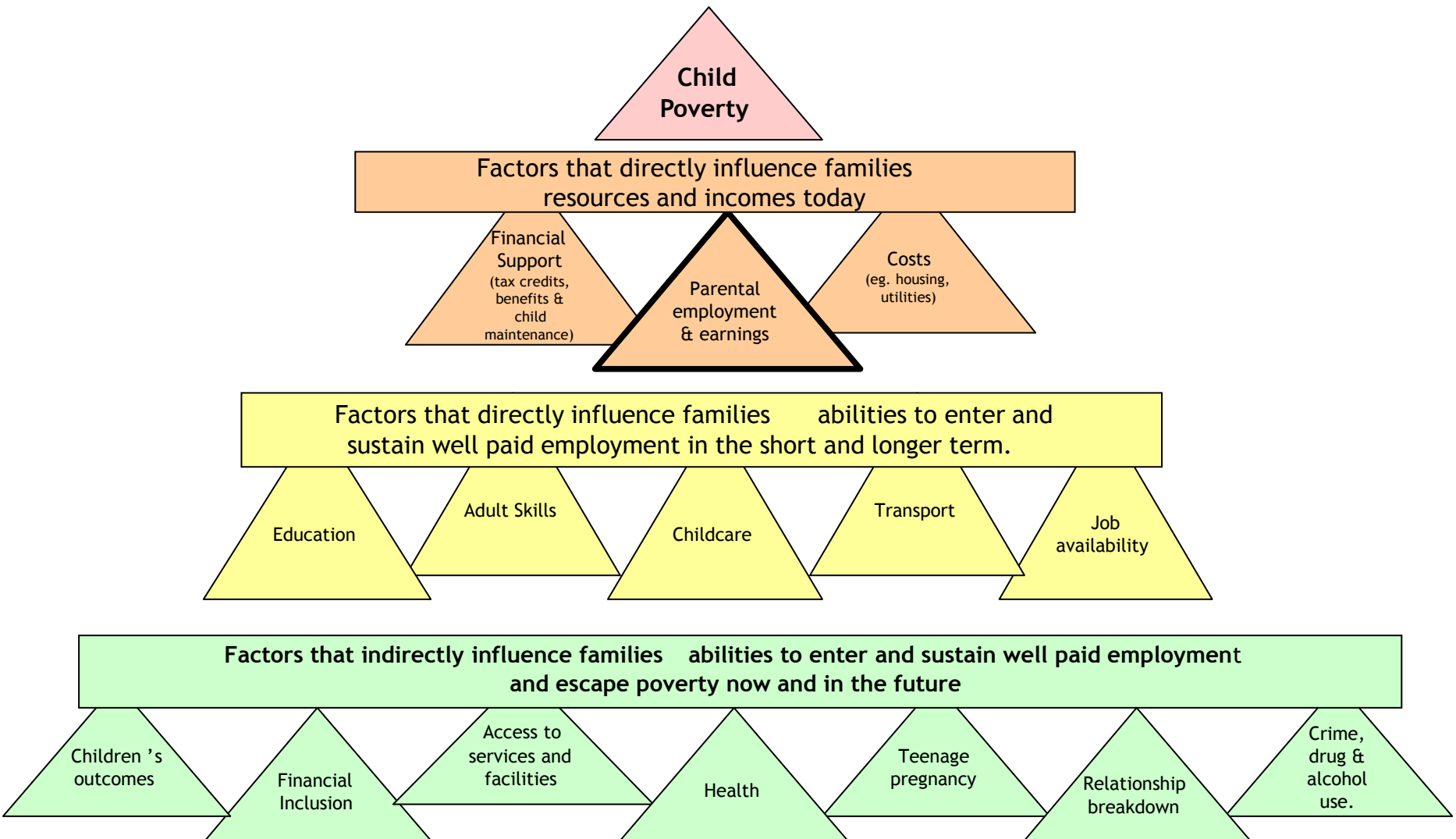
- **What does it involve?**
 - **A**ware of the potential impact of poverty
 - **A**cknowledging cases of poverty impact
 - **A**meliorating poverty impact
- **Active Participation / Education for Empowerment**, e.g. Girl Up (www.girlup.org) / facilitate decision-making
- **Relationship focus**
- **Be sensitive to (if not address) root cause of problems**
- **Community learning environment**

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Education and the 'bigger' picture

Conceptualising poverty: Child Poverty Pyramid



Consolidate our 'poverty intelligence'

- **Be aware of what education can do**
 - It can't (and should not be expected to) end child poverty
- **Understand the poverty-education dialectic**
- **Understand our local situation**
 - Free school meals indicator
- **Awareness of key outcomes**
 - School readiness
 - Attainment
 - Attendance
 - Engagement / behaviour
- **Think people and think social**

Tackle factors that reinforce disadvantage

- **Hidden costs of education – not ‘free’ system**
 - **Alternative Provision**
 - School Tutors
 - **Access / Utilisation of Existing Local Resources**
 - Computers
 - **Charging policy**
 - School Trips
 - School Uniform Grants
- **Provision through education can compensate / ameliorate for wider poverties**
 - **Healthy Free School Meals**
 - **Out of School Activities**

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



*The bigger picture starts
in the backyard – local strategies
to tackle child poverty*

What might tackling poverty locally mean?

- **Enabling people not living in poverty to increase the opportunities for more people to live a poverty-free life**

- **Reducing the number of people living in poverty**
- **Preventing people on the margins of poverty from falling into poverty**
- **Enabling people living in poverty to increase their chance of living a poverty-free life**

- **Protecting those living in poverty from the worst excesses of living with poverty**

What is the problem with aiming to reduce the numbers living in poverty?

- **Nothing (in principle, or for those with control over the key levers)**
- **The local state (and indeed the Scottish Government) cannot control this**
- **Reducing numbers tends to be interpreted as a work-first approach and ...**
 - **Work, per se, does not eradicate poverty**
 - **(Job) supply is insufficient to meet demand**
 - **Local state is scaling back on the number it employs**

What should be at the heart of local strategies to tackle poverty?

Protecting those living in poverty from the worst excesses of living with poverty &

Enabling people living in poverty to increase their chance of living a poverty-free life

Why?

It is already what you do

- It would give more explicit acknowledgement of tackling poverty activity
- More likely to engender wider internal support for tackling poverty

It may, by default, become the most important function of the current tackling poverty interventions of the local state

- Rising demand for core services
- Contraction of activity in employment/employability

It is within the realm of local control

- No confounding/intervening factors (it could be argued)

Making sense of child poverty as a means toward better restorative practice in education



Conclusion

Concluding Thoughts

- We already know a lot about poverty education
- We need to articulate an anti-poverty vision at both the national and local levels
- We need a “poverty in education agenda” that is not just focused on ‘content’, or ‘product’, but one that is part of a ‘process’ of engagement with wider anti-poverty community
- New group (Poverty and Education) has first meeting at SERA conference in November

**Thank you for listening.
Enjoy the rest of the seminar.**

Dr John H. McKendrick
Glasgow School *for* Business and Society @ GCU
j.mckendrick@gcu.ac.uk

Brighter futures begin with GCU

