

Non Resident Parents and Poverty in the UK

Non Resident Parents in the UK are probably the most marginalised group in the UK. They are also some of the poorest. Sadly our poverty organisations like Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) will NOT discuss their poverty. I try repeatedly to make them do so on Twitter. No doubt they will have made submissions to you and you will therefore see for yourself they they fail to mention this group of people.

As regards their poverty the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) is run by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) who also administer Universal Credit. These TWO systems massively contradict one another.

The Child Maintenance Service's formula for calculating amounts to be paid has NOT been changed since **1998** as they have failed to uprate it for a non resident parent's cost of living since this date.

On our welfare system, both old and the new Universal Credit system currently rolling out, non resident parents are classed as single CHILDLess people and receive benefits only as childless people and do NOT receive ANY child elements for children they pay for.

These people are clearly NOT childless and it is wrong to label them as such.

Paying Child Maintenance whilst on any kind of new or old benefit will only ever have ONE outcome – that you are left to live on an amount BELOW what the benefit system tells you that you are entitled to. This also applies when on in work benefits.

Sadly in the UK this is because 'Measures of child poverty that assess a child's household income as that of their resident parent are blind to the impact on the child of spending much of their time in a potentially MUCH poorer household where their needs are unrecognised by the benefits system'

If a non resident parent remarries/cohabits and has two more children with a new partner the situation becomes worse if they are on low incomes and receive benefit top ups. This time the paying of child maintenance means that the ENTIRE second family, children included, are again left to live on an amount BELOW their welfare entitlement. They may also have the children from the first family perhaps two days per week so on those days they have FOUR children to feed, keep warm, bathe etc. but they receive nothing at all for the children from the first family.

In a nutshell if you ANY receive benefits in the UK and do not have to pay Child Maintenance for children you get no money for you will STILL be poor. The paying of it in such a scenario can only make you POORER.

I am pretty sure you will receive lots of submissions telling you how single parents fare worst on Universal Credit but when they do not mention the second families of non resident parents it does seem that way but unfortunately that just hides the truth of the matter. It is astounding that CHILD Poverty Action Group has nothing to say about the situation for children in second families where the paying of child maintenance where household incomes are low only makes these children poorer.

This submission to the Child Maintenance Committee sums it all up so it is not as if the powers that be are unaware of it, they sadly choose to do nothing.

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/work-and-pensions-committee/child-maintenance-services/written/39518.html>

I enclose a small number of other links reflecting the situation for non resident parents in the UK

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2010-0097-judgment.pdf>

https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk%2FProjects%2FStart-Year%2F2017%2FNon-resident-parents%2Fnonres_parents_shared_housing%2Fcopy_of_DownloadTemplate%2Fat_download%2Ffile&data=02%7C01%7C%7C50d220ec65e54814ce0a08d610047f02%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C636714008834202785&sdata=cSqPY6ssQJ%2FCXAoY4n7m%2B59GMc7meWydI%2BDeP7xXOe8%3D&reserved=0

Should you wish to meet anyone in the UK to discuss this matter I would suggest that you meet with Families Need Fathers <https://fnf.org.uk/>