

A child-derived material deprivation index

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Abstract

This thesis details the development of a child-derived index of child material deprivation. Whilst child poverty has come to the fore in academic and policy circles in recent decades, definitions and measures have tended to draw on adult-derived understandings of poverty. The aims of this thesis are to test whether children's own perceptions of poverty can be used to form a scientifically robust and practically useful measurement tool, and to demonstrate the use of such a tool.

The research draws on Mack and Lansley's (1985) consensual approach to poverty measurement. Focus groups and surveys with children were used to produce a child-derived index of material deprivation. Analysis indicates that this index, whilst open to development and improvement, is a useful tool in measuring child poverty and in understanding the relationship between child poverty and children's subjective well-being. It can also be used to compare children's and adults' conceptions and reports of poverty. Findings indicate that commonly used indicators of poverty such as income, receipt of free school meals and adults in paid work appear to make much more sense to adult conceptions of poverty than they do to children's conceptions. These findings reinforce the view that children's conceptions of their needs can be used to further our understandings of child poverty and its impacts.

The work is split into four parts: a literature and data review, providing the rationale and justification for the work; a methodological section detailing the development of the child-derived index of material deprivation; a substantive section providing examples of uses of the index and exploring what it can contribute to understandings of child poverty; and a conclusion detailing limitations, drawing together findings, and making recommendations for research and policy.

Contents

Lists of figures, tables, boxes and charts.....	iv
List of appendices.....	viii
Acknowledgements.....	ix
Author’s declaration.....	xi
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Literature review: Locating children within ‘child poverty’: why a child-derived measure, and why material deprivation?.....	6
1.1 Introduction.....	6
1.2 Defining ‘child’ and ‘poverty’.....	6
1.3 Child poverty.....	21
1.4 Empirical background.....	38
1.5 Discussion.....	46
Chapter 2: The research process: Chronology and methods.....	48
2.1 Introduction.....	48
2.2 Background.....	48
2.3 Material deprivation: the importance of methodological considerations.....	49
2.4 The development of a research strategy.....	53
2.5 Methods.....	57
2.6 A note on ‘child-centric’ research and ‘child-derived’ measures.....	81
2.7 Discussion.....	82
Chapter 3: Children’s views on socially perceived necessities: focus group findings.....	84
3.1 Introduction.....	84
3.2 Rationale for the use of focus groups.....	84
3.3 Categorising the data.....	88
3.4 Findings.....	89
3.5 Overarching themes.....	105
3.6 Outcomes of the focus group findings.....	108
3.7 Discussion.....	111
Chapter 4: Piloting and question selection.....	113
4.1 Introduction.....	113
4.2 Background and rationale.....	113
4.3 Material deprivation questions.....	117

4.4 Comparing children’s and parents’ responses.....	118
4.5 Validity of material deprivation items.....	128
4.6 Developing a scale.....	137
Chapter 5: Individual items and the deprivation scale.....	143
5.1 Introduction.....	143
5.2 Individual items.....	143
5.3 The child-derived material deprivation scale.....	160
5.4 Discussion.....	177
Chapter 6: Indicators and dimensions of child poverty: comparing children’s and adults’ perspectives.....	180
6.1 Introduction.....	180
6.2 Background.....	181
6.3 Data and methods.....	184
6.4 Findings from the two surveys.....	187
6.5 Conclusions.....	207
Chapter 7: Child poverty and children’s subjective well-being.....	214
7.1 Introduction.....	214
7.2 Background.....	214
7.3 Some unresolved issues in the study of subjective well-being.....	216
7.4 Poverty and subjective well-being.....	219
7.5 Methods.....	221
7.6 A note on subjective well-being measurement.....	223
7.7 Findings.....	226
7.8 Discussion.....	240
Chapter 8: Conclusions.....	245
8.1 Introduction.....	245
8.2 Limitations.....	245
8.3 Key findings and implications.....	249
Appendices.....	I
Appendix A: List of survey questions relevant to child poverty considered in developing the deprivation scale and used to inform focus group agendas.....	I
Appendix B: Focus group schedule.....	XII
Appendix C: Child and adult necessities in the PSE survey.....	XVIII
Appendix D: The Children’s Society 2010 surveys.....	XX
Abbreviations.....	LXXXIX
Statistical notation.....	XCI
References.....	XCII

Lists of figures, tables, boxes and charts

List of figures

Figure 1.1	Different breadths of conceptions used in the study of poverty.....	19
Figure 1.2	How income-based, family-centric poverty measures position children.....	35
Figure 1.3	How material deprivation, child-centric based poverty measures can position children.....	38
Figure 6.1	Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the Children’s Society data.....	197
Figure 6.2	Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the PSE 2012 data.....	198
Figure 6.3	Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the Children’s Society data (very deprived).....	200
Figure 7.1	Rees et al’s model of subjective well-being.....	217

List of tables

Table A	Roles in research design, fieldwork and analysis.....	xii
Table 1.1	UK deprivation rates by demographic factors.....	26
Table 1.2	Child material deprivation by household income poverty in the HBAI 2010/11.....	43
Table 1.3	Child deprivation by adult deprivation in the PSE 2013.....	45
Table 2.1	Composition of the focus groups.....	62
Table 2.2	Categories of children’s deprivation items.....	63
Table 2.3	Social class of respondents.....	66
Table 2.4	Mean equivalised income in each income quintile.....	68
Table 2.5	Demographic and school characteristics of the main survey sample.....	70
Table 2.6	Demographic characteristics of the quarterly survey samples.....	71
Table 3.1	Strengths and weaknesses of focus groups.....	85
Table 3.2	Mentions of themes, by focus group.....	89

Table 3.3	Categories, items and questions.....	110
Table 4.1	Number of adults in paid work.....	120
Table 4.2	Whether the child receives free school meals.....	120
Table 4.3	Subjective ratings of how well-off the family is.....	121
Table 4.4	Material deprivation items.....	123
Table 4.5	Problematic items.....	131
Table 4.6	Associations between deprivation items/activities and objective poverty measures.....	133
Table 4.7	Associations between deprivation items/activities and subjective poverty measures.....	135
Table 4.8	Items and activities where issues have been identified.....	136
Table 4.9	Details of Cronbach's Alpha for the final items to include.....	138
Table 4.10	Distributions on the deprivation scales.....	139
Table 4.11	Odds of experiencing other domains of poverty according to deprivation status.....	140
Table 5.1	Proportions having, lacking and wanting, and lacking and not wanting each item/activity.....	146
Table 5.2	Differences in subjective well-being between those who lacking and want, and those who lack and do not want, items and activities.....	151
Table 5.3	Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities compared to those who lack and want them.....	152
Table 5.4	Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities, compared to those who lack and want them, by demographic characteristics.....	155
Table 5.5	Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities compared to lacking and wanting, controlling for demographics.....	146
Table 5.6	Odds of lacking items and activities by living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and by subjective poverty.....	160
Table 5.7	Tobit regressions for deprivation based on demographics and poverty variables.....	171

Table 5.8	Odds of being deprived by demographic and poverty-related variables.....	173
Table 5.9	Odds of being severely deprived by demographic and poverty-related variables.....	175
Table 5.10	Differentiating between the poverty status of children and adults.....	176
Table 6.1	Deprivation items in the different indices.....	186
Table 6.2	Comparing adults' and children's views around lacked items and activities.....	189
Table 6.3	Comparing individual items for impacts on children.....	192
Table 6.4	Proportions poor on each dimension.....	193
Table 6.5	Number of dimensions poor.....	194
Table 6.6	Composition of the poor across the three dimensions in the Children's Society data.....	207
Table 6.7	Composition of the poor across the three dimensions in the PSE 2012 data.....	207
Table 7.1	Regressions examining the impact of minimum income and material deprivation on subjective well-being.....	231
Table 7.2	Odds of having low well-being by minimum income and material deprivation.....	232
Table 7.3	Strength of the association between material deprivation and GCI domains.....	234
Table 7.4	Odds of being unhappy on the GCI domains.....	236
Table 7.5	Regressions examining the impact of material deprivation on subjective family well-being.....	239
Table 7.6	Odds of having low family well-being.....	240
 List of boxes		
Box 2.1	Example of the continuum used with children.....	64
 List of charts		
Chart 5.1	Mean subjective well-being according to responses to items and activities.....	150

Chart 5.2	Distribution of the deprivation scale.....	165
Chart 5.3	Odds of living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and of being unhappy with money and possessions, at various points on the deprivation scale.....	167
Chart 6.1	Proportions of children poor by survey and material deprivation index.....	195
Chart 6.2	Overlaps in dimensions for materially deprived children.....	202
Chart 6.3	Overlaps in dimensions for children in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits.....	203
Chart 6.4	Overlaps in dimensions for subjectively poor children.....	204
Chart 7.1	Example of the distribution on a multi-item subjective well-being measure: The SLSS.....	225
Chart 7.2	Example of the distribution on a single-item subjective well-being measure: Happiness with friends.....	225
Chart 7.3	The relationship between minimum income, material deprivation, and subjective well-being.....	228
Chart 7.4	Subjective well-being by increasing levels of material deprivation.....	229
Chart 7.5	Happiness in the GCI domains by material deprivation.....	233
Chart 7.6	Proportion of children unhappy on GCI domains by material deprivation.....	235
Chart 7.7	Mean deprivation score by family well-being variables.....	238

List of appendices

Appendix A	List of survey questions relevant to child poverty considered in developing the deprivation scale and used to inform focus group agendas.....	I
Appendix B	Focus group schedule.....	XII
Appendix C	Child items and activities in the PSE survey (original survey wording).....	XVIII
Appendix D	The Children’s Society 2010 surveys.....	XX

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Author's declaration

The work presented here is my own and has not been submitted for examination at this or any other institution for another award.

The research presented in this thesis was jointly supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Children's Society, through a Collaborative Award in Science and Engineering (CASE) studentship. The purpose of the studentship was broadly defined, involving working with the research teams at the University of York and the Children's Society on the Children's Society's Child Well-being research programme¹, specifically helping with the design, piloting and analysis of a 2010-11 school-based survey. This survey was intended to build on findings from the Good Childhood Enquiry and an earlier survey conducted in 2008 which had itself drawn on the Good Childhood Enquiry findings. A related purpose was to inform follow-up, home-based quarterly surveys which formed part of the same Children's Society research programme. A broad range of possible directions were therefore available, focusing on sub-sections of the Survey as organisational needs and personal research interests directed.

The work presented here builds on work undertaken for my Master's in Research, funded through the same studentship. Given the collaborative nature of the Children's Society Well-being Research Programme, a wide range of resources were available to draw on in the design, fieldwork and analysis phases of the project. As a result, not all work was conducted by the author alone, and other people's contributions to the research must be fully acknowledged (whilst any mistakes in the design, fieldwork or analysis included in this thesis remain the sole responsibility of the author). Details of people involved in different stages of the research can be found in table A.

¹ See <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/well-being> for details of this Programme.

Table A: Roles in research design, fieldwork, and analysis

Stage	Design	Fieldwork	Analysis
Selection of an approach to developing the new measure	Method selected by author	-	Author
Qualitative work with children	Method selected by author Sample design by researchers at the Children's Society Interview schedule designed by author Analysis method selected by author	Focus groups mainly conducted by researchers at the Children's Society – author present for and co-facilitated two of the six groups	Transcription and analysis conducted by author
Piloting	Overall survey design and sampling by researchers at the Children's Society Material deprivation questions designed by author incorporating suggestions and feedback from colleagues at The University of York and the Children's Society	Survey conducted by Research Now, a survey agency	Author
Surveys	Overall survey design and sampling by researchers at the Children's Society Material deprivation items (original index and additional items) designed by author	Surveys conducted by Research Now and NFER, survey agencies	Author

Several parts of this thesis appear in the same or a similar form in various publications. These are now detailed.

Parts of chapter seven are published in Main, G. (2014) 'Child poverty and children's subjective well-being'. In *Child Indicators Research* online first February 2014, DOI 10.1007/s12187-014-9237-7.

Parts of chapters one and two are published in Main, G. and Bessemer, K. (2014) 'Children's material living standards in rich countries'. In Ben-Arieh, A., Casas, F., Frones, I. and Korbin, J. (Eds) *Handbook of child well-being*. New York: Springer.

Parts of chapters two, five and seven are published in Main, G. and Bradshaw, J. (2012) 'An index of child material deprivation'. In *Child Indicators Research* vol.5 no.3 pp503-521.

Parts of chapters two to five and chapter seven are published in Main, G. and Pople, L. (2011) *Missing out: A child-centred analysis of material deprivation and subjective well-being*. London: The Children's Society.

Parts of chapters two to five are published in Bradshaw, J. and Main, G. (2010) *PSE Measures Review Paper: Children's Deprivation Items*. Working paper series no.7. Available online at <http://www.poverty.ac.uk/sites/default/files/WP7.pdf>.

The work presented here, whilst at times overlapping with the co-authored work listed above, is the sole work of the author. However, the contributions of co-authors and fellow researchers to helping develop ideas and analysis must be acknowledged.

Introduction

Child poverty has a longstanding history as a concern of social policy, and remains firmly on national and international policy agendas. Internationally, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) contains several pertinent Articles². International concern is also evident within the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDG), particularly those concerning ending poverty and hunger, achieving universal education, and promoting child and maternal health. Within the European Union, the European Commission has declared an intention to establish a specific ad hoc group on Child Poverty and Well-Being, and has described the tackling and prevention of child poverty as "essential" (Council of the European Union, 2012: 2). At the national level, child poverty in the UK has been a central policy concern since Blair's commitment in 1999 to eradicate it in 20 years – a commitment that has been enshrined in law in the 2010 Child Poverty Act, and which the current coalition government has affirmed its support of (DWP, 2011).

A great deal of effort has been concentrated on measuring child poverty and monitoring progress against policy goals (amongst many others see Dickens, 2011; Lewis, 2011; Piachaud, 2012; Stewart, 2011), and on illuminating the devastating and wide-ranging impacts of child poverty on child outcomes (Bradshaw, 2011, covers many of the domains of children's lives which can be impacted by poverty). However, less systematic attention has been paid to examining child poverty from children's own perspectives – that is, finding out what growing up poor means to children in the UK, finding out how children conceptualise and experience poverty in their day-to-day lives, and operationalising children's understandings of poverty in quantitative surveys. As a result, current knowledge about child poverty is for the most part limited to adult perspectives of what poverty is, and adult reports of whether children experience it. Ridge's (2002) study of child poverty and social exclusion offers

² For example Article 24, concerning basic health care; and Articles 26 and 27, concerning the obligations of governments and families to provide adequate physical resources for children's survival and healthy development.

extremely valuable insights into the lives of children in poor families, but quantitative work has yet to take up the opportunity to measure and examine the impacts of child poverty drawing on these insights. The aims of this thesis are to begin the process of translating children's accounts into a quantitative measure; and to explore what this can tell us about how children's and adults' perspectives differ, and about the impact of poverty on children's subjective well-being. Two research questions are addressed:

- Can children's views on their material needs be used to inform the development of a robust, quantitative measure of child poverty? And if so,
- What insight can such a measure provide, alone or in combination with more traditional measures, into our understandings of child poverty, its causes, and its effects?

In addressing these questions, this thesis details the development and testing of a new, child-centric and child-derived³ index of child material deprivation (a term which is explored in more detail in chapter one). It assesses the value of the index as a supplemental measure of child poverty and as an explanatory factor in various domains of children's well-being. It details the rationale for, development of, and usefulness of such an index, with a view to demonstrating the value of including children's views and opinions in how child poverty is conceptualised and measured. Initially, a literature and empirical review sets the scene for the research. The remainder of the thesis is split into two sections: a methodological section concerned with developing the measure, and a substantive section demonstrating some uses of the measure. The structure is as follows:

Section I

Chapter one details the theoretical and empirical background to the research, presenting a review of the literature and analysis of existing data relating to

³ Child-centric measures are those which are specific to the situation of children, but may draw on conceptions of poverty derived from research with adults. Child-derived measures draw on children's own conceptions of poverty.

child poverty and child material deprivation. The aim of this chapter is to assess the evidence for the need for this piece of work, and set the scene for the remainder of the work.

Section II

Chapter two presents the chronology of the research and the methodology. The rationale for the approach taken is provided, along with details of the qualitative and quantitative methods and tools used. Whilst some specific details of data and methods are presented in individual chapters, the majority are detailed in this chapter.

Chapter three is concerned with the qualitative phase of the research, focus groups which were run with children to ascertain their views on necessities of life for children in England today. Children's views and researcher analysis are presented, along with details of the outcomes of the groups which fed into future stages of the research.

Chapter four details a pilot study conducted with parent-child pairs. The aim of this pilot study was twofold: to compare children's and parents' responses to questions in order to address issues of validity, and to test the items identified in the focus groups for their value in constructing a child-derived scale measuring child material deprivation.

Chapter five presents the findings of the main Children's Society survey and a subsequent smaller-scale Children's Society survey of children which incorporated some data from adults. The individual items identified by children are checked for validity as indicators of material deprivation, and the scale they form is tested, following as far as possible the recommendations of Gordon and Nandy (2012) for developing instruments to measure poverty.

Section III

Chapter six presents a comparison between the Children's Society poverty-related data (using measures of living in a household likely to qualify for

minimum income benefits and subjective poverty, as well as the child-derived material deprivation measure), and child poverty measured in the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 2012 (PSE 2012), the largest-scale survey of poverty in the UK to date. Responses provided by children in the Children's Society survey, and by adults in the PSE 2012 survey, are compared. The extent to which the three different dimensions of poverty – material deprivation, qualification for minimum income benefits, and subjective poverty – overlap with one another when children's reports and adults' reports are used is examined.

Chapter seven examines the links between material deprivation, qualification for minimum income benefits, and subjective well-being in the Children's Society data. Overall subjective well-being and various domains of subjective well-being found to be important to children in previous research by the Children's Society are examined (see Rees et al, 2010 for more details). The relationship between material deprivation and children's subjective well-being in the domain of family life is explored in more depth.

Section IV

Chapter eight concludes the thesis, providing a summary of the main findings, details of limitations of this research and implications for future research agendas, and implications for policy.

Section I

Background

Chapter 1

Literature Review

Locating children within 'child poverty': why a child-derived measure, and why material deprivation?

1.1 Introduction

As detailed in the introduction, child poverty is a central concern for social policy. Growing up in poverty has wide-ranging and life-long negative impacts on individual children, and the presence of child poverty within a society represents a cost to that society in terms of missed opportunities and wasted potential. The aim of this chapter is to provide a context for the empirical work which follows. Definitions of key terms are provided along with discussions of key debates where terms are contested. The choice of material deprivation as a framework for measuring child poverty is discussed, and the theoretical rationale for developing a child-centric and child-derived measure is presented. Finally, qualitative and quantitative evidence is used to provide an empirical grounding for the research.

1.2 Defining 'child' and 'poverty'

'Child' and 'poverty' are both contested concepts, with various different meanings which can shed different kinds of light on the issue of child poverty. For the purpose of this thesis, working definitions are needed to ensure theoretical clarity and to operationalise concepts into viable research questions. It is acknowledged that different working definitions may result in different and equally valid conclusions.

Child

In recent years there has been a great deal of academic debate around the status and nature of childhood. The question of what 'child' means is complicated because, similarly to 'adult', it is ascribed to a hugely varied group

of people. Two main approaches to childhood can be identified in the academic literature: the developmental approach, which is concerned with the progress children make towards adulthood; and the sociological approach, which is concerned with the lives and cultures of children in the present.

The basis of the developmental tradition is summarised in Modell's (2000:81) comment that "amongst the most interesting things children do is to grow up": children are of interest because they will, one day, be adults. Edwards and Alldred (1999) note the assumption that development towards adulthood takes place as a linear, often stage-based process (as illustrated in popular texts on child development such as Santrock, (2011)), and the basis of this process is understood as primarily biological (Kennedy (1998) unpicks the aspects of development which can be understood as biological compared to those which appear to change over time and culture). Roche (1999) argues that the tradition positions children as less competent than adults, and that this has had implications for the imbalance in rights and power between children and adults.

Wyness (1999) argues that the positioning of children as incompetent and dependent justifies adult power and control over children's lives, which Cockburn (1998) and Reynaert et al (2009) describe as often discussed in terms of protection – that is, the basis of the approach is that children require the protection of parents and other adults. Although the developmental approach acknowledges individual variation between children, the focus is on determining which factors make children uniquely different from adults, and observing 'normal' trends in children's progress towards adulthood.

Sociological traditions, and notably what is commonly referred to as the 'new sociology of childhood', have been described by Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) as a reaction against the dominant developmental traditions. The approach questions some of the assumptions involved in developmental concepts of children and childhood. In contrast to the developmental approach, 'children' and 'childhood' are understood by many authors (including Kennedy, 1998; Nieuwenhuys, 2010; Jenks, 2004) to be (in large part) social constructions rather than natural categories. As a result, children's present lives and cultures,

as well as their progress towards adulthood, are considered interesting topics for investigation – Wyness (1999) argues that children are influential actors in shaping their presents. The sociological tradition is therefore concerned not only with what is unique to children, but also with the differences between children, and with questioning the homogeneity assumed within the developmental approach. Amongst other authors, Nieuwenhuys (2010) questions inherent links between age and childhood. Others including Cockburn (1998) and Thorne (2004) note the somewhat arbitrary nature of distinctions between ‘adult’ and ‘child’. Within the tradition, ‘childishness’ is seen as potentially acquired and perpetuated as a result of social expectations, rather than as innate to ‘children’. That is, the dispute between sociological and developmental approaches is not *whether* children behave differently from adults, but *why* they do so – unlike the deterministic biological position taken in developmental approaches, the sociological approach ascribes children agency, seeing them as adopting and/or challenging the roles allowed to them by the adult world (many examples of this can be found in the literature, including Edwards and Alldred, 1999; Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008; Nieuwenhuys, 2010; Grover, 2004).

The lack of a clear and uncontested definition of childhood is also evident in the policy and legal arenas. In spite of the expanse of policy regarding the nature of children and childhood and the suitable treatment of children, which Hendrick (2003) describes as stemming from the late 19th century and particularly following the establishment of the welfare state, Therborn (1996) argues that ‘child policy’ remains an elusive term. There is a great deal of inconsistency in how policy differentiates children from adults. In terms of definition, little discussion can be found: policies concerning children tend to focus on how to identify a child (usually in terms of age and the functions and expected roles of the child), rather than on the characteristics that this judgement is based on⁴. The specific ages vary wildly: rights accorded to children under Britain’s

⁴ One exception to this is Gillick Competence test, a piece of case law established in 1985 that permitted ‘children’ confidential (from parents) access to contraceptive advice from medical professionals if the treating doctor deemed the ‘child’ competent to make their own informed decisions.

ratification of the UNCRC apply to everyone under 18; 'children' aged ten are accorded adult criminal responsibility; there are strict laws about the kinds of work that people under 13, 14, 16 and 18 can legally engage in (Citizen's Advice Bureaux (CAB), 2011); 16-year-olds can join the army, but cannot vote until they reach 18; people under 16 are required to attend full-time (unpaid) education⁵; recent legislation means that from January 2012, people under 35 were entitled to lower levels of housing benefit than their older counterparts (DirectGov, 2011). Whether someone is considered a child or not, then, appears to be context-specific: rights and responsibilities are accorded gradually, and without any evident overriding framework.

Irrespective of whether a developmental or sociological approach is taken, what is evident in both the academic and the policy arenas is that debates around childhood relate strongly to debates around rights and power. The developmental perspective positions children as powerless and dependent on adults, whilst the New Sociology of Childhood positions children as rights-bearers whose potential power is compromised by social structures. The purpose of this thesis is not to attempt to arrive at a conclusion about whether sociological or developmental approaches to childhood are 'correct', but to assess whether the involvement of children in the measurement of child poverty can add to our understanding of the issue. If a child-derived measure of child poverty is feasible and functions differently to adult-derived measures, this may support the idea that children are competent, active agents. However, as will be examined below, it is clear that adult-derived measures of child poverty are valuable in offering insight into children's living conditions and the effects of poverty on children's short- and long-term well-being. Indeed, Uprichard's (2008) position – that the study of children and childhood only retains an adequate richness when being and becoming are considered simultaneously – is supported. Child poverty is important for children's presents and for their futures, and the impacts on both of these are understood as interacting. Therefore, whatever the causes of disparities of power and rights between adults and children, these disparities are a key theme in this

⁵ This age looks set to increase to 18 by 2013 in light of recent research conducted by the Department for Education – see Spielhofer et al, 2007.

thesis, and are therefore key in the definition of 'child' used. Children are defined as people who, due to their young age, are dependent on adults (usually parents) for the meeting of their material needs (a term which will be examined in more detail later on). In practice, the data which this thesis draws on limits this group further to people between the ages of 8-16, the age range covered in the qualitative and quantitative stages of the empirical research. As a result, although the words 'child' and 'children' are used as a convenient shorthand throughout this thesis, it must be noted that findings can only be assumed to be applicable to children within this age range. Research with younger children, and with those beyond compulsory school age who are still legally defined as children, may result in very different findings.

Poverty

Within the study of poverty, there are many frequently-used terms which nonetheless lack single or even arguably consistent or coherent definitions (see Veit-Wilson, 2010 and Spicker, 2007 for a discussion of existence of multiple definitions of poverty). This thesis draws on Townsend's (1979: 31) definition of material deprivation as an approach to poverty. That is:

"Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities"

This conception of poverty - as an inability to live according to basic social norms - has been hugely influential in poverty studies and policies, particularly within the developed world (for example the European Union Social Protection Committee adopted a definition of poverty that strongly draws on Townsend's conception - see European Commission (2004)). Some important aspects of the definition should be noted. Implicit in Townsend's definition is a concern with

living standards that goes beyond what can be measured using income alone. Access to resources, diets, activities and living conditions are not tied to any particular monetary value, but seen as valuable in their own right. Secondly, the definition is inherently *relative*, rather than absolute. *Absolute* conceptions of poverty are concerned with people's basic biological needs, whereas relative conceptions are concerned with people's living standards in relation to the time and place in which they are living (Alcock, 2006). Whilst this distinction makes a lot of sense in theory, in practice it is much harder to implement. Indeed, in adopting his relative definition, Townsend (1985) questioned the whole basis of an absolute approach to poverty. He argued that to some extent all approaches are relative in that they are based on common understandings about physical requirements and social norms prevalent at the time and in the place where they are developed. One example he gave was Seebohm Rowntree's (2000, first published 1901) inclusion of tea – a drink that provides no nutritional benefit – in his basket of goods thought to be basic necessities for families in York at the turn of the 20th century. It may therefore be more useful to see definitions of poverty as located on an absolute-relative continuum, rather than as fully falling into either category.

Lister (2004) notes one further continuum along which the concept of poverty is contested: the breadth of the condition. Some approaches consider poverty to be a narrow, single-dimensional concept, whilst others view it as broad and multi-dimensional. Four examples of approaches, ranging from narrow to broad, are: monetary poverty, material deprivation, social exclusion, and well-being. These approaches are now discussed.

Monetary poverty

One of the most common and, Laderchi et al (2003) argue, intuitively comprehensible approaches to understanding poverty in developed economies is the monetary approach, which defines poverty as insufficient income or consumption. Within this approach, poverty is uni-dimensional – to be poor is to lack adequate monetary resources (however adequacy is defined). The main advantage of income as an indicator of poverty is that it is easy to understand

and theoretically easy to measure (although in practice measuring people's incomes can be a very complicated matter – Meyer and Sullivan (2003) outline some of the difficulties in a US context). Additionally, income offers insight into the monetary resources that are available to families or individuals. However, in recent years the academic study of poverty and, to a lesser extent, policy approaches to poverty, have begun to incorporate wider measures in response to the limitations of income as an indicator of poverty (for example the UK government has included combined income poverty and material deprivation measures in official statistics – see Adams et al (2012)).

Some important limitations are now outlined. Firstly, as Short (2005) demonstrates, income does not account for non-monetary resources that families or individuals might have at their disposal. For example, someone who has inherited a great deal of land or property may have a low income, but at the same time may not need to spend much money on their day-to-day needs. Secondly, Hallerod (1995) points out that deciding what to include in someone's income is deceptively problematic; if someone regularly receives gifts of money, goods or services in addition to any paid work, deciding whether and how to include these in calculations of income is very complicated. Thirdly, Ebert (1996) and Laderchi et al (2003) address the issue of the same income having the potential to result in very different living standards depending on several factors. For example three people living together in a house may have three times the income of an individual living alone, but are unlikely to have three times the expenses on housing costs; similarly someone living in a rural area may have to spend much more money on transport to achieve a similar lifestyle to someone living in an urban environment. Fourthly, changes in income do not always happen concurrently with changes in living standards (Berthoud et al, 2004, discuss the relationship between income poverty and deprivation in the UK using both cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis). Gordon (2006) discusses the way in which families who face a sudden loss of income may maintain high living standards for some time as a result of savings and goods purchased before the change. Conversely, families with low material living standards may not be able to address this completely and immediately on

achieving an increase in income – it may take time to service debts and gradually accumulate the goods necessary for a decent standard of living. Fifthly, as will be discussed in more detail below, children live in increasingly diverse family types, with some children living in multiple households and family structures; so for example children may live with both parents in one household, but (Beier et al (2010) found) are increasingly likely to live with parents across multiple households in lone-parent or step-family structures. In this context, the use of income in one of the child's households over-simplifies the realities of the child's life – the households they live in may vary in terms of experiences of and extent of income poverty, and the child may bring resources from one household into another. For example, a child may bring clothes between the two households of which they are a member, when these have been purchased exclusively as part of the spending of one household. Finally, as Saunders (2004) highlights, the use of low income as a definition of poverty risks the conflation of definition and measure. If poverty is *measured* by income, also using low income as the *definition* of poverty results in a high degree of circularity and risks losing the deeper motivation for studying poverty. That is, *defining* poverty as low income and *measuring* poverty according to whether people have low income breaks the link with the idea that 'poverty' refers to an unacceptable deficit in *living standards* (an example of this in UK policy can be found in The Cabinet Office (2010) – relative income poverty is defined as living in a household with an income below 60% of the national median). An exclusive focus on income as a measure of poverty has given rise to criticisms (as mentioned by Alcock, 2006) around whether the focus of poverty research is on poverty per se, or on inequality – arguably a different (but not necessarily less important) issue.

The use of income as a measure of *child* (rather than household) poverty presents a number of additional problems. In practice, income is often calculated at the level of the household or family – that is, the incomes of adults living within a household are added together to arrive at an aggregate figure for household income. Children are very unlikely to have substantial personal incomes and are overwhelmingly likely to be financially dependent on parents

or carers; measuring household income is therefore by its nature an indirect method of assessing child poverty. Statistical research typically deals with this problem by disaggregating household income based on the assumption that spending is shared equitably between different members of a household (a process called *equivalisation*). In practice, this means that a formula is used to approximate what proportion of the household income is likely to be allocated to each member of the household. How true the assumptions behind such formulae are to real intra-household distributions remains open to a great deal of question (see later sections regarding the equitability of intra-household distributions). Redmond (2014) notes that the assumptions behind intra-household sharing tend to be based on theoretical models rather than empirical data, and that there is a shortage of such empirical data. Cockburn et al (2006) add that differing needs of household members and sharing styles within households complicate the creation of accurate equivalence scales. For example, Ridge (2002) found that in some households parents prioritise spending on their children to their own detriment, resulting in the children having acceptable living standards whilst the parents have poor living standards – a finding also noted by Gordon et al (2003). Conversely, it is possible that some parents may prioritise their own needs and wants over those of their children, resulting in parents having adequate living standards whilst children have poor living standards.

For the reasons listed above, income is often described as an *indirect* measure of child poverty. Ringen (1988) provides a detailed discussion of direct and indirect approaches to poverty measurement. For the purposes of this thesis, an important point drawn from this is that income represents an input at the level of the adult or adults in a family, which may or may not be translated into the output of good living standards for the child or children.

Material deprivation

In contrast to income, material living standards are an *output* or *outcome* of income *in combination with other factors*. That is, income can be translated into good living standards, but other factors might mean that children have good

living standards despite a low family income, or poor living standards despite a high family income. Material living standards, and material deprivation particularly, therefore represent a *direct* measure of child poverty. Material deprivation as a measure is concerned with people's access to the physical and social resources deemed to be necessary to avoid unacceptably low living standards (see Townsend, 1979). The approach maintains a focus on physical resources, meaning that it remains aligned with popular conceptions of what 'poverty' means and is relatively simple and comprehensible. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), drawing on Townsend's (1979) work, defines material deprivation as "the inability for individuals or households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time" (OECD, 2007). Poverty within this conception potentially becomes a multi-dimensional concept – examples of consumption goods and activities may relate to different facets of life creating multiple domains⁶, although findings are often presented as a simple or weighted count of items lacked, suggesting a single dimension (as used by Adams et al (2012) in the UK Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report). A complication in this approach is whether the selected items provide a complete measure – ie. cover all the resources necessary – or an indicator – ie. cover resources that represent an underlying and possibly unmeasurable latent construct. Given the number of items that would have to be included to measure everything someone needs to avoid material deprivation, it is likely that in practice most surveys provide indicators rather than complete measures.

Social exclusion

Within the UK policy framework, one definition of social exclusion is that it "relates to being unable to participate fully in normal social activities, or to engage in political and civic life" (Local Government Improvement and Development Agency, 2010). Social exclusion is about the social processes and cycles which result in some people withdrawing from normal cultural practices

⁶ For example the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) material deprivation measure includes domains relating to finances, durables, dwelling and community to name but a few.

and participation, and becoming isolated from social norms and unable to benefit from social resources. Definitions (for example Levitas et al, 2007) encompass concerns with the impact of these processes on both excluded individuals and groups, and on wider society. Lister (2004) notes that social exclusion is understood by some as a conceptualisation of poverty, and by others as a condition which is separate from (if often co-morbid with) poverty. Social exclusion widens the focus from a concern with access to material resources and activities, to a concern with participation in customary social processes and with how the individual and the social interact to create and perpetuate exclusion and inclusion (for an example see Colley and Hodkinson (2001)). It is therefore inherently relative – social exclusion can only happen in relation to prevalent social norms. To illustrate this, participation in political processes can be used as an example. A person who cannot afford to travel to a polling station to vote may be considered materially deprived as a result of this lack of affordability. If the same person *could* afford the travel but *chose* not to vote due to feelings of disenchantment with the national political system, they may be considered socially excluded – they are not participating in social processes which are important to the society in which they live – but they would not be considered materially deprived. This illustrates a further point: different approaches to poverty differ in terms of what they consider *facets* of poverty, and what they consider *causes and effects* of poverty. A lack of a desire to vote may be found to be an effect of poverty when a material deprivation conception is used, but at the same time may be an important facet of poverty when the underlying framework for the study is social exclusion.

Well-being

Well-being is an approach which is broad both in how the term is used, and (in most cases) in what is included within the approach. So whilst some researchers use the term ‘well-being’ synonymously with ‘income poverty’ (for example Cruces, 2005), others have much broader and more varied interpretations (Axford, 2008, discusses some of the various meanings of child well-being in a UK context). As with social exclusion, well-being is used in a much wider range of contexts than just in the study of poverty. Many studies of

well-being are conceptually very different from studies of poverty – a study of children’s well-being may have little to do with what would traditionally have been considered to be poverty. However, recently there has been an increasing focus on well-being as a policy concern incorporating but not limited to what would traditionally have been thought of as poverty (examples of this kind of study can be found in Helliwell (2006) and Layard (2003)). Indeed, as reported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (ONS, 2011) the UK government has recently begun incorporating measures of both objective and subjective well-being into the data used to assess national progress, alongside economic, social and environmental measures. This relates to the Easterlin Paradox – the finding that beyond a threshold, increases in income are not related to significant increases in people’s subjective well-being (Easterlin, 1974). In response to this, some governments have widened their social policy concerns from a focus on low income and material deprivation to a broader conception of ‘the good life’, incorporating non-material resources such as relationships, personality, and an ability to thrive in the face of adversity (some examples of the kinds of measures being introduced in the UK are outlined in ONS (2012)).

One important well-being focused approach to the study of poverty is Amartya Sen’s Capabilities Approach, which is concerned with people’s capacity to live a life which they have reason to value (Sen, 1985). This kind of approach moves conceptions of poverty away from normative frameworks which are concerned with objective resources and social conventions, towards more subjective frameworks which are concerned with personal preferences, albeit that preferences are shaped by social structures and so are likely to have high levels of cultural homogeneity. White (2008) provides an example of this, identifying the subjective, the material and the relational as three interdependent dimensions of well-being, with relevance at the level of both individuals and communities. An important critique that well-being approaches make of narrower approaches is that they tend to rely on negative indicators – such as the lack of material goods within the material deprivation approach – rather than the impacts of these indicators (for example Camfield et al (2008), Ben-Arieh (2006)). So someone approaching the study of poverty from a well-being

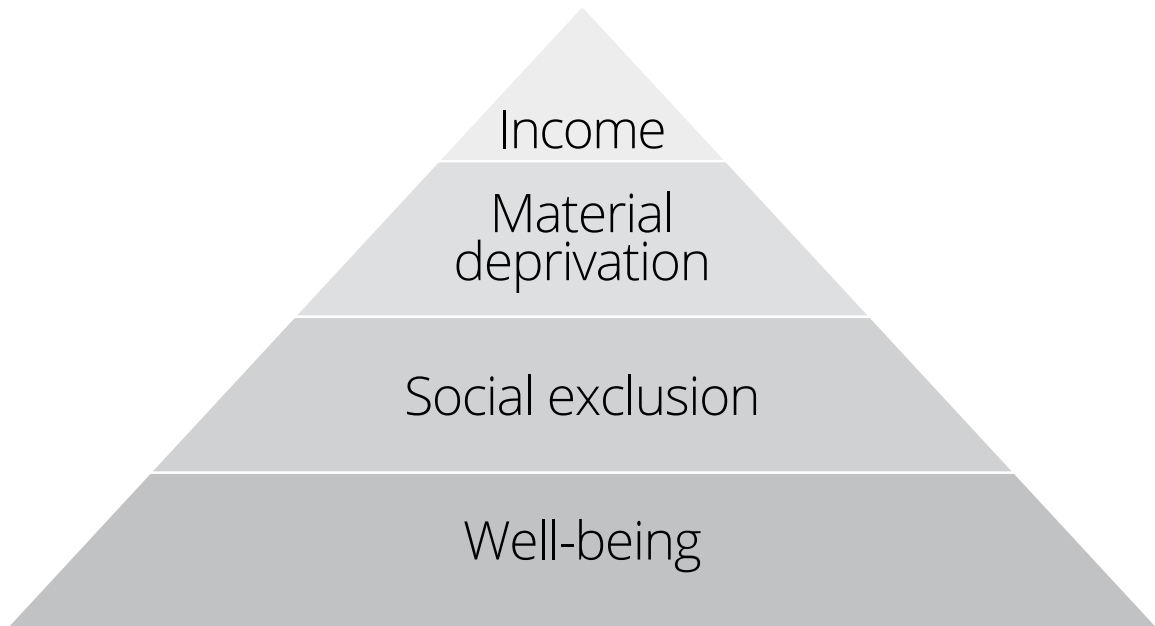
perspective may be concerned not only with what physical resources a person has access to, but also with the creative strategies they find to thrive despite a lack of access to what others may consider to be necessary resources. That is, the holistic picture of someone's environment and their interactions with and roles in shaping that environment are considered to be far more important than more simplistic considerations of what people have or do not have.

The value of multiple approaches to the study of poverty

One way of making sense of these varying approaches to the study of poverty is to see them as complementary ways of understanding the same underlying problem. It is important to note that the fact that poverty is understood in a wide range of ways does not point automatically to an adoption of Orshansky's (1969: 37) viewpoint that "poverty... is in the eye of the beholder"; rather, it points towards 'poverty' being a term with multiple meanings centring around a core concept of limited resources, as Spicker (2007) explores. This is not to say that the approaches do not differ significantly in how they conceptualise poverty, but that all of them are striving to find ways to better understand the causes, effects, and processes involved in creating human misery and happiness, with a particular focus on how material resources relate to these processes. Spicker (2007) discusses how different conceptions of poverty differ and overlap around a central core. Thus the various ways of defining and conceptualising poverty, just as above for 'child', can be viewed as different lenses through which social problems can be understood, rather than as problematic contradictions.

Figure 1.1 below illustrates the four conceptions of poverty detailed above – income, material deprivation, social exclusion and well-being. The pyramid shape demonstrates the varying breadth of the different conceptions. It ranges from income as a narrow, household-focused conception to well-being as a much broader conception which, as noted above, can be considered an approach to poverty but may also encompass elements of people's lives which fall outside what many would consider 'poverty' to mean.

Figure 1.1: Different breadths of conception used in the study of poverty



Policy definitions of poverty

As above, the lack of consensus amongst academics about a single definition of poverty is reflected in policy. The conflation of definition and measurement can be clearly seen in the response to the question “what is child poverty?”, posted on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

“Children are said to be living in relative income poverty if their household’s income is less than 60 per cent of the median national income.” (DfE, 2011)

The ‘definition’ of child poverty given here – living in a household with an income lower than 60% of the national median – illustrates the circularity noted above in both defining and measuring poverty in relation to income. It is closer to a measure than to a meaningful definition, in that it provides no insight into the differences in living standards between the poor and the non-poor. Policy use of the terms ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ poverty also reveals inconsistencies. Indicators of what are termed ‘relative’ and ‘absolute’ low income are included⁷, but the ‘absolute low income’ measure is arguably still a

⁷ Details of the different policy headline poverty figures are provided in the next section.

relative measure, since it does not relate to subsistence but is simply a slightly lower but still relative threshold than the relative poverty threshold of 60% of the current median income (see the Child Poverty Bill, 2010). Finally, the Child Poverty Strategy (DWP, 2011) reflects the complications inherent in measuring poverty as a multi-dimensional problem – whilst the Strategy is clear in its rhetoric that poverty is seen as multi-dimensional⁸, and poverty is described as being “about far more than income” (DWP, 2011: 2), indicators still rely heavily on income with only one – combined low income and material deprivation – incorporating a non-income measure. With a review of the current measures having been announced by Iain Duncan Smith in June 2012 (DWP, 2012), a political consensus on what child poverty means appears as unobtainable as an academic consensus on the issue.

The selection of a material deprivation approach

It is questionable whether a single, uncontested definition of poverty would be desirable since different understandings of poverty allow for different types of questions to be posed about the nature, causes and effects of the problem. For the purpose of this thesis, a material deprivation approach will be taken. Reasons for preferring material deprivation to an income-only approach have been outlined above. One advantage of material deprivation over broader approaches is that it allows for an examination of the independent causes and effects of poor *material* provision as compared to poor provision in less concrete or simply different facets of life. Another is that it allows for a more detailed examination of the relationships between material deprivation and other life experiences such as political participation. If these are treated as two aspects of the same underlying construct, it is more difficult to gain insight into exactly how they relate and interact to produce negative outcomes than if they are measured as separate constructs and then hypotheses about relationships are tested. Finally, material deprivation succeeds in addressing some of the most severe shortcomings of an income-only approach, whilst retaining a conception of poverty that tallies reasonably well with popular understandings

⁸ Areas such as family, home environment, health, education (page nine of the Strategy), and aspirations and stability (page 12) are included in the conception of child poverty used.

of the issue (Nolan and Whelan, 1996, argue for narrower conceptions of poverty for this reason). This means that approaches based on or incorporating material deprivation are likely to be comprehensible to the public, and therefore are more likely to gain political mileage than approaches which may be felt to be more nuanced or obscure. However, it is also stressed that material deprivation should not be seen as the only useful approach to poverty. Material deprivation interacts with other aspects of child poverty – for example household income poverty and social exclusion – and should be seen as *one* useful approach to poverty measurement, rather than the *only* useful approach to poverty measurement. This issue is explored in more depth drawing on data relating to different approaches to poverty measurement in chapter six.

1.3 Child poverty

Child poverty in the current literature

Given the multiple but related ways that the terms ‘child’ and ‘poverty’ are used, it is unsurprising that ‘child poverty’ similarly lacks a single and consistent definition. But this is not to say that there is not an abundance of research into child poverty. Drawing primarily on policy definitions, there is a great deal of evidence around the proportion of children in poverty and how this has changed over time, and around the impacts of child poverty on the lives of poor children and the adults who they grow up to become.

Policy indicators of child poverty

Current policy measures of child poverty include four headline figures, taken from the HBAI report for 2010-11 (Adams et al, 2012):

- **Relative low income**, defined as children living in households with an equivalised income lower than 60% of the national median. In 2010-11, 18% of children were found to be living in relative low income before housing costs (BHC), and 27% after housing costs (AHC). This is the lowest rate since the mid-1980s.
- **Absolute low income**, defined as children living in households with an equivalised income lower than 60% of the median income in 1998/99,

adjusted for prices. 11% of children were found to be living in absolute low income BHC, and 18% AHC. This represents a marked drop over the longer term, but no change from the 2009-10 levels.

- **Combined low income and material deprivation**⁹, defined as children living in households with an equivalised income (BHC) lower than 70% of the median household income and defined as materially deprived¹⁰. 14% of children were in combined low income and material deprivation, a rate that has dropped slightly since 2009-10.
- **Severe poverty**, defined as children living in households with an income (BHC) below 50% of the national median and experiencing material deprivation. 4% of children were in severe poverty, a drop of one percentage point since 2009-10.

Prevalence and risk factors

The prevalence of child poverty, and its impacts on children, varies according to several demographic factors. White et al (2002) and Sumner (2010) highlight the unique nature of child poverty as a complex issue which must be concerned with children's rights, children's participation, and children's well-being and well-becoming. Both articles note the heterogeneous nature of children as an important factor – children of different ages and developmental stages will have very different needs to one another. Whilst some effort is made to account for this in some equivalence scales (which are designed to account for the economies of scale which are possible in larger families)¹¹ and deprivation

⁹ The material deprivation index used in HBAI is based on ten items and activities, including: outdoor space where children can play safely; enough bedrooms for every child aged ten and over of a different gender; celebrations on special occasions; leisure equipment; at least one week's holiday away from home per year; a hobby or leisure activity; swimming at least once a month; friends round for tea or a snack once a fortnight; a school trip at least once a term; and playgroup at least once a week for pre-school children.

¹⁰ The approach taken in the HBAI report is based on ownership of goods and access to services, used to create a prevalence-weighted score - that is, an item that is owned by 99% of the population will contribute more to the score if it is lacked than one that is owned by 60% of the population. Appendix two of the HBAI report provides more detail on how HBAI deprivation scores are calculated (Adams et al, 2012).

¹¹ For example the OECD Modified equivalence scale, which accords different weights to children of different ages depending on perceived differing costs of the age groups.

measures¹², more attention is paid to diversity between children and families in terms of likelihood of experiencing poverty. Adams et al (2012) provide a breakdown of the following risk factors in terms of experiencing poverty as defined in UK policy. Children were more likely to be in poverty if:

- Their family contained no adults in paid work (although most poor children – around three in five – lived in households with at least one adult in paid work).
- Their household was headed by a lone parent.
- They lived in a large family (defined here as including three or more children).
- They had one or more disabled family members.
- Their household was headed by someone from an ethnic minority.

Analysis conducted by Sharma (2007) emphasises the risk for these groups as well as children in households where parents have low or no formal qualifications, and where parents are engaged in low-paid and/or unstable work.

Limitations of policy measures

The methods for measuring child poverty which these findings draw on rely heavily on household income. Indeed, only two of the policy measures – combined poverty and material deprivation, and severe poverty – incorporate the non-income element of material deprivation, and these in combination with income rather than as separate indicators. But whilst the policy definitions presented here have informed a great deal of the academic literature on child poverty, the multi-dimensional nature of the problem has been an increasing focus in academia and in policy (for example the Child Poverty Strategy, which as noted above describes child poverty as “about far more than income” (DWP, 2011:2)). Many authors discuss the inadequacies of household income as it is

¹² For example within the Family Resources Survey (FRS), items are included that are counted as deprivations for some age groups but not for others – so attendance at play group is a deprivation for pre-school children but not older children, whilst going on school trips is a deprivation for school-age but not for pre-school children.

currently used to measure child poverty, and offer different methods. Idson and Miller (1999) argue that equivalised income, used to compare all households, does not provide a realistic picture of differences in priorities and spending patterns between households with and without children. Burchardt (2006) goes further, highlighting the heterogeneous nature of households with children through her work demonstrating that existing equivalence scales are not adequate for households with disabled children. Burchardt (2006) also argues for the inclusion of material deprivation as well as income measures, a position that is supported by Nolan (2001), who argues that material deprivation provides a better reflection of poverty over time, and Bradshaw (2008). Bradshaw et al (2007) propose a combined low income and material deprivation measure as a better way of capturing poverty than income alone. Ansell et al (2007) go further, calling for measures which draw on wider well-being conceptions. Qualitative studies of what poverty means to children themselves also call into question the suitability of predominantly income measures; Ridge (2002) and Redmond (2008) suggest that social exclusion – primarily in terms of an inability to have things that peers have, and participate in activities that peers participate in – tallies more than household income with children’s accounts of what poverty means to them.

Risk factors when policy material deprivation indicators are used

Using the material deprivation measure alone (which, as noted above, uses a threshold based on prevalence weighting of material deprivation items included in the survey) – a measure which is not included in the policy figures – 26% of children were found to be in poverty¹³. This is a significantly higher rate than is found using any of the official headline figures, other than relative income poverty using AHC income. Overlaps between child material deprivation and household income poverty are explored later on, but some key risk factors for experiencing material deprivation irrespective of household income are explored here through analysis of the HBAI 2010-11 dataset. Table 1.1 presents this analysis. The first column of the table shows the deprivation rates for

¹³ Based on own analysis of the HBAI 2010-11 dataset, accessed from the Economic and Social Data Service at <https://www.esds.ac.uk/about/about.asp>

different groups of children – so for example whilst 26% of children are deprived overall, 25% of those living in households where they are the only child are deprived, compared to 37% of those living in households containing three or more children. The second column shows the composition of poor children (followed in brackets by the composition of all children). So for example 28% of poor children live in households where there is only one child, compared to 29% of all children living in such households). The final column shows the results of a logistic regression¹⁴ controlling for all of the demographic variables included in the table – ie. number of children, tenure type, ethnicity, household work status and family structure. Odds ratios show the likelihood of children in each set of circumstances being deprived, compared to a baseline – so for example children with one additional child in their household are 1.1 times as likely to be deprived as those who are the only child, and those with two or more additional children are 1.8 times as likely to be deprived. Risk factors were found to be similar to those for other, income-based types of poverty (see Adams et al, 2012 and Sharma, 2007), and include living in a larger family; living in rented accommodation; being black; having no parents in paid work; and living in a lone parent household. The strongest effects when all variables were controlled for were tenure type and work status¹⁵. This indicates that children experiencing material deprivation alone face similar risk factors to those facing more income-based types of poverty, and may suggest that current income thresholds are not set high enough to capture all children who suffer from poor material living standards because their parents cannot afford to provide for them. Alternatively, there may be some children who are not adequately materially provided for despite living in a household with adequate income. This will be explored further in later sections.

¹⁴ Logistic regression models are used frequently throughout the remainder of this thesis. A description of this method, including more detail on the interpretation of odds ratios, can be found in chapter two.

¹⁵ A further model checking for interactions between tenure, work status, and lone parent status was run but whilst these interactions were statistically significant the model produced was not substantially better than one without these, and the nature of the impact of the variables on deprivation did not change. For brevity it is therefore not presented here.

Table 1.1: UK deprivation rates by demographic factors

Demographic variable		% children deprived	Composition (overall % in brackets)	Odds ratio
Overall deprivation rate		26		
Number of children in the family	1	25	28 (29)	1
	2	21	37 (46)	1.1**
	3+	37	36 (25)	1.8**
Tenure type	Owners (outright or with mortgage)	11	26 (62)	1
	Renters	51	74 (38)	4.8**
Ethnicity	White	24	77 (82)	1
	Mixed	24	5 (5)	0.7**
	Asian	31	9 (7)	1.6**
	Black	46	8 (5)	1.7**
	Other	25	<1 (<1)	1.2**
Work status	Some paid work	17	54 (83)	1
	No paid work	71	46 (17)	4.5**
Family structure	Couple with children	19	55 (77)	1
	Lone parent with children	50	45 (23)	1.6**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level. Source: Own analysis of HBAI 2010-11 data, accessed from the Economic and Social Data Service at <https://www.esds.ac.uk/about/about.asp>

Impacts of child poverty

It is well established that child poverty measured by household income, or by household income and adult-defined material deprivation, is associated with a host of negative experiences and outcomes. Many of these are outlined in Bradshaw's (2011) account of child well-being in the UK; Keung (2011) found that child poverty is associated with lower educational participation and attainment, as well as having special educational needs; Quilgars (2011) found that poverty is related to living in poor neighbourhoods and poor housing, which itself is linked to poor outcomes; Bradshaw and Bloor (2011) found links with long term health problems; Bradshaw and Keung (2011) found links to mental health problems; Hooper (2011) found associations with the likelihood of experiencing physical abuse and/or neglect. These impacts are replicated in the wider research base, and clearly demonstrate that income poverty is a hugely damaging experience for children. Qualitative research with children and parents reveals similar themes – Pemberton et al (2013) provide a literature review of the qualitative evidence around experiences of poverty and social exclusion. Several themes are highlighted, including:

- **Education** – parents and children are concerned about the costs of education, an inability to participate in informal education such as out-of-school activities, and the impact of poor education on future life chances. Some groups of poor children – for example poor young carers - also found unsympathetic attitudes on the part of teachers;
- **Environment** – a lack of access to safe spaces where children can play and develop skills was highlighted, as were poor housing conditions and dangerous neighbourhoods. Perceptions of street play as anti-social were seen as limiting the opportunities available to children;
- **Socialising** – children were often excluded from events requiring money (either directly through fees or indirectly through the need to pay for transport), and from social events where reciprocity was assumed – for example children not being invited to birthday parties because their families were not able to reciprocate or buy presents for other children;
- **Fitting in** – children were often bullied by peers for lacking the kinds of clothes and shoes needed to fit in. This was particularly the case for poor children living in more affluent neighbourhoods.
- **Relationships** – evidence was found that both parents and children made efforts to minimise each other’s knowledge of how much poverty was impacting their lives, to reduce stress. However, it was also noted that parents and children are strongly aware of their situation, and that stress resulting from it can negatively impact family relationships.
- **Feelings of shame and dependence** – parents and children felt shame as a result of their poverty and the way this is perceived and discussed in wider society.

However, whilst Attree (2006: 54) noted a “narrowing of horizons” for poor children, meaning that becoming accustomed to poverty resulted in decreased future aspirations, Pemberton et al (2013) also note that many poor parents retain high aspirations for their children. Additionally, Kintrea et al (2011) note that the assumption that poor children and their parents have lower aspirations than their richer counterparts is questionable.

Child poverty and child well-being

One limitation of existing research into the impacts of child poverty, particularly in quantitative work, is the lack of much exploration of impacts on well-being rather than well-becoming, and of impacts on subjective facets of well-being. Regarding the latter, whilst qualitative studies (for example Ridge (2002); and noted by Pemberton et al (2013)) have found reports that children feel shame, stigma and exclusion as a result of poverty, quantitative studies to date including Rees et al (2011) and Knies (2011) have found minimal or no associations between child poverty and child well-being. A possible reason for this is a lack of clear distinction between household- and child-level poverty. As noted above, research findings suggest that many poor parents make efforts to protect their children from the material impacts of income poverty. A valid hypothesis may therefore be that material deprivation mediates the impact of household income poverty on children's subjective well-being, driving the focus of this research. To test this hypothesis, a measure that distinguishes between poor children and poor households would be needed.

Distinguishing poor children from poor families

An important advantage of material deprivation is its capacity to offer insight into children's material living standards both as deeply entwined with and as to an extent separable from families. The history of poverty research reveals a focus on family- or household-level measures. Whilst this has been criticised to an extent with regard to women's experiences of poverty as compared to men's experiences (amongst others, see Pahl, 1989, 2000a, 2000b, 2005), White et al (2002) and Redmond (2009) highlight that very little attention has been paid to date to differentiating between children and adults. There are several reasons why studying children's material living standards in a way that allows children to be differentiated from their families is of growing importance, outlined below.

Power imbalances between adults and children

Firstly, as noted above, the assumption that children's material living conditions can be discerned from studying the incomes of the adults they live with is

questionable. Lister (2004) cites evidence from the study of gender differences in exposure to and experience of poverty which suggests that women are more vulnerable to poverty than men. This is because they are both more likely to live in household types that are vulnerable to poverty (such as lone parent and single pensioner families – see Adams et al (2012) for evidence of this in a UK context), and, as Pahl (2005) found, because they are less likely to receive an equitable share of household resources. Power relationships, whilst shifting over time, continue to an extent to prioritise men’s wants and needs over those of women. These two factors – family structure and power relationships - represent complex interactions between resources and power: women heading lone parent families may have fewer resources but greater influence over the use of those resources, whilst women living with male partners may have more resources but less control over them. Additionally, men and women prioritise spending differently - studies of real-world intra-household distributions, whilst (as noted above) relatively rare, suggest that in diverse contexts women will tend to prioritise spending on children and on food (Middleton et al, 1997; Grogan, 2004), whilst men who control family budgets spend more on alcohol and tobacco and less on women’s and children’s clothes (Lundberg et al, 1997; Grogan, 2004).

This has implications for how household income is equalised. Both of these factors – the likelihood of living in more vulnerable family types and the power relationships – could be applied to children, meaning that there is reason to pursue the study of intra-household distributions between adults and children, as well as between adult men and adult women. Power imbalances between adults and children are also likely to vary in strength and impact over the course of childhood and depending on the context of childhood – experiences of such imbalances may differ in extent and effect for children of different ages, and for children from different backgrounds. To give two examples, Cockburn et al (2006) in their study of comparative calorific intake report that older children and girls are treated less favourably than younger children and boys in intra-household sharing; and when money was allocated to women in a South African context, Duflo (2000) found that the health of girls, but not that of boys, improved. This would indicate that measuring children’s living standards

directly is desirable. Given fundamental developmental differences between adults and children in addition to power imbalances, measures which are applicable to adults may be less so to children – so to measure child poverty according to children’s income would be verging on meaningless since all children would be in poverty. Few people would argue that putting children to work for money would be a desirable policy recommendation from poverty studies. Material deprivation provides a method for looking at children’s material living standards in a way that reflects the realities of children’s lives. That is, children are likely to have access to goods and services directly, rather than to financial resources enabling them to purchase goods and services. Equally, goods and services which are important to children may be available freely but with differential access based on factors other than income. So for example a child in a rural setting may struggle to access the kinds of youth provision that are available to children in urban environments, but this will not necessarily be related to differences in the household incomes of the children.

Diversification of family types

Secondly, and on a related note, Redmond (2009) notes that the diversification of family types (and indeed the existence of children who do not live in families) increasingly challenges the assumption that children live in single family units that occupy single households and can be represented by single measures of poverty. McLanahan and Percheski (2008) note that children are increasingly likely to live in a variety of family types across their childhood, including two-parent families, single parent families, and step families. Lockie (2009) highlights that children living in single-parent or step-families may well live in multiple households, and those households may be of similar or different structures – so for example a child may live in two step-family households, or one step-family and one single-parent household. As noted above, the material resources available to children may differ between households and/or be carried across households. Despite an acknowledgement of changing family types in the academic literature, research into children’s experiences of material living standards when they live across multiple households is lacking. However, it is reasonable to assume that this suggests that child poverty

requires several types of measure to account for the complexity. Children's households are undoubtedly an important factor in their well-being as many resources are shared between household members. An accurate picture of a child's living standards will need to reflect household conditions in all of the houses within which a child lives, as well as the resources children carry between households. Therefore, separate measures of household material deprivation and child material deprivation are useful in gaining a fuller picture of children's living standards.

Children as active agents

Children, then, may differ from adults and from each other in terms of the share of household resources they receive and in the sources of material provision available to them. Another way that children may differ (again noted by Redmond (2009)) is in how they perceive, experience and react to poverty. Compared to adults, children have different and lesser access to power to act on their perspectives and to influence their own experiences and the world around them. But, as John (2003) notes, whilst it tends to be assumed amongst authors on children's social position that children lack power, investigations (for example Punch, 2005) have also revealed a huge level of creativity in some children's efforts to exert power within social structures which minimise their formal access to it (an example is the pejoratively labelled idea of 'pester power' as a process by which children influence parents' spending decisions – see Nicholls and Cullen, 2004). However, it is evident that parents have a great deal of power over children (John, 2003; even if this is often couched in terms of 'responsibility' or 'authority' where power is felt to be an uncomfortable word – see Griffith, 1996). Indeed, Alderson (2000) argues that adult fantasies of a 'slippery slope', whereby giving children a small amount of power will lead to parents becoming powerless over their children whilst still accountable for their behaviour, often fuel opposition to children's rights. This despite research evidence (for example Aquilino and Supple, 2001) that a democratic parenting style, where children's rights to be involved in rule setting and decision making are acknowledged, is associated with better quality parent-child relationships and better outcomes for children. This has complex implications for the

relationship between a family's economic status and a child's material situation. On the one hand, it is clear that children are at a disadvantage in terms of access to formal power in family decisions about spending – children's views are taken into account at the discretion of parents, and only for as long as parents are willing to listen to them. On the other hand, it is clear that many children use wide-ranging strategies to exercise informal power over spending decisions. It is likely, then, that variation in parenting styles and in the individual child's capacity to successfully negotiate power are further confounding factors in the relationship between household income and child poverty as understood by children themselves.

An exploration of how far it is sensible and practicable to distinguish children from families has been a key aspect of more recent studies relating to childhood. Whilst (as stated above) the position taken here is that children can best be understood as simultaneously child-beings and adult-becomings, a large and growing body of research from within the new sociology of childhood suggests that children can provide valid and reliable accounts of their own worlds, and that these accounts differ from those provided by parents. To cite but a few examples, Campbell (2008) and Rasmussen (2004) found evidence that children can keep secrets from adults involved in their lives; Vyverman and Vettenberg (2009) found children to have very different understandings of shared parent-child experiences; Leonard (2004) found that children at times disagree with parents about what is in their best interests, and resent the level of power parents have over them; and Fattore et al (2008) found that children's perceptions of their own well-being offered information that challenged as well as complemented responses provided by parents. Such findings, along with an increased policy focus on children's rights and the prominence of ecological theories of child development¹⁶, led to the child indicators movement, embodying an increasing demand for robust child indicators (Ben-Arieh, 2008). Whilst early child indicators were concerned with children's well-becoming (ie. their movement towards successful adulthood) and with adults' perceptions of

¹⁶ These theories stress the importance of multiple interacting environmental layers (many of which go beyond or are outside of the family unit) in contributing to how children grow up – see Bronfenbrenner (1994).

what was important, Ben-Arieh (2008) highlights more recent movement in child indicators towards a concern with children's well-being, at least in part as understood by children themselves.

Children as rights-bearers

The increasing concern with monitoring children's lives and consulting with children in research has been mirrored to an extent in an increasing policy focus on children's rights. Whilst, as Henricson and Bainham (2005) argue, a delicate and often imperfect balance between children's and parents' rights can be seen in academic and policy literature, that children are considered active agents with relevant viewpoints and individual rights at all suggests a sea change towards seeing children as citizens in their own right, rather than as adjuncts of parents. Probably the most relevant policy change regarding children's rights was the ratification of the UNCRC in 1991. The UNCRC addresses three overarching themes in children's rights – provision rights, protection rights, and participation rights, often referred to as the three Ps. Article 12 in particular guarantees children the right to contribute to the debate on issues impacting their welfare. This right has been enacted more successfully in some arenas than others, and whilst Lundy (2007) and Tidsall et al (2008) argue that efforts at promoting children's participation have at times been tokenistic, nevertheless children can no longer legally be ignored. Since it is difficult to argue that child poverty is not an issue impacting children's welfare, the time is ripe for a quantitatively operationalisable definition of child poverty¹⁷ that includes reference to children's own conceptions of what it means to be poor. Redmond (2009) stresses that such consultation with children around how poverty is defined, and what resources constitute necessities, is indicated both by research and human rights legislation. Such a measure need not be seen as a replacement for existing, adult-centric or household-level measures, but rather as a complementary measure intended to add to and challenge current understandings of child poverty and its impacts.

¹⁷ A definition that is quantitatively operationalisable is stressed here as this kind of measure can contribute not only to understandings of child poverty but also to its measurement, and therefore to monitoring reduction efforts.

'Children' as a diverse group

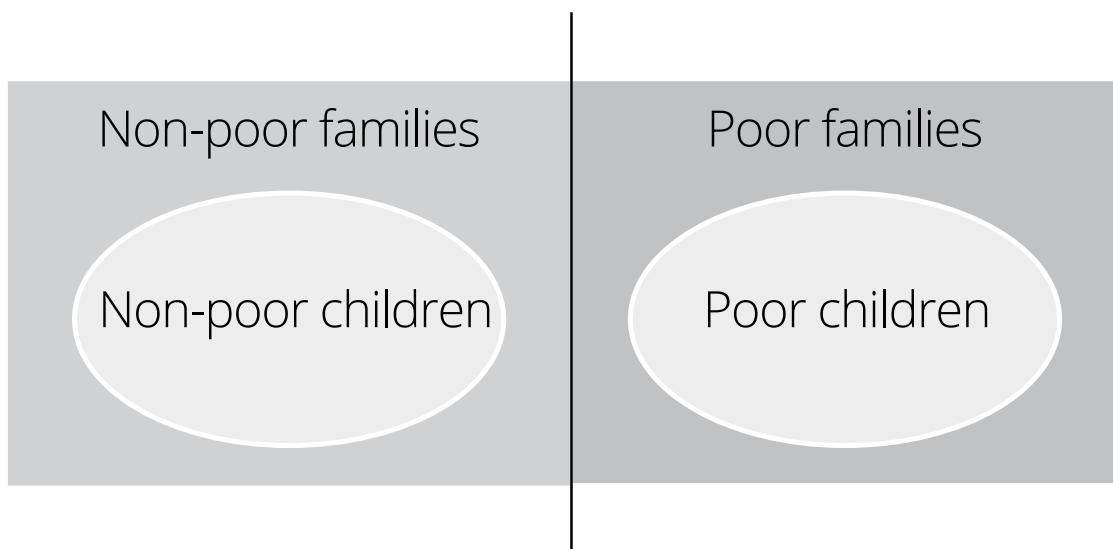
Children's fortunes, then, are interwoven with the fortunes of their families, but are also not represented exclusively and accurately by those of their families. Additionally, 'children' do not form a homogenous group. Children will vary in their experiences of material deprivation according to a range of demographic factors (Bradshaw, 2011, provides details of the many demographic factors which influence the odds of children experiencing poverty in the UK). They will also vary in how they interpret and are impacted by these experiences across an even broader spectrum of demographic and individual factors (Ridge, 2002, discusses many of the ways in which children in her study differed in their responses to poverty). In light of these variations between children, and potentially even within the different experiences of an individual child, it becomes increasingly inappropriate to assume that one or even both parents can accurately report on their child's experiences of material living standards. These experiences will be influenced by factors within children themselves, within children's families, and external to family environments. This lends credibility to the position adopted within the new sociology of childhood (for example Redmond, 2009) and the child indicators movement (for example Ben-Arieh, 2005), which exhort researchers and policy makers where possible to consult with children directly as well as through the proxies of parents about issues that impact on their lives. If research agendas are to offer a more complete picture of children's lives, children themselves must play a part in shaping these agendas. The study of children's living standards, then, can contribute to this by examining children's positions both within families and as individuals in their own right; and by consulting with children as well as with parents not only about what resources children *have*, but also about what they *need* to avoid poverty. Children are unlikely to be able to provide an accurate picture of factors such as the proportion of household income spent on them. Additionally, they may disagree with parents or offer complementary views to parents about what their material needs are. Material deprivation therefore provides a means of gaining insight into child poverty in a way that children can understand and report on, and in a way that has the potential to derive from

children's own perceptions of their needs, as well as or in contrast to parental perceptions of children's needs.

The contribution of child-centric material deprivation approaches

To illustrate the role of material deprivation in differentiating children's experiences of poverty from those of their families whilst continuing to acknowledge the importance of family context, a new model is needed. Figure 1.2 shows the assumption behind income-only or family-centric measures of child poverty. Implicit in the use of income-based measures is the assumption that child poverty is fully and accurately proxied by a low family income. Implicit in family-centric measures is the assumption that a child's situation is fully and accurately proxied by the poverty status of their family. Poor children are assumed to reside exclusively within poor families, whilst non-poor children are exclusively within non-poor families.

Figure 1.2: How income-based, family-centric poverty measures position children



However, when using a child-centric material deprivation approach, child poverty can be defined by the access children have to resources which they can use, directly or indirectly, to achieve a lifestyle that is in accordance with the social norms of people at their life stage living within their society. Using

resources *directly* means using resources that are themselves outputs or outcomes, and are physically available to the child – so a child who has a pair of shoes can make direct use of that resource, and a child who has their own bedroom can make direct use of that resource. *Indirect* use of resources may involve more complex processes for children. For example a child may require new clothes, but given their lack of personal income their capacity to obtain these depends on parents or carers having the resources, ability, and will to provide these for the child. Similarly a child may wish to participate in a fee-charging event or in an event for which parental consent is required. A child has only indirect access to these resources as they are dependent on the continued co-operation and capacity of parents or carers to obtain access to them. This complication in examining poverty from the perspective of children highlights again the importance of power relationships in childhood studies. That is, physical resources interact with power relationships in a complex manner, producing outcomes which may appear counter-intuitive when compared to studies of poverty that rely exclusively on household income.

This interaction between power and resources is invisible in the predominant monetary- or income-related definitions, and indeed in family-centric definitions, as a result of the power imbalances identified in the definition of ‘child’ above. Children do not have their own incomes and have at best indirect control of familial financial resources. This makes problematic the assumption that income at the level of the family is an adequate proxy for poverty at the level of the child - the focus is on the child as a unit of analysis independently from the family. The distinction made here – that children living in poor families may not be poor, and that children living in non-poor families may be poor, is summarised effectively by White et al (2002:6):

- Income poverty is not specific to the child – household affluence is likely to influence whether children have what they need, but it is not a direct measure of this.
- Intra-household allocation will impact on the material conditions of individuals within a household – they note that very little work has been

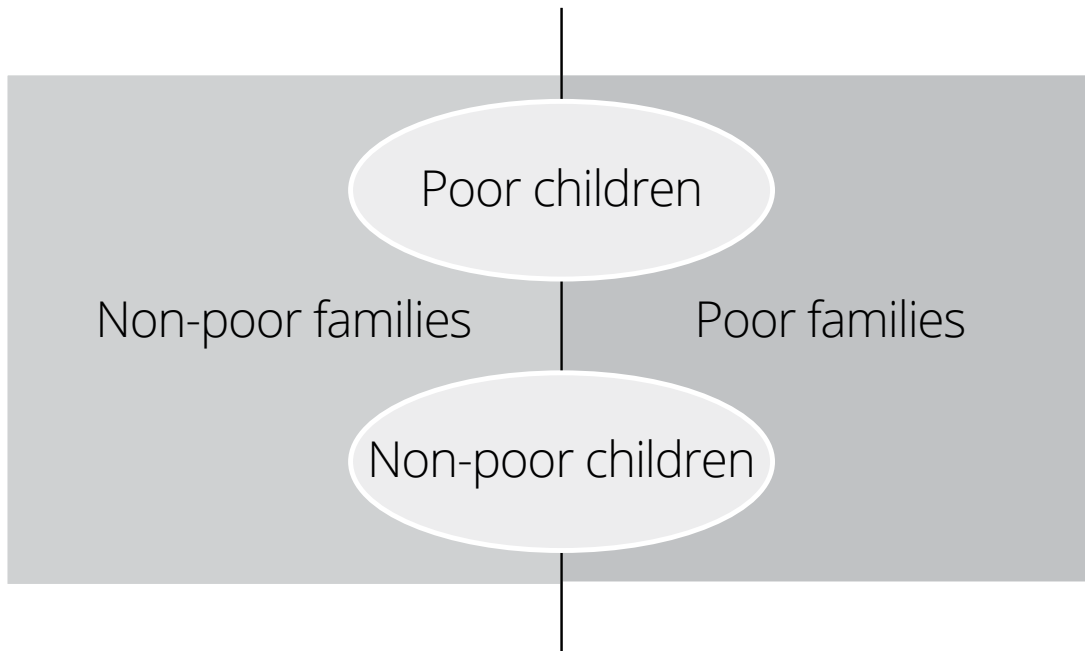
done on intra-household allocations concerning distributions between adults and children, although some is cited above.

- What children need may vary according to characteristics of the child, including age and, (in their words) “somewhat controversially”, sex.

Whilst differentiating between households and children may result in the same groups of children being identified as poor as in existing definitions, illustrated in figure 1.1, it represents a different approach. This approach avoids the assumption that poor children inevitably originate from poor families, or that poor families inevitably produce poor children. The difference in approach is illustrated in figure 1.3, below. Children are located within families¹⁸, but may access resources from beyond those available to their family, or may be denied access to ‘family’ resources. Additionally, children may live in multiple households, and the different households may differ in terms of whether they are classed as poor or not. This is not to say that household income is unimportant. Rather, the point is that child poverty may be experienced in two distinct (if often co-morbid and related) ways – at the level of the family where the family or household as a group lacks adequate resources, and/or at the level of the child, where the child as an individual lacks adequate resources. Poor children can live within both poor and non-poor families, and non-poor children can live within both non-poor and poor families.

¹⁸ Whilst it is acknowledged that there are children who are not located within families, and that the experience of poverty for these children is likely to be different to that of children within families, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the situations of these children. However, Redmond’s (2009) position that research into the experiences and perceptions of such children is required is supported.

Figure 1.3: How material deprivation, child-centric based poverty measures can position children



As will be detailed below, many current measures of children’s material living standards draw on *child-centric* measures as well as household or family-level measures. That is, measures are used which are focused on children rather than on families or households, and these can be used in conjunction with family-level or household-level measures to obtain a fuller picture of children’s living standards. Less work, however, has been done on the development of *child-derived* measures – that is, measures which are developed based on consultation with children, rather than with parents or other adults, about children’s material needs. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the viability and value of a measure that is not only child-centric but also child-derived. The next section will examine what existing child-centric measures can tell us about child poverty, and where a child-derived measure may add to knowledge.

1.4 Empirical background

Evidence has been found in both the theoretical and empirical literature, then, that supports the need for a new measure of child poverty to supplement existing, adult-centric and/or adult-derived measures. Changes in family

structures, studies of intra-household distributions, and changing understandings of childhood and of children all suggest that existing measures may not capture the whole picture. However, before constructing a new measure it is reasonable to ask whether empirical evidence supports theoretical assumptions, and if so how far. The aim of this section is to summarise and explore qualitative and quantitative evidence to determine whether empirical findings in existing research support the need for a new, child-centric and child-derived, measure of child poverty.

Qualitative evidence

Amongst the literature on child poverty, a small number of studies were found which investigated children's own perceptions of poverty. The limitations of this literature must be acknowledged. Primary among these is that children included in samples tended to be selected on the basis that they were in poverty according to adult-derived understandings (ie. low income), meaning that the perceptions investigated were limited by adult-derived conceptions of poverty. Nevertheless, they indisputably provide hugely valuable insight into how children experience life in households with very limited resources. Common to all the literature found on this topic, and as noted by Redmond (2009) in his review of the role of children's agency in child poverty studies, was a highlighting of the need to substantially increase the involvement of children in academic and policy understandings of child poverty. Indeed, McDonald (nd) presents a detailed theoretical argument for the inclusion of children, highlighting that adult arguments for ending child poverty tend to focus on the issue in terms of social investment for a better future rather than on children's well-being; that children alongside adults are intrinsically involved in the social construction of what it means to be a poor child; that unequal intra-household distributions mean income is an inadequate measure of child poverty; and that children's agency and access to extra-household resources mean that adults cannot adequately proxy children in the measurement of child poverty.

Harpham et al (2005), Camfield and Tafere (2009) and Camfield (2010) discuss the importance of child-specific measures of child poverty drawing on

children's perceptions in developing countries, although it is unclear why this is felt to be more relevant to such countries. Indeed, there are many similarities between these studies and those conducted in richer countries (including Ridge, 2003; Ridge, 2002; Fortier, 2006; Harju and Thorod, 2011; Andresen and Fegter, 2011; Martin and Hart, 2011; Sutton et al, 2007). These similarities include that children perceive poverty in overlapping but different ways to adults, and that children focus more than adults on the relational causes and impacts of poverty. In both richer and poorer countries, children are found to ascribe more agency to themselves than adults tend to ascribe to them in terms of the impact of parental income poverty. This agency is often seen in relational terms - children describe being vulnerable to poverty whatever their family situation if they do not work at maintaining good relationships with the adults who control family income (as found by Camfield and Tafere, 2009; Andresen and Fegter, 2010). It is also seen regarding personal creativity - children describe devising strategies for avoiding the impact of low income, for example through formal or informal work, or accessing resources from extended family (detailed in Harju and Thorod, 2011; Fortier, 2006; Ridge, 2003; Ridge, 2002; Camfield and Tafere, 2009). Ridge (2002) also found evidence that in addition to parents protecting children from the impact of low income, children protected parents from the distress of knowing the impact on their child of going without, by pretending not to want things that they did in fact want.

Amongst children in richer countries (who are focused on here as they will form the basis of the empirical analysis in this thesis), two key studies (Ridge's (2002) qualitative study and Redmond's (2009) review) found that poverty was understood by children to be very much linked to material deprivation and social exclusion. Several researchers (including Martin and Hart, 2011; Sutton et al, 2011; Fortier, 2006) found that children did not tend to see themselves as poor even when adult measures would classify them as such, but rather as more or less able to adhere to the social norms of their peers. Fortier (2006 and Ridge (2002) found that children described the effects of lacking socially normal items and experiences in terms of shame; Ridge (2002; 2003) also highlighted the impact of non-participation; and Martin and Hart (2011) found

evidence that children lacking such items were at risk of being bullied. Hence, the kinds of things stressed by children were being able to take contributions to social or school events (Harju and Thorod, 2011); having fashionable clothing and shoes (Martin and Hart, 2011; Fortier, 2006; Ridge, 2002), and being able to participate in activities and events requiring a fee or at least money for public transport (Ridge, 2002). These are not necessarily important in themselves, but in terms of what they represent to the child and to their peers. Possession of such items and experiences reduces feelings of personal shame or inadequacy, and children lacking such items and experiences may be excluded by formal processes if they lack fees, or by informal processes if they are bullied by peers. Redmond (2009) notes children excluding other children as an important facet of child poverty from children's own perspectives. Thus when children's perceptions and meanings are considered it becomes very difficult to separate material deprivation from social exclusion – the two are fundamentally linked in how poverty is understood and experienced.

To summarise, it is clear that children tend to have a different and potentially less monetary understanding of poverty than adults, although their understandings are no less subtle and perhaps more so in terms of the focus on relational causes and effects of going without. It is also clear based on the recommendations of the above authors and on the relatively small and overwhelmingly qualitative literature in this field that the inclusion of children's voices in child poverty research has to date been limited in terms of the ways children are included, and the frequency with which children's views are incorporated.

Quantitative evidence

Qualitative evidence, then, supports the usefulness of the potential to measure child poverty as an independent phenomenon from that of household poverty – both in terms of the incidence and prevalence of poverty, and in terms of the meanings of being poor. Existing data does not allow for an examination of the second of these, since we have yet to include questions in large-scale surveys that are developed in consultation with children around how to determine who

is poor. The ability to explore the first question is also limited, since in major surveys children are often either not included at all or are surveyed through proxies (for example the FRS, the PSE 2012 and the EU-SILC all use adult proxies). But some insight into the comparative position of children and parents, using adult-derived understandings of poverty, can be garnered using the material deprivation measures in these surveys. This section presents analysis completed using the HBAI and PSE 2012 datasets, with a view to establishing whether there is empirical evidence indicating that research into intra-household distributions between adults and children is warranted. Analysis is descriptive and was performed using Stata, a statistical analysis program.

HBAI 2010-11

The HBAI dataset contains data from a stratified sample of over 24,000 households across Great Britain. Included in the data are measures of household income and indicators of child material deprivation, based on responses to a set of ten items (detailed previously) deemed necessary for children by adults. The items were selected based on results of the 1999 PSE Survey (see Pantazis et al (2006) for details of the 1999 findings, and McKay and Collard (2004) for details of how this list was used to develop material deprivation items for the FRS). Household income is based on an aggregation of all incomes to individuals within the household, and is equivalised using the OECD Modified equivalence scale. Analysis is presented based on income both BHC and AHC. Households are said to be in income poverty if their equivalised income is below 60% of the national median – a flag identifying households below this level is provided in the dataset. As noted above, material deprivation is based on a prevalence-weighted score out of 100, with children scoring more than 25 considered materially deprived. As for income, a flag is provided in the dataset identifying children in this position.

In this analysis, household income poverty and child deprivation are compared to see whether there is evidence for materially deprived children in non-poor households and vice versa, which would suggest that further exploration of the

situation of children independently from family-level variables would be useful. Data presented here are from the 2010-11 release.

Table 1.2 shows the proportion of children in each of four groups – not income poor and not deprived; income poor and not deprived; not income poor and deprived; and both income poor and deprived. Two measures of income are used –BHC and AHC – to examine the impact of these different measures of income poverty on the proportion of children in the different conditions. 74% (BHC) or 75% (AHC) of children have material deprivation and income poverty statuses which match up – ie. they are either income poor and deprived or not income poor and not deprived. 9% (BHC) or 13% (AHC) are income poor but not deprived, which may indicate a group of children who are protected from the material impacts of poverty by some mechanism (possibly parental sacrifice or access to resources from people not within the immediate family). Finally, 17% (BHC) or 12% (AHC) are not in income poor households but are deprived, which may indicate that the income poverty threshold is not set high enough; that strains on household budgets result in poor living standards despite ‘adequate’ income; or that parents are not prioritising children’s needs in their spending.

Table 1.2: Child material deprivation by household income poverty in the HBAI 2010/11

		Not deprived (%)	Deprived (%)	Total (%)
BHC	Not income poor	65	17	83
	Income poor	9	8	17
	Total	74	26	100
AHC	Not income poor	61	12	73
	Income poor	13	14	27
	Total	74	26	100

BHC – before housing costs; AHC – after housing costs. Source: Own analysis of HBAI 2010-11 data, accessed from the Economic and Social Data Service at <https://www.esds.ac.uk/about/about.asp>

PSE 2012

A valid criticism of the data above, drawn from HBAI, would be that like is not compared with like – several studies (for example Nolan and Whelan, 2010;

Bradshaw and Finch, 2003) find that income poverty and material deprivation are not as closely linked as might be expected, and that the degree to which different dimensions of poverty overlap is limited and varies across different countries. However, no agreed household or adult deprivation threshold is available for HBAI data. In contrast, the PSE survey data has been used to construct measures of child, adult and household deprivation.

The PSE Survey provides detailed data on household income and deprivation on household, adult and children's items. This survey represents one of the largest-scale representative studies of poverty in the UK to date. The survey follows the approach to consensual poverty measurement pioneered by Mack and Lansley (1985). An initial omnibus survey asked respondents to indicate which of a large set of items and activities were necessary and which may be desirable but were not necessary. A further survey - called the mainstage survey - asked respondents (amongst a raft of other questions relating to poverty and social exclusion) whether they (or their children) had or did the items or activities, and, if not, whether this lack was due to an inability to afford them. Items and activities which had in the omnibus survey been deemed necessities by 50% or more of the population were used to construct indices of deprivation – at both the individual adult level, and at the child level. The resulting indices – comprising 24 items for children and 22 items for adults - are used here to examine the relationship between household-level and child-level deprivation¹⁹. Deprivation indices were calculated based on summing the number of items lacked. Deprivation thresholds were set based on the proportions of people lacking cumulative numbers of item, and the association between numbers of items lacked and income poverty (detailed in Gordon et al, 2013). In line with Gordon et al's report, children were classed as deprived if they lacked two or more child-specific necessities, and adults were classed as deprived if they lacked three or more adult- or household-specific necessities. The PSE mainstage survey covered over 4,000 households, and over 12,000 people. All adults (those aged 16 and over) within a household were asked to

¹⁹ A full list of adult and child deprivation indicators used in the PSE can be found in appendix C.

complete the survey, with the main carer completing questions relating to children in the household.

The relationship between adult deprivation and child deprivation was examined by cross-tabulating the two measures. Adults in a household were treated as deprived if half or more of the adults within a household were classed as deprived on the adult index. The percentage of people in each group is shown in table 1.3. Somewhat shockingly, almost half of all children (48%) lived in households where adults were deprived. For most children – 75% - their deprivation status matched up with that of their parents. 21% of children were not deprived themselves but were living with adults who were deprived, suggesting parents who work to protect their children from deprivation at their own expense. A small but concerning group of 4% of children were in households where the adults they lived with were not deprived, but they themselves were deprived.

Table 1.3: Child deprivation by adult deprivation in the PSE 2012

	Adults not deprived (%)	Adults deprived (%)	Total (%)
Child not deprived (%)	48	21	69
Child deprived (%)	4	27	31
Total (%)	52	48	100

Source: Own analysis of the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 2012 data, unpublished

Implications

Empirical evidence from two different surveys, then, lends support to the idea that whilst for the majority of children the poverty status of their household (whether measured by income poverty or material deprivation) reflects their own, for a not insubstantial minority there is a disjuncture between the two. In the majority of cases where they do not match up, children appear to be being protected from the impacts of poverty, in all probability often through parental sacrifice. However, and potentially more worryingly, there is a small but persistently identifiable group of children whose parents are not poor but who are themselves living impoverished lives. And this in surveys where adults, rather than children themselves, define impoverishment and provide the data by which it is measured. Based on this, the case for investigating the prevalence

of child poverty drawing on children's own conceptions and using children themselves as respondents is evident.

1.5 Discussion

The aim of this chapter has been to provide working definitions of key concepts, and to investigate whether theoretical and empirical evidence support the potential value of a new measure of child poverty that is both child-centric and child-derived. A key theme, whilst defining terms and arguing for a new measure, has been the complexity and contested nature of the concepts under exploration. No attempt has been made to argue that the working definitions used here are more accurate or valid than other definitions, nor is the intended outcome of the thesis to produce a measure that will replace household-centric or adult-derived measures of child poverty. Indeed, the existence of multiple understandings of 'child poverty' reflected in multiple measures is seen as an advantage, helping to both broaden out our understandings of the issues where complementary evidence is produced, and challenging us to refine our understandings where evidence appears contradictory. Rather, it is argued, evidence from a range of disciplines suggests that there may be gaps in what is known about child poverty resulting from the existing, primarily adult-derived and household-centric, conceptualisations of the issue. The aim of this thesis is to develop and test a method for filling some of these gaps.

The next section is concerned with the development of this measure, and the next chapter goes on to detail the methods used in developing a new measure, including the background research leading to the development of this project; a review of different understandings of poverty and methods for measuring it which led to the selection of an approach; and the iterative process of data gathering and analysis which resulted in the measure used here, and in potential developments and refinements to that measure.

Section II

Developing the measure

Chapter 2

The research process: Chronology and methods

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the chronology of the research and the methodological issues involved. A brief background to the research is provided, followed by details of the selected method for developing and using a child-derived and child-centric measure of child material deprivation. The research drew on both qualitative and quantitative methods, and a discussion of the use of mixed methods is provided. Ethical and practical issues in researching with children are then discussed, and methods used at different stages of the research are detailed. Finally, some thoughts on child-centric research with respect to this thesis are presented.

2.2 Background

The work presented in this thesis is rooted in the Children's Society Well-being Research Programme. Main (2009) examined the links found in the 2008 wave of the school-based survey between child poverty and children's subjective well-being. Two main questions were used as indicators to assess whether children could objectively be classed as poor – how many adults in their household were in paid work, and whether they received free school meals. Supplemental questions were concerned with children's personal access to financial material resources, their happiness with the money and possessions they had, and their subjective perception of how well off their family was. Subjective well-being was measured using the Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS), a well-established scale measuring children's overall life satisfaction (Huebner, 1991, details the establishment of the scale)²⁰. Findings indicated that the objective measures of child poverty explained only a tiny proportion (less than 1%) of the variation in children's subjective well-being – a surprising finding given that in qualitative research poor children report a great deal of

²⁰ More details of the SLSS are presented in chapter 7.

distress resulting from their living in poverty (for example Ridge, 2002), but one which has been supported by subsequent research findings from survey data gathered both by the Children's Society (Rees et al, 2011) and elsewhere (Knies, 2012). This work raised several issues and questions, including:

- Whether proxies used to measure child poverty were valid - ie. did these variables capture children who would be defined as poor by other measures.
- Whether these proxies were reliable when respondents are children rather than adults – ie. whether children provide reliable responses to these questions.
- Whether the understanding of poverty reflected in these measures – ie. that child poverty is about household income and resources – is the best way of capturing the impact of poverty on children's subjective well-being.

This thesis grew out of these initial questions and the literature and empirical review presented in the previous chapter.

2.3 Material deprivation: the importance of methodological considerations

An important issue in the study of material deprivation is that of methodology: what is measured, and how is it measured? As discussed in the previous chapter, there are many reasons why material deprivation provides a more nuanced and direct measure of child poverty than income does. However, as with all approaches to poverty measurement, difficult decisions have to be made in the process of moving from material deprivation as a *theoretical conceptualisation* of poverty to material deprivation as an *operationalised measure* of poverty. The method used to operationalise a child-derived and child-centric measure of child material deprivation is outlined below.

Operationalising material deprivation

One issue in the measurement of material deprivation is around precisely what to measure. Simple usages of phrases like ‘material resources’ disguise an incredibly wide-ranging and contestable concept. Some things that can be measured fall clearly into the category of material resources. An example of this might be whether a child has a particular item of clothing, or a bed. However, other things may be more on the boundaries of material resources. So for example in an overcrowded house where the presence of many siblings results in a child struggling to find the peace and quiet needed to focus on school work, it is debatable whether deprivation of this quiet space would constitute a *material* deprivation, or deprivation in a different domain. Others are probably outside of the boundaries of what would be considered material deprivation but clearly have links to material deprivation. An example of this would be if parents put themselves under a great deal of stress in order to provide materially for children, but as a result parent-child relationships are negatively impacted. Strained relationships between children and parents are of key relevance to children’s well-being, as is material deprivation (Rees et al’s (2012) research with children in the UK revealed family relationships to be one of the most important contributors to child well-being). Parents attempting to protect their children from one negative impact of poverty in a way which exposes their children to another is an example of why many different conceptions of poverty can be used to illustrate the interactional and dynamic processes involved. Material deprivation is an important aspect of this, but should certainly not be considered to be the only aspect of poverty, and the measurement of material deprivation should be used in a context which allows for an examination of the non-financial and non-material costs as well as the benefits of material provision.

In terms of the operationalisation of material deprivation for this thesis, understandings drew on a combination of children’s own interpretations of questions in a focus-group setting, and on an examination of items included in similar measures (see appendix A) which were used as prompts in focus groups (specific research strategies including focus groups are detailed below).

Consensual poverty measurement

Consensual measurement of material deprivation (also referred to as democratic measurement) relates to Townsend's (1987) notion of *collective poverty*. This is contrasted by Townsend with *objective poverty* – a lack of things that are somehow objectively classed as necessities – and *subjective poverty* – a subjective experience of poverty irrespective of whether external judgements would deem a person to be poor. Earlier efforts at the measurement of poverty through material deprivation drew on expert judgements of what was a necessity (for example Rowntree, 2000 (first published 1901) and Townsend, 1979), and therefore attempted to measure Townsend's objective poverty. Items and activities were included in measures if experts felt they were necessary, and simply lacking items and activities (for whatever reason) constituted a deprivation. More recent efforts have drawn on collective poverty, now commonly referred to as *consensual* or *democratic* poverty measurement. Pioneered by Mack and Lansley (1985), and developed in the 1990 Breadline Britain study (Gordon and Pantazis, 1997) and two Poverty and Social Exclusion Surveys in 1999 (for analysis see (amongst others) Pantazis et al (2006)) and in 2012²¹, the consensual or democratic method for measuring material deprivation has two key differences to previous methods. Firstly, items and activities are only classed as necessities if 50% or more of the population of interest deemed them necessary; and secondly people are only counted as deprived of items which they *want*, and which they lack *through an inability to afford them*. That is, items which are not owned through reasons other than unaffordability, and/or items that are not wanted, are not seen as deprivations.

In the study of child material deprivation specifically, there is an added complication around whose views of necessities are considered. Chapter one noted that to date research into poverty has drawn overwhelmingly on adult conceptions and views. However, the evidence that children can report on their own lives and that parents do not have full access to children's opinions and

²¹ Papers detailing the development and analysis of this survey are frequently updated at www.poverty.ac.uk.

experiences, and the policy shift towards incorporating children's views, calls the validity of this approach into question. This is particularly relevant to the use of democratic or consensual measures – since the measurement of poverty using these indicators is intended to make sense to the population of interest, the conclusions that can be drawn about *child* poverty based on *adult* perceptions of children's needs are somewhat limited (although by no means without value).

The identification of suitable indicators

Arriving at a suitable list of material deprivation indicators, then, is a complex and potentially labour-intensive process. This results in a temptation to draw on previous indicators, or to use indicators that have already been successfully developed in other contexts (so for example the list of indicators in the EU-SILC draws on research that was based in the UK context). When this is done carefully, it is a valuable and resource-saving approach. However, it must be undertaken with a great deal of caution. As is suggested by Townsend's (1979) definition of material deprivation, the specific things that constitute necessities are highly contingent on time and place. A lifestyle that is considered 'rich' by someone growing up in the 1950s may be considered 'poor' by someone growing up in the 21st century. Similarly, a lifestyle that is considered 'rich' in a developing country may be considered 'poor' in a developed country. Furthermore, what one group (in this context, adults) consider to be a necessity may not be seen as such by another group (in this case, children). In addition, the relevance of some items and activities will change over time (Saunders (2004) discusses this in terms of standards in acceptable housing varying over time and place). So whilst owning a landline telephone will have been considered in many countries to be a necessity until recently, the development of increasingly functional and affordable mobile phones may result in people no longer seeing landlines as a necessity because the assumption may exist that people will definitely have access to a mobile phone (and therefore not need a landline in addition to this). Other items, such as personal computers, have rapidly become part of what is considered to be a 'normal life' as well as increasingly being a requirement for school work and social participation, and

may need to be included in future lists of essentials. Certainly, the kind of technologies that will be normal in the future lives of today's children may be alien to a large proportion of today's adults.

In such a context of rapid technological change and development, the regular updating of lists of necessities is of particular importance. Specific items may be less relevant to people's conceptions of material deprivation than the function that is served by those items, and whether this function can be served by other, similar items that might not have been considered in previous research.

Despite these reasons for caution, Hick (2012: 3) notes a "high degree of path dependency" in the material deprivation indicators used over time, suggesting that updating is potentially not as frequent as would be optimal. Whilst comparison over time is easier with similar lists of items²², leading to a preference for maintaining the same items over time, social changes may render specific items irrelevant or no longer necessary, meaning that if the same list is retained changes over time are easier to measure, but the underlying construct being measured may no longer be the same.

In conclusion therefore, it is important to ensure that lists of items and activities are appropriate to the time in which research is being conducted; are appropriate to the geographical location in which research is being conducted; and that enough background work is done on the development of indicators that the meanings and functions of deprivation items, rather than just the items themselves, are considered in the methodology involved in constructing measures of material deprivation.

2.4 The development of a research strategy

Previous efforts at the consensual measurement of material deprivation have drawn on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to address the range of requirements for producing a high quality measure, and this approach will be adopted. These requirements (with respect to this research) include:

²² Although this is not impossible with different lists of item, subject to conceptual and statistical verification that the same underlying construct is being measured.

- To reflect activities and experiences that tally with the broad concept of material deprivation, rather than with related but different concepts of poverty and/or well-being
- To draw on children's own perceptions of what is necessary
- To be owned by, or seen as necessary by, a majority of the population of interest – ie. children
- To be derived in the time and place with which the study is concerned
- To include items that serve as good proxies for the meeting of the underlying needs with which they are concerned. For example, a smart phone and a more basic mobile phone may meet very different needs and reflect very different underlying constructs, given the former's capacity to access internet and games, compared to the more simple communications provided by the latter.

The rationale for a mixed-methods approach

The requirements listed above demand multiple and varied research strategies. Developing a good measure relies on both 'what' and 'why' questions. The concern is not only with what children say they need, but with why they say they need it; not only with what impacts children's well-being, but with how strongly it impacts and why there is an impact. Implied by this is a need for both qualitative and quantitative research strategies. The use of mixed methods, and the ethical and practical concerns which are central to research with children, are discussed next. Details of the methods and ethical considerations in different stages of the research are then provided, although some methodological and/or ethical considerations are described in individual chapters in order that these can be seen in context. Briefly, the data comprises three key components:

- **Focus groups** with children from a wide range of backgrounds
- **A pilot survey** testing the questions generated from analysis of focus group data
- **Surveys** (both home- and school-based) using the questions with a representative sample

Reconciling qualitative and quantitative research strategies

The work presented in this thesis draws on mixed methods – both qualitative and quantitative research strategies were used to develop and use the measure. Traditionally, there has been a sharp divide between qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods have drawn on *interpretivist* epistemology – that is, the assumption is made that there is no social reality, but rather that the social world is fluid and subjective, constantly being created and re-created through interactions. Quantitative methods, contrastingly, rely on a *realist* epistemology – that is, the assumption is that there is a real social world which can be observed, albeit that any observations may be mediated by the subjective perspective and context of the observer. However, as Bryman (2008) observes, at times research using either strategy in reality draws on both epistemologies – qualitative research can produce data about an objective social reality, and quantitative research can produce data that adds to our understandings of subjective social meanings. More recently, then, a shift can be noted towards mixed methods research, valuing the contribution that both strategies can make to a fuller understanding of key issues. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) point to the development of *post-positivism*, an epistemology that represents common ground between qualitative and quantitative researchers, in that an objective social world tends to be acknowledged but equally the impossibility of accessing that world directly, and the influence of context and subjectivity on interpretation of that world, is stressed. Within such an epistemology, the potential exists for mixed methods research which draws on aspects of qualitative and quantitative research strategies in a way that enhances both.

In cases where mixed methods may enhance the effectiveness of research, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) recommend a pragmatic approach – that is, that as long as mixed methods are beneficial, and the potential clash between different epistemologies has no notable and detrimental effect on the conduct of the research, the approach is suitable. The strength of this approach is that it results in findings with “complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:18). Findings from the different

approaches can corroborate each other and expand overall knowledge of the issues under enquiry.

Mixed methods in the creation of a child-derived material deprivation index

The use of mixed methods in this thesis, then, was based on two questions – *whether* mixed methods were suitable in addressing the research questions, and *how* to mix qualitative and quantitative methods to best address these.

Regarding the suitability of mixed methods to the research, an aim of the research was to construct a quantitatively operationalisable understanding of childhood material deprivation that drew on children's own conceptions of child poverty. The first part of this is inherently linked to the use of quantitative methods – to construct a quantitatively operationalisable measure relies on their use. The second part – concerned with children's own conceptions of poverty – relies on qualitative methods. To gain insight into children's understandings of material deprivation, and of what is needed to avoid material deprivation, in-depth qualitative research with children is indicated.

Regarding *how* to mix methods, Mason (2006) identifies six ways in which mixed methods can be used. These range from research which uses qualitative and quantitative methods as distinct stages with one subordinate to the other, to research which endeavours to fully integrate methods with both contributing vital but different information. In this research, qualitative strategies were used at the beginning of the research process to generate items that could be incorporated into quantitative surveys, and findings from qualitative research were also drawn on to aid interpretation of quantitative findings – so when items or activities which were included in surveys worked particularly well or badly, qualitative findings were drawn on to help understand possible reasons for this. Whilst this does not represent a full integration of different methods, it does reflect the importance of both qualitative and quantitative strategies in developing an effective quantitative measure.

Specific methods are now detailed.

2.5 Methods

This section details the specific methods used in the different stages of the research. Ethical issues are for the most part discussed first, since many ethical considerations were similar across the different stages. Considerations that were particular to a specific stage, though, are discussed in the relevant section.

Ethics

Research with children, as research with any population, involves careful consideration of ethical concerns, and, as noted by Hughes and Gutkin (1995) and de Laine (2000), ethical dilemmas in research with children are not always easily resolvable. Children may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation or harm as a result of their social and legal dependence on adults and, when research is conducted by adults, Davies (2008) notes the importance of attention to social norms such as obedience to adults and compliance with their demands. Issues such as informed consent, assent and the right to withdraw from the research were therefore treated as of paramount importance in the planning and conduct of research with children. Sin (2005) stresses the need to monitor consent on an ongoing basis rather than just at the start of data collection. In line with the recommendations of Ovenden and Loxley (1993), informal language was used in explanations of the research and of participants' rights. The voluntary nature of participation was stressed at the beginning of and throughout the different research stages. As the research was conducted by and on behalf of the Children's Society in partnership with The University of York, formal ethical procedures were available and approval was sought and obtained prior to the start of the Children's Society well-being research programme. All of the research detailed within this thesis fell within the remit of this Programme.

The issue of parental, as well as children's, consent is much debated in research with children. Although Harvey and Dodd (1995) note that it is generally considered good practice to gain at least the passive consent of parents, this somewhat conflicts with the ethos of the new sociology of childhood and the

Children's Society. Specifically, there is a conflict in terms of respecting children's autonomy and their moral and practical status as independent agents who are normally located within, but not entirely represented by, families and parents. In terms of parental consent, different stages of the research were treated differently as a result of pragmatic considerations. For the focus groups, the organisations from which children were recruited were informed of the topics and schedule for group discussions, and were given the option of informing parents if they desired. For the survey research, some stages (including the pilot survey and the home-based quarterly surveys – see below for details) were conducted in children's homes and included some parentally-provided data, so parental consent was inherently implicitly sought. For the pilot survey and quarterly surveys, the research agency responsible (Research Now) adhered to their own policy of obtaining parental consent. For the main school-based survey, schools were informed of the content and nature of the survey but consent was not sought from parents, in the spirit of respecting children's right to choose for themselves whether to participate.

Beauchamp and Childress (1989) identify four ethical principles for research with children and young people: autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice. Whilst researcher actions are unlikely to ensure that these principles are met in as full a way as possible, all were considered at each stage of the research. Children's autonomy was addressed through paying careful attention to stressing the voluntary nature of participation, and by in at least the main survey allowing children to exercise their autonomy in deciding whether to participate, rather than allowing parents to prevent this. Beneficence and non-maleficence were addressed in the focus groups through the use of ground rules and monitoring the state of groups and individuals within the groups to avoid harm to the best of researchers' abilities, and in the surveys by careful pre-testing of questions – questions were developed in consultation with children, and topics which consultation with children suggested might be sensitive were not covered. Researcher judgements were also made about questions to include overall and in different types of survey – so for example detailed questions about children's relationships with their parents were not asked in

the quarterly home-based surveys where researchers had no control over whether parents were observing children's responses. Justice was addressed in the focus groups through attempts to allow children as close to an equal power balance with adults as possible through stressing their expertise in the issues being researched, and in the wider research through involving children in research on their material needs rather than relying solely on the opinions of adults and parents. This is in line with the ethical consideration outlined by Holliday (2007), concerning the promotion of children and young people as co-participants in research rather than simply its subjects.

A similarly debated issue is that of remuneration for participation (see Thompson, 1996; Wendler et al, 2002; Kirby, 1999). For this project, the child-centric perspective necessitated careful consideration of how to appropriately acknowledge children's contributions. For those focus groups which were held within school settings, providing children with direct remuneration proved impossible, and instead vouchers were given to the schools to thank them and the children for their participation. Children from the Children's Society project were each given a voucher to acknowledge their contribution. All participating organisations were sent details of the research findings and the wider research project so that children and the organisations with which they were affiliated can monitor the impact of their participation on the wider research agenda.

Focus groups

As detailed above, the purpose of the focus group stage was to ascertain children's views on what constitutes material deprivation for a child growing up in the UK today. More details about the rationale for using focus groups are provided in chapter four. Focus groups were conducted by researchers from the Children's Society and the University of York. The resources provided by the Children's Society allowed for a wider range of focus groups than would otherwise have been possible, and existing relationships between the Children's Society and participating organisations facilitated access.

Specific ethical issues

Focus groups differed from other stages of the research as the only stage in which fieldwork was completed by researchers from the Children's Society and The University of York. The face-to-face nature of this stage meant that researchers were in close contact with participants, meaning that the voluntary nature of participation could be monitored more thoroughly. Children were reminded that participation was voluntary at regular intervals and particularly where their verbal or non-verbal behaviour may have suggested a desire to withdraw (for example fidgeting, going off-topic, looking or moving away from the group, verbally expressing boredom or other forms of discomfort). Face-to-face research also requires extra considerations in terms of the potential risks posed by researchers to children. The institutional context of the research, within the Children's Society well-being research programme, allowed for clear procedures around the obtaining of Criminal Records Bureau checks for researchers, and for multiple researchers to be present with children at all times. Child protection procedures as laid out by the Children's Society and by the organisations within which groups took place were followed.

Allen (2002) and Duncombe and Jessop (2002) note that qualitative research, due to its focus on gathering in-depth information, carries a particular risk of subtle forms of psychological harm through encouraging participants to reflect on and discuss sensitive and personal issues. Morgan (1997) highlights that this may be accentuated in focus group situations where participants disclose information not only to the facilitator but also to other members of the group. Attention was therefore paid to the establishment and maintenance of ground rules for the duration of the group, as well as attention to issues of assent and the right to withdraw as detailed above. Facilitators prepared a list of ground rules for the group which covered issues relating to respect for one another, confidentiality, and being allowed to refuse to answer questions. Care was taken to ensure that rules were communicated in a way that children understood, and children were given the opportunity to ask questions and add rules if these were agreed on by the whole group. Signs of discomfort with the rules, both verbal and non-verbal, were monitored, and children were

encouraged to ask questions and ultimately to withdraw if they were not comfortable with the rules. It was made clear to children that the rules applied to adult researchers, as well as to them.

Sampling procedure

Whilst efforts were made to include a wide range of children in the focus groups, due to time and resources constraints sampling was a combination of purposive (children were selected based on meeting characteristics that represented those of the population of interest) and convenience (children were selected based on their availability and capacity to participate). Purposive elements of sampling included recruiting children from both the north and the south of England, and those aged between 8-16 which is the range covered by the Children's Society research project (to date). Convenience elements included contacting schools and groups which had existing relationships with the Children's Society, facilitating access.

The limitations of this sampling strategy are acknowledged: the sample is not representative of children in England, and some groups, particularly children falling outside the age range and those who are not engaged in mainstream social institutions, are absent. However, the reasons that purposive or convenience samples are often used for similar research is outlined in Morgan (1997), who indicates that when the purpose of focus groups is to feed into quantitative research such as surveys, this is often the most practical strategy. Here, limitations on researcher resources and time meant that this strategy, followed by more robust sampling for a pilot study, was the most efficient method to gather a wide range of participant views. As is commonly the case in qualitative research, the aim of the focus groups was not to gather statistically robust and generalisable data. Rather, it was to form hypotheses around the kinds of item that children feel are socially perceived necessities. These hypotheses were then tested through piloting and the final survey, as detailed in later chapters.

Participant details

In addition to the previously noted age restrictions, participants were selected to represent an equal balance of boys and girls. Six groups were run in total, five of which were in school settings and one of which was in a Children's Society project. Efforts were made to select schools from varied socioeconomic settings, to increase the chances of a diverse sample. However, data were not collected on the socioeconomic status of participating children, and specific participating children were selected by schools rather than by researchers. No data were collected on the ethnic backgrounds of participating children. Table 2.1 presents details of the composition of the different groups, showing the numbers of children in each group overall and by age and gender.

Table 2.1: Composition of the focus groups

Setting	Location	Age range	Boys (n)	Girls (n)	Total (n)
Primary school	Leeds	8-9	4	3	7
Primary school	Hackney	8-9	3	3	6
Primary school	Hackney	10-11	2	4	6
Secondary school	Hackney	12-13	1	4	5
Secondary school	Hackney	14-15	4	2	6
Children's Society project	Warrington	11-13	4	2	6
Total			18	18	36

Process of running the groups

As noted above, participating organisations and children were given as much information as possible in advance. To facilitate this, a relatively detailed schedule for focus groups was devised which was distributed prior to children's participation (see appendix B). Whilst this was used as a guide in the groups, however, there was a degree of flexibility exercised by researchers to help ensure that important issues could be covered in enough depth, and that the groups were appropriately tailored to the needs and abilities of participating children.

Following initial explanations of the research and obtaining consent from children in line with the processes outlined above, children were introduced to the topic of material wellbeing through ice breaking exercises encouraging

them to think about things they liked to or wanted to buy. The concept of relative poverty was introduced through getting children to consider things that the very poorest people, the very richest people, and people in the middle would be likely to own, within a UK context. It was then explained that the research focus was on the kinds of things that people of their age need (rather than want) to have ‘a normal kind of life’ compared to other people in a similar setting. This wording was selected as it was felt by researchers to convey, in relatively simple terms that would make sense to children, the concept of social or relative, rather than absolute, necessities.

Within the examination of the things children felt were necessary for a normal kind of life, several prompts were used drawn from an analysis of the kinds of deprivation items used in surveys of adults, and surveys using adult proxies. These are shown in table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Categories of children’s deprivation items

Category	Examples
Free time	Activities, money, toys/games, leisure equipment
Specific individual possessions	Mobile phones, clothes, treat food/drink
Household needs	Own/shared bedroom, celebrations on special occasions, TV
Family and friends	Holidays, days out, friends visiting
School	Uniform, computer, school trips

Such prompts and examples were drawn on only when children did not spontaneously offer ideas in the relevant areas, allowing children to dictate the direction and focus of groups as much as possible, and to avoid imposing adult conceptions of material needs on their discussion. However, one focus group with 8-year-old children found it difficult to concentrate on the research topic, leading to a heavier reliance on the prompts and examples. Here, researchers encouraged the children to give each item a position on a continuum from ‘need this’ to ‘want this but don’t need it’ and to provide additional items where they wanted to. An example of this continuum is shown in box 2.1.

Box 2.1: Example of the continuum used with children



Sixsmith et al (2007) highlight the usefulness of visual methods in research with children, as these may be more familiar and comfortable for participants than writing answers or engaging in lengthy conversation with adults. Throughout the focus groups, equipment for drawing was kept handy and children were given the opportunity to use pictures prepared by researchers of the items given as examples, or draw their own pictures on continua as described above. However, in order to avoid overly interpreting children's drawings from an adult perspective, children were asked to describe their drawings once they were completed, and to explain their reasoning behind placing items at different positions on the need-want continuum. Time was left at the end of groups for children to ask questions, provide any final comments and give feedback on their experience of participating.

Analysis of the focus group data

Focus groups were recorded (with the consent of participants) and transcribed. Data were subject to thematic analysis in line with the principles of grounded theory (see Strauss and Corbin, 1994), although it is acknowledged (as detailed by Braun and Clarke, 2006) that as with much similar research, many of the 'strong' theoretical assumptions of grounded theory were not met. This reflects the nature of the focus groups in this research as a preparatory phase, rather than as the bulk of the research in their own right. Data analysis was conducted using Atlas Ti, a computer package for qualitative analysis. Transcripts were read through initially and coded according to key words (here, individual items children identified as necessities), then coded again according to wider categories (often the rationale for seeing a specific item as a necessity, or the kind of need identified which items would meet), then a final time according to

any overarching themes which arose (often the broader ends which were satisfied by needs). So for example 'mobile phone' might be a key word code, followed by 'social and communication' as a category code, followed by 'building maintaining relationships' as an overarching theme. Key words tended to be useful in identifying specific items to include in the next steps of the research; categories were useful in assessing what kinds of broader need the various specific items were meeting; and overarching themes provide an empirical grounding for interpreting the meaning behind children's perceptions of certain items as necessities. Themes were also useful in their potential to generate hypotheses around the links between material deprivation and wider conceptions of wellbeing amongst children, for example links between the possession of certain items and social relationships with peers.

Pilot survey

As above for focus groups, the rationale for the pilot study is discussed in more depth in chapter four. Here, details of the methods used are provided. The purpose of the survey was to test various questions (detailed in chapter four) relating to child poverty and material deprivation, and to compare parents' and children's responses to these questions. 303 parent-child pairs (a total of 606 respondents) were surveyed.

Fieldwork

A survey agency, Research Now, was commissioned by the Children's Society to undertake the pilot survey. In addition to the ethical considerations outlined above, Research Now is obliged to operate within the codes of ethical conduct for market and social research. The survey was administered in children's homes, to facilitate participation from both children and parents. A particular consideration for the pilot survey was therefore the presence of both parents and children. This has both ethical implications regarding the confidentiality of children's responses, and practical implications in terms of the capacity of the survey to differentiate between responses provided by parents and children (ie. whether parents provided guidance to children in terms of how they should

answer questions). The following wording was therefore incorporated into instructions for parents:

“The purpose of this survey is to see how parents and children answer questions about household affluence differently. We therefore ask parents not to help their children with the questions because this will affect the findings. If children ask their parents for help because they don't understand a question or don't know the answer, we would appreciate it if parents could tell them to select 'Not sure'.”

Sampling

The purpose of the pilot was to test questions rather than to produce a robust representative sample for detailed statistical analysis. Therefore, sampling was geared towards covering a fairly broad range of children across age groups and genders. The comparatively small sample size precluded detailed stratification, so sampling was random across the panel available to the research agency, stratified only by region and social grade.

Participant characteristics

The achieved sample was broadly balanced across several characteristics of interest. There was no missing data for any of the demographic variables of interest. 47% of parents, and 49% of children, were male. Children's ages included were 11 (25%), 12 (23%), 15 (26%), and 16 (25%) year olds. A reasonable balance was found between those generally considered to be working class (classes C2-E: 51%) and middle class (classes A-C1: 48%). Details are shown in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Social class of respondents

Social class	Percent
A	14
B	21
C1	13
C2	16
D	17
E	18

Household income

Income was another variable of particular interest in the pilot survey. Data were collected on household income from adult respondents. Although there was some missing data, at 5% this is within generally acceptable ranges. Adults were asked to report their gross household income, and were given the option to report weekly, monthly or annual income. Weekly and monthly reports of income were multiplied up to calculate annual income in subsequent analysis. Income questions were asked based on income bands, and equivalised using the OECD modified scale. The top of the lowest band, bottom of the highest band, and mid-points of interim bands were used to arrive at a figure. Since bands rather than specific figures were used for income, this data should be treated with some caution. This is reflected in the fact that values of equivalised income seem remarkably low, with those in the lowest income quintile reporting an annual equivalised income of just £3,786 per year. This may suggest that respondents were reporting individual rather than household income, and reflects some of the problems noted in chapter one with relying on income as a measure of poverty – it is remarkably difficult to measure accurately. Because of these difficulties, two checks were performed. The income measure was tested for associations with known correlates of income such as children’s free school meal receipt, subjective poverty, and social class of the household. Associations with all of these variables in the expected manner existed – ie. those receiving free school meals, reporting being not very well off, or being from lower social classes had lower incomes. Then income data for comparable households in the HBAI were checked, and mean income within the quintiles in HBAI were found to be substantially higher than in the Children’s Society data. This suggests that whilst the absolute amounts of income may not be reliable, the general distributions are accurate (ie. households with lower reported incomes can be assumed to have lower actual incomes and vice versa). Therefore, income quintiles rather than actual sums are used in the analysis presented in the remainder of this thesis. To give a broad idea of the income range within which people reported that they fell, the mean income within each quintile is presented in table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Mean equivalised income in each income quintile

Quintile	Children's Society mean equivalised income	HBAI mean equivalised income*
Lowest	£3,786	£10,461
2	£7,836	£15,407
Middle	£12,981	£19,473
4	£19,113	£25,550
Highest	£25,087	£53,180

*Based on own analysis of the incomes of households in England containing children aged 8-15 in the HBAI data. Income in the HBAI is equivalised using the OECD modified scale, as used in the Children's Society data.

Analysis

Data was analysed using Stata, a computer package for statistical analysis. A range of statistical tests, detailed in chapter four, were applied.

Main and quarterly Children's Society surveys²³

The bulk of the analysis presented throughout this thesis draws on data from the main and quarterly Children's Society surveys. The main survey, undertaken in 2010-11, addressed a broad range of topics relevant to children's well-being. Quarterly surveys which are conducted every three months on an ongoing basis were used to follow up specific subjects of interest.

Samples

For the main survey, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), a research agency, was commissioned to conduct the fieldwork. A sample of 5,454 children from school years four, six, eight and ten was drawn, from 63 primary and 43 secondary schools. Sampling was clustered: schools were selected from NFER's register of schools and colleges, stratified by percentage of students eligible for free school meals, school type, and government office region. This survey was only undertaken in England.

For the quarterly surveys, Research Now (who conducted the pilot survey) were commissioned to tap into their panel of children and young people to

²³ Full contents of both surveys discussed in this section are presented in Appendix D.

recruit a sample of around 2,000 respondents for each wave of the survey (nb. the survey is not longitudinal – participants vary between waves). The main wave (wave three) included in this thesis was conducted in 2011, consisting of 1961 respondents. This wave focussed on poverty and material deprivation. This survey included some respondents from Scotland and Wales as well as children living in England.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

For the main survey, the composition of the sample can be examined across a range of demographic and school characteristics. Percentages of children in different groups are shown in table 2.5. Whilst stratification was not conducted for individual characteristics, a fairly even balance across age groups and sex was achieved. Compared to census data for the whole population of England, white children are somewhat under-represented compared to other groups, but on the positive side this allows for more detailed analysis by ethnicity than would be possible if white children were in a greater majority. Women are slightly over-represented compared to census data, and there is some (small) disparity between the distribution of respondents amongst Government Office Regions (GOR) in the sample compared to the census. Census data for relevant variables (gender, ethnicity and GOR) are presented in brackets after sample percentages in table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Demographic and school characteristics of the main survey sample

Individual characteristics		
School year (%)	Year 4	21
	Year 6	23
	Year 8	34
	Year 10	23
	Total	100
Sex (%)	Male	47 (census*=49)
	Female	53 (census=51)
	Total	100
Ethnicity (%)	White	80 (census=86)
	Mixed	4 (census=2)
	Indian	2 (census=3)
	Pakistani/Bangladeshi	5 (census=3)
	Black	5 (census=3)
	Other	4 (census=3)
	Total	100
Urban/rural (%)	Urban	81
	Rural	19
	Total	100
Government office region (%)	North East	3 (census=5)
	North West/Merseyside	15 (census=13)
	Yorkshire and the Humber	7 (census=10)
	East Midlands	9 (census=9)
	West Midlands	10 (census=11)
	Eastern	6 (census=11)
	London	23 (census=15)
	South East	22 (census=16)
	South West	5 (census=10)
	Total	100
School characteristics		
FSM bands (proportion children receiving free school meals in the school) (%)	Lowest 20%	22
	Second lowest 20%	23
	Middle 20%	20
	Second highest 20%	22
	Highest 20%	13
	Total	100
Key Stage 2 achievement band (primary schools) (%)	Lowest	15
	Second lowest	32
	Middle	16
	Second highest	10
	Highest	27
	Total	100
GCSE achievement band (secondary schools) (%)	Lowest	13
	Second lowest	13
	Middle	29
	Second highest	16
	Highest	29
	Total	100

*Census data is drawn from the 2011 Census, accessed online from <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>

Fewer demographic variables were available for the quarterly survey. However, respondents were broadly balanced across age group, gender, income and social class. Table 2.6 shows the percentage of children in different groups by some basic descriptive characteristics of the sample. For social class, a notable bias towards respondents from higher social classes (A-C1) can be seen, with 70% being middle class. Unfortunately, comparable census data is not available as social class was measured using a different categorisation system in the 2011 census²⁴. Census data for region is provided in table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Demographic characteristics of the quarterly survey sample

Demographic variable		% respondents
Age group	8-9	25
	10-11	25
	12-13	25
	14-15	25
	Total	100
Sex	Male	51
	Female	49
	Total	100
Social class	A	7
	B	31
	C1	32
	C2	18
	D	10
	E	2
	Total	100
Region	North	23 (census*=25)
	Midlands	25 (census=26)
	South	39 (census=36)
	Scotland/Wales	12 (census=12)
	Total	100

*Census data is drawn from the 2011 Census, accessed online from <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>

Representativeness

Efforts were made to stratify the samples, and an examination of some key characteristics as presented above suggests that the samples are broadly representative of children in England (for the main survey) and for Great Britain (in the quarterly survey). Ideally survey data would be analysed using

²⁴ Based on the NSSEC categorisation system used in the 2011 Census, 44% of the population are in managerial/professional or intermediate occupations; 32% are in lower supervisory, semi-routine or routine occupations; 9% are self-employed; and 15% have never worked, are long-term unemployed, or are not classified. These groupings are not easily comparable to the social class categorisations used in the Children's Society survey.

weights – a multiplication factor applied to each case used in statistical analysis which alters its contribution to the final calculation. Weights can have three primary applications: to compensate for bias in how a sample was selected, which may be a result of non-response or complex sample design (such as cluster sampling); to compensate for differences between sample characteristics and population characteristics (for example if through random chance a sample has a higher proportion of females than is the case in the population of interest); and to gross findings up so that population numbers can be estimated (for example if estimates are needed on the number, rather than percentage, of the population in a particular category, such as the unemployment count). These adjustments can be calculated to provide one weight, or can be calculated separately and different weights can be used depending on their suitability to the analysis performed. However, data on selection probabilities and on the nature of the complex sample, which would be required to calculate the first kind of weight, were not available in the Children’s Society surveys. Attempts were made to weight the data in line with the second application of weights described above – ie. to compensate for the deviation between sample and population characteristics outlined in tables 2.5 and 2.6, but adjusting the sample for discrepancies based on one characteristic of interest (such as ethnicity) increased deviation from the population norm based on other characteristics (such as gender). Regarding the third application of weighting, without weights based on selection probabilities and sample characteristics, grossing weights may not provide reliable data and in any case percentages rather than absolute numbers were deemed to be more relevant to the research questions. As a result, the decision was taken to not weight the data. Therefore, whilst proportions can be considered to be likely to be broadly representative, analysis involving the production of confidence intervals and significance estimates must be treated as representative of the sample only, rather than of the population of children in England or Great Britain.

Statistical methods

As for the pilot survey, data were analysed in Stata using a range of statistical procedures which will for the most part be detailed in the relevant chapters.

However, issues relevant to the all aspects of the analysis will be discussed here. Firstly, logistic, linear and tobit regression methods are used frequently throughout. These methods will be described. Next, issues around missing data in the surveys and how this was handled will be presented.

- Regression methods

Regression methods are used frequently throughout this thesis. These methods allow for an examination of the relationship between one or multiple predictor variables and an outcome variable. They can be used to identify the relative strength of associations with the outcome variable amongst multiple predictors, and can offer insight into how well the model as a whole fits the data (ie. how well the predictor variables work as predictors of variation in the outcome variable). Different types of model are suited to different types of data and outcome variable, and three types of model – logistic, linear and tobit – are used in this thesis²⁵. These are now described.

Logistic regression is used to predict the odds of a particular outcome being achieved. Outcome variables in logistic regression are always *binary* – that is, there are two possible outcomes - and the regression model predicts the odds of achieving the outcome of interest depending on variation in predictor variables. An example of this is in table 1.1, chapter one, where the odds of being deprived (compared to not being deprived) are outlined based on membership of various social categories such as the number of children in the household, and ethnic groups. Logistic regression can provide log odds or odds ratios; odds ratios are used throughout this thesis. These are interpreted as follows. When predictor variables are categorical or ordinal, the odds of alternative groups achieving the outcome of interest are compared to those of reference groups (for example the odds of black or Asian respondents compared to those of white respondents). The odds of the reference group achieving the outcome are set to one, meaning that the proportion of this group experiencing the outcome of interest is treated as a baseline. So using the above example, the odds of white respondents would

²⁵ Other types of model such as predictive mean matching are used in the analysis and treatment of missing data – see below. But these models are not used in subsequent analysis and so are not described in detail here.

be set to 1. If black respondents were found to have odds of 2.0, this would indicate they are twice as likely as white respondents to achieve the outcome of interest. Conversely, if Asian respondents had odds of 0.5, this would indicate that they are only half as likely as white respondents to achieve the outcome. When scale predictors are used, the logistic odds show the increase or decrease in likelihood of the outcome being achieved based on a one-unit change in the value of the predictor. Kohler and Kreuter (2009) provide an introduction to the use of logistic regression in Stata.

Logistic regression models are widely used in this thesis. In chapter one they are used to examine the odds of different groups of children experiencing material deprivation. In chapters four and five, they are used to examine the likelihood of different groups of children lacking individual items and activities identified as deprivation indicators, and of being deprived according to various cut-off points on the deprivation scale which is produced based on these indicators. In chapter seven they are used to examine the odds of different groups of children experiencing low subjective well-being (the categorisation of some children as having low subjective well-being is discussed later).

Linear and tobit regression models are used to examine the size and strength of associations between predictor and outcome variables when the outcome is a scale variable. Two pertinent assumptions of linear regression are that the outcome variable is normally distributed, and that the relationship between predictors and the outcome variable are linear. In the case of tobit regression, whilst the assumption of linear associations remains, the model is designed to be used where there is *censoring* in the outcome variable. That is, where the scale used in measurement instruments cuts off at a point before the full extent of variation can be captured, or where a phenomena appears to naturally result in a peak at one or both ends of the distribution, tobit regression is designed to produce accurate results. Kohler and Kreuter (2009) provide an introduction to the use of linear regression in Stata, and McBee (2010) provides an introduction to the use of tobit regression.

As with logistic regression, predictor variables can be categorical or ordinal (in which cases differences between the baseline category and each other category are calculated), or scale (in which case the amount of change in the outcome variable for each one unit change in the predictor variable is calculated). *Beta values* (b) are calculated, which in their unstandardised form represent the mean amount of change in the outcome variable, based on the predictor variable. So to give an example of a categorical predictor, if gender produces a beta value of 1.5, and boys are the baseline case, girls score on average 1.5 points more than boys on the outcome variable. Conversely, if black children were the baseline case and analysis based on ethnicity showed that for white children the beta value was -2.4, this would indicate that white children scored on average 2.4 points less than black children. To give an example of a scale predictor, if age produced a beta value of 1.3 this would mean that for each additional year of age, children scored on average 1.3 more points – so a 13-year-old would score 1.3 more points than a 12-year-old, and 2.6 more points than an 11-year-old. Linear regression can also be used to produce *adjusted r squared* statistics, which describe the percentage of the variation in the outcome variable which is predicted by the specified model. Adjusted r squared is expressed as a number between zero and one. So if a model produces an adjusted r squared value of 0.13, this indicates that the model explains 13% of the variation in the outcome variable. Tobit regression models do not produce an adjusted r squared value.

Linear and tobit models are used in chapters five and seven. They are used to explore the power of the deprivation scale, other poverty-related measures, and demographic factors to explain variation in children's overall subjective well-being (the measurement of this is discussed later). In most instances, both linear and tobit regression results are presented. There are two reasons for presenting both types of regression. Firstly, as discussed in chapter 7, the distribution of subjective well-being data tends to be negatively skewed, with censoring to at the top of the scale. This distribution may mean that the results produced in linear regression analysis are invalid. However, as noted above, tobit regressions do not produce adjusted r squared values, meaning that the

overall fit of the model to the data is more difficult to assess. The second reason why both models are presented, then, is to allow the reader to compare beta values for both types of model, and see some indication from linear models about the fit of the model.

- Analysis and treatment of missing data

One procedure which was used on all data, and which will be detailed here, was multiple imputation. Whilst missing values on individual variables were generally acceptably low (under 10%), much analysis was conducted on composite variables and using multivariate methods, resulting in substantial amounts of missing data (up to almost a third of relevant cases in the most extreme instances). Lunt (2011) identifies four options when missing data is present:

- **Omit variables with missing data**, resulting in the loss of capacity to explore relationships of interest and/or relevance, and potentially biased effects since variables of interest may not be able to be controlled for.
- **Omit cases with missing data** (ie. listwise or casewise deletion), resulting in biased estimates since sample characteristics will change. Additionally, this change in sample characteristics may be related to variables of interest – for example poor children may be more likely to not answer certain questions as a result of being poor – which will bias estimates and compromise the validity of models.
- **Reweight individuals to ensure that remaining cases reflect the distribution of the original sample**. Where multivariate analysis is being conducted amongst potentially relatively small groups, this may mean that inferences are drawn from unacceptably small groups. Although weighting will make these groups appear larger, the associated standard errors may be misleadingly small since it is unclear how far these small numbers of cases are representative of others with similar (but not necessarily identical) characteristics). Or,
- **Impute data**

To avoid the pitfalls of the first three options, the decision was taken to impute data.

Whilst many types of imputation are available, single imputation ignores the increased error which results from imputed data reflecting predicted rather than observed values. Multiple imputation, which presents averages of results of analysis from those produced across a range of datasets representing multiple possible values for imputed data, thereby avoids this bias. It avoids the problem of treating imputed data as if it were real – standard errors are larger, reflecting the inherent uncertainty in imputed data. Whilst imputation is by no means a perfect response to missing data – values cannot be treated as if they were real data – it could be considered the best option when alternatives result in an overly biased or reduced sample.

Rubin (1976) identifies three types of missing data:

- **Missing completely at random (MCAR).** This is data where missingness is not associated with any observed or unobserved characteristic. A theoretical example of this kind of missingness in the data used here would be a situation where a child simply did not notice one of the questions and therefore did not provide an answer to it.
- **Missing at random (MAR).** This is data where missingness is not inherently related to presence or missingness of data on other variables (for example where respondents are routed towards or away from certain questions), but where it is related to other observed variables. So the above example of poor children potentially being more likely to miss responses to certain questions is an example of missing at random – these children are not prevented from providing data, but the chances of them deciding to or being able to provide data is associated with another, observed, characteristic.
- **Missing not at random (MNAR).** Data that is missing not at random is missing directly as a result of an observed characteristic. If part of the survey design led to some children being consistently routed away from a particular question or set of questions because of their response to a

previous question, this data would have to be considered missing not at random. An example of this is different questions being asked of different age groups – so eight-year-old children may be asked different questions to ten-year-old children. Within a resulting dataset, all eight-year-old children would be missing data on questions only asked of ten-year-old children, because the survey did not ask them to provide responses to these questions. Responses for eight-year-olds to such questions is not missing at random – it is missing specifically as a result of an observed characteristic – ie. their age - and a resulting routing decision.

Multiple imputation relies on the assumption that data can be considered MAR. Data which are MCAR do not require imputation since missingness will not be associated with any variable of interest, and so estimates will not be biased if simple casewise deletion is used. Imputation may increase the efficiency of analysis through retaining a larger sample size, but may not be necessary. Data which are MNAR present problems for imputation as the mechanism responsible for missingness must be built into models to avoid biased results.

In practice, making definite judgements about whether data are MAR or MNAR can be difficult. 'Ideal type' MAR data – ie. data where missingness is explained entirely by observed variables – is rare. The result of this is that it may be that an unobserved respondent characteristic is partially or entirely responsible for missing data for some or all cases where it is found. So for example if a question was included which children below a certain level of reading capability were not able to comprehend and therefore did not answer, this data should be treated as MNAR rather than MAR. But the absence in this theoretical example of a reading capability variable means that this judgement cannot be reached. However, checks of missing data and its association with other variables of interest can be used to make an informed judgement about whether further investigation might be needed – so for example if most or all children below a certain age gave no or nonsensical responses to a particular question, this may suggest that for that age group, missingness on that variable is not at random.

In getting data ready for imputation, it was therefore established whether data were MCAR, and for data that were not MCAR how confidently the judgement could be made that data were MAR rather than MNAR. MNAR data was found in the year eight and ten samples, where respondents were randomly allocated one of two surveys. The purpose of this was to gather data on a wide range of variables without creating a survey that was unfeasibly long. Therefore, for some variables, half of the school year eight and year ten respondents were asked one question whilst the other half were asked another. Which question respondents were asked was in no way related to any characteristic of the respondent other than which version of the questionnaire was used. As a result of this, for those questions which were only asked of half of the sample, at least 50% of cases had missing data and the missing data for the 50% of children who were not asked the question must be assumed to be MNAR (although missing data for the children who were asked the question but did not respond cannot be assumed to also be MNAR). Because the missing data for this group was MNAR, it was not suitable for imputation. Therefore, analyses of this data were only undertaken on the subsample who had answered the relevant version of the survey. Other data were also deemed to be definitely MNAR and therefore not appropriate for imputation. For many variables of interest, children in the youngest age group (school year four) were not asked questions because a judgement had been made that the questions were unsuitable for this age group. Given that there were several variables of key interest that were not asked of this age group (for example questions relating to objective and subjective perceptions of household wealth), the decision was made to exclude children in year four from the analysis where these variables were included.

For the remainder of the variables and cases, patterns of missing data overall and broken down by sub-groups (including age, gender, ethnicity, disability status and learning difficulty status) were examined. Whilst in some cases missingness was associated with these variables (in line with the assumptions of MAR), the associations were not so strong as to suggest an obvious case of MNAR. The demographic variables did not indicate that certain groups of children did not have the capacity to answer questions, but rather that there

may be some limited association between demographic characteristics and missingness on the variable/s of interest. As noted above, this judgement is not necessarily valid since data may be MNAR as a result of unobserved factors. However, findings supported the judgement that imputation could go ahead with a reasonable amount of confidence.

Multiple imputation was undertaken using chained equations (MICE). Whilst many methods for imputing are available, Lunt (2011) recommends the use of MICE for cases where data for binary and categorical variables are to be imputed. Unlike some other imputation methods, MICE has the functionality to use a variety of regression models to predict the values of missing data. Models were selected based on the type of data. Logit models were used to predict binary variables. Multiple logit models were used for categorical variables, and ordinal logit models were used for ordinal variables. Where scale variables were imputed, these were rarely normally distributed and contained only integer values. Given that linear regression would have produced non-integer values which would then have had to be rounded to produce integers, and may have predicted values outside of the range of the scales, predictive mean matching (which predicts the value of missing data points based on the values of similar cases) was used. This helped to ensure that the range and types of values predicted reflected the range of possible responses, and was closer to the observed distribution rather than to a theoretical normal distribution. MICE involves predicting values in the case with the lowest missing data, followed by the next lowest, and so on until all missing data that can be imputed, is imputed. Imputation estimates provide a value and also a 'target' within which the actual value of the missing data point can be assumed to fall. The multiple imputations reflect this uncertainty – 'noise' is added through the existence of a range of possible values across the imputed data, which increases standard errors to account for the inherent uncertainty in imputed data.

All variables used in subsequent analysis were included in imputation models, and imputation models were run separately prior to imputation being undertaken to ensure that they ran and produced viable results. Imputation for all variables needed for all the analysis undertaken in this thesis was not

achievable due to the large number of binary and categorical variables. Therefore, imputation was undertaken separately for each section of analysis, reflecting individual chapters of this thesis. In line with Statacorp's (2011) guidance, 20 imputations were produced. For each variable in each round of imputation, imputed data was visually checked through comparisons of the distributions in the non-imputed data and amongst imputed data in all imputations using frequencies and kernel density charts. Distributions of imputed data for the most part closely reflected the distributions of non-imputed data, and where there was more deviation this was explained by the associations between the imputed variable and the predictor variables used – so for example for some variables related to deprivation, other deprivation-related variables were associated both with increased odds of being deprived according to that variable, and increased odds of missing data on that variable. Deviations from the observed distribution were, however, never large, and where they were larger this was exclusively in cases where there were fewer missing values when, as noted by Social Science Computing Co-operative (SSCC) (2013), larger deviations can be expected and will not change the overall distribution of the imputed dataset since the vast majority of values are observed rather than imputed.

2.6 A note on 'child-centric' research and 'child-derived' measures

As noted here and in chapter one, one of the aims of this thesis and the Children's Society well-being research programme is to as far as possible conduct research in a child-centric manner. Additionally, the aim of this thesis was to produce a *child-derived* index of child material deprivation. However, as with all research conducted by or with adults, on or with children, it must be acknowledged that the research is not fully child-centric, and the measure not fully child-derived. As Woodhead and Faulkner (2008) note, this is commonly the case in research with children. Whilst children were consulted about what to include in surveys, adults at the Children's Society and The University of York instigated, funded, conducted and in large part directed the research. Whilst children were participants in focus groups and in surveys, adults were responsible for the facilitation of focus groups and administration of surveys,

for the design of focus group schedules and survey questions, and for the analysis of data obtained at each stage of the research. It is hoped that the work can be developed towards an iterative process whereby children can be consulted about the analysis undertaken by adults including giving children the opportunity to challenge adults' interpretation of results. Children's feedback could then be used to refine findings and develop research instruments that better reflect children's own conceptions and priorities. But it is unrealistic to describe this research as fully child-centric, or even to aspire to this in future research given that adults conducting the research are drawing on years of training and experience which is simply unavailable to children, and have an interest in researching this subject in a way that it cannot be assumed children would share. These limitations are by no means exclusive to this project – most examples of research with children will be to some extent adult-centric and adult-led, just as they may be to some extent child-centric and child-led. It may therefore be more appropriate to attempt to locate research with children on an adult-centric to child-centric continuum, and the nature of measures derived through research with children on an adult-derived to child-derived continuum, rather than seek absolute child-centricity or child-derivation. What this thesis and other findings from the Children's Society well-being research programme represent, particularly in their quantitative elements where child-centric research strategies are much less developed than in qualitative research, is an effort at conducting research in a way that is more child-centric than has previously been achieved, and using measures that are closer to being child-derived that have previously been available. It is to be hoped that the methods used here, and more broadly in the field of research with children, can be developed to move towards a more equitable balance between adults and children in the extent to which children are involved at all stages.

2.7 Discussion

This chapter has detailed the overall methodology followed in the development of a child-derived measure of child material deprivation, and has provided some details of the specific methods used in the research. Throughout the chapter, efforts have been made to explain the rationale for key decisions and outline the

limitations as well as the strengths of these. Whilst most overarching methods-related details have been covered here, in places it was felt that these would be better placed in the specific chapters to which they are relevant (for example details of specific statistical tests applied to data). This is in order to present information in a way which best facilitates ease of reading without undue repetition where similar methods are used in several places.

The next three chapters detail the findings from the focus groups, pilot study, and main survey.

Chapter 3

Children's views on socially perceived necessities: focus group findings

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the process of conducting focus groups with children to develop a set of deprivation indicators that make sense to children, rather than to adults and/or parents. Firstly it provides a background to the use of focus groups in developing consensual measures of poverty, examining how this method has been used amongst other populations and why focus groups are particularly suited to this type of research. Findings from focus groups are then presented through an analysis of the data collected. Finally, these findings are translated into items that were taken forward for piloting to inform survey questions.

3.2 Rationale for the use of focus groups

Focus groups began as tools primarily used in behavioural sciences and marketing research. From the 1950s, social researchers began to take more of an interest in the approach (Stewart et al, 2007). The method involves interviewing a group of people together on the research topic, drawing not only on interactions with the interviewer but also on interactions between group members and how groups negotiate shared answers to questions or present alternative opinions in the social setting allowed by the group (Krueger and Casey, 2009). Krueger and Casey (2009) identify several strengths and weaknesses of the focus group method, presented and elaborated on in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Strengths and weaknesses of focus groups

Strengths	Weaknesses
Focus groups can facilitate decision making based on the collective understandings of participants.	Focus group members may intellectualise as a result of a desire to appear rational in the group setting.
Focus groups can provide guidance on appropriate strategies for product (here, survey question) development.	The group setting prohibits (or at least impedes) a detailed discussion of participants' emotions.
Focus groups can provide insight into the rationale behind decisions, as well as the decisions themselves.	Participants in focus groups may make up answers in order to appear knowledgeable in the group setting.
Focus groups can offer insight into how social norms (or group norms) are negotiated.	Overly large groups may provide more trivial answers than one-to-one interviews would.
	Dominant participants may skew results to reflect their (rather than the group's) view.

Source: Adapted from Krueger and Casey (2009)

The use of focus groups in developing material deprivation indicators

Preparations for the 1999 wave of the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey (PSE 1999) (see Middleton, 1998) provide an insight into what may be the first use of focus groups in the development of deprivation items for a large-scale survey. Here, participants in focus groups were asked to review the items used in the 1985 Breadline Britain studies and to make recommendations around which items were necessary and which were not, as well as add items where they felt these were missing. The methodology described in Middleton's report shows the development of items for the PSE 1999 drawing on a combination of expert opinion (the initial items considered by focus groups were determined by experts, and their primary position in the focus groups preclude an entirely inductive approach) and popular consultation.

Two important methodological issues are evident in Middleton's (1998) report: that the use of group rather than one-to-one settings for data collection help in the establishment of socially perceived necessities as a result of the innately social setting; and that at the same time the inclusion of a wide variety of individuals in establishing socially agreed necessities may limit resulting lists in that some items may be necessary for some groups and not others. An example of this is that older women perceived a dressing gown to be a necessity in contrast to other participant types. It is unclear whether this means that a dressing gown is not a socially perceived necessity (because some groups of the

population do not see it as a necessity), or whether it simply indicates that older women have different socially perceived needs to other groups (because socially perceived necessities differ between different sub-populations). This is likely to be of at least equal relevance in research with children, where developmental as well as individual and cultural differences mean that what is a necessity to one child may not even be desirable to another.

Subsequently, the focus group approach as a method of selecting and/or validating items used in material deprivation survey questions has been adopted by many researchers, and has informed the setting and monitoring of official UK measures of poverty (for example see Hirsch and Smith, 2010; McKay, 2008). These investigations have tended to take a similar format to those used in the Breadline Britain study: participants have been asked to focus on existing lists of items set by experts, but have also been given the opportunity to add their own ideas. Hirsch and Smith (2010) acknowledge the role of focus groups in providing not only clarification on items for inclusion in surveys, but also insight into the reasoning behind such items. This provision of a rationale, albeit one that lacks the statistical rigour of the subsequent quantitative research, allows researchers to assess not only specific items that are perceived as necessities but also to judge what deeper function the item performs, and therefore its link to poverty, material deprivation, and potentially the links between these and well-being. To address issues of generalisability raised by a reliance on qualitative research, the DWP measure followed a model similar to that used here: focus groups were followed by omnibus or pilot surveys including long lists of items, the data from which were then used to determine which items end up in final measures of poverty (Hirsch and Smith, 2010).

The use of focus groups to develop child-derived indicators

Focus groups, then, have become an established method for the investigation of socially agreed necessities. In such investigations, the method provides a unique opportunity to observe not only the items that most people consider necessities, but the processes of negotiation that lead to the inclusion or

exclusion of items, and the rationale behind this. The type of group has tended to follow a mixture of researcher- and participant-led discussion, with some items or themes raised by researchers to validate existing items, but also the provision of participant-led time so that new items can be introduced. This balance reflects the purposes of the research: to garner the opinions of individuals from wide-ranging groups in society whilst still establishing enough overlap between different groups to inform the construction of a robust, generalisable measure for use in later quantitative research.

However, the element of researcher-led discussion poses methodological difficulties in research with children. In previous work all participants – experts who determine items, researchers who conduct focus groups, and focus group participants – have been adults. This means that all groups involved in the creation of the measure have a personal insight into the issue – experts, researchers and participants are all adults, so all have a meaningful contribution to make to the discussion of what constitutes a socially perceived necessity for an adult. In research with children, there is not so clear a case for the use of adult ‘experts’ in determining items to discuss – their views by necessity will reflect adult perceptions of children’s needs, rather than those of children themselves. Since facilitators were also adults, their perceptions of what children need were similarly lacking in relevance to the topic of interest. This research therefore took a child-centric and child-led approach as far as practicable, allowing children to take a lead in focus group discussions before presenting pre-determined topics for focus.

Many of the steps taken to follow as child-centric and child-led an approach as possible are detailed in chapter two. Children were given time to establish an understanding of the focus of the research, then invited to offer their own ideas to as great an extent as they were comfortable with before researcher prompts were introduced. Whilst this can by no means be assumed to entirely negate the impact of power differences between adults and children, it is hoped that such an approach allowed for a more child-centric range of data than would otherwise have been gathered.

3.3 Categorising the data

As noted in chapter two, analysis was undertaken by coding the focus group data in three ways. Key words were identified which were also items or activities seen as necessities; categories were identified which represented broad facets of children's lives into which items and activities could be allocated; and overarching themes were identified to offer some insight into the underlying needs which children identified as important and which were serviced by the items and activities identified. An aim of the analysis method was to embrace the flexibility and pragmatism offered by thematic analysis (outlined by Braun and Clarke, 2006). These three coding methods represent a combination of deductive and inductive analysis as described by Braun and Clarke. The identification of specific items was deductive and based solely on researcher's agendas, in that the primary purpose of the groups was to generate items to take forward to surveys. The identification of themes drew in equal measure on observed patterns in the data, and on pre-determined ideas derived from the theoretical background detailed in chapter one, and the items identified in pre-existing surveys detailed in appendix A. Overarching themes, whilst in part reflecting findings of other research, were primarily drawn from the data rather than informed by a researcher-imposed theoretical framework.

The results are now presented, drawing on the ten categories of material deprivation item identified in the focus group data. These categories were also used to help identify a range of items to take forward to the pilot survey detailed in chapter four – this analysis is presented in table 3.3. The aim of this was to help to ensure that these items covered as broad a range of children's material needs as possible, avoiding an over-emphasis on some types of need over others. In contrast, as will be discussed in section 3.5, the overarching themes which were identified were helpful in illuminating the holistic nature of material deprivation, offering insight into how specific items and categories of material need impact and interact to produce social exclusion.

Ten broad categories were identified in the analysis:

- Well-becoming
- Social and communication
- Food and drink
- Entertainment
- Travel
- Clothes and fashion
- Money
- Personal space
- Home and family
- Celebrations

There were also three minor categories of health care, safety, and pets. Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of which categories were raised in each group. The findings section is structured around these categories.

Table 3.2: Mentions of themes, by focus group

	8-9 Leeds	8-9 Hackney	10-11 Hackney	12-13 Hackney	14-15 Hackney	11-13 Leeds
Well-becoming	X	X	X	X	X	X
Social and communication	X	X	X	X	X	X
Food and drink	X	X	X	X	X	X
Entertainment	X	X	X	X	X	X
Travel	X	X	X	X	X	X
Clothes and fashion		X	X	X	X	X
Money	X	X	X	X	X	X
Personal space	X		X	X	X	X
Home and family	X	X	X	X	X	X
Celebrations		X	X	X	X	X
Health care	X				X	
Safety		X			X	X
Pets			X		X	X

3.4 Findings

Well-becoming

A major topic for children, in line with adults' perceptions of children's poverty and well-being (see Ben-Arieh, 2005 and 2008), was the things they felt they needed in order to become successful adults. That is, things that contribute to

their well-*becoming*, rather than directly to well-*being*. Primary amongst these concerns was education. Children tended to agree that getting a good education was the most important factor in their financial well-becoming:

"[You need] An education, because if you don't have an education you won't get a very good job, and then you'll be living on the street"

Eight year old, Leeds

Schools

'Normal schools', rather than private schools, were felt to be adequate by participants in one group, and discussions of school tended to be primarily focussed on educational rather than social aspects of going to school. In terms of educational resources additional to school resources, including having private tutors on particular topics, this was not felt to be necessary. Indeed, according to one group this was more associated with parental preferences than children's needs:

Facilitator: Do you need tutors outside of school?

Participant 1: You don't really need them unless you're obsessed by a certain subject.

Participant 2: I think tutors are more your mum wants it, not you.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

Educational resources

Resources to support education were another focus, and whilst children felt that they needed some 'basic' resources such as paper and pens, there was also a level of resentment that schools were not geared more towards technological developments. This was at times felt to render some aspect of school-based learning irrelevant to, if not detrimental to, well-becoming; children were aware that their generation will not necessarily do things in the same way as or using the same kinds of tools as previous generations:

“But the only thing is, when we’re older, I don’t really see any point in doing like handwriting and maths in our head cause when we’re older, in our era, we’re going to be using like computers and calculators all the time. There’ll probably be robots and you won’t even need to use maths.”

13 year old, Hackney.

Computers were generally agreed to be necessary to support education across the participating age groups, supporting Hirsch and Smith’s (2010) finding that education relies on such resources at younger ages than in the past. For some children, the incorporation of technology into teaching made education more interesting and so facilitated their engagement, for example the use of Nintendo DSs in teaching maths. Books, access to the internet, subject-specific equipment (such as sports clothes), school bags, school uniform and reference books such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries were also agreed on by most participants. However, two points were raised in relation to this. Firstly, children felt that people in different situations would have different needs, including those with disabilities needing support to make learning accessible, and those with particular interests or talents needing resources to develop these. Secondly, access to the outcomes or functions of items was seen as more important than the physical items themselves. For example, where a dictionary was seen as a necessity, having access to a dictionary online would preclude the need for a paper dictionary. That is, items and activities appeared to be understood as a means of reaching a desired end state, rather than as of importance in their own right. Specific items and activities represent common or popular methods for reaching those end-states, but the achievement of end states themselves, rather than the items and activities, are the important consideration. This highlights the need for frequent reviews of items and activities used in material deprivation measures.

Parental involvement in education

Parental involvement in education was an issue that varied with the age of participants: whilst younger children tended to value this, older children placed more limitations on what they felt parents should be involved in. Older children

indicated that they did not need parents to attend events such as sports days and parents' evenings, although with the latter example this was because most of the information on their child's progress would be available on the school website. This may link with differences in opinion of school overall: although most children felt that school success was an important factor in their well-becoming, others were less enthusiastic, feeling that education was pushed onto them by teachers, against their wishes.

Other aspects of well-becoming

Although the primary focus in discussions on well-becoming was on education, two other topics – healthy eating and exercise – were raised as important in relation to this. These will be examined in more depth in later sections.

Social and communication

Participating in social activities and communicating with family and friends were highly valued by all children, and several items were felt to be necessary for this.

Mobile phones

Mobile phones were a major point of discussion, and were clearly highly sought-after amongst children of all ages. However, when asked to consider whether a mobile phone was a necessity most children agreed that it becomes so on the child starting secondary school. At this point, mobile phones were felt to be essential in several arenas of the child's life – communication with friends and family, insurance against emergency situations, tools for fitting in with peer groups, and sources of entertainment. Of this list, the use of phones in emergency situations was the most-often cited reason why a mobile phone was a necessity, although children also argued that this was not the only or even the primary reason that a mobile phone was a necessity for secondary-aged children. One child listed the reasons for having a phone as:

“Emergencies, keep in touch, and music and entertainment.”

12-13 year old, Hackney.

Different kinds (and costs) of phones were raised, and children tended to agree that whilst more expensive phones with wider ranges of capability were desirable, a cheaper but functional phone would do. However, some raised concerns that this would not meet the needs associated with having a phone as a source of entertainment, as it would be unlikely to be able to play music or have advanced games. This posed an interesting point about the changing nature of social necessities and their relationship to technological development. As noted above, individual items per se may reasonably be seen as less important than the underlying need which is met by the item. An attempt to capture this has been made in the subsequent identification of categories of necessities and overarching themes in the analysis of children’s views – a mobile phone fits firmly in the ‘social and communication’ category, but may also have a place in ‘entertainment’. In terms of overarching themes, children’s discussions of the functions of mobile phones show that they are relevant to ‘building relationships’, ‘fitting in’ and ‘having fun’. The complexity of the relationship between specific deprivation indicators, the needs fulfilled by these, and the changing nature of both indicators and social needs is worthy of a great deal more qualitative exploration than it can be accorded in this, primarily quantitative, work.

Internet access

All children agreed that the internet has become a necessity in terms of communication. Regarding this too, more advanced mobile phones were felt to be desirable as these allow internet connectivity. However, it was clear that many children did not view this kind of phone as a need, as long as they could access the internet through other means such as on a computer. This again raises the above point that items were considered less important than the functions they performed: one group of children felt that a computer was not a necessity, but following probing by the facilitator this was because they assumed that other means of accessing the internet, for example through a

mobile phone or an iPod Touch, would be available. It should be noted briefly that whilst children gave specific examples of brands such as the above, efforts were made in the development of questions to avoid items such as 'iPod Touch' in favour of generic terms such as 'MP3 player'. The importance of the internet as a means of communication was evident, with children citing email, web sites, and social networking as important in maintaining relationships.

Contact with friends

Previous conceptions of children's necessities have tended to include a focus on organised or purposeful engagement with friends – for example having friends round to eat, or attending social groups and clubs (examples of such questions can be seen in the HBAI and PSE 1999 and 2012 lists of child deprivation items and activities). Children involved in the focus groups, however, tended to reject these ways of socialising in favour of more informal contact with friends. In terms of having friends round, where children discussed this they seemed very indifferent to it:

Participant 1: [if a friend asks to come round] Like, yeah, alright, you can come but I don't really care.

Participant 2: If they didn't come then you wouldn't really mind.

12-13 year olds, Hackney.

In terms of social contact, some participants valued siblings whilst others felt that siblings were a hindrance due to fighting and having to share space.

Food

Food and drink were discussed in two, relatively un-related ways.

The importance of a healthy diet

Firstly, children acknowledged the importance of a healthy diet, but seemed largely to take this for granted, viewing it as a need but not a want. For some

children, it was uncertain whether a healthy diet was even perceived to be a need:

Participant 1: You can't just live off fruit and vegetables.

Participant 2: Yeah, if you can go to a chip shop or go to a fruit shop, which one are you going to go to.

12-13 year olds, Hackney.

Food as a treat

Treat food, on the other hand, was widely felt to be a necessity. For most children, treat food was associated with enjoyment and sociability – treats such as trips to fast food restaurants were seen as part of having a normal life. Children associated having treats with their well-being, and with balance and enjoyment. For some children, adults were seen as inhibiting their needs in this arena through preventing them from having the treats they felt they needed:

"It's just adults, they don't let you have anything."

Eight to nine year olds, Leeds.

For some children, there appeared to be an association between fast food (such as chips, pizza, or other take-away items) and being able to eat – one child indicated that if he could not get fast food he would worry that he would have nothing to eat as there may be no food available at home. This highlights the subtle balance between well-being, well-becoming, and children's social and legal status: it is unclear whether this child would have felt fast food was a necessity if he had been secure that he would be adequately provided for at home, but given children's inability to manage their own living environments fast food solutions were seen as necessary. However, most children acknowledged that whilst treat food was a need, it should be balanced with healthy food and should only be eaten on occasion.

Entertainment

Several sources of entertainment were felt to be necessary, and were for the most part linked either with participation in social activities or with being able to participate in conversations, for example about television programmes.

Television

Whilst the value of a television to entertainment irrespective of social participation was acknowledged, having a television was universally felt to be a need in order not to be excluded from conversations with peers, and for some this stretched to having Sky or Cable TV. The social importance of television was a common theme:

Participant 1: Well you probably wouldn't have any friends if you didn't have TV. Cause like the main thing that you usually talk about with your friends is what you watched on TV.

Participant 2: So if you didn't like have a TV it would be quite hard to like fit in, and have conversations.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

Games consoles

Games consoles were another major theme, although there was evident debate around how far these were seen as a need and how far they were a want, and then for only a sub-group of children (primarily boys). One of the main lines of division on this was in terms of gender:

Facilitator: So [do you need a] games console?

I: If it's a boy obviously they're going to say need.

Eight to nine year olds, Hackney.

This links to the above point about the balance between covering a diverse population when constructing lists of socially perceived necessities, and

ensuring that the needs of all groups can be adequately covered. To use the possible gendered difference in perceptions of games consoles as an example, an important consideration is whether it is wanted by enough girls to make it a necessity for all children; and at the same time if it is not a necessity for girls whether its exclusion means boys' needs are not being properly represented in the resulting measure. This links back to the discussion of different conceptions of poverty – a recurring theme is the difficult balance in creating measures which stand up to statistical analysis (ie. are relevant to a broad spectrum of the population), without losing their relevance to sub-groups or minorities. Given that the intention for this measure is to create an index of relevance to all children aged 8-16 in England, strong gender biases in individual items may be problematic. Other biases such as social class may also be relevant, but such data was not so readily (or at all) available in the focus group context. The applicability of items and activities to various sub-groups of children is therefore investigated in depth in chapters four and five.

As with the meanings of television, many children related the lack of games consoles to social exclusion. Some children described experiences of themselves or a peer lacking this whilst the majority of children owned it, and being excluded because of this. Others discussed the need for this item in order to enjoy time spent with friends, feeling that spending time together was more desirable if there were games consoles to play on.

Electronics as entertainment and fashion

Overall, the main focus in terms of entertainment was on electronic devices – in addition to television and games consoles, children frequently mentioned mobile phones, iPods and other music playing devices, computers, and the internet as sources of entertainment. One child highlighted that these provide not only entertainment but also aid fitting in with peers, describing them as a “fashion thing”. Non-electronic sources of entertainment such as musical instruments, fiction books and magazines were mentioned slightly less often. Whilst the extent to which each individual item was seen as a need varied, it

was evident that children felt they needed some of these items, in line with their interests, to feel they had a normal life.

Links between entertainment and social needs

Some of the items highlighted by children were based more on participation in social activities than on individual entertainment. These included having equipment in the garden that they could play on (with or without friends) and, amongst younger children, being part of a club that allowed them to engage in a pastime they found interesting. Children from multiple age groups mentioned games to play with their family, such as board games. Older children discussed activities such as going to the cinema with friends as a need. For younger children, being part of a club was important both socially and in terms of feeling proud of their achievements:

Participant 1: You have to feel proud of yourself when you get a medal or something.

Participant 2: You get to make new friends when you go to clubs.

Eight to nine year olds, Leeds.

Travel

Public vs private transport needs

Whilst there was some debate around the vehicle type needed, all children agreed that the capacity to travel is necessary. Children in London tended to be less likely to think cars were a necessity as they were able to take advantage of the good public transport infrastructure including busses, the underground and trains with simple methods of payment (familiarity with the Oyster Card system²⁶ was evident). However, even children from London stressed that for those living in areas without such good access to public transport, a family car would be a necessity. For those living outside of London, reliance on public transport was seen as more problematic due to issues of frequency and timing.

²⁶ This system allows people to use a top-up card for travel on a range of public transport options, rather than buy individual tickets for each journey.

However, some children in London felt that public transport may be more expensive than using a car, and others highlighted that using public transport was not socially desirable as it seemed to be linked with poor people they did not want to associate with. As one girl commented:

“Oh my god, I ain’t taking the bus!”

10-11 years old, Hackney.

As with their views on education, children felt that different situations demanded different types of transport – for example one group highlighted that disabled people may need a car even in places where non-disabled people would not. Negotiation around the relative nature of poverty was also evident in discussion of cars amongst one group who were using the scale from richest to poorest (similar to the one presented in chapter 2):

Facilitator: So you’re thinking it’s above the middle [of the scale] so you have to be quite rich to have a car.

Participant 1: Yeah.

Participant 2: I think it should be in the middle.

Participant 1: I think it’s only the richest.

Participant 2: Yeah, but your dad’s got a car.

11-13 year olds, Leeds.

Bikes were also discussed primarily in their capacity as transport rather than recreation or fitness aids. However, children also stressed that if places are within walking distance then other forms of transport are not necessary.

Public transport and parental preferences

Regarding public transport, there was variation in terms of whether children were allowed by parents to use this on their own. In general, children in

London seemed much more familiar and comfortable with public transport even at the youngest ages participating, whilst younger children in Leeds (aged eight to nine) expressed some surprise that one of them was allowed by their parents to use the bus alone.

Clothes and fashion

Whilst clothes and shoes were felt by almost all children to be an absolute need, there was also widespread agreement that the types of clothes and shoes are important. This was not exclusively about expensive or designer labelled clothes, but about having clothes that can be combined into fashionable outfits and that come from mainstream brands that are widely accepted by children as being standard but fashionable. The importance of having clothes was related to an ability to fit in with friends, and children expressed not only fears that they would be bullied if they wore the 'wrong' clothes, but also a fairly common admission that they would bully peers who wore clothes they felt did not look good:

Participant 1: ...basically, you need good clothes.

Participant 2: No, not good clothes, it's to be able to match clothes, look good.

Facilitator: And what about the right clothes, do you need the right clothes?

Participant 1: If you want to have friends, get the right clothes.

Participant 3: I really don't care what my friends wear, but if they look stupid I'll just say...

Participant 1: You look stupid.

Participant 3: No, I'll just say where did you get that top from? I don't think you should wear it again.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

Whilst children on the one hand said that appearance was more important than branding, when specific examples were given it became clear that branding is to some extent important – for example given the choice between two identical pairs of trainers, one (more expensive) labelled Adidas and one (cheaper) unlabelled, children said they would pay more and get the Adidas trainer. Brands in some groups were a major topic of conversation, and most children indicated a clear preference for popular brands even if they did not see them as necessities, along with some distain for people who did not have branded clothes. However, this was by no means universal and some children indicated that real friends would not care what kind of clothes their friends wore. It was also evident that children were not comfortable with the idea of second hand clothes unless these are handed down from someone they know – the idea of shopping in charity shops, for example, was met with definite rejection.

Younger children tended to discuss fashionable clothes less than older children, potentially suggesting that this kind of item is age-specific. However, younger children did discuss some instances of bullying resulting from people wearing things that did not meet with the approval of their peers, such as glasses:

“My older sister, she was in a class with someone who had glasses, and they were always mean to her because she had glasses”

10-13 year olds, Leeds.

Clothes to enable participation in other activities, such as football kit and school uniform, were raised in addition to fashionable clothes.

Money

The issue of whether children need money themselves was debated, possibly reflecting different experiences of parenting. Some children felt that they could ask their parents for whatever they wanted and on the whole be given it, resulting in them not seeing a need to have their own money. Others felt that parents were not always aware of what they needed, and therefore that they needed money themselves to get these things:

"I would say, parents, we really know what we need for ourselves, but your parents don't."

12-13 year olds, Hackney.

Younger children when discussing money related it more to parental needs for money – for example to pay rent and to maintain their houses – rather than relating it to a need to have money for themselves. One older group of children raised the potential of having their own job, but the focus of this amongst those participating was on the need for money, rather than the need to work.

A member of one of the groups felt that having money would prevent children from engaging in anti-social behaviour, as they could then buy and do things to keep themselves entertained:

Facilitator: And what kind of things do you think those kids would want to stop them doing that kind of stuff [anti-social and/or criminal activity]?

Participant 1: Money. I think if they had money they wouldn't do it, cause they would buy something to keep them occupied.

11-13 year olds, Leeds

The idea of having some money to save was also raised, and children related this to being able to make choices in later life, such as travelling on leaving school. However other children felt that they were not able to save money themselves, preferring to spend it here and now. Despite this, having some money saved up (either by themselves or by parents on their behalf) for when they were older was commonly agreed to be necessary.

Personal space

Spaces, both outside and inside, where children could have privacy alone or with friends were felt to be necessities. Both outdoor and indoor spaces were discussed. Children described the availability of outdoor spaces not only in terms of their existence but also in terms of the perceived safety of such spaces

– outdoor spaces which were perceived by children or parents to be unsafe for them were not adequate to meeting children’s needs for personal space. Within homes, children discussed the need for having space to themselves. For some this meant their own bedroom, but for others sharing with a same-sex sibling was considered acceptable:

“I can share, right, but I’d prefer my own room.”

10-11 year olds, London.

Sharing space with siblings was an issue that triggered varied responses across the age ranges, possibly reflecting different kinds and qualities of sibling relationships. However, some children felt that there should be an age limit beyond which children are not expected to share a room, which tended to be on starting secondary school:

Facilitator: So when do you think, is there a certain age do you think where you kind of need to have your own bedroom, so when you’re young it’s OK to share?

Participant 1: I think, cause when I was younger I used to be scared to sleep by myself so I liked having my sister with me, but now they’ve moved out and gone to the other house. Cause we’ve got another house. I’m used to it now, I’m 11.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

Home and family

In terms of their home environment, children’s expectations tended to fit fairly well with the kinds of items used in measures of adult or household poverty (the HBAI and PSE 1999 and 2012 surveys contain lists of such items). These included adequate furniture, electricity, hot water, fridges, home phones, and other common household items, all of which were discussed and agreed to be necessary. Children also showed a sensitivity to the state of their homes, indicating that having a home that is well decorated and in a decent state of repair is necessary to social acceptability:

Participant 1: Yeah [you need a nicely decorated house], cause if someone's coming over they like to inspect or something.

Participant 2: Yeah, if it's your house you want it to be clean cause you don't want them to walk in and smell it and...

Participant 3: Yeah, often people judge you by your house.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

Having adequate personal space (in line with the above section) was raised in relation to the home environment, including for most children having a bedroom of their own and a garden that they could spend time in. Children for the most part felt that a garden rather than a shared outdoor space was necessary due to concerns over safety in public spaces.

In relation to time with family, children felt that time spent together at home, days out, and family holidays were all necessities to maintain good relationships and deal with personal stress:

Facilitator: But what if you didn't have any holidays a year?

Participant 1: I would pass out.

Participant 2: You need one.

Participant 3: You absolutely need one holiday a year.

11-13 year olds, Leeds.

Celebrations

There was a strong feeling evident amongst children that celebrations and presents on special occasions were needed. This was related to having a sense of security in relationships and knowing that they were cared for by others. However, children also highlighted that the experience of celebrating was more important than the expense of gifts, with one child stating that as long as they

got cards on their birthday they would know they were cared for. However, most children felt that presents and/or cards were important:

Participant 1: If I didn't have presents on my birthday it wouldn't feel like my birthday, it would just feel like a normal day.

Participant 2: And you need to know that people care about you.

Participant 1: On your birthday it should be special.

Participant 3: Even if it's just a card or something, at least you know that people know about it.

10-11 year olds, Hackney.

In addition to presents, some children felt that festive decorations were necessary including Christmas trees, in order to mark special occasions.

Additional points

Three additional types of need were raised which were not discussed in enough depth to provide a detailed analysis, but which may still be important to children's social needs. One child briefly mentioned the need to be able to afford medicine to maintain a good standard of health, and another group mentioned healthcare as a basic need. In three of the groups, children discussed the idea of safety, feeling that poorer people are more vulnerable to crime, particularly violent assault, than richer people. Finally, three groups discussed the need for a pet, indicating that rich people may have lots of pets but that one pet was necessary to having a normal life.

3.5 Overarching themes

As noted previously, in addition to identifying specific items and activities, and categories into which these fell, an effort was made to identify overarching themes in children's discussions of what they needed and why they needed it. The purpose of identifying overarching themes is to take into account Carthaigh's (2013) point that considerations of poverty are implicitly linked to

perceptions of need, and that a 'need' implies an end-state which requires fulfilment. Whilst a full investigation of the poverty, needs, and end-states in relation to child poverty and based on children's own perspectives is beyond the scope of this primarily quantitative thesis, it is hoped that analysis presented here may help to inform future research on the subject. The identification of overarching themes also allowed for a consideration of the data generated in more depth than the identification of items or categories of item allowed, drawing on what Braun and Clarke (2006) describe as a more inductive rather than theoretical approach.

Four overarching themes were identified in the analysis. None fit the criteria of an 'end-state' very well, in that they are not binary conditions which children could be categorised as having fulfilled or not fulfilled. However, it may be possible to locate children (or allow children to locate themselves) on a continuum representing how far they feel this condition to be achieved for them. Whilst factors other than material deprivation will undoubtedly contribute to children's position on such continua, focus group discussions with children helped to shed light on how material deprivation may contribute to a failure to thrive in the four themes identified. These were:

- **Development:** Linked to the discussion of well-becoming above, children were aware of the need to develop into self-sufficient adults, and valued resources and possessions that would enable this. The identification of this theme drew on children's references not only to their happiness in the present moment but also their development towards fulfilling adulthoods. This was discussed, for example, in reference to the need for an education in order to obtain an economically productive role in society; in reference to money as a resource not only for meeting needs in the present but also for saving towards meeting future needs; and in reference to the need for healthy food even when this was less enjoyable than treats, in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the present and the future.
- **Fitting in:** Many of the needs related to fitting in with friends, and children highlighted consequences of being at best left out and at worst

bullied or victimised if they did not have the things they needed to be accepted by their peer group. This was discussed in more direct terms regarding (for example) the need for clothes and shoes to fit in with friends, but also in less direct terms regarding (for example) the need for access to the same types of media as peers had to enable participation in group discussions.

- **Having fun:** Having fun was valued by children, and most items could be related to an ability to enjoy life. At times, for example with treat food, some children felt that adults did not accept this need. However, for most items children did not express any contention with adults over what they needed in order to have fun. As above, there were some items and activities which fed directly into 'having fun', such as family day trips. Others fed into this theme less directly but no less importantly, for example having access to media for entertainment provided fun in itself, but was probably more often and more importantly seen as valuable in terms of facilitating fun with friends. This process was very much linked to 'fitting in', something that was facilitated by an ability to have fun with friends.
- **Building relationships:** A major focus was on building and maintaining relationships with family and friends. Children put a high value on the ability to communicate with and spend time with family and friends, and seemed to value this in itself, over and above the activities that were involved in spending time together. This theme was evident through almost all of the items and categories identified, highlighting (as noted by Ridge, 2002) the social nature of poverty and deprivation as understood from children's own perspectives.

Whilst these themes represented distinct domains of children's lives, it was also evident that a complex interrelationship existed between the different themes and items or activities. Whilst treat food, for example, may ostensibly be seen as related to 'having fun', it may also impact 'building relationships' – for example sharing treat food with friends may help consolidate social bonds, whilst parents refusing treats which children perceive themselves to need may

challenge the social bond between child and parent. In addition to building social bonds with friends, having treat food with peers may facilitate fitting in via a similar mechanism. Alternatively, a child who is denied any treat food may stand out from peers, threatening their capacity to fit in. Additionally, developing an ability to enjoy treat food but maintain an overall healthy diet may be a way in which a child develops towards a healthy and successful adulthood, demonstrating that this item may have the potential to link to development. Finally, a child who does not have access to treat food but does have access to clothes to fit in with peers may find that some of the negative impacts on fitting in and on building relationships with peers which may have resulted from their lack of access to treat food can be mitigated by their access to this other necessity.

Given the limited scope of the focus groups and the pragmatic approach taken to sampling, a detailed discussion of how the specific items identified here interact and act to realise and symbolise the overarching themes would be spurious. However, as noted above, it is hoped that this example of how items and overarching themes (and indeed categories) can interact may provoke future, more detailed investigations on the subject.

3.6 Outcomes of the focus group findings

The focus groups served a dual purpose – of understanding how children conceptualise, experience and define material deprivation, and of generating a list of items to be included in large-scale surveys. Due to space constraints, a maximum of 20 items could be included in the pilot study. A range of methods were used to narrow the items down, including combining items as a result of consideration of the rationale behind inclusion (using the categories and overarching themes described above); referring to existing data to check for the prevalence of ownership (items that are owned almost universally will offer little insight into differences between rich and poor children); and observing the frequency with which items were mentioned and the strength of feeling amongst participants about their inclusion as a socially agreed necessity. This approach therefore incorporated both subjective and objective assessments as

to whether items should be included in the final list. It must be acknowledged that a degree of subjectivity was inevitable to this approach of selecting the final 20 items, and judgements were made by researchers without further consultation with children. Such judgements, as noted above, were based on covering as wide a range of 'types' of need as possible. This reflects a less than fully child-centric approach, and a more rigorous strategy may have been to test all items children raised in a small-scale pilot survey, allowing analysis of data from a representative sample of children to determine items for inclusion in the final survey. However, resource and time constraints meant that a cheaper, faster and more pragmatic approach was followed.

The first step in deciding on which items to include was as described above: individual items were identified, categorised, and examined for their role in relation to the overarching themes. Items which were considered a need by more children or by/for specific groups of children were prioritised over those only rarely mentioned, or where there was more debate over whether the item was a need at all. Questions were then devised based on the criteria above: the frequency mentioned (between rather than within groups to avoid the undue influence of dominating individual voices) and importance placed on the item by children; the ability to combine items into composite questions based on similarity in the needs fulfilled; and the insight that including items is likely to give into variation between children. The categories, items, and questions designed for piloting are shown in table 3.3. Where items were relevant to multiple categories, they are either listed in multiple places or located in the category to which they were felt to most strongly belong.

Table 3.3: Categories, items and questions

Category	Items/activities	Questions
Well-becoming	Educational games A school bag Things you need for school like books, pens Clothes for school like your school uniform A computer for school work	A computer at home that is connected to the internet that you can use for school work and in your free time Books of your own at home
Social and communication	Mobile phone Computer/laptop to communicate with friends	Your own mobile phone
Food and drink	Sweets Treat food (like pizza, burgers and milkshakes)	Treats and snacks like sweets, chocolate, chips or pizza once a week
Entertainment	TV (including pay TV such as satellite or cable) Games console Computer/laptop Computer/console games Board games Equipment for sports Equipment and/or clubs for hobbies Trips to the cinema DVDs or videos DVD player iPod or similar	Being part of a club where you play sports or do an activity like drama, art or music An iPod or other personal music player A games console, like an Xbox, DS, PS3 or a Wii, and at least one game for it Cable or satellite TV at home
Travel	Family car Money for/access to public transport A bike	A family car for transport when you need it Access to public transport like the train or the bus when you need it
Clothes and fashion	Fashionable shoes, particularly trainers Fashionable clothes New (not second hand) clothes	A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans) The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age
Money	Pocket money Money to save	Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home
Personal space	Garden Somewhere outside to play Own bedroom	A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends A bedroom of your own (not shared)
Home and family	A clock Home furnishings A nice house Family holidays	At least one holiday away from home each year with your family
Celebrations and family time	A Christmas tree Meals together Day trips with family	Presents on special occasions like birthdays and Christmas Trips or days out with your family at least once a month
Pets	A pet	A pet at home

3.7 Discussion

The use of focus groups with children to determine child-derived deprivation items reflected the established methods for determining material deprivation items amongst adults. It departed from existing practice through the involvement of children rather than adults or parents in data collection, and through a primary focus on child-led rather than researcher-led discussion. Attempts were made to ensure groups were as child-centric as possible to avoid adult perceptions overly influencing outcomes, resulting in a list that hopefully reflects the needs of children as perceived by children. Children were found to engage enthusiastically with the subject matter, and questions designed to clarify and define socially perceived necessities appeared to work well in most cases. Focus group data were analysed to identify categories of item and underlying themes, to provide insight not only into which items should be included in a list of children's socially perceived necessities, but also why these items are important to children. Development, fitting in, having fun, and building/maintaining relationships were found to be the key themes that children focus on when considering what items they need.

As stated above, the purpose of the focus group phase was twofold – to understand more about children's conceptions of socially perceived necessities, and to generate a list of items for inclusion in subsequent, quantitative phases of the research. The second of these points will be picked up in later chapters. Regarding children's perceptions of poverty, a notable finding highlighted at several points throughout this chapter was the importance to children not of items and experiences in themselves, but in their symbolic value. That is, children emphasised the messages that items or experiences transmitted about themselves, to themselves and to others. This finding tallies with research conducted by Ridge (2002) and Redmond (2008) that children conceive of poverty primarily in social terms, and experience material deprivation as a form of social exclusion. As Redmond (2009) notes, this exclusion is often child-led – that is, children exclude or are excluded by other children. The finding that children value both being and becoming – that is, they stress the importance of resources that will contribute to their economic well-being in the future as well

as to their material situation in the present – tallies with Uprichard's (2008) perspective that both are important considerations in theory and research on children and childhood.

Although these findings offer a unique insight into children's socially perceived necessities, limitations of the research must be stressed. The age range of children ran from 8-15, so excluded children below or above these limits. Limitations to the child-centric, child-led and child-derived nature of the process and findings have been outlined previously. Focus groups were run exclusively in relatively urban areas, and although this has been taken into consideration in the compilation of items for inclusion in the surveys, this may mean that the interests of children in rural areas are not adequately addressed. Finally, the use of schools and projects to run focus groups means that children who are excluded from mainstream social institutions will not be represented in the findings. More extensive research with representatives from groups inadequately covered by this work is therefore suggested in order to develop the findings presented here.

Chapter 4

Piloting and question selection

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the piloting of children's deprivation items as conducted following the focus group research outlined in chapter three. Three questions are addressed:

- How far children's and parents' responses agree on a range of questions relating to poverty, including low income and proxies for this; subjective family poverty; and material deprivation;
- Whether the items identified in chapter three appear to be valid as indicators of material deprivation; and
- Which items form the best scale in terms of validity and reliability, to take forward to the large-scale Children's Society surveys.

The chapter concludes with details of the items which will be carried forward.

4.2 Background and rationale

The importance of pilot studies in establishing the adequacy of surveys and of the individual items contained within them is well established (for example see de Vaus, 2002; Marsh, 1982; Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). Marsh (1982) notes that piloting can be qualitative or quantitative in nature, and that pilot studies aim to address several points. Amongst these, de Vaus (2002) identifies the following as factors that a pilot can shed light on in relation to individual or sets of items:

- Examination of variations between participants in response (responses should be varied enough that differences between participants can be explored);
- The meaning that participants accord survey items (particularly within social research, it cannot be assumed that researchers and participants

have a shared understanding of the concepts being measured – see Marsh (1982) for a discussion of this);

- Redundancy in items (little additional information is gained through the inclusion of two items measuring virtually identical concepts);
- Scalability (where items are required to contribute to the measurement of a wider or underlying concept);
- Non-response (which is likely to indicate that response levels will be low in the main survey); and
- Acquiescent response sets (where participants consistently tick the same response for each question).

He further notes that flow (the way the survey fits together), question skips (whether some questions are left unanswered by a large number of respondents), timing (how long the survey and sub-sections of it take to answer), and respondent interest and attention can be monitored through piloting entire surveys.

The Children's Society pilot

The pilot study described here was conducted by a research agency, Research Now, on behalf of the Children's Society. Whilst the items were designed to be part of a wider range of questions relating to children's well-being, only one of Teijlingen and Hundley's (2001) two purposes of piloting – the suitability of a subset of items – is reported; whilst full piloting was conducted for the survey, the concern here is limited to the questions relating to children's material deprivation. Fowler (2009) notes that good survey measures should be reliable (ie. provide consistent responses in similar situations) and valid (ie. they should measure what they are intended to measure). Efforts are made in this analysis to establish whether the material deprivation questions meet these criteria. However, another purpose of the pilot was to compare how children and adults responded to similar questions relating to household and personal levels of material well-being. Different responses to the same questions where these relate to objective factors may indicate either that children do not have an awareness of certain aspects of their household's material situation (as may be

the case for household income, or adults' work situations). Alternatively, they may indicate different levels of awareness and different kinds of interpretation of items (as may be the case where children and parents provide different responses to whether the child has or has access to items and activities). The pilot therefore also provided insight into the appropriateness of using children as respondents, and interestingly, where subjective questions are included, into how appropriate it is to use adults as proxies for children – a common practice in many surveys (for example the FRS and the PSE 1999 and 2012, as discussed in chapter one).

The specific issues which were addressed through the piloting of questions included:

Individual item meanings and formats

In combination with other data, information was garnered on the comprehensibility and meaning of questions to the target audiences – both parents and children. The survey pilot alone was not adequate in addressing this, but contributed to it. In addition to rates of missing data in the pilot, two other sources of information were used: data from the focus groups which, as detailed in the previous chapter, indicated that children could adequately grasp the idea of wants, needs, and socially agreed necessities; and the successful use of similar questions in existing surveys of both adults and children.

The pilot was also designed to test the format of the questions. In Mack and Lansley's (1985) and Pantazis et al's (2006) development of the consensual poverty method, socially perceived necessities were identified by an omnibus survey asking whether items and activities were necessities, followed by a mainstage survey asking about ownership. Only those items deemed necessary by more than 50% of respondents in the omnibus survey were used to develop an index of material deprivation in the mainstage survey. Resource and time constraints on what could be included in the pilot and the mainstage Children's Society surveys meant that only one of these – asking whether items were necessities, or asking about ownership – could be done. Rather than look at perceptions of necessities, then, respondents were asked whether they (or their

child) had, lacked and wanted, or lacked and did not want each item. Prevalence of ownership and relationships to other poverty-related variables were used to validate items. Strong relationships would indicate that items are widely desired and owned, and therefore that they are likely to meet the criteria of socially perceived necessities. However, it is acknowledged that this difference from the consensual poverty methodology means that items, although very likely to meet the needs of a material deprivation index, should not be referred to as socially perceived necessities since the rigour involved in meeting this definition could not be achieved in this instance.

Scalability and validity of items

Scalability of items could be tested through the pilot. To develop a scientifically valid and practically useful index of child material deprivation, items should be demonstrably measuring a similar underlying construct – material deprivation. The pilot allowed for this to be tested prior to the inclusion of questions in the main surveys.

As has already been mentioned, the pilot allowed for a preliminary exploration of the links between deprivation items and other poverty measures. The sample design discussed below – including parent and child pairs – meant that data on household income could be collected, which would not normally be possible from a child-only sample, allowing for a more detailed exploration of links between children's reports of deprivation items and other poverty variables than would otherwise have been possible.

Exploring the validity of children's responses and of parental proxies

The capacity to compare children's and parents' responses was also useful in garnering information about the validity of data. This worked in two ways: children's ability to accurately report household characteristics such as adults in paid work could be checked, as could parents' ability to accurately report on children's possessions. The first of these served the needs of the mainstage Children's Society survey, within which in previous waves concerns had been raised about children's capacity to report on such matters. The second

addressed the wider practice in child poverty measurement of assuming that parents are adequate proxies for their children.

Reducing the number of items

Finally, the pilot served as a basis for narrowing the list down to a shorter set of items. This was useful in excluding those items that bore no relation to other poverty measures and so appear highly likely to be measuring a different underlying construct. It was further useful in determining a shorter list of questions, in line with space and resource constraints specific to the survey.

The pilot, then, served several important purposes in the development of survey questions.

4.3 Material deprivation questions

Whilst most information on methods has been covered in chapter two, details of the specific material deprivation questions used in the pilot study are presented here as these were unique to this survey. Twenty material deprivation items were tested in the pilot survey. The question phrasing was: “Here is a list of items that [some young people of your age have/some children the same age as yours have]²⁷. Please tell us whether [you have/your participating child has] each item on the list”. Possible responses included “[I have/Child has] this”; “[I don’t/Child doesn’t] have this but [I] would like it”; “[I don’t/Child does not] have this and [I don’t/does not] want or need it”; or “Don’t know”. The items (which are abbreviated for the remainder of the chapter, but listed in full here) included the following. Abbreviated forms used throughout the rest of the thesis are shown in brackets at the end of each item:

- Some pocket money each week to spend on [yourself/themselves] (pocket money)
- Some money that [you/they] can save each month, either in a bank or at home (saving money)
- A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans) (trainers)

²⁷ Square brackets indicate where different wording was used for adults versus child respondents.

- Treats and snacks like sweets, chocolate, chips or pizza once a week (treats)
- Being part of a club where [you/they] play sports or do a hobby like drama, art or music (club)
- An iPod or other personal music player (MP3)
- [Your/their] own mobile phone (mobile)
- A computer at home that is connected to the internet that [you/they] can use for school work and in [your/their] free time (computer and internet)
- A games console, like an Xbox, DS, PS3 or a Wii (games console)
- Cable or satellite TV at home (cable/satellite TV)
- A pet at home (pet)
- A garden at home, or somewhere nearby like a park where [you/they] can safely spend time with [your/their] friends (garden)
- A bedroom of [your/their] own (not shared) (bedroom)
- Presents on special occasions like birthdays and Christmas (presents)
- A family car for transport when [you/they] need it (car)
- Access to public transport when [you/they] need it (public transport)
- The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people [your/their] age (clothes)
- Books of [your/their] own [suitable to their age] at home (books)
- At least one family holiday away from home each year (holiday)
- Family trips or days out at least once a month (day trips)

4.4 Comparing children's and parents' responses

As noted above, one of the purposes of piloting was to compare responses from parents and children about objective and subjective facets of their material well-being. With regard objective measures, high levels of disagreement may indicate:

- The unsuitability of such questions for research with child respondents, in cases where children may have limited knowledge of some aspects of

their household's material situation (for example parental employment or income)

- The unsuitability of such questions for research with adult respondents, in cases where adults may have limited knowledge of some aspects of their children's material situation (for example if the child lives in multiple households and has resources which are not necessarily directly provided by the adult being asked)
- The value of asking both parents and children, to gain a fuller picture of household or child material resources.

With regard subjective measures, less agreement would be expected. Whilst there will be strong similarities between the objective situations of children and adults in the same household, these may well be interpreted differently by parents and children. Additionally, parents' greater power over how financial resources are used may influence how the same household material situation is interpreted by different members of that household. Disagreements here, then, may indicate that it is not appropriate to use parents as proxies for children (or vice-versa). However, examining data provided by both parents and children may provide interesting insight into how and why subjective experiences vary.

Adults in paid work

Children and parents provided responses to how many adults in their family were in paid work. Options included none, one, two, or three or more. In the vast majority of cases (302 out of the 303 pairs), parents and children both provided a valid response to this question. It should be noted that due to rounding error, figures in this table add up to 99% rather than 100%. Due to small numbers in the analysis, numbers in each cell are shown in brackets after percentages, and caution is indicated in interpretation. Agreement between parents and children was high – 93% of pairs provided the same response as each other. Table 4.1 shows the percentage of children and parents giving each response, and where agreements and disagreements occurred. There is no evidence of a systematic difference in responses to this question – in 3% of

cases parents claimed there were more adults in paid work than children did, and in 3% vice versa.

Table 4.1: Number of adults in paid work in the child's household

		Children (%)				Total
		None	One	Two	Three or more	
Parents (%)	None	14 (42)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	15 (44)
	One	0 (1)	29 (89)	2 (6)	0 (0)	32 (96)
	Two	0 (1)	2 (7)	47 (143)	0 (0)	50 (151)
	Three or more	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (1)	3 (8)	4 (11)
	Total	15 (44)	33 (100)	50 (150)	3 (8)	100 (302)

Free school meals

Similarly, both parents and children reported on whether children received free school meals. Again, levels of missing data were very low with 301 pairs both providing valid responses. Very high levels of agreement can be seen between parents and children, with almost 99% giving the same answer. Table 4.2 shows the percentage of parents and children giving each response. As above, numbers are shown in brackets after percentages. Again, no systematic direction for differences in responses can be seen.

Table 4.2: Whether the child receives free school meals

		Children (%)		
		Yes	No	Total
Parents (%)	Yes	19 (58)	1 (2)	20 (60)
	No	1 (2)	79 (239)	80 (241)
	Total	20 (60)	80 (241)	100 (301)

Subjective family situation

Parents and children were asked to evaluate how well-off they felt their family was compared to other similar families. All participants (303 pairs) provided valid responses to this question. Unsurprisingly, there were much higher levels of disagreement with regard to subjective perceptions of the family's situation, compared to the previous objective indicators. About 50% of respondent pairs evaluated their family similarly to each other, whilst the other half disagreed.

However, as table 4.3 shows, disagreements were rarely extreme. That is, it was rare to have a case where a child rated their family as very well off whilst the parent rated them as not very well off at all, or vice versa. Overall, a higher percentage of children reported their family's situation as better off than parents (29%) than vice versa, but this trend was not universal or particularly pronounced, with 22% of parents rating their family as better off than children did. As previously, numbers are shown in brackets after percentages.

Table 4.3: Subjective ratings of how well-off the family is

		Children (%)					Total
		Very well off/rich	Quite well-off/rich	About average	Not very well-off/rich	Not very well-off/rich at all	
Parents (%)	Very well off/rich	1 (3)	1 (2)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (7)
	Quite well-off/rich	1 (2)	7 (21)	6 (19)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14 (42)
	About average	0 (1)	13 (39)	27 (82)	9 (27)	0 (1)	50 (150)
	Not very well-off/rich	0 (0)	1 (3)	10 (29)	11 (33)	5 (15)	26 (80)
	Not very well-off/rich at all	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2)	3 (10)	4 (12)	8 (24)
	Total	2 (6)	21 (65)	44 (134)	23 (70)	9 (28)	100 (303)

Material deprivation

For the material deprivation items, parent-child pairs were again in fairly strong agreement about whether children had, lacked and wanted, or lacked and did not want the items and activities. For 15 of the items agreement levels were over 90%. For the remaining five items and activities, three of these - saving money, club membership, and clothes to fit in with friends had agreement levels of 85% or more. The remaining two items - trainers and family day trips - were over 80%. Percentages of parents and children giving each response are shown in table 4.4, and numbers are shown in brackets following each percentage. It should be noted that some cell sizes are very small. The final column shows differences between parents and children where children report that they do not have the item, and where parents and children disagree about whether children want or do not want the item. Whilst findings must be treated with some caution due to small numbers, it appears that there is no particular trend across the items for parents or children to be more likely

to report wanting the items or activities whilst the other group reports children not wanting them. However, it is clear that parents are either not always aware of whether children want or do not want items and activities they lack, or if they are aware do not accurately report this.

Table 4.4: Material deprivation items

	Parents				Children				Parent/child agreement	
	Has this (%)	Wants this (%)	Doesn't want this (%)	Total % (n)	Has this (%)	Wants this (%)	Doesn't want this (%)	Total % (n)	% agreeing (n)	Where there is disagreement, % (n) children saying they want the item or activity when parents say they don't want it
Pocket money	74	22	4	100 (303)	73	24	4	100 (302)	92 (278)	38 (3)
Saving money	66	28	6	100 (302)	66	30	4	100 (297)	85 (252)	60 (9)
Trainers	52	23	25	100 (303)	56	25	19	100 (300)	84 (252)	59 (19)
Treats and snacks	90	6	4	100 (303)	90	6	4	100 (301)	95 (286)	50 (3)
Club membership	61	18	20	100 (303)	63	19	18	100 (298)	88 (262)	58 (14)
MP3 player	75	17	8	100 (303)	78	17	6	100 (301)	92 (277)	50 (3)
Mobile phone	89	8	3	100 (303)	89	9	2	100 (302)	96 (290)	100 (5)
Computer and internet	97	3	0	100 (303)	98	2	0	100 (301)	99 (298)	N/A
Games console	89	5	6	100 (303)	90	6	4	100 (302)	96 (290)	80 (4)
Cable/ satellite TV	75	16	9	100 (302)	77	16	6	100 (299)	94 (281)	60 (6)
Pet	65	20	15	100 (301)	67	20	13	100 (301)	92 (277)	53 (8)
Garden or similar	94	4	1	100 (303)	94	4	2	100 (301)	97 (292)	25 (1)

Table 4.4: Material deprivation items (cont.)

	Parents				Children				Parent/child agreement	
	Has this (%)	Wants this (%)	Doesn't want this (%)	Total % (n)	Has this (%)	Wants this (%)	Doesn't want this (%)	Total % (n)	% agreeing (n)	Where there is disagreement, % (n) children saying they want the item or activity when parents say they don't want it
Public transport	87	7	6	100 (301)	86	6	8	100 (298)	91 (271)	22 (2)
Clothes to fit in with peers	87	11	2	100 (303)	82	15	3	100 (300)	86 (258)	29 (2)
Own books	94	2	4	100 (302)	93	1	5	100 (301)	95 (286)	0 (0)
Family holiday	67	29	4	100 (301)	70	27	3	100 (301)	93 (280)	50 (5)
Day trips	54	37	9	100 (299)	56	35	9	100 (294)	82 (241)	46 (6)

Discussion

This section has examined the relationship between responses to similar questions from parents and children. Given the prevalence of using parents as proxy respondents for children in surveys relating to children's material living conditions (for example the FRS and the PSE 1999 and 2000), these findings are of interest in shedding light on the reliability and validity of this method. The adult-child concordance data has been presented descriptively rather than statistically due to limited numbers and the non-representative sample, and because the degree of concordance is not the primary purpose of the investigation.

Fowler (2009) highlights many of the issues with using adults as proxies. These include that proxy respondents may not have full information about the person they are responding for, and that social desirability may mean their responses shed them, the proxy, in a more positive light than the actual respondent might. Whilst these issues have long been acknowledged in research concerned with adults, however, they are largely ignored in research concerning children, with parents frequently being used as proxies. This is of particular concern when survey questions include not only objective but also subjective elements. In relation to research on material well-being, the boundary between objective and subjective is to an extent clouded when questions include Mack and Lansley's (1985) category of 'don't have and don't want' – where parents are proxying for children, it is unclear whether this refers to parents' perceptions of children's wants, or to parents' preferences regarding what their children have irrespective of children's own preferences.

High levels of agreement were found for the two variables – number of adults in paid work, and whether the child receives free school meals – that are proxies primarily for household-level resources and poverty. These variables are also unique amongst those tested here in that there is no subjective element to the questions. This suggests that there is minimal need for concern about the accuracy of children's responses to these questions about their household situation, and that they are likely to provide accurate data when these variables

are used as proxies for living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits.

Regarding subjective perceptions of how well-off the family is, children and adults differed to a larger extent but answers were on the whole not wildly varying. That is, children who thought their family was very well off were highly unlikely to live with parents who thought their family was not very well-off at all, and vice versa. The similarity between responses suggests that there are overlaps in how children and parents interpret their material situation, but the differences indicate that perceptions are not identical. This leads to two conclusions – firstly, that parents cannot be assumed to be good proxies for the subjective feelings of children about their material situation; and secondly that there may be interesting ground to cover in future research in relation to how and why parents and children differ in their perceptions of how well-off their family is.

In terms of material deprivation items, levels of disagreement were not very high, but were much higher for some items than for the purely objective questions asked about adults in paid work and free school meals. Two reasons for this are proposed. Firstly, parents may not be aware of some possessions that children have – so for example it is possible that a child might have possessions in one household that their parent in another household is not aware of; or an older child in particular might access resources through non-parental gatekeepers, and so own things that their parents are not aware they own. Secondly, children and parents may understand their experiences, possessions, and the significance of these differently; so a parent and child might disagree on whether a child's clothing means that they fit in with friends, or they may disagree about whether a particular outing (for example a visit to extended family) constitutes a family day-trip or a holiday. Additionally, and still in relation to the material deprivation questions, there was for several items limited agreement between parents and children when an item or activity was lacked, about whether the child wanted or did not want it. This links to the above point about subjective feelings – parents cannot be assumed to be good proxies for children's subjective feelings about whether they want or don't want

items. As a result, in surveys where parents are asked this, responses must either be treated with a great deal of caution, or interpreted to mean whether *parents* want an item or activity *for their children*, rather than whether *children* want an item or activity *for themselves*.

To summarise, the implications of this for this thesis and future research are:

- Children's responses to questions about the number of adults in paid work in their household, and to whether they receive free school meals or not, can be assumed to be valid and therefore used as proxies for receipt of minimum income benefits. This is differentiated from income poverty since as Adams et al (2012) show, the majority of children in income poor households in the UK are not in workless households and would not qualify for free school meals. Whilst this is not as accurate or as detailed as income data, that children can provide reliable data for these items means that research can be conducted on children living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits with children themselves, even where the inclusion of parents is prohibited by ethical or practical considerations.
- Parents should not be used as proxies for children in questions relating to children's subjective feelings or perceptions. Parental answers should be interpreted either as parental perceptions of children's feelings, or as parental perspectives rather than as a proxy for the child's own perspectives.
- Children and parents may have different perspectives on similar family situations. This does not mean that either is less accurate or reliable, but that children and parents might interpret both survey questions, and their family situation, differently to one another. Further research exploring factors which influence differences and similarities in children's and parents' perceptions of their material well-being may yield interesting results.

For the remainder of this chapter, children's responses (rather than parents' responses) are used. This is in line with the child-centric and child-derived

aims of this thesis, and in line with the child-supplied data which was available from the Children's Society larger-scale surveys.

4.5 Validity of material deprivation items

A second purpose of the pilot survey noted above was to assess whether the 20 items and activities identified in the focus group phase of the research are valid indicators of child material deprivation. Fowler (2009) notes that the process of validating survey items – that is, ensuring that they measure what the researcher intends them to measure – is essential in constructing meaningful data. The items included in the pilot were to an extent validated through the focus group phase of this research – children indicated in the groups that the items and activities were both understandable to them and were felt to be useful as indicators of material deprivation. However, the pilot provided a further opportunity to validate items quantitatively. Drawing on Gordon and Nandy's (2012) recommendations for the construction of poverty measures²⁸, the validity of the 20 items was tested in two ways. Firstly, the items and activities were examined for the proportion of children owning, lacking and wanting, and lacking and not wanting them. Secondly, associations between the items and activities and other facets of poverty were examined.

Item functioning

Missing data

A basic consideration in how well survey items function is whether respondents can and will answer the question. Respondents may be unable to answer questions if they do not know the answer or if they do not understand the question, and they may be unwilling to answer the question if they feel it is too sensitive or inappropriate. High levels of missing data are therefore problematic because they may indicate that questions are not suitable. As noted in chapter two, they are also problematic because they may bias findings, and whilst multiple imputation offers a method for minimising this bias

²⁸ These recommendations are elaborated and drawn on in much more depth in the analysis of the large-scale Children's Society survey, detailed in chapter five.

(discussed in chapter two) it is not a replacement for careful question design with a view to maximising the number of non-missing responses.

Dong and Peng (2013) note the absence of an established cut-off point beyond which levels of missing data are deemed unacceptable. They highlight Schafer's (1999) position that estimates are not biased if less than 5% of data is missing, and Bennett's (2001) argument that more than 10% of missing data will result in biased estimates, but also point out Tabachnick and Fidell's (2012) point that the mechanism of missingness (ie. whether data is MCAR, MAR or MNAR) is important. For the material deprivation items, very low levels of missing data were found, ranging from 0%-3%. This would indicate no problems with the items in terms of respondents' willingness and capacity to provide responses.

Prevalence of ownership and desirability

The extent to which items function well as indicators of material deprivation will depend on the prevalence of ownership in the population. Given the relative conception of poverty which is drawn on in this thesis, it is unlikely that items and activities which are not owned by a majority of the population of interest (over 50%) will be good indicators of deprivation. Items and activities owned by fewer than 50% of the population may be *desirable* to children, but are unlikely to be *needs* in the sense that their lack will result in exclusion from social norms. Similarly, items which are almost universally owned will be unlikely to be good indicators if they will offer little or no insight into *variation between children* – to discriminate between the poor and the non-poor, there must be some proportion of children who lack the item or activity.

Moving on to desirability, it is important that those who lack the items and activities do so out of necessity rather than choice. This point will be discussed in more depth in subsequent chapters. To briefly summarise, it is important that the indicators selected measure *deprivation*, rather than preference. If the lack of an item or activity simply or predominantly represents a lack of *desire* to own the item or participate in the activity, it is unlikely to be a good indicator of material deprivation. Therefore, amongst those lacking items or activities it is valuable to look at the proportion reporting wanting the item or activity

compared to the proportion not wanting it. If a higher proportion of those children lacking an item or activity do not want it than want it, this may suggest the item is not a good indicator of material deprivation, or that its value as an indicator is only relevant to some sub-groups within the population. To give an example, something that is desirable to boys but not girls may be a good indicator of material deprivation for boys, but may be less valuable as an indicator for girls.

All items and activities were owned by over 50% of respondents, and owned or lacked but wanted by significantly more than this – over 80% of respondents either owned or lacked but wanted each item or activity. However, specific problems were identified with five of the items tested:

- **Having access to a computer and internet connection and receiving presents on special occasions** were owned by 98% of the sample. This may indicate that these items will offer little insight into material deprivation since only the very few children in the most extreme poverty will lack them, meaning that they will not do well at differentiating between poor and non-poor respondents.
- **Club membership, access to public transport, and having their own books** were all either lacked and not wanted by a higher proportion of children than lacked and wanted them, or had a fairly even split between those lacking and not wanting and those lacking and wanting them. These items may not be good indicators of material deprivation since there appears to be a significant portion of those who do not have the item or activity not wanting it.

The problematic items and activities are shown in table 4.5, along with percentages reporting having, lacking and wanting, and lacking and not wanting the item or activity. Numbers are shown in brackets after percentages, and it should be noted that some cell sizes are very small.

Table 4.5: Problematic items

	Has this % (n)	Wants this % (n)	Doesn't want this % (n)	Total % (n)
Club membership	63 (187)	19 (56)	18 (55)	100 (302)
Computer and internet	98 (294)	2 (7)	0 (0)	100 (301)
Presents on special occasions	98 (297)	1 (3)	1 (2)	100 (302)
Public transport	86 (255)	6 (19)	8 (24)	100 (298)
Own books	93 (281)	1 (4)	5 (16)	100 (301)

Construct validity

An important issue in developing the new measure was assessing how far the individual items, and the scale as a whole (addressed in subsequent sections), measure the intended construct. Testing this may be problematic: as Streiner and Norman (2008) note, the point of developing a new measure is often that no similar measure exists. This is the case in relation to child-derived measures of child material deprivation.

Investigating associations

One method for testing construct validity in this situation is to check for associations with other variables which could logically be assumed to be related to the construct of interest. Items were therefore next tested for associations with related constructs – indicators that the child was likely to be living in an income-poor (measured through the proxies of being in the lowest equivalised income quintile; receiving free school meals; and having no adults in paid work), and subjective poverty (feeling that the family was either ‘not very well off/rich’, or ‘not very well-off/rich at all’). Logistic regression was used to examine these relationships – the odds of lacking an item were explored according to whether respondents were poor on the related construct. That is, it would be expected that as income decreases, the odds of lacking items and activities increases. Perfect relationships between material deprivation, objective poverty, and subjective poverty would not be expected or desirable since different facets of poverty are being measured; but some association would be expected and would lend credibility to the use of the items and activities identified as indicators of material deprivation.

The interpretation of adaptive preferences

Items and activities were coded so that deprivation was indicated if children lacked an item or activity. An issue in examining these relationships involves how to treat 'don't have and don't want' responses. Briefly the concern is around whether it should be assumed that children exhibit adaptive preferences – ie. they adjust their expectations of what they would like to reflect the reality of their situation and avoid constant disappointment – or not. A more detailed definition of the issue, and consideration of how to treat data, is presented in the next chapter. However, since it would be more beneficial to make a judgement about this based on a larger sample, two sets of tests are conducted and reported here – one assuming that children exhibit adaptive preferences (therefore treating both 'don't have and want' and 'don't have and don't want' responses as a deprivation), and one assuming no adaptive preferences (treating 'don't have and don't want' as non-deprived, and only 'don't have and want' as deprived).

Associations with objective poverty measures

Table 4.6 shows the results of bivariate logistic regressions examining the associations between the objective poverty measures and the deprivation items²⁹. Items are flagged (shown in the last column of the table) if they have no significant association with any measure of objective poverty. For six of the items and activities – pocket money, saving money, club membership, access to a family car, a family holiday, and day trips – significant associations were found with all objective poverty variables, whether or not adaptive preferences were assumed. For most of the remaining items one or more significant associations existed. However, four items were flagged as potentially problematic based on these tests. Having a games console, cable/satellite TV, a pet, and presents on special occasions were not found to be significantly associated with any of the objective poverty measures.

²⁹ See chapter two for an explanation of these models and details of how odds ratios are interpreted.

Table 4.6: Associations between lacking deprivation items/activities and objective poverty measures

Item/activity		Odds of being in bottom income quintile	Odds of receiving free school meals	Odds of having no adults in paid work	No significant association with objective poverty flag
Pocket money	Not adaptive	5.6**	2.3*	3.2*	n
	Adaptive	3.4**	2.3*	3.4*	
Saving money	Not adaptive	3.5**	2.7*	2.6*	n
	Adaptive	3.9**	3.0**	2.9*	
Trainers	Not adaptive	1.9*	1.7 NS	1.5 NS	n
	Adaptive	2.3*	1.8*	2.2*	
Treats and snacks	Not adaptive	2.5 NS	6.6**	3.9*	n
	Adaptive	1.6 NS	3.6*	2.5 NS	
Club membership	Not adaptive	2.3*	3.7**	4.5**	n
	Adaptive	3.2**	3.1**	5.8**	
MP3 player	Not adaptive	2.6*	1.8 NS	1.7 NS	n
	Adaptive	3.1*	2.1*	2.6*	
Mobile phone	Not adaptive	0.7 NS	3.4*	0.6 NS	n
	Adaptive	0.8 NS	4.0**	1.2 NS	
Computer and internet	Not adaptive	4.1 NS	10.8*	7.4 NS	n
	Adaptive	4.1 NS	9.2*	7.4 NS	
Games console	Not adaptive	1.0 NS	0.9 NS	0.4 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.1 NS	0.9 NS	0.2 NS	
Cable/ satellite TV	Not adaptive	1.6 NS	1.8 NS	1.2 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.9 NS	1.8 NS	1.4 NS	
Pet	Not adaptive	0.5 NS	1.0 NS	0.9 NS	Y
	Adaptive	0.8 NS	1.0 NS	1.5 NS	
Garden or similar	Not adaptive	2.1 NS	5.3*	6.6*	n
	Adaptive	3.1*	5.9**	8.5*	
Own bedroom	Not adaptive	1.6 NS	1.6 NS	2.4*	n
	Adaptive	1.8 NS	1.6 NS	2.6*	
Presents on special occasions	Not adaptive	2.0 NS	8.2 NS	3.6 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.0 NS	2.7 NS	1.8 NS	
Access to car	Not adaptive	3.3*	8.5**	15.4**	n
	Adaptive	4.1**	7.8**	14.9**	
Public transport	Not adaptive	1.8 NS	4.1*	3.3 NS	n
	Adaptive	2.1*	2.9*	2.2 NS	
Clothes to fit in	Not adaptive	2.5*	1.4 NS	2.4 NS	n
	Adaptive	1.9 NS	1.4 NS	2.4*	
Own books	Not adaptive	4.0 NS	4.1 NS	1.0 NS	n
	Adaptive	2.9*	3.7*	3.1*	
Family holiday	Not adaptive	2.1*	4.4**	6.9**	n
	Adaptive	2.7*	5.1**	7.7**	
Day trips	Not adaptive	3.2*	4.3**	3.2*	n
	Adaptive	4.2**	3.4**	3.6*	

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association. In the final column n indicates no flag and Y indicates flag.

Associations with subjective poverty measures

Next, associations with subjective poverty were explored, again using bivariate logistic regressions. For the purposes of this research – to establish a measure of child material deprivation that captures children’s own conceptions of poverty – this association is possibly more important than an association with objective poverty since objective poverty measures tend to be based on adult-derived understandings of poverty. Since only one question addressed subjective poverty, items and activities were flagged if they were not significantly associated with this. The limitations of this are acknowledged. Children were asked to rate how well-off they felt their *family* was, and it may be that children differentiate between their own, individual position and their family’s position in their perceptions of poverty. However, as the only available measure it is of value in ascertaining whether children experience the lack of items and activities as identified to be associated with the perception that their family is less well off.

Five items and activities were identified as problematic based on having no association with children’s perceptions that their family was less well-off than average. These included having a mobile phone, having a games console, having a pet, getting presents on special occasions, and having their own books.

Associations are shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Associations between lacking deprivation items/activities and subjective poverty measures

Item/activity		Odds of subjective family poverty	No significant association with subjective poverty flag
Pocket money	Not adaptive	3.0**	n
	Adaptive	3.0**	
Saving money	Not adaptive	4.1**	n
	Adaptive	4.4**	
Trainers	Not adaptive	2.8**	n
	Adaptive	2.6**	
Treats and snacks	Not adaptive	4.2*	n
	Adaptive	2.3*	
Club membership	Not adaptive	2.7*	n
	Adaptive	2.1*	
MP3 player	Not adaptive	3.0**	n
	Adaptive	2.6*	
Mobile phone	Not adaptive	1.7 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.7 NS	
Computer and internet	Not adaptive	13.2*	n
	Adaptive	13.2*	
Games console	Not adaptive	1.9 NS	Y
	Adaptive	2.1 NS	
Cable/ satellite TV	Not adaptive	1.9*	n
	Adaptive	1.9*	
Pet	Not adaptive	0.9 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.1 NS	
Garden or similar	Not adaptive	3.5*	n
	Adaptive	2.8*	
Own bedroom	Not adaptive	1.9*	n
	Adaptive	2.0*	
Presents on special occasions	Not adaptive	4.2 NS	Y
	Adaptive	1.4 NS	
Access to car	Not adaptive	4.7**	n
	Adaptive	4.2**	
Public transport	Not adaptive	4.0*	n
	Adaptive	1.7 NS	
Clothes to fit in	Not adaptive	5.2**	n
	Adaptive	4.8**	
Own books	Not adaptive	6.4 NS	Y
	Adaptive	2.2 NS	
Family holiday	Not adaptive	4.1**	n
	Adaptive	4.4**	
Day trips	Not adaptive	5.0**	n
	Adaptive	7.2**	

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association. In the final column n indicates no flag and Y indicates flag.

Discussion

This section has addressed the question of whether the 20 items identified in the focus groups are good indicators of material deprivation, and which of them should be carried forward to be used in developing a scale. Whilst this analysis indicates that for most items we can be fairly confident in their capacity to act as indicators for childhood material deprivation, several items were flagged as potentially problematic. Reasons for these problems include either that the items do not function well as an indicator of material deprivation, or that there is some question over the construct validity of the item as an indicator of material deprivation. Items where at least one potential problem was identified are shown in table 4.8. Whilst it may be inappropriate to assume items are inadequate on the basis of one problem, those where there are more than one issue are excluded from further analysis on the basis that they are probably not good indicators of material deprivation. These include: having a games console; having a pet; receiving presents on special occasions; and having their own books. Club membership, having a mobile phone, having a computer and internet connection, having cable/satellite TV, and having access to public transport are retained in the subsequent analysis.

Table 4.8: Items and activities where issues have been identified

	Item functioning	Construct validity: objective poverty	Construct validity: subjective poverty
Club membership	X		
Mobile phone			X
Computer and internet	X		
Games console		X	X
Cable/ satellite TV		X	
Pet		X	X
Presents on special occasions	X	X	X
Public transport	X		
Own books	X		X

4.6 Developing a scale

The main purpose of developing a list of indicators was to create a scale to assess the prevalence and depth of material deprivation experienced by children. However, due to space constraints in the Children's Society surveys only ten items could be carried forward from the pilot. Efforts were therefore made to find ten items which functioned well individually, and which formed a reliable scale.

Criteria for scale acceptability

In constructing the scale, three criteria were adopted:

- Initially, any items which did not have satisfactory construct validity were dropped.
- Remaining items were retained if they were significantly inter-correlated with the other items.
- Items were then removed one-by-one based on their contribution to the scale, assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (α) – initially non-contributing items were dropped, and then items were dropped based on making the least contribution to the scale until ten items remained.

The scales produced (as above, no assumption is made as yet about adaptive preferences) were then tested for validity through similar methods to those used above – that is, associations with subjective and objective poverty measures.

Internal reliability

As prescribed by the three steps detailed above, all the items other than the four identified as problematic in table 4.8 were included. A correlation matrix of the remaining 16 items indicated that all should be considered for inclusion. α was then used to determine which ten items to retain. The purpose of α is to test internal reliability – that is, through examining inter-item correlations, the procedure assesses how far a set of questions all contribute to the measurement of the same underlying construct. Generally, a high α (which usually varies

between zero and one) indicates a better scale, although with the acknowledgement that scales with larger numbers of items tend to produce higher α because the number of items in the scale is part of the calculation (Field, 2005). Additionally, an overly high α might mean there is redundancy in the scale – that is, that multiple questions are measuring almost identical aspects of the overall construct. Whilst guidance varies and, Field (2005) argues, different levels may be acceptable in different contexts, in general scales with an α over 0.7 are usually considered to be acceptable.

The resulting scales are presented in table 4.9. Whether adaptive preferences were assumed or not, the same list of ten items emerged. The α using non-adaptive items was slightly higher than when adaptive preferences were assumed, but both scales are well above the 0.7 recommended level. The scale with non-adaptive preferences scored an α of 0.78, and with adaptive preferences the α was 0.74.

Table 4.9: Details of Cronbach’s Alpha for the final items to include

Item	No adaptive preferences assumed		Adaptive preferences assumed	
	α if dropped	Item-rest correlation	α if dropped	Item-rest correlation
Pocket money	0.74	0.55	0.71	0.49
Saving money	0.74	0.56	0.70	0.52
Trainers	0.77	0.37	0.72	0.38
MP3 player	0.75	0.49	0.72	0.41
Cable/satellite TV	0.77	0.34	0.73	0.34
Garden or similar	0.77	0.29	0.74	0.24
Access to car	0.76	0.43	0.73	0.34
Clothes to fit in	0.76	0.45	0.72	0.37
Family holiday	0.75	0.49	0.71	0.46
Monthly daytrips	0.76	0.46	0.71	0.42

Construct validity

Scale distributions

Next, the scales were constructed by summing the number of items respondents were deprived of. Table 4.10 shows the distributions of respondents on each of these scales. As would be expected, a reasonable proportion of children lack none of the deprivation items (ie. are not at all deprived and score 0 on the scales), and very few children lack most of all of the items (ie. score ten on the

scales). On the whole, the proportion of children at each point on the scale decreases as the level of deprivation increases. That is, most children are not at all or are only minimally deprived, and as deprivation scores increase the proportion of children decreases. This is promising, since measures of poverty and deprivation are intended to capture the tail of a distribution, and the distribution of scores on the deprivation scales reflects this.

Table 4.10: Distributions of children on the deprivation scales

N items lacked	Non-adaptive scale (%)	Adaptive scale (%)
0	33	21
1	22	20
2	13	15
3	13	15
4	5	8
5	4	6
6	4	8
7	3	3
8	2	2
9	1	1
10	1	1

Associations with other facets of poverty

As noted above, an important aspect of developing a measure is ensuring that the intended construct is indeed being measured. Individual items were tested above for associations with related constructs. It is also important that the scale as a whole is validated in this manner. To retain large enough numbers to conduct analyses, the scales were used to form groups of children experiencing differing levels of material deprivation. Children were loosely categorised as not deprived if they lacked none or one items (ie. scored zero or one on the deprivation scale); deprived if they lacked two to four items; and severely deprived if they lacked five or more items. Bivariate logistic regressions were then performed to investigate whether there was a significant relationship between deprivation and the odds of children being in the lowest income quintile; having no adults in paid work; receiving free school meals; and rating their family as worse off than average (ie. each regression was performed separately, rather than one regression controlling for all of these variables). Validity of the scales was tested through not only whether significant

associations existed, but also whether the strength of associations increased as the level of deprivation increased (ie. for example those who were classed as ‘severely deprived’ should be more likely to be in the lowest income quintile than those classed as ‘deprived’). For all variables on both scales, these criteria were met. Respondents who were more deprived were significantly more likely to experience other facets of poverty, and the odds of experiencing other facets of poverty increased as the extent of deprivation increased. Results are shown in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Odds of experiencing other domains of poverty according to deprivation status

		Odds of being in the bottom income quintile	Odds of having no adults in paid work	Odds of receiving free school meals	Odds of subjective poverty
Non-adaptive preferences assumed	Not deprived	1	1	1	1
	Deprived	2.6*	4.1**	3.2**	3.8**
	Severely deprived	7.4**	7.7**	5.5**	12.8**
Adaptive preferences assumed	Not deprived	1	1	1	1
	Deprived	2.6*	7.4**	2.3*	4.5**
	Severely deprived	10.5**	23.4**	7.2**	18.5**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level.

Discussion

The purpose of this section has been to assess which items should be preferred in the development of a scale of child material deprivation, and whether an adequate scale can be formed using these items. For logistical reasons, it was only possible to carry ten items forward to the main stage surveys. Therefore, an important function of the pilot was to identify which items perform the best, individually and in a scale, as indicators of material deprivation.

The same list of ten items was selected whether adaptive preferences were assumed or not. These are (in the full form, ie. as they were taken forward and included in the main stage surveys):

- Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself

- Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home
- A pair of designed or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans)
- An iPod or other personal music player
- Cable or satellite TV at home
- A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends
- A family car for transport when you need it
- The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age
- At least one holiday away from home each year with your family
- Trips or days out with your family at least once a month

This list includes some items which tally with adult perceptions of children's needs, and some which are likely to be very challenging to adults' perceptions (this is explored further in chapter six). The meaning and functioning of these items, individually and as a scale, will be discussed more in the next chapter. However, the pilot data confirms the suitability of these items as individual indicators and as items forming a scale of child material deprivation. In summary:

- A reasonable proportion of children lacked no or few items, which would be expected since a concern with relative deprivation is inherently a concern with the tail of a distribution.
- As the number of items lacked increases, the number of children steadily decreases. Again, this fits with the shape of data that would be expected in a measure of deprivation.
- Using the scale as a whole, significant associations were found with objective and subjective measures of child poverty.
- These associations increased in magnitude as the level of deprivation increased, which again lends credibility to the scale as a valid way of capturing the construct of interest.

The next chapter details the items and the scale as a whole as they appeared in the large-scale Children's Society surveys. Similar but more detailed analysis is performed on the individual items and on the scale as a whole, using a larger

sample which is more representative of the population of interest (as detailed in chapters one and two).

Chapter 5

Individual deprivation items and the deprivation scale

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed examination of the individual items included in the Children's Society 2010-11 Survey, and the deprivation scale formed by these. The previous chapter detailed the use of a small-scale pilot in selecting indicators of material deprivation which could be used to form a reliable scale. The purpose of this chapter is to assess the validity of the individual items, ascertain how best to develop a scale based on the items, and assess the validity of the scale which they form. This is achieved through examining responses to deprivation items themselves, and associations between these and other demographic and poverty-related variables. Whilst some of this analysis is similar to that presented in the previous chapter, it is conducted using larger, broadly representative samples which lend increased weight to findings. Additionally, larger numbers of respondents, and more and different questions, enable a more detailed examination of the items and the scale. Firstly individual items will be discussed, followed by an examination of the scale as a whole. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about the viability of the scale as a measure of childhood material deprivation. The methods involved in conducting the surveys and analysing the data are discussed in chapter two.

5.2 Individual items

Frequencies

Firstly, the proportions of children having, lacking and wanting, and lacking and not wanting each item or activity were examined. As detailed in the previous chapter, items and activities to be included in the main survey were selected on the basis that a majority owned them, and amongst those not owning them, more wanted than did not want them. However, given that this survey was larger-scale and based on a more thoroughly stratified sample (making it closer

to representative of school children aged 11-16 in England), a re-examination of this was undertaken.

Table 5.1 shows the basic proportions in each category for the items and activities. This analysis is based on imputed data as discussed in chapter two – for all variables, the total number of respondents is 4,315. Proportions owning the items and activities vary between 63-93%. Whilst these are all acceptable in that the majority of children have the items, the proportion having pocket money - 63% - and trainers – 69% - could be seen as rather low. This suggests that it may not be reasonable to see children lacking these items as relatively deprived by this lack, as many of their peers will be in a similar position. Additionally, and in contrast to pilot findings, more children ‘lacked and did not want’ trainers than ‘lacked and wanted’ them. This suggests that the item may not be a very good discriminator between deprived and non-deprived children, since its lack may be more associated with preferences than with deprivation. Going back to focus group discussions, some possible explanations for the issues with these two items are now posited.

Trainers

Some disagreement was found between researchers and children over the meaning of the phrase “designer or brand name trainers”. As demonstrated by the wording of the question in the survey (exact wording is shown in table 5.1; abbreviated wording is used thereafter, shown in brackets), researchers had intended ‘designer or brand name’ to indicate branded but not necessarily the most expensive trainers. As illustrated by the subsequent quote, children, on the other hand, may have interpreted ‘designer or brand name’ as meaning more high-end trainers, whilst popular brand names may have been interpreted as ‘just trainers’:

“When you say designer do you mean Adidas and Nike?”

“I don’t really call that designer, it’s just trainers...”

“Well, I would never buy not designer trainers”

12-13 year olds.

This suggests that some children responding to the survey question may have understood the wording ‘designer or brand name’ differently to how it was intended. Cognitive testing of this item, through discussions with children about how they interpret the wording and what kinds of wording might work better, and through testing different wording in surveys, is therefore indicated in advance of its inclusion in future surveys. An alternative explanation for the issues with this item, however, may be that whilst trainers are important to the children who want them, they are not important to those who do not want them: cultural differences between different sub-groups of children may mean that brand name trainers, whilst desirable to a majority of children, are not important to some sub-groups of children (for example those who choose to wear other kinds of footwear). This will be explored more below, and if this is the case, the decision as to whether to include trainers in future indices should relate to the purpose of the research – whilst they are relevant to a majority of children (80%), a significant minority do not see them as desirable.

Pocket money

In light of the finding that 16% of respondents indicated they neither had nor wanted pocket money, focus group data was re-examined in relation to this item. As with trainers above, whilst the majority (85%) of children had or wanted pocket money, that 16% of children did not want it bears further examination. Although the majority of children in focus groups indicated a desire for some money of their own, some disagreed that this was necessary because they could ask for (and be given) items more or less as they requested, rather than being given the money to go out and get these items for themselves:

"I don't get pocket money"

"Do you just ask for it whenever you want?"

"Yeah"

12-13 year olds

As above, this may suggest that whilst pocket money is valuable to most children, there are some who are satisfied that parents will provide what children ask for. Whilst the 85% majority who have or want pocket money suggests the item is adequate, cognitive testing through qualitative explorations of the meaning of the item to children and further survey piloting is indicated to ensure that it is providing data on the underlying construct (material deprivation) that was intended, before its inclusion in future research.

Table 5.1: Proportions having, lacking and wanting, and lacking and not wanting each item/activity (n=4,315)

Item	Have (%)	Lack - want (%)	Lack - don't want (%)
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself (pocket money)	63	21	16
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home (saving money)	73	18	8
A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans) (trainers)	69	11	20
An iPod or other personal music player (MP3 player)	80	14	7
Cable/satellite TV at home (cable/satellite)	93	4	3
A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends (garden)	89	8	3
A family car for transport when you need it (car)	91	6	2
The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age (clothes)	91	6	3
At least one holiday away from home each year with your family (holiday)	81	15	4
Trips or days out with your family at least once a month (day trips)	75	18	7

Adaptive preferences

As noted in the previous chapter, analysing the individual deprivation items and creating a scale based on them requires a decision to be made about how to treat the different response categories. It is fairly uncontroversial to treat those who have the item or activity as not deprived of that specific item or activity³⁰. Similarly, those who lack and want items or activities can be reasonably assumed to be deprived of those items or activities³¹. However, how to treat those who lack and do not want items and activities is somewhat more complicated. Whilst early research by Townsend (1979) into consensual poverty based judgements simply on having or lacking items or activities, the work of Mack and Lansley (1985) challenged this. They argued that it is unreasonable to treat people who do not want items or activities as deprived of those items or activities (for example in the case of a vegetarian by choice lacking meat or fish to eat). They therefore recommended separating those lacking items into two categories – those who lack and want them, and those who lack and do not want them. Despite this, Mack and Lansley acknowledged that this new categorisation does not allow for differentiation between people who say that they do not want an item or activity because this is their genuine preference, and people who say they do not want an item or activity because a lifetime lack of it has resulted in them being unaware of the benefits of having it, and therefore ill-placed to make such a judgement. Hallerod (2006) explored this issue further, using the phrase ‘adaptive preferences’. To complicate matters still further, not only might people not have the full knowledge needed to make a judgement about whether they want an item or activity they lack, but also people whose resources preclude ownership of items or activities may

³⁰ Although even this is somewhat simplistic, given that the quality of items and activities may vary wildly between two children who both have the item or activity. However, an exploration of this is not possible within the limitations of this thesis.

³¹ In surveys using adult responses such as the HBAI and the PSE 1999 and 2000, people are only treated as materially deprived if they lack an item or activity *as a result of being unable to afford it*. However, this was not treated as a necessary condition in this analysis. The reasons for this are firstly that children may not know whether parents can afford the item or activity or not; and secondly that children, given their lack of direct access to substantial financial resources, could reasonably be seen as materially deprived due to the lack of an item or activity which they want, whether or not *their parents* can afford it.

avoid the pain and/or shame of lacking them by claiming that they do not want them.

The issue boils down to a dilemma as to whether to risk under-counting the poor by treating everyone who lacks does not want an item or activity as if they are not deprived (therefore assuming adaptive preferences do not exist); or to risk over-counting the poor by treating those who lack and do not want an item as deprived (assuming that adaptive preferences exist for all people and all items/activities). The former approach is followed in UK official poverty statistics such as Adams et al's HBAI reports, whilst Goodin (1985) offers an important discussion of the flaws of this approach. The process of deciding how to address this dilemma is now outlined.

Testing for adaptive preferences

Rather than base judgements on theory alone, the individual items were explored to see whether an obvious choice for how to treat 'don't have and don't want' responses presented itself. Whilst no formalised method for assessing the presence of adaptive preferences exists, two methods are used here.

Firstly, associations between different response categories and overall subjective well-being might offer some insight into the issue. Those having items and activities could be expected to have higher subjective well-being than those lacking and wanting them. Where insight may be gained into adaptive preferences is by examining the subjective well-being of those lacking and not wanting them. If children in this category score as highly as those having the item, it can be assumed that they genuinely do not want it since the lack of it is not causing them lower subjective well-being, and therefore it can be assumed that adaptive preferences are not in play. On the other hand, if their subjective well-being is significantly lower than those who have the item or activity, this might suggest that they are either not aware of the benefits of having it, or are protecting themselves from the knowledge that having it would enhance their well-being.

Secondly, given that parents and other adults may protect children from the worst impacts of income poverty but are unable to create material resources from nothing, relationships between different response categories and income poverty may offer some insight. Amongst those who lack the items, if those in income poverty are more likely to say that they do not want the item, this may represent those children adapting their preferences to a deprived life situation. If there is no difference between those in income poverty and those not in income poverty, this offers little insight into whether children show adaptive preferences in their responses or not.

It should be noted here and in the next section that excluding those who have the item or activity from analysis seriously reduces sample size. Sample sizes for analysis with this group range between 1,585 (those lacking pocket money) and 296 (those lacking cable/satellite). This may limit the reliability and generalisability of findings. However, for fairly simple analysis based on a small number of variables, the reliability of analyses is not so severely compromised as to render findings completely unhelpful. This analysis is also useful because such an analysis was not possible with the smaller sample used for the pilot study, detailed in the previous chapter.

Associations with subjective well-being

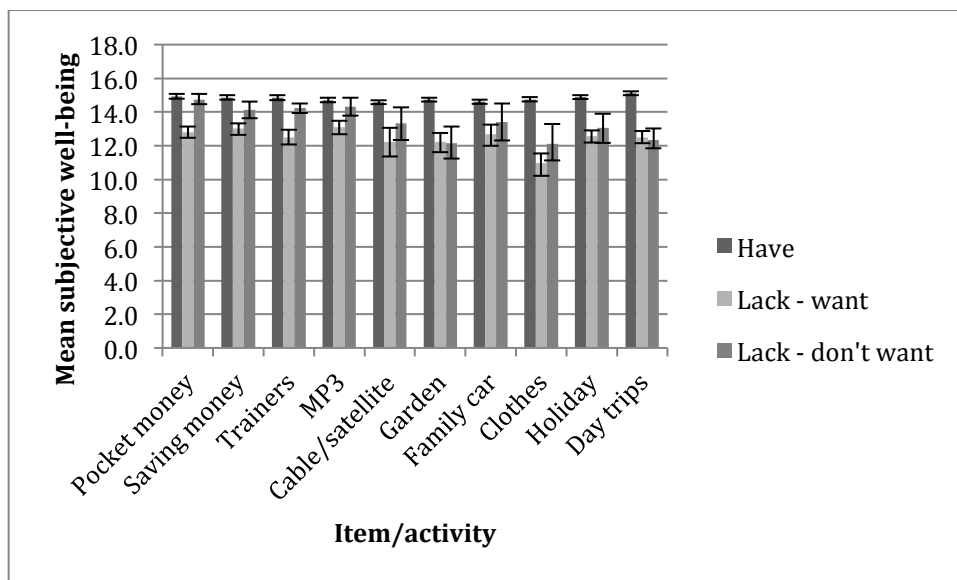
Chart 5.1 shows differences in subjective well-being according to whether children have, lack and want, or lack and do not want each item and activity. Subjective well-being was measured using a reduced version of Huebner's Student Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS) (see Huebner, 1991), a well-established tool for measuring subjective well-being. The reduced version is based on work undertaken by Rees et al (2010), which found that two of the seven items could be dropped without impacting the reliability of the scale, and with the advantage of reducing levels of missing data³². The remaining five items ask children to rate their agreement with statements about their lives³³ on a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Responses are summed to

³² A more detailed discussion of the SLSS is presented in chapter 7.

³³ The statements are: my life is going well; my life is just right; I wish I had a different kind of life; I have a good life; I have what I want in life.

form a 0-20 scale of overall subjective well-being. In this analysis, no clear picture emerges. For most items and activities, those lacking and not wanting them fall somewhere between those having and those lacking and wanting them in terms of their subjective well-being. For two items – garden and day trips – the well-being of those not wanting them is as low as or lower than that of those lacking and wanting them. For one item – pocket money – those lacking and not wanting it are almost as happy as those who have it.

Chart 5.1: Mean subjective well-being according to responses to items and activities (n=4,315)



Amongst those lacking the items and activities, bivariate linear regressions with subjective well-being as the outcome variable and lacking and not wanting the item as the predictor variable was used to test whether these differences were statistically significant³⁴. For five of the items – pocket money, saving money, trainers, MP3 player, and clothes – significant differences were found, with those lacking and not wanting the items scoring somewhat higher (ie. having higher subjective well-being) than those lacking and wanting the items. Those lacking but not wanting pocket money scored on average two points more on the SLSS than those lacking and wanting it. Other differences were: 1.1 points for saving money, 1.7 points for trainers, 1.2 points for MP3, and 1.3 points for

³⁴ Details of linear regression and the interpretation of beta (b) values can be found in chapter 2.

clothes. However, as can be seen from chart 5.1, other than in the case of pocket money children choosing this response still have lower subjective well-being than those who have the item or activity. Results for items where a statistically significant difference was found are shown in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Differences in subjective well-being between those who lack and want, and those who lack and do not want, items and activities (n=4,315)

Item/activity	b	Sig
Pocket money	2.0	**
Saving money	1.1	**
Trainers	1.7	**
MP3	1.2	**
Clothes	1.3	*

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level. b refers to the unstandardised beta coefficient in linear or tobit regression.

Associations with household qualification for minimum income benefits

Next, bivariate logistic regressions were used to examine associations between living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and wanting/not wanting items and activities, amongst those who lacked the items/activities. Since income was not measured in the surveys, a direct indicator of income poverty was unavailable. Therefore, a proxy for household qualification for minimum income benefits (a subset of those in income poverty, likely to be experiencing severe levels of income poverty) was created based on children either living with no adults in paid work, or receiving free school meals (both of which are strongly related, theoretically and in practice, to living in a household that is in poverty – see Adams et al, 2012). About 15% of respondents were deemed to be in households which would qualify for minimum income benefits by this proxy.

Significant differences were found between those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and those in other households for three items or activities – pocket money, saving money, and trainers. However, contrary to the idea of adaptive preferences, in each of these cases, children in households

qualifying for minimum income benefits were more likely to lack and want the item or activity than children not in such households. Children in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits who lacked pocket money were 0.6 times as likely as those not in such households to not want it; those who lacked saving money were 0.5 times as likely as those not in such households to not want it; and those who lacked trainers were 0.5 times as likely as those not in such households to not want it. For pocket money, this difference may be a result of the issue discussed above – children in more well-off households may be more likely to have parents who will supply money or goods as the child requests, reducing the need for pocket money. However, similar explanations do not exist for the findings in relation to saving money or trainers. Results for items and activities where a statistically significant difference was found are listed in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities compared to those who lack and want them (n=4,315)

Item/activity	Odds ratio	Sig
Pocket money	0.6	*
Saving money	0.5	**
Trainers	0.5	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level.

Findings in relation to adaptive preferences

The above analysis reveals a mixed picture regarding the presence or otherwise of adaptive preferences. In terms of subjective well-being, exactly half of the items showed some indication of adaptive preferences, with those lacking and not wanting the items appearing to do no better in terms of subjective well-being than those lacking and wanting them. However, when the proxy for children living in households qualifying for minimum income benefits was used results indicated that rather than making children more likely to say they did not want items and activities, the experience of living in such a household was associated with children who lacked them being more likely to want them. On balance, the decision was taken in this thesis to treat those lacking and not wanting items and activities as if they were not deprived – that is, to assume no

adaptive preferences. Whilst the above analysis shows that this is not a clear-cut or uncontroversial decision, the risk to credibility of over-counting children as poor based on experiences of material deprivation outweighed the benefits that may have come from assuming adaptive preferences.

Universality

An important consideration in developing a measure of material deprivation based on consensual conceptions of poverty is how far individual items and the scales they are used to form are universal in applicability within the population of interest³⁵. That is to say, as far as possible items and activities should be equally desirable to the population of interest irrespective of demographic characteristics. This links to the discussion in chapter three concerning games consoles – a balance has to be struck between ensuring that the needs of all groups are represented in a material deprivation measure, whilst ensuring that items are applicable to as wide a range of the population of interest as possible. Whilst overall frequencies can demonstrate whether the majority of children have items, and amongst those who lack them whether the majority want them, this overall picture may conceal variations between sub-groups which render some items or activities less suitable than others. So for example if amongst children from a particular ethnic group an item or activity is simply not desirable, this may be obscured by its level of desirability in the majority population, but would hamper its effectiveness as a universally (amongst the population of interest) applicable indicator of material deprivation.

To test the suitability of items and activities in terms of their universality, logistic regression was used to compare the odds of lacking and wanting compared to lacking and not wanting each item. Associations with gender, age group, family type, ethnic group, disability status, and learning difficulty status were investigated. Finally, logistic regressions controlling for all these characteristics were used to test whether any associations were spurious when other variables were controlled for. Table 5.4 shows the results of bivariate

³⁵As discussed in chapter one, it is in the nature of relative measures of poverty and material deprivation that they will not transfer well across different cultural and/or national settings.

logistic regressions, showing items and activities where there was a significant relationship between the demographic variable and the odds of lacking and not wanting items or activities (results of multivariate models are shown in table 5.5). Because regressions compared those who lacked and wanted to those who lacked and did not want each item and activity (ie. those having the item or activity were excluded), numbers vary between regression models and the number analysis is based on is shown in the final column of the table. To summarise:

- **Girls were more likely than boys** to not want trainers or cable/satellite.
- **Older children** were more likely than younger children to lack and not want pocket money, trainers and day trips.
- **Those in lone parent families** were less likely to lack and not want trainers.
- **Black children** were less likely to lack and not want pocket money, saving money and trainers.
- **Disabled children** were less likely to lack and not want pocket money and trainers, and more likely to lack and not want a holiday.
- **Children with learning difficulties** were less likely to lack and not want pocket money and trainers.

Table 5.4: Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities, compared to those who lack and want them, by demographic characteristics

Gender (male as reference)					n
	Female	Sig			
Trainers	2.0	**			1,338
Cable/satellite	1.8	*			296
Year group (year 6 as reference)					
	Year 8	Sig	Year 10	Sig	
Pocket money	1.7	**	1.5	**	1,585
Trainers	1.5	**	1.4	*	1,338
Day trips	1.5	*	1.6	*	
Family structure (two parents as reference)					
	Lone parent	Sig	Step or other	Sig	
Trainers	0.6	**	0.6	*	1,338
Ethnicity (white as reference)					
	Black	Sig	Other	Sig	
Pocket money	0.5	*	1.0	NS	1,585
Saving money	0.5	*	1.0	NS	1,136
Trainers	0.4	*	0.7	NS	1,338
Disability (not disabled as reference)					
	Disabled	Sig			
Pocket money	0.6	*			1,585
Trainers	0.5	*			1,338
Holiday	2.6	**			
Learning difficulties (no learning difficulties as reference)					
	Learning difficulties	Sig			
Pocket money	0.7	*			1,585
Trainers	0.6	**			1,338

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

As noted above, logistic regressions with multiple independent variables were then performed to establish whether significant associations with demographic variables remained once all demographic variables were controlled for. Table 5.5 shows the items and activities for which there are significant associations with demographic variables when other demographics are controlled for. To summarise results:

- For **pocket money**, older children were more likely to lack and not want it whilst black children were less likely to lack and not want it.

- For **saving money**, black children were less likely to lack and not want it.
- For **trainers**, girls and older children were more likely to lack and not want them; children in lone parent or other family types, and black children, were less likely to lack and not want them.
- For **cable/satellite**, girls were more likely to lack and not want it.
- For a **holiday**, disabled children were more likely to lack and not want it.
- For **day trips**, older children were more likely to lack and not want them.

Table 5.5: Odds of lacking and not wanting items and activities compared to lacking and wanting, controlling for demographics

	N	Pocket money	Sig	Saving money	Sig	Trainers	Sig	Cable/satellite	Sig	Holiday	Sig	Day trips	Sig
Sex (male as ref)	1,585	1.1	NS	1,136	NS	1,338	NS	296	*	809	NS	1067	NS
Year Groups (6 as ref)	8	1.7	**	1.3	NS	1.4	*	1.0	NS	0.9	NS	1.5	*
	10	1.5	**	0.9	NS	1.4	*	1.0	NS	0.8	NS	1.6	*
Family type (both parents as ref)	Lone parent	0.9	NS	0.9	NS	0.7	*	1.3	NS	1.2	NS	0.9	NS
	Step/other	0.7	NS	0.9	NS	0.7	*	1.4	NS	0.7	NS	0.7	NS
Ethnicity (white as ref)	Black	0.5	*	0.5	*	0.4	*	1.5	NS	0.8	NS	1.6	NS
	Other	1.0	NS	1.0	NS	0.7	NS	1.8	NS	0.9	NS	1.0	NS
Disability (not as ref)	0.8	NS	NS	0.9	NS	0.8	NS	0.5	NS	2.5	*	1.0	NS
Learning difficulties (not as ref)	0.7	NS	NS	0.9	NS	0.8	NS	1.5	NS	1.0	NS	1.0	NS

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

Based on this analysis, given the number of items tested and considering the possibility of type I errors³⁶, there are relatively few items and activities where significant differences exist between different demographic groups. Trainers and pocket money stand out again, in this instance for being the only items and activities for which there are statistically significant associations with more than one demographic variable when various demographic characteristics are controlled for. Trainers stand out as the only item which is significantly associated with four demographic characteristics – gender, age, family type and ethnicity. Amongst the different demographic characteristics, being older and being black stand out as those with statistically significant associations with the most items and activities. On the whole, it appears that the items where there are associations are more likely to be lacked and not wanted among older children, and are less likely to be lacked and not wanted by black children. This second association may tie in with the finding above that children living in households which qualify for minimum income benefits are often more likely to lack and want items and activities – as detailed in chapter one, black children are disproportionately likely to be growing up in income poor households. It is also interesting that children with disabilities are more likely to lack and not want holidays – this may be associated with the accessibility difficulties faced by children and their families in this position.

As stated above, given the likelihood of at least some false positives in this analysis, results are on the whole promising regarding the universality of the items and activities selected. However, in terms of developments to the scale, possibly pocket money and definitely trainers are again highlighted as items which could benefit from refinement or replacement in future research.

³⁶ These errors occur when the null hypothesis is rejected when it should be accepted – that is, in this case, an association between a material deprivation indicator and a demographic variable is found when in reality none exists. When (as in this thesis) the significance level is set at the standard 0.05 (Field, 2009), the chances of getting a type I error are one in 20. Therefore, when 20 tests are performed it is likely that at least one will produce a type I error (Field, 2005).

Validation of the material deprivation questions

The next stage in the analysis again partially replicates analysis undertaken in the pilot chapter, but drawing on the larger sample available in the main survey. The purpose was to check the validity of the items and activities as measures of material deprivation, based on associations with other poverty-related variables. Here, the items are tested for associations with living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty. Living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits is measured using the proxies detailed above. Children were classed as living in such a household *either* if they received free school meals, *or* if they had no adults in their household in paid work, *or* if both these conditions were met. Subjective poverty is measured by asking children to rate on a zero to ten scale, with zero being very unhappy and ten being very happy, “How happy are you with the things you have (like money or the things you own)?”. Children were classed as subjectively poor if they scored below the mid-point of this scale (that is, scoring lower than five). About 6% of children were subjectively poor by this measure.

Both living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty were statistically significantly associated with the odds of lacking each of the ten items and activities. Results of bivariate logistic regressions are shown in table 5.6. Associations tended to be somewhat stronger for subjective poverty, with the exception of having a car which was more strongly associated with living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. Lacking trainers, cable/satellite and clothes were particularly strongly associated with subjective poverty compared to living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, suggesting that perhaps these items are more strongly associated with children’s subjective experiences of poverty than with what adults would conceive of as poverty. This is further support for the core assumption underpinning this thesis: that children and adults conceive of and experience poverty in related but somewhat different ways.

Table 5.6: Odds of lacking items and activities by living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and by subjective poverty (n=4,315)

	Minimum income benefits		Subjective poverty	
	Odds ratio	Sig	Odds ratio	Sig
Pocket money	1.3	*	4.3	**
Saving money	1.7	**	4.1	**
Trainers	1.8	**	5.1	**
MP3	2.1	**	3.7	**
Cable/satellite	1.7	*	5.8	**
Garden	1.8	**	4.2	**
Family car	5.4	**	3.4	**
Clothes	2.5	**	7.9	**
Holiday	2.3	**	4.1	**
Day trips	1.6	**	4.4	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level.

Summary

In this section the individual material deprivation items selected for inclusion in the Children's Society 2010-11 Survey have been further examined. Overall, whilst some items (notably trainers, and possibly pocket money) could benefit from further development or potentially replacement, the items constitute adequate indicators of material deprivation. The next section examines the process of developing a scale based on these indicators.

5.3 The child-derived material deprivation scale

Whilst individual deprivation indicators may be of interest, and may generate a great deal of debate between children themselves and in terms of comparative perspectives of adults and children regarding which items and activities should be included, the primary purpose of developing a set of indicators was to create a scale which could be used to assess the presence and depth of material deprivation amongst children, as understood by children themselves. Since no list of material deprivation items and activities is likely to incorporate every single item or activity that is necessary to avoid poverty, deprivation items must

be seen as indicators and are more powerful when combined into a scale than when used individually. Scales should therefore be treated as a measure of a latent variable – material deprivation – rather than as a direct observation of the variable³⁷.

Methods used to create the scale

Selecting items for the scale

As with developing the individual indicators, the processes involved in developing a scale based on these are complex and rely on theoretical and statistical judgements. Firstly, and as has already been undertaken to a large extent in this and the previous chapter, decisions must be made around which items and activities to include. It may be that a sub-set of items form a better measure than including all items. Gordon and Nandy (2012) propose several steps to take in determining which items to include. The first three, detailed below, have already been undertaken:

- **Creating a ‘politically’ valid deprivation index** – items and activities should be seen as necessities by more than 50% of the population of interest. Whilst it was not possible to ascertain the proportion of children viewing items and activities as necessities, findings from the focus groups, in combination with the fact that the majority of items are owned by a large majority of the sample, would lend credibility to the political validity of this index. A major concern, however, is that the population of interest in this index is children, rather than adults. It should be noted that what is a politically valid deprivation index according to children and based on children’s own perceptions of needs is not necessarily the same thing as a politically valid index according to adults’ perceptions of what children need. The above point regarding trainers, cable/satellite and clothes illustrates this issue – these items appear on the whole to be valid indicators of deprivation as gauged by

³⁷ It should however be noted that ‘latent variable’ here is used as a conceptual term – ie. it is understood conceptually that material deprivation is an underlying variable which is being estimated, rather than fully captured, by the selected indicators. The term is not intended to imply that statistical analysis capable of identifying latent variables has been performed, although this would be a valuable future direction for this research.

children's perceptions of child deprivation, but would probably challenge adults' perceptions of child deprivation. This is discussed in more depth in chapter six.

- **Creating a preference-free deprivation index** – the lack of items and activities should only be treated as deprivation if people do not choose to go without them. This is linked to debate around adaptive preferences, detailed above. Whilst it is possible that people say they lack and do not want items or activities because they have adapted their preferences to their situation rather than because they genuinely do not want the items or activities, treating only those who lack and want items or activities as deprived avoids the potential criticism raised by Piachaud (1981) that people might live in squalor out of preference rather than necessity. However, Gordon's suggestion which is used in most research with adults, to ask if items or activities are lacked because they cannot be afforded, is not possible in this case. As noted above, firstly, children may not know whether their parents can afford items or activities, or otherwise. Secondly, even if parents can afford items or activities but decide not to get them for their child, this does not mean that the child does not experience the deprivation as sharply as if their parents could not afford it. Indeed, if the child is aware of this situation they may feel doubly deprived at their parents' decision to withhold something out of choice rather than necessity. Therefore, whether the child wants the item or activity or not, rather than whether the item or activity can be afforded or not, is the preferred question in this research.
- **Creating a 'scientifically' valid deprivation index** – each item in the index should be demonstrated to be a valid measure of deprivation. In this thesis, that objective has been pursued by investigating associations with measures of other facets of poverty. Items where such associations exist and are strong are likely to be good measures. Items which lack such associations or only have weak associations require further exploration or discarding. However, it should be stressed again that perfect associations are neither likely nor desirable – these would

suggest the new measure is simply replicating existing measures, and therefore render it irrelevant.

The remaining two steps of Gordon and Nandy's model include:

- **Creating a reliable index of deprivation** – statistical tests should be used to demonstrate the items form a reliable scale. Here, Cronbach's Alpha was used³⁸. All items should contribute to the α , and the α should be above a minimal acceptable threshold. Across imputed datasets, an average α of 0.73 was achieved. All items contribute to this, and the α would diminish if any items were removed. This falls within the commonly recommended threshold of scores of over 0.7 representing a reliable scale (see Field, 2005 for further details).
- **Checking for additivity** – the above steps should produce a valid and reliable deprivation index, but a final check should be performed to ensure that the index is additive – that is, that higher scores on the index are associated with higher levels of deprivation. This can often be tested by ensuring that increased levels of deprivation are associated, for example, with progressively lower levels of income. However, income cannot be used in this case for two reasons – firstly, pragmatically, income data was not collected; and secondly, theoretically, the purpose of this index is to create a child-derived measure which is likely to be related to but may not replicate exactly adult-derived measures. This step was not possible in this instance for two reasons. Firstly, no suitable data for comparison was collected; and secondly this index is conceptually different to similar adult-derived indices and therefore may not necessarily be expected to have similar relationships to variables such as income. The identification of a suitable correlate of child material deprivation and its use to test the index would be an interesting subject for future research.

³⁸ More sophisticated analysis of this using Item Response Theory is possible, and would be a valuable development to this work.

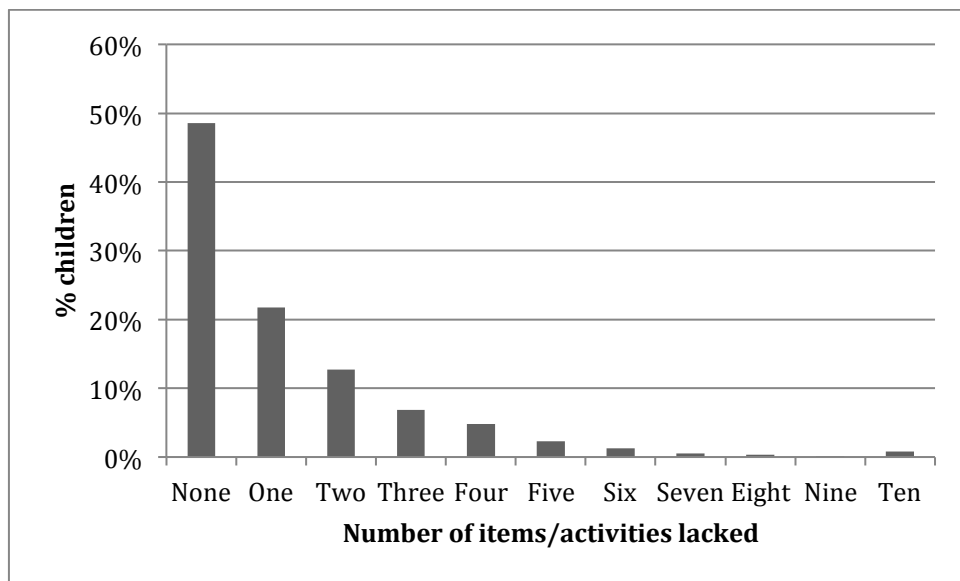
Combining items to form a scale

Secondly, decisions must be made around how to combine the items to form a scale. Two options are: to present a simple count of items lacked (ie. items are given equal weight), or to use *prevalence weighting*. Prevalence weighting involves according different items different weights based on the proportion of the population owning the item, to reflect the idea that the lack of items or activities which are more universally owned is likely to have a greater impact than the lack of items or activities which more people go without. Saunders and Naidoo (2009) provide more details about prevalence weighting, and Willits (2006) provides an example of a prevalence weighted index. Prevalence weighting has the advantage of appearing more logical – it makes intuitive sense to assume that items which are more universal are more important. However, it has the disadvantage of complicating interpretation – it is not possible to examine the effects of simply lacking a certain number of items, or to set thresholds based on a number of items lacked, which moves analysis further from popular meaningfulness and from the concrete data. Additionally, Hallerod, Bradshaw and Holmes (1997) demonstrated that different kinds of prevalence weighting produce very similar indices, and that these indices are very similar to unweighted indices, suggesting that prevalence weighting is unnecessary. There is also an issue of scientific validity in weighting – whilst some items may be lacked by a smaller proportion of the population, this is not necessarily linked to the impact of lacking that item compared to others, and weights may be difficult to justify however intuitively right they may seem. According to Guio et al (2012), “the square root of the Cronbach’s Alpha statistic can be considered to be the correlation between the index and the ‘perfect’ index made from the answers to the [theoretical] infinite set of deprivation questions”. Based on the Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.73 reported above, this results in a very high correlation of 0.85. Again drawing on Guio et al’s work, this would suggest that prevalence weighting would add little if any additional information. The decision was therefore taken to create an index based on a simple sum of items lacked – that is, to give each item or activity an equal weight.

Properties of the scale

Chart 5.2 shows scores on the deprivation scale. Scores range from zero (lacking none of the items) to ten (lacking all of the items). The shape of the distribution is as would be expected for a measure of deprivation – the largest proportion of children are not deprived at all, and proportions decrease as levels of deprivation increase, tailing off towards lacking seven or more items.

Chart 5.2: Distribution of the deprivation scale (n=4,315)

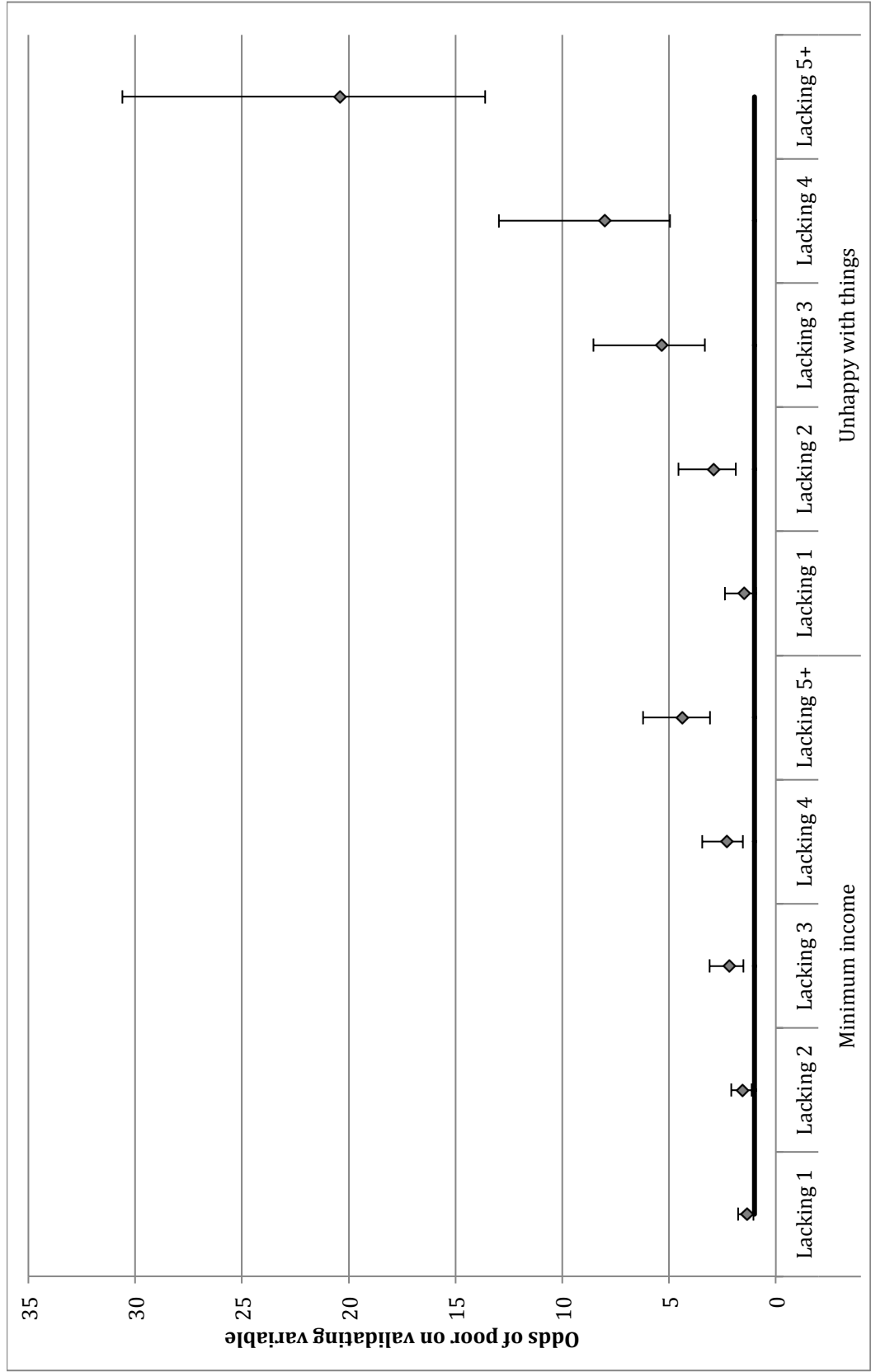


A next step was to decide on thresholds for the scale – that is, to choose points at which various levels of deprivation will be identified. Such decisions tend to be to an extent arbitrary, but associations with related variables can be used as a method for establishing a justifiable threshold. In this analysis, associations between lacking various numbers of items (one, two, three, four and five or more), living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and being unhappy with money and possessions were tested.

Chart 5.3 shows the results of logistic regressions examining the odds of being in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and the odds of being unhappy with their money and possessions, for children at each of these points on the scale. The relationship, as would be expected given the child-derived nature of the measure, is much stronger for unhappiness with money

and possessions than it is for low income. For both validating variables, the confidence interval around odds of being poor when only one item is lacked crosses or almost crosses the one line – that is, the association is not or is only barely statistically significant. However, the association is statistically significant for both variables at lacking two or more items or activities. For both validating variables, the associations increase in strength as the depth of deprivation increases, with those lacking five or more items being substantially more likely to be poor on validating variables than those lacking fewer than this.

Chart 5.3: Odds of living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and of being unhappy with money and possessions, at various points on the deprivation scale (n=4,315)



Based on the above findings, the decision was made to set the threshold for deprivation at lacking two or more items, since this is where associations with the validating variables become statistically significant. This results in about 30% of children being classed as deprived. However, it is important to acknowledge that associations increase as levels of deprivation increase, and children who lack more items may differ from those lacking fewer. Therefore, four groups of children are proposed for consideration in subsequent analyses using the scale, based on a combination of an examination of the above results, and the need to maintain sufficient numbers in deprivation groups to allow for statistical analysis. The proposed thresholds are:

- **Lacking none or one items** – not deprived (70%)
- **Lacking two items** – deprived (13%)
- **Lacking three or four items** – very deprived (12%)
- **Lacking five or more items** – severely deprived (5%)

Testing the scale

Regression analyses were next performed to examine whether the scale as a whole behaves as would be expected. These explore the impact of demographic and poverty-related variables on the total deprivation scale scores, on the odds of being deprived (lacking two or more items or activities), and on the odds of being severely deprived (lacking five or more items or activities). Given the inherently censored distribution of deprivation measures, which are by their nature concerned with the tail of a distribution, tobit regression³⁹ is used to estimate the impacts of demographics and poverty-related variables on deprivation scale scores. . Logistic regression is used to explore the odds of being deprived and severely deprived.

Table 5.7 shows the results of the tobit regression exploring the impact on scores on the deprivation scale. The second column shows just demographic variables. All demographic variables with the exception of gender are significantly associated with deprivation scores. Older children are

³⁹ Details of tobit models and their interpretation can be found in chapter two.

progressively less deprived than younger children, whilst children from lone parent families or other family types are on average slightly more deprived than those from two parent families. Children from black or other ethnic minority groups are on average somewhat more deprived than those whose ethnicity is white. Children with disabilities, and those with learning difficulties, are on average somewhat more deprived than those without. In all cases where there is a significant association, this is in line with what would be expected based on what is known about poverty risks. That is, older children are less likely to be living in poor households, whilst children from ethnic minorities, those in non-traditional family types, and those with disabilities or learning difficulties are more likely to be in poor households. The observed associations are therefore to be expected, and serve to validate the index in that the latent variable being measured, whilst different in some important ways to adult-derived notions of material deprivation, has similarities to adult-derived notions.

When only poverty-related variables are included, in the third column of table 5.7, both living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty are significantly associated with higher levels of deprivation. By far the stronger association is with subjective poverty; children who are subjectively poor lack on average just over three more items than those who are not. When demographics and poverty-related variables are entered together (in the fourth column) as would be expected, the impacts of poverty somewhat mediate the strength of the associations between demographic variables and deprivation. The failure of poverty-related measures to completely mediate the impact of demographic variables is partially explained by the rather crude nature of the measures relating to income available in the data – that is, the proxy for living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits.

Finally, the fifth column shows results when interaction terms are included. A wide range of interactions were explored given the interconnected nature of many of the demographic and poverty-related variables. Likelihood ratio tests were used to determine whether the inclusion of interaction terms improved the fit of the model, and interaction terms were dropped if they were both

statistically non-significant and if they did not improve model fit. When these terms are included, findings are that:

- All main effects remain significant other than **disability**, which becomes non-significant.
- Children who are living in a **lone parent family** and who are **subjectively poor** are not as severely impacted as might have been expected – those in lone parent families are on average 0.3 points more deprived, and those who are subjectively poor are on average 2.9 points more deprived, whilst those experiencing both are 2.2 points more deprived (based on summing the losses resulting from living in a lone parent family and being subjectively poor, then adding the interaction term).
- Children who are **disabled** and **subjectively poor** fare particularly badly – disabled children are not significantly poorer than their non-disabled counterparts when interactions are included, but those who are disabled and subjectively poor lose 2.9 points based on subjective poverty, and an additional 2.1 points based on the combination of subjective poverty and disability. The result is that they are on average a substantial five points more deprived than non-disabled and non-subjectively poor peers.

Table 5.7: Tobit regressions for deprivation based on demographics and poverty variables (n=4,315)

		Just demographic variables		Just poverty variables		Demographics and poverty		All and interactions	
		b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig
Sex (ref: male)		-0.1	NS			-0.2	NS	-0.2	NS
Year group (ref: year 6)	8	-0.7	**			-0.6	**	-0.6	**
	10	-0.5	**			-0.5	**	-0.5	**
Family type (ref: two parents)	Lone parent	0.5	**			0.3	*	0.3	*
	Step/other	0.5	**			0.3	NS	0.3	*
Ethnicity (ref: white)	Black	1.3	**			1.0	**	1.0	**
	Other	0.8	**			0.6	**	0.6	**
Disabled		1.3	**			0.8	*	0.3	NS
Learning difficulties		0.9	**			0.7	**	0.6	**
Minimum income benefits				1.1	**	0.7	**	0.8	**
Subjective poverty				3.1	**	2.8	**	2.9	**
Interaction terms									
Lone parent+subjective poverty								-1.1	*
Step or other +subjective poverty								-0.4	NS
Disabled+subjective poverty								2.1	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level. b refers to the unstandardised beta coefficient in linear or tobit regression.

Table 5.8 shows the results of multivariate logistic regressions exploring the impact of the same range of variables on the odds of being deprived. As above, the model in the second column where just demographic variables are included shows all but gender to have a significant relationship to the odds of being deprived. Older children are less likely to be deprived, whilst other groups are all more likely to. In the third column, where just poverty-related variables are included, both are significantly associated with being deprived but whilst those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are almost twice as likely to be deprived, those in subjective poverty are over five times more likely to be deprived. Column four shows that when demographics and poverty variables are entered, older children remain less likely to be deprived than younger children; children from ethnic minorities are more likely to be deprived than white children; those living in lone parent families are more likely to be deprived than those living with both parents; and those with

disabilities are more likely to be deprived than those without disabilities. The associations with step or other family types, though, become non-significant when poverty-related variables are controlled for. In the final model, shown in column five, interactions between gender and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and between family type and subjective poverty, are included. In this model, gender becomes significant with girls being slightly less likely than boys to be deprived. However, girls living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are significantly more likely to be deprived. Children in lone parent families are significantly more likely to be deprived, but somewhat confusingly (and similarly to the above tobit regression) this reduces if the child is also subjectively poor.

Table 5.8: Odds of being deprived by demographic and poverty-related variables (n=4,315)

	Just demographic variables		Just poverty variables		Demographics and poverty		All and interactions	
	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds ratio	Sig
Sex (ref: male)	1.0	NS			0.9	NS	0.8	*
Year group (ref: year 6)	8	**			0.6	**	0.6	**
	10	**			0.7	**	0.7	**
Family type (ref: two parents)	Lone parent	**			1.2	*	1.3	*
	Step or other	**			1.2	NS	1.2	NS
Ethnicity (ref: white)	Black	**			1.8	**	1.8	**
	Other	**			1.3	*	1.3	*
Disability	1.5	**			1.2	NS	1.2	NS
Learning difficulty	1.5	**			1.4	*	1.4	*
Minimum income benefits					1.5	**	1.2	NS
Subjective poverty					5.5	**	6.9	**
Interaction terms								
Female+income poverty							1.7	*
Lone parent+subjective poverty							0.4	*
Step or other+subjective poverty							0.8	NS

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

Finally, table 5.9 shows the logistic odds (based on multivariate logistic regressions) of children experiencing severe deprivation based on the same demographic and poverty-related variables. Here, column one shows that year group is no longer significant. Children living in lone parent or step or other family types are more likely to be severely deprived, as are children from ethnic minority groups and those with disabilities or learning difficulties. Column two shows a similar but more pronounced pattern to that in the previous logistic regressions – those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are almost three times more likely to be severely deprived, and those in subjective poverty are more than nine times as likely. Column four shows that, as above, when poverty and demographics are controlled for living in a step or other family type is no longer significantly associated with deprivation. Other variables that were significantly associated in previous columns retain significant but slightly less strong associations. The fifth column shows interaction terms which behave similarly to those in the previous table. When the interaction between gender and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits is controlled for, the main effect for gender is that girls are somewhat less likely to be deprived, whilst girls in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are quite a bit more likely to be deprived. Interestingly, the main effect of living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits is lost, with living in such a household only impacting the odds of deprivation in combination with gender. Children living in lone parent families are more likely to be deprived, but those in lone parent families who are subjectively poor experience this effect less strongly.

Table 5.9: Odds of being severely deprived by demographic and poverty-related variables (n=4,315)

	Just demographic variables		Just poverty variables		Demographics and poverty		All and interactions	
	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig
Sex (ref: male)	0.9	NS			0.8	NS	0.6	*
Year group (ref: year 6)	0.8	NS			0.8	NS	0.7	NS
10	0.8	NS			0.8	NS	0.8	NS
Family type (ref: two parents)	2.0	**			1.5	*	1.9	**
Step or other	2.0	**			1.5	NS	1.6	NS
Ethnicity (ref: white)	3.9	**			3.1	**	2.9	**
Other	2.4	**			2.0	**	2.0	**
Disabled	2.8	**			1.9	*	1.9	*
Learning difficulty	2.1	**			1.7	*	0.4	*
Minimum income benefits			2.9	**	2.1	**	1.3	NS
Subjective poverty			9.3	**	7.3	**	11.1	**
Interaction terms								
Female+income poverty							2.6	*
Lone parent+subjective poverty							0.3	**
Step or other+subjective poverty							0.7	NS

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

Distinguishing poor children from poor families

In addition to the central aim of creating a measure of child poverty which incorporates children's own views of their needs, two of the purposes of developing a new, child-derived index of child material deprivation were:

- To develop a method for differentiating between the poverty status of a child, and the status of the family in which the child lives, and
- To develop a scale that allows for adult conceptions of child poverty and deprivation to be compared with child conceptions of the same issues.

Therefore, a final test for the efficacy of the scale was to look at whether the measure is able to help differentiate between the four theoretical groups of children identified in the literature review (non-poor children in non-poor households; poor children in non-poor households; non-poor children in poor households; and poor children in poor households). This can then be compared to similar analysis of the deprivation scale used in the HBAI (as discussed in chapter one) to gain an approximation of how far adult- and child-derived scales of material deprivation differ and are similar in their relationship to household poverty⁴⁰. Results are shown in table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Differentiating between the poverty status of children and adults⁴¹ (n=4,315)

Poverty status	Children's Society data (%)	HBAI data (%)
Neither income poor (HBAI)/minimum income benefits (Children's Society) nor deprived	62	65
Deprived but not income poor/minimum income benefits	23	17
Income poor/minimum income benefits but not deprived	8	9
Income poor/minimum income benefits and deprived	6	8

⁴⁰ This would only be an approximation as the methodologies within the two surveys and their analysis differs substantially – see chapter one for details of the HBAI methodology for arriving at low income and child material deprivation thresholds.

⁴¹ Different indicators of low income are used here – the HBAI data reflects those in households with an equivalised income below 60% of the median; the Children's Society data reflects those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. The HBAI measure is therefore likely to capture many more children as income poor than the Children's Society data does.

As would be expected, the majority of children in both surveys (68% in the Children's Society survey and 73% in the HBAI) have a deprivation status which reflects the income poverty status of their household – that is, they are both in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and deprived, or neither living in such a household nor deprived. But the existence of 32% (Children's Society) or 26% (HBAI) of children whose minimum income and deprivation statuses are in contrast suggests that income-based conceptions of poverty such as income poverty alone cannot capture the full picture of child poverty. Whilst it must be remembered that the proxies for minimum income (either no adults in paid work or receiving free school meals) will not identify all income poor children, the proportions would indicate support for the existence of all four categories of children, and the similarities in proportions in the categories between the Children's Society data and the HBAI data may lend credibility to this proxy for very low income. Evidence supports Ridge's (2002) finding that many income poor parents protect their children from the material impacts of poverty, but also that some non-income-poor parents cannot or do not protect their children from the experience of material deprivation. This lends support to the value of investigating this further. The similarities between the child- and adult-derived measures are also interesting – whilst there is some overlap in items and activities, there are also items which adults would be very unlikely to class as necessities in the children's index, and items in the adult-derived index which children in focus groups were not enthusiastic about as necessities from their perspective. However, fairly similar ballpark figures in each group emerge. This again supports the value of investigating how a child-derived index compares, in content, performance and public acceptability, to existing adult-derived indices.

5.4 Discussion

This chapter has detailed analysis of the individual items and the deprivation scale they form in the main Children's Society survey. Gordon and Nandy's (2012) steps for establishing a politically valid, scientifically valid, and preference-free index were followed as far as possible to ensure that individual items and the deprivation scale represent good measures of child material

deprivation. Results are promising – items and the scale meet the required criteria. However, there is of course room for improvement, with two individual items – pocket money and trainers – standing out as potential aspects of the measure that could benefit from change or development.

Examination of the deprivation scale in relation to demographic and poverty-related variables reveals that the child-derived measure of material deprivation is similar but not identical to adult-derived measures of child poverty. Similar groups who are at higher risk of being in poverty – younger children, children in lone parent families, children from ethnic minorities, and children with disabilities or learning difficulties – are at a higher risk of poverty as it is traditionally measured (based on income) (details of these and many other groups at increased risk of poverty are provided (amongst others) in Bradshaw, 2011). These groups are also at a higher risk of material deprivation as measured by the child-derived index. However, children’s subjective poverty is much more strongly related to being deprived by the child-derived index than it is to living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. This validates the use of the index as a related but separate measure of child poverty, with the potential to capture children’s own conceptions of poverty better than adult-derived measures of child poverty can. This point is additionally supported by the finding that the index, in combination with indicators of living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, can be used to identify the poverty status of children independently from that of their families.

Section 3

Using the scale

Chapter 6

Indicators and dimensions of child poverty: comparing children's and adults' perspectives

6.1 Introduction

So far, the focus of this thesis has been on the development of a child-derived measure of child material deprivation, and (for the most part) has drawn on children as respondents. However, another subject of interest is how far children's perceptions of child poverty and responses to survey questions overlap with those of adults. This chapter compares children's and adults' perceptions of individual children's necessities. It then goes on to examine overlaps between different dimensions of child poverty. This is done using various child- and adult-derived indices of material deprivation, and comparing findings when children are respondents to those based on adults as respondents. Finally, risk factors for the different dimensions of poverty are compared, based on data from child- and adult respondents. Four main issues are addressed. These include:

- Similarities and differences between adults and children in their perceptions of what children need to avoid material deprivation. This is examined through looking at children's and adults' responses to different child-related individual items.
- How far overlaps between different dimensions of child poverty – material deprivation, household qualification for minimum income benefits, and subjective poverty – vary depending on whether the material deprivation measure is *child- or adult-derived*. That is, whether the index used is based on children's or adults' conceptions of children's material needs.
- How far overlaps between these dimensions vary depending on whether the data is *child- or adult-reported*. That is, whether overlaps differ based on whether children or adults answer questions relating to the three dimensions of child poverty.

- How the demographic composition of those poor on each domain varies, and how these variations compare when child-reported data is compared to adult-reported data. That is, whether risk factors for experiencing poverty on the different dimensions are similar or different when different respondents are used.

6.2 Background

Poverty as a multidimensional issue

The primary purpose of this thesis was to develop a measure of child poverty derived from children themselves, and the judgement was made that within the selected conception of poverty, the most appropriate method for doing so was to draw on material deprivation. However, it is widely acknowledged that poverty is a multidimensional issue (as identified by Roelen and Gassmann (2008) in their literature review on the measurement of child poverty and well-being), and the study of one domain or dimension alone will not provide a full picture. Whilst Nolan and Whelan (2007) point out that evidence of poverty as a multidimensional *issue* does not on its own imply the need for a multidimensional *measure*, studies of poverty and, within the UK, official poverty measures (see Adams et al, 2013) do increasingly attempt to accommodate a degree of multidimensionality.

Issues and findings in multidimensional poverty measurement

As noted in chapter one, conceptions of poverty range from the narrow to the broad. Similarly, multidimensional measures of poverty range from the narrow which tend to draw on various measures of material resources (for example Berthoud et al, 2004), to the broad (for example Tomlinson et al, 2007) which draw on a much wider range of dimensions and may include dimensions considered by some to be measures of well-being or social exclusion, rather than of poverty per se. However, as Nolan and Whelan (2010) note, a common finding irrespective of the breadth of conception is that there are surprisingly low levels of overlap between different dimensions. Two approaches noted by Atkinson (2003) are the union approach, which classes as poor those poor on

any dimension; and the intersection approach, which classes as poor only those poor on all dimensions. As Alkire and Foster (2011) highlight, the first of these risks over-counting the poor, and often results in unfeasibly large proportions of populations in poverty; the second risks under-counting, and often results in the converse. However, the method of examining overlaps between different dimensions does offer insight into how far different measures of poverty capture similar or the same groups of the population, and can be used to compare overlaps amongst and between different groups (for example de Neubourg et al (2012) examine overlaps in different dimensions to compare how far the extent of overlaps are similar between countries). Examining the composition of the poor on different domains may also add valuable insight into whether the domains are measuring a similar underlying construct (and therefore capturing similar types of people, albeit that these might be different individuals), or different constructs (and therefore capturing different types of people).

Three dimensions of child poverty

Drawing on research by Bradshaw and Finch (2003) which examined overlaps in dimensions of poverty, and driven in part by the practicalities of available data, the decision was made to focus on three dimensions of poverty:

- **Material deprivation:** Drawing on Townsend's (1987) notion of collective poverty, material deprivation is measured using items and activities which are deemed necessities by the population of interest. Measures are created here based on items identified as necessities by children in focus groups and then included in the Children's Society mainstage survey; items identified as necessities for children by adults in an omnibus survey, with those deemed necessary by over 50% of respondents being classed as necessities and included in the PSE 2012 survey (in line with Mack and Lansley's (1985) method); and items which were common to the two surveys.
- **Qualification for minimum income benefits:** Low income as a conception of poverty is amongst the most commonly used and

understood. In the UK households are considered to be in relative income poverty if their equivalised income is below 60% of the national median. However, a measure of income poverty is difficult to achieve in the Children's Society data as children could only be asked about proxies for low income, rather than about household income itself. Measures are created here through the use of proxies for low income, which are also strong indicators of very low household work intensity or worklessness. Since the majority of children in the UK who are in poverty are not in workless households (Adams et al, 2012), this measure is better described as one of qualification for minimum income benefits, rather than as a proxy for income poverty which would cover a larger group of children.

- **Subjective poverty:** This dimension is concerned with ascertaining the proportion of people who feel themselves or their households to be poor, irrespective of their actual physical resources. Whilst subjective poverty measures are rarely used in policy, such measures can be useful in offering insight into the impact of perceived lack or want on an individual's well-being (Kingdon and Knight, 2003).

These dimensions reflect a reasonably narrow conception of child poverty (two are related to child- or household material resources), which is in keeping with the decision outlined in chapter one to retain in the conception of poverty a link to material resources. However, the inclusion of subjective poverty allows for a slight broadening of this conception, as classification as poor on this dimension does not depend on limited personal or household material resources. The use of this subjective dimension serves in part to determine how far the more material conceptions of poverty used previously reflect personal perceptions of poverty amongst respondents.

The next section will describe the data and detail the measures used for these dimensions.

6.3 Data and methods

Sources of data: the Children's Society mainstage survey and the PSE 2012

Data provided by children, from the Children's Society mainstage survey, has previously been described in chapter two. When suitable cases were selected for imputation and data was imputed for all relevant variables, a total sample of 1,906 children aged 11-16 was included in this analysis.

The PSE 2012 survey is the largest comprehensive survey of poverty and social exclusion in the UK to date, covering over 4,000 households. The survey was administered to all adults within households, and the main carer completed questions relating to children. Other questions were completed either by the household nominated respondent or by all adults separately. Data for children were extrapolated from the responses provided by adults – more details of this process will be detailed below, where relevant. For the purposes of comparability, analysis was limited to children aged 11-16 and living in England. This resulted in a sample of 520 children. Given the comparatively small sample size, it should be noted that figures lower than 2% of the unweighted total represent fewer than 20 cases. Figures this low must be treated with a great deal of caution and are highlighted in the findings.

Dimensions of poverty

Material deprivation

Looking at the construction of the indices of material deprivation, results based on three different deprivation measures are presented here. Firstly, the measure detailed in this thesis is presented. Secondly, a measure of child material deprivation derived from adults, and used in the PSE 2012 survey, is presented. This measure consists of 23 items⁴². Finally, an eight-item index incorporating the items which were common to both surveys is presented.

⁴² This index is of 23 items, in contrast to the 24 item index for children presented in analysis of the PSE 2012 child deprivation measures elsewhere (for example Gordon et al, 2013). The reason for this is that one of the items – nursery or playgroup every week for pre-school children – is not relevant to children in the 11-16 age range examined here.

Some aspects of how deprivation indicators are treated and indices created are common across the two surveys; children were treated as lacking the item only if they or the adult respondent indicated that they lacked but wanted it (in the PSE 2012, options were lacked and unable to afford, or lacked and did not want). However, there were also some differences. Whilst all children in the Children's Society data provided individual information, adults providing information for children in the PSE 2012 were asked to indicate a deprivation for *all* children if *any* of the children in their household lacked the item or activity. Whilst this is in keeping with the focus on the household as a unit of primary importance, and helped to facilitate the collection of large-scale data from adults, this method highlights a limitation of such data – it is not possible in the PSE 2012 to explore differences in the material status of multiple children within the same household.

Indices were created by summing the number of items lacked and wanted, or in the PSE lacked due to not being able to afford. All indices were found to have acceptable levels of reliability, measured using Cronbach's Alpha (figures are shown at the bottom of table 6.1). Decisions were required about the point on the deprivation scales at which the deprived could be distinguished from the non-deprived. As with all decisions about setting thresholds, an element of arbitrariness was involved. For all three indices (the ten-item child-derived index, the index based on the eight common items, and the 23 item adult-derived index), methods similar to those detailed in chapter five were used to determine appropriate cut-off points. These included comparing incidence and extent of ill-being on other, related variables such as subjective well-being, income poverty or proxies for this, and poor health. For all indices, a cut-off point of lacking two or more items seemed the most appropriate. Details of the specific items are presented in table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Deprivation items in the Children’s Society, common, and PSE indices

Children’s Society index (10 items)	Common index (8 items)	PSE 2012 index (23 items)	
Pocket money	Pocket money	Coat	Leisure
Saving money	Saving money	Fruit/veg	Trousers
Trainers	Trainers	Three meals	Saving money
MP3 player	MP3 player	New shoes	Pocket money
Cable/satellite TV	Garden	Garden	Toys
Garden	Clothes	Books	Celebrations
Family car	Holiday	Meat	Hobby
Clothes	Day trips	Study	Clubs
Holiday		Games	Day trips
Day trips		Bedroom	School trips
		Computer	Holiday
		New clothes	
Cronbach’s Alpha=0.77	Cronbach’s Alpha=0.75 (Children’s Society survey), 0.82 (PSE 2012)	Cronbach’s Alpha=0.85	

Household qualification for minimum income benefits

Constructing the proxy for qualification for minimum income benefits in the Children’s Society data was based on the same method as detailed previously – children were categorised as living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits if either (or both) they received free school meals, or they had no adults in paid employment. Although income data were available in the PSE 2012, a similar method was used to ensure data were as comparable as possible. Children were classed as in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits if either (or both) any child in their household received free school meals (data were not available for individual children, and children in a household where one child receives free school meals are overwhelmingly likely to be eligible for free school meals themselves) or there were no adults in their household in paid work.

Subjective poverty

The measure of subjective poverty was perhaps the variable where the greatest difference between the questions in the two surveys was found. In the Children’s Society survey, children were asked to rate how well off they felt their family was on a five point scale, ranging from very well off to not very well

off at all. Those rating their family as not very well off and not very well off at all were considered to be in subjective poverty. In the PSE 2012 data, the question used to allocate a subjective poverty status asked respondents to locate their standard of living on a similar five point scale, ranging from well above average to well below average. Those rating their standard of living as below average (ie. in the bottom two categories) were classed as in subjective poverty. However, a further complication was that this question was asked of all adults in the child's household. The decision was made to class children as living in a subjectively poor household if more than 50% of the adults they lived with were subjectively poor. This reflects the methodology followed by researchers involved in the PSE 2012 survey (for example Gordon et al, 2013).

6.4 Findings from the two surveys

Findings are split into three sections. Firstly, findings about the individual items identified by children as necessities in focus groups described in chapter three are presented. The two surveys had eight of these items in common (ie. the PSE 2012 survey included eight items identified in the focus groups and used in the subsequent Children's Society surveys). Secondly, overlaps between different dimensions of poverty, comparing adults and children as respondents, and comparing different deprivation indices, are explored. Finally, the composition of the poor on each dimension is examined, using both the child-supplied Children's Society data and the adult-supplied PSE 2012 data.

Analysis of individual items

Eight of the individual items appeared in both surveys, enabling a direct comparison between adult- and child respondents. These items are examined with regard to addressing two questions – firstly, whether adults and children are similar in their assessments of whether lacked items are wanted or unwanted, and secondly whether a pattern can be found to explain the items which are accepted and those which are rejected by adults as child necessities. However, the proportion of children having the item or activity are not reported as differences in these may be related to differences in the timing or sampling

strategies of the two surveys, rather than reflecting genuine differences in the prevalence of ownership reported by adults compared to children. The purpose of the first question is to assess whether adults appear to provide reliable data regarding children's subjective experiences about whether or not they want items they lack. The purpose of the second is to assess whether apparent differences between adults' and children's perceptions of necessities are best viewed as adults having a greater awareness of the wider social situation or of genuine contributors to children's well-being, or as adults lacking a full awareness of children's worlds and experiences.

Perceptions of whether children want what they lack

Results relating to the first of these questions are presented in table 6.2. The first four columns show, for those lacking the item or activity, the percentage who lack and want (or can't afford, in the case of parents) and who lack and do not want it. Numbers are shown in brackets after percentages, and confidence intervals around the estimates are shown underneath. The subsequent two columns show the ratio of those lacking and wanting to those lacking and not wanting the items, firstly when children's reports are used, and secondly when adults' reports are used. Shaded cells indicate a cell size lower than 20, indicating that estimates should be treated with caution. For pocket money and MP3 players, adults and children report similar rates of wanting to not wanting the items. Differences between the ratios of wanting: not wanting may suggest that parents are more likely than children to report wanting saving money, trainers, an annual holiday, and family day trips, if these are lacked. Similarly, these may suggest that children are more likely than parents report wanting a garden and clothes to fit in, if these are lacked. This hints at subtle differences in the ways that adults and children view children's needs, and in their perceptions of whether lacked items are wanted or not. Given these differences, it is difficult to justify preferring adult reports over children's own reports, when adults and children disagree and the thrust of the question is concerned with subjective feelings – ie. whether a lacked item or activity is wanted or unwanted.

Table 6.2: Comparing adults' and children's views around lacked items and activities

	% children lacking and wanting (n)	% children lacking and not wanting (n)	% parents lacking and can't afford (n)	% parents lacking and don't want (n)	Children: want:don't want ratio	Parents: want:don't want ratio
Pocket money	21 (400) CI: 19-23	14 (267) CI: 12-15	15 (99) CI: 11-18	10 (50) CI: 7-13	1.5	1.5
Saving money	20 (381) CI: 18-22	8 (152) CI: 7-9	34 (209) CI: 29-39	6 (35) CI: 4-8	2.5	5.7
Trainers	14 (267) CI: 12-15	19 (362) CI: 17-20	24 (155) CI: 20-28	19 (93) CI: 15-23	0.7	1.3
MP3 player	16 (305) CI: 14-17	7 (133) CI: 6-9	18 (127) CI: 15-22	9 (51) CI: 6-13	2.3	2.1
Garden	10 (191) CI: 9-11	3 (57) CI: 3-4	4 (25) CI: 2-5	2 (14) CI: 1-4	2.5	2.0
Clothes	7 (133) CI: 6-9	3 (57) CI: 2-4	9 (64) CI: 7-12	7 (42) CI: 5-10	2.7	1.3
Holiday	17 (324) CI: 15-19	4 (76) CI: 3-5	25 (169) CI: 21-29	4 (22) CI: 2-6	4.3	6.3
Day trips	18 (343) CI: 16-20	8 (151) CI: 6-9	23 (137) CI: 18-27	6 (38) CI: 4-8	2.3	3.8

CI: Confidence interval

Possible explanations for adults' different perceptions of children's needs

Results relating to the second question are shown in table 6.3. The first column shows findings from the omnibus survey of adults, who were asked to indicate whether they felt each item was something that people “should be able to afford and should not have to do without”, or whether it was something that “may be desirable, but is not necessary”. Of the eight common items, five (pocket money, saving money, a garden, an annual holiday, and day trips with family) were considered necessities. Three (brand-name trainers, an MP3 player, and clothes to fit in with peers) were not. Of these, brand-name trainers and an MP3 player were the most resoundingly rejected by adults as socially perceived necessities, with fewer than 10% of adults viewing these items as necessary for children.

To explore possible reasons for this, the second column shows the proportion of children who have this item or activity, as reported by adults in the PSE

mainstage survey. If substantially fewer children overall had the items or activities which adults deemed non-necessities, this may indicate that adults are more aware of a broader social context than children. This context could be seen as aiding adults in forming a more realistic view of whether the lack of items is likely to result in social exclusion, or whether it is simply relatively common for children to go without. Conversely, if items deemed non-necessities by adults are owned by similar proportions of the population to those deemed necessities, this will offer little insight into why adults agree with children's assessments of some items and activities whilst disagreeing with others.

A further analysis of adults' perceptions is presented in the final column, exploring whether there is a difference in the association with children's subjective well-being (reported by children and measured using the SLSS) when items considered non-necessary by adults are compared to those considered necessities. A weaker relationship to subjective well-being for non-necessities would suggest that adults have more insight than children into what makes a real difference to their happiness. Again, a similar relationship to subjective well-being between necessities and non-necessities would suggest that adults do not have a greater insight into what enhances children's subjective well-being.

The results of this analysis which are presented in table 6.3 offer little insight into the rationale behind adults accepting some of children's suggestions as necessities whilst rejecting others. Although trainers are reported by parents as the lowest level of ownership of the eight items, at 57% this is not far behind saving money, which is viewed as a necessity overall, and by 49% more adults than view trainers as such. An MP3 player is owned by a higher proportion of children than three of the items viewed by adults as necessities – by 72% of children, whilst 'necessities' such as day trips, holidays and saving money are owned by similar or lower proportions. Clothes to fit in with peers are amongst the most commonly owned item according to parental reports, with 84% of children having these. Only a garden is owned by a higher proportion of children. This suggests either that adults' perceptions of child necessities are

not related to prevalence of ownership, or that adults are unaware of the prevalence of ownership of these items and may therefore not realise that their lack may result in the social exclusion of children from their peer groups. In terms of explanations for this, one possibility is that some items and activities which are important to children relate to the priorities and values of parents, whilst others do not. So for example items and activities such as having a family car and a holiday are experienced by both adults and children (albeit that they might interpret these experiences differently); money (both pocket money and saving money) may have different connotations to adults and children, but both are aware of its social significance; but items such as brand-name trainers and MP3 players may be of little normative values to adults, whose social norms are more associated with those of their own peers than with those of their children's peers.

A similar pattern to that described above emerges for the relationship between lacking items and subjective well-being⁴³. Whilst the lack of an MP3 player has the weakest relationship to subjective well-being, a drop of 1.8 points on the SLSS, this is not far behind the accepted necessity of saving money which is associated with a drop of 2.0 points. Lacking trainers results in a drop of 2.5 points, placing the strength of the association somewhere in the middle of the group, higher up in terms of the impact than adult-approved saving money, and with a similar impact to lacking pocket money or an annual holiday. Clothes to fit in with peers again stands out; the lack of this item results in a significantly greater drop in well-being than any other item – of 4.1 points, with the next strongest relationship – lacking day trips – resulting in a drop of 3.0 points. Overall, no real trend can be seen in subjective well-being when comparing items and activities deemed necessities by adults, when compared to those not deemed so. These findings, in combination with those about prevalence of ownership, suggest that factors other than children's social exclusion or subjective well-being explain differences between adults and children in terms of what each group perceive to be children's needs.

⁴³ As noted in chapter four, a more detailed discussion of the SLSS and the measurement of subjective well-being is presented in chapter seven.

Table 6.3: Comparing individual items for impacts on children

	% adults viewing item as a necessity (n=1,957)	% parents reporting child has item (n=520)	Children: drop in SWB if item is lacked (n=1906)
Pocket money	54	75	2.5
Saving money	55	60	2.0
Trainers	6	57	2.5
MP3 player	8	72	1.8
Garden	92	94	2.5
Clothes	31	84	4.1
Holiday	53	71	2.7
Day trips	60	71	3.0

SWB – subjective well-being.

Overlaps in dimensions

This section will examine how far poverty on the three dimensions – material deprivation, qualification for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty – overlap. Firstly, the proportion poor on each dimension is shown, for both surveys and using the different indices of material deprivation. Secondly, the extent of overlaps between different dimensions is detailed. Thirdly, the extent of overlaps between dimensions for people poor on each dimension is explored. In this section, abbreviations are used for the various indices of material deprivation. CS10 refers to the full child-derived material deprivation index in the Children’s Society data. PSE23 refers to the full adult-derived index of child material deprivation in the PSE 2012 data. CS8 and PSE8 refer to the indices comprising the eight common items, detailed in the previous section.

Proportions poor in each dimension

Table 6.4 shows the percentages poor on each dimension, in the different surveys and using the different material deprivation measures. For each measure of material deprivation, and in both surveys, material deprivation is by far the most common dimension on which poverty is experienced, identified for between 30%-37% of the samples. The proxy for qualification for minimum income benefits identifies very similar percentages as poor irrespective of survey – 17% in the Children’s Society data and 16% in the PSE 2012. Subjective poverty is the least common dimension when children’s reports are used, experienced by only 10%. When adult reports are used, this rises to 16%,

a similar level to income poverty. This may provide evidence for adults protecting children from the felt experience of poverty, and/or may hint at differences in how poverty is understood by adults compared to children.

Table 6.4: Percentages of children poor on each dimension

	CS10 (%, n=1906)	CS8 (%, n=1906)	PSE23 (%, n=520)	PSE8 (%, n=520)
Material deprivation	32	30	35	37
Qualification for minimum income benefits	17	17	16	16
Subjective poverty	10	10	16	16

CS 10 refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE23 refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data.

Proportions poor on cumulative numbers of dimension

Table 6.5 examines the proportion of people poor on cumulative numbers of dimension. This confirms the above-mentioned limitations of either the union or the intersection approach. The union approach would result in 39%-45% of children being identified as poor (that is, the sum of those poor on one, two or all dimensions), a finding which may be considered to be lacking in credibility. Conversely, the intersection approach would result in only 2%-8% of children being identified as poor, a figure which is very unlikely to capture all those children experiencing genuine hardship and exclusion from social norms. In the Children’s Society survey, numbers poor on each dimension drop off fairly sharply, with most children poor on any dimension poor on only one dimension, and very few (2%) poor on all dimensions. This trend is less pronounced in the PSE 2012 survey, with numbers decreasing more gradually as the number of dimensions on which poverty is reported increases – for example, there is a sharper drop in numbers between those reporting one dimension and two dimensions of poverty in the Children’s Society survey than in the PSE survey.

Table 6.5: Number of dimensions on which children are poor

Number of dimensions poor	CS10 (%, n=1906)	CS8 (%, n=1906)	PSE23 (%, n=520)	PSE8 (%, n=520)
0	55	57	61	59
1	32	31	19	21
2	11	10	13	12
3	2	2	8	8

CS 10 refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE23 refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data.

Overlaps between the dimensions

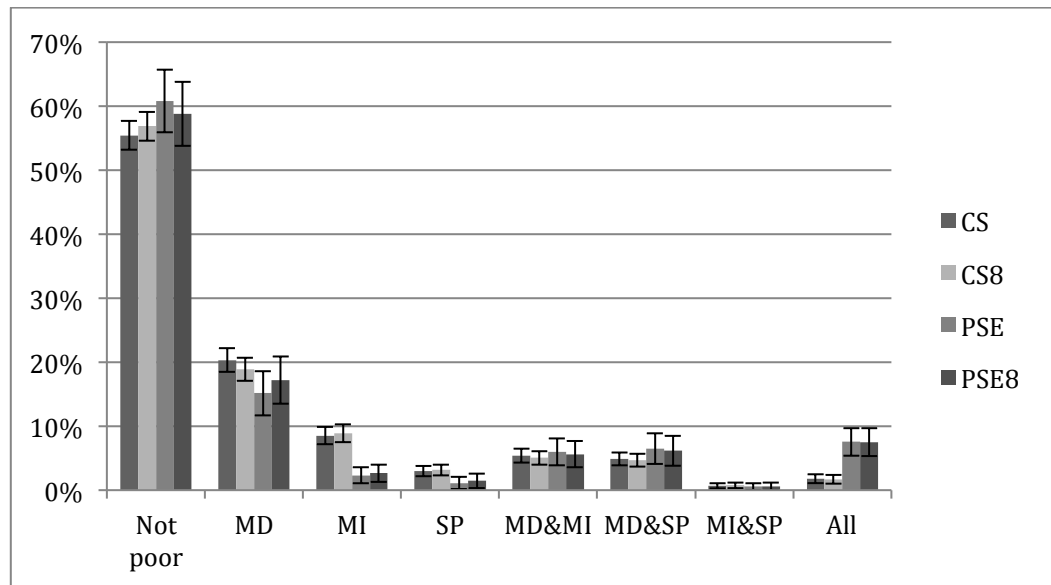
The next stage of the analysis explores how different dimensions of poverty overlap with one another. In the following charts, abbreviations are used for the different dimensions of poverty; MD refers to material deprivation; MI refers to living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; and SP refers to subjective poverty.

Chart 6.1 shows the proportions poor in each possible combination of the dimensions. Whilst when using Children’s Society data the proportion of children not poor on any dimension is slightly lower, this difference is not large⁴⁴. When children’s own reports (compared to parental reports) are used, higher percentages report being poor on any individual dimension, and lower percentages report being poor on multiple dimensions. The exception to this is experiencing both qualification for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty without material deprivation, which children are very unlikely to report in either survey. This may be a result of the material deprivation measures capturing a great deal more children than any other poverty dimension in this data. Children in the PSE 2012 survey are more likely to be poor on all dimensions. Variation based on who responds to questions about children (ie. adults or children) is greater than variation based on the material

⁴⁴ It should be noted that some differences in estimates would be expected as a result of chance and of sampling error. As a result, small differences found in descriptive analysis such as that presented here should not be interpreted as indicative of population differences. The overlapping confidence intervals in chart 6.1 suggest that this difference is unlikely to be statistically significant.

deprivation index used (ie. child-identified items, common items, or adult-identified items).

Chart 6.1: Proportions of children poor by survey and material deprivation index



CS refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data. MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

To illustrate these relationships in a different way, figures 6.1 and 6.2 show Venn diagrams demonstrating the overlaps between different dimensions of child poverty. Separate Venn diagrams illustrate the overlaps for different indices of material deprivation, and different surveys. The diagrams show the proportions of those poor on any dimension, who are in each possible group in terms of combinations of dimensions on which they may experience poverty. The figures show the percentage of those poor on any dimension in each group – so those who are not poor on any dimension are not included in the analysis, and numbers add up to around 100% (subject to rounding errors).

First, those who are poor on just one dimension (in figures 6.1 and 6.2) are considered. These figures confirm that, because the measure identifies more children as poor, by far the largest group across the two surveys and the differing measures are children who are just materially deprived. Children who

are just materially deprived account for 39-44% of those in any kind of poverty. In the PSE 2012 data, those who just qualify for minimum income benefits or who are just subjectively poor account for such a small proportion of children as to make accurate measurement problematic. Here, there is a contrast with the Children's Society data, where reasonably large sections of children who are poor on any dimension are poor on only these dimensions.

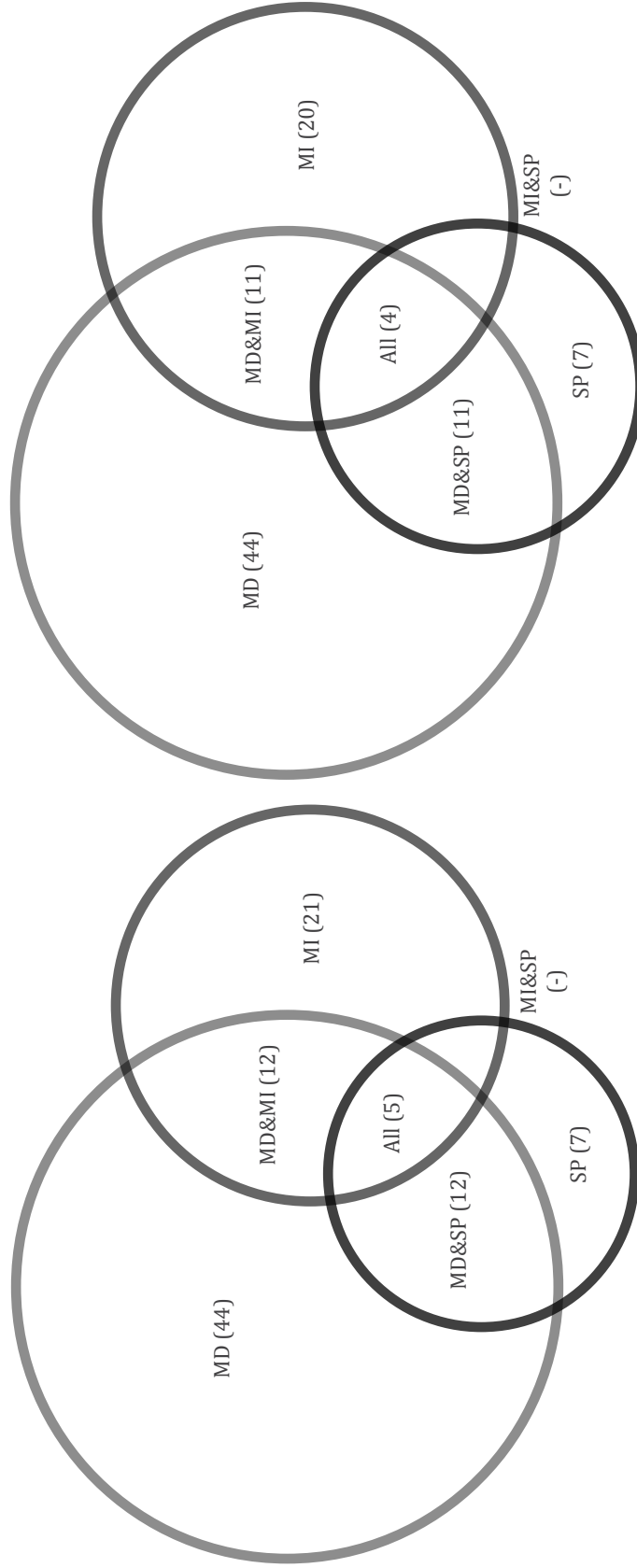
Looking at combinations of two dimensions, the smallest group overall, which is similar across surveys and measures, comprises those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and in subjective poverty (without being materially deprived). In both surveys, the numbers in this group are too small to allow for accurate measurement. This suggests that for both children and adults, having such a low income as to be likely to qualify for minimum income benefits does not seem to have a strong association with feeling poor unless material deprivation is also experienced. This supports Ringen's (1988) position that income is only an indirect measure of poverty – the ways in which people *feel* poverty are to do with their material living standards, rather than their income. This is not to say that income is not related to poverty; for most people income is the means of achieving adequate material living standards. Rather, the impact of income on people's felt experience of poverty looks to be mediated by their experience of material deprivation⁴⁵.

Links between material deprivation and qualification for minimum income benefits, and between material deprivation and subjective poverty, are stronger. However, these relationships are more pronounced in the adult-reported PSE 2012 data than in the child-reported Children's Society data.

Finally, those poor on all dimensions are much more prevalent in the PSE 2012 data, accounting for almost one in five of the poor, compared to around one in twenty of the poor in the Children's Society data.

⁴⁵ This point relates to Cummins' (2000) argument that despite its evasiveness, there is a relationship between income and subjective well-being – this is picked up on in more detail in chapter seven.

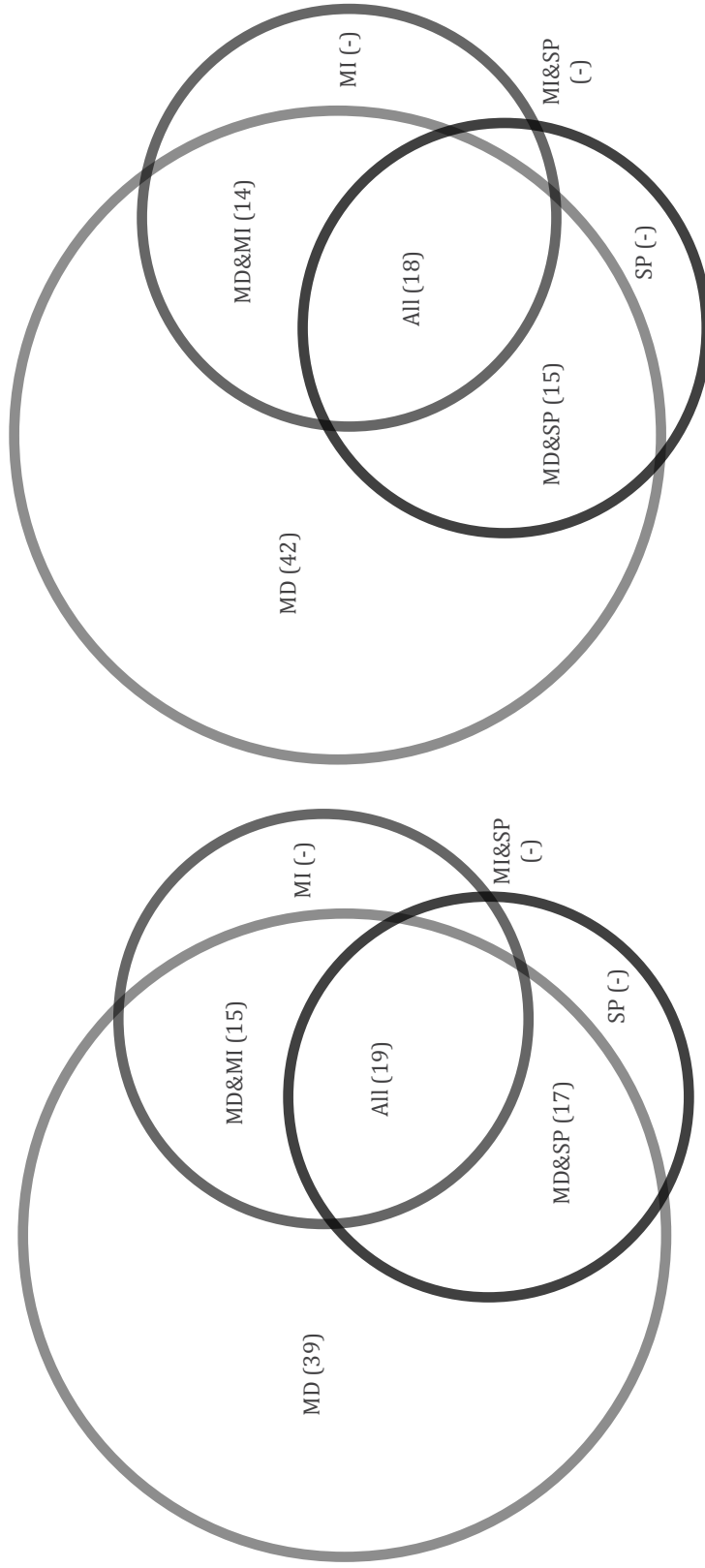
Figure 6.1: Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the Children's Society data



MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

The figure on the left shows overlaps using all ten child-derived items, whilst the figure on the right shows overlaps when just the eight items in common in the Children's Society survey and the PSE 2012 survey are used. All figures show the proportion of those poor on any dimension – those not poor on any dimension are excluded from the analysis. Figures under three should be treated with caution as they represent fewer than 20 unweighted cases – these are marked with (-) instead of a figure.

Figure 6.2: Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the PSE 2012 data

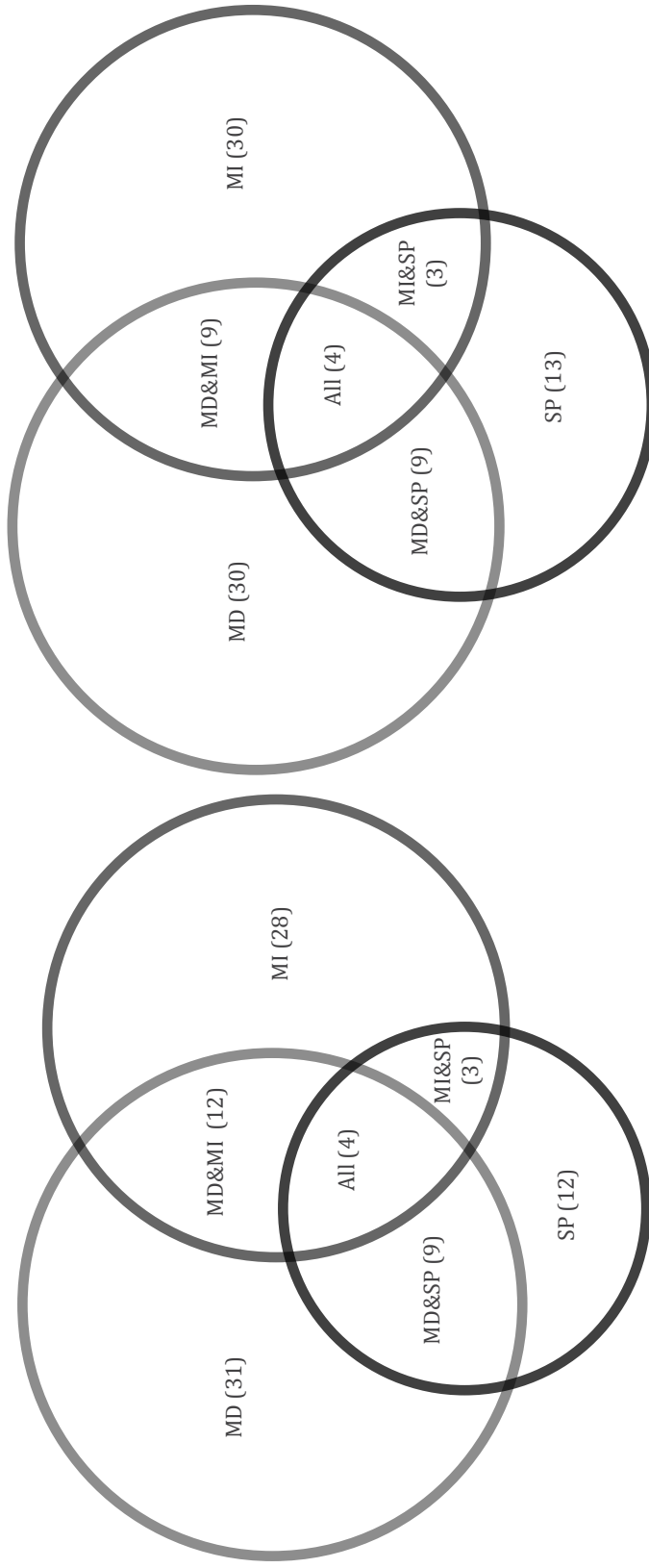


MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

The figure on the left shows overlaps when the adult-derived PSE23 items are used; the figure on the right shows overlaps when the common eight items are used. Figures under ten should be treated with caution as they represent fewer than 20 unweighted cases – these are marked with (-) instead of a figure.

One possible reason for the fairly low levels of overlap and the predominance of material deprivation, particularly in the Children's Society data, may be the difference in the proportions poor on these different dimensions. To explore this possibility, a different material deprivation threshold was set to explore associations between the three dimensions when more similar proportions of children were experiencing each of the three dimensions. Because of the smaller sample in the PSE 2012, only data from the Children's Society survey are presented. Using a threshold of lacking three or more items or activities, around 18 % (using the CS8 scale) to 20% (using the CS10 scale) of the sample were identified as very materially deprived. However, overlaps between the dimensions were not found to be much stronger based on this threshold. Irrespective of material deprivation index, a higher proportion of children were poor on exclusively one of the three dimensions, than on any combination of the dimensions. Again, proportions are of children who are poor on at least one dimension – children not poor on any dimension are excluded from the analysis. Findings are shown in figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3: Venn diagrams showing overlaps in dimensions for the Children’s Society data (very deprived)



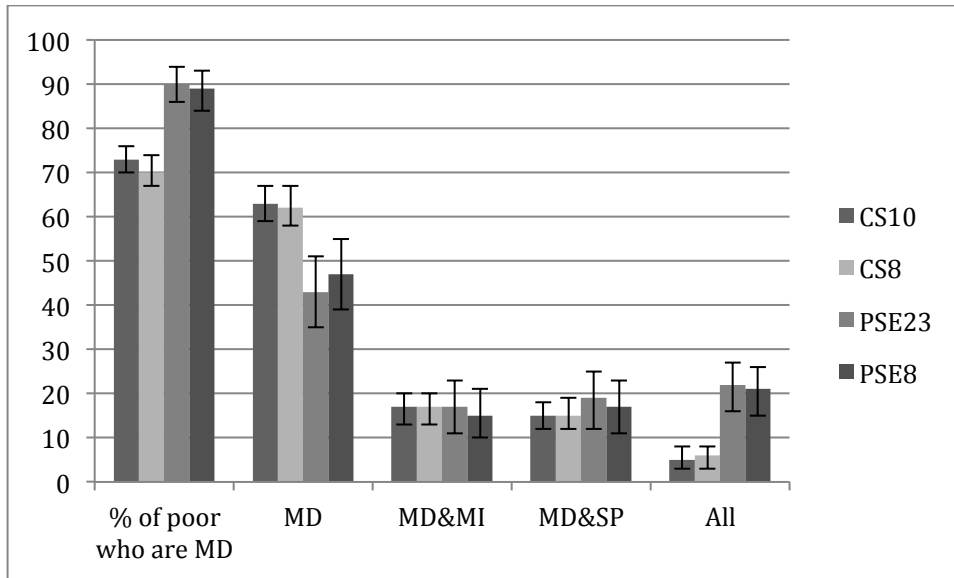
MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

The figure on the left shows overlaps using all ten child-derived items, whilst the figure on the right shows overlaps when just the eight items in common in the Children’s Society survey and the PSE 2012 survey are used.

Next, going back to the original (lacking two or more) indices of material deprivation, overlaps between dimensions for those poor on each specific dimension were examined. Charts 6.2-6.4 show the overlaps between dimensions of poverty when a child is identified as poor on each specified dimension. In each chart, the first set of bars shows the proportion of the children who are poor on any dimension, who are poor on the specified dimension. The next sets show the proportion of those who are poor on the specified dimension, who are poor on each possible combination of dimensions.

Chart 6.2 confirms that across surveys and material deprivation measures, most children who are poor on any dimension are materially deprived. This is because (as shown in table 6.4 above) this measure identifies more children as poor than other measures; depending on survey and material deprivation index, 30-37% of children are identified as materially deprived, compared to 16-17% living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and 10-16% in subjective poverty. From 70% to 90% of children who are poor on any dimension are identified as experiencing material deprivation. Whilst there are small differences in proportions between surveys, for the most part differences are more pronounced between surveys – that is, between child compared to adult respondents – to within surveys – that is, based on the choice of material deprivation index. The biggest group of children who are materially deprived, in both surveys and across indices, are only materially deprived. This is somewhat more pronounced in the Children’s Society data than in the PSE 2012 data. Similar and small proportions across the two surveys and indices are either both materially deprived and in income poverty without subjective poverty, or materially deprived and in subjective poverty without income poverty. Whilst this may be partly a result of the material deprivation measure identifying more children as poor, it also suggests that material deprivation is more central to the felt experience of poverty than qualification for minimum income benefits without material deprivation is. Almost four times as many children who are materially deprived are poor on all dimensions in the PSE 2012 than in The Children’s Society data.

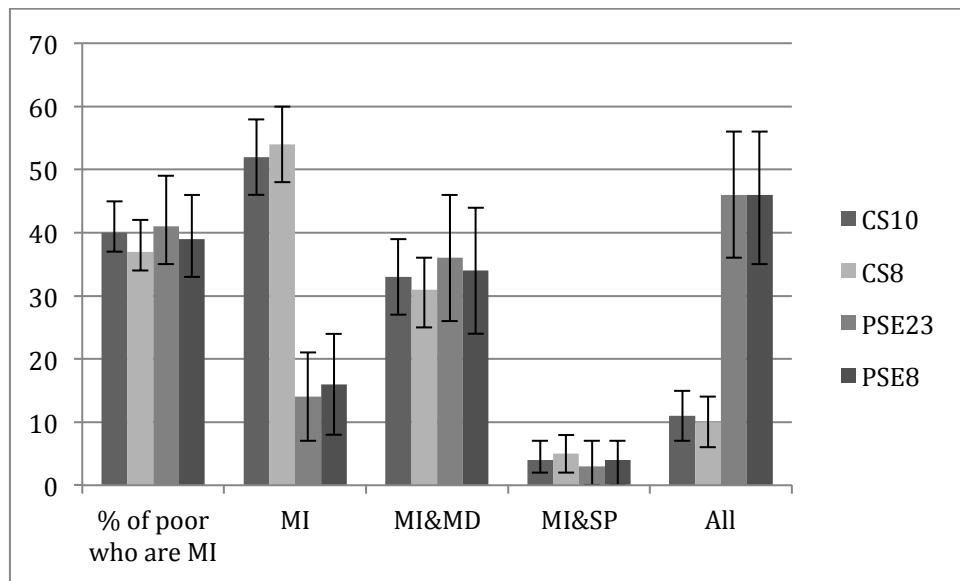
Chart 6.2: Overlaps in dimensions for materially deprived children



CS10 refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE23 refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data. MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

Chart 6.3 shows that, across the surveys and indices of material deprivation, a reasonably similar proportion of respondents who are poor on any dimension are in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, standing at around two in five. It should be noted that for the PSE 2012 data, figures for those just in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are very low, and for all data, figures for those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and subjective poverty without being materially deprived are very low – these estimates should be treated with a great deal of caution. Those in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits alone form a much larger group in the Children’s Society data than in the PSE 2012. In both surveys, there is a reasonably strong association between living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and material deprivation in the absence of subjective poverty. As above, a substantially higher proportion of children in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits experience poverty on all dimensions in the adult-provided data than in children’s own reports of their situations.

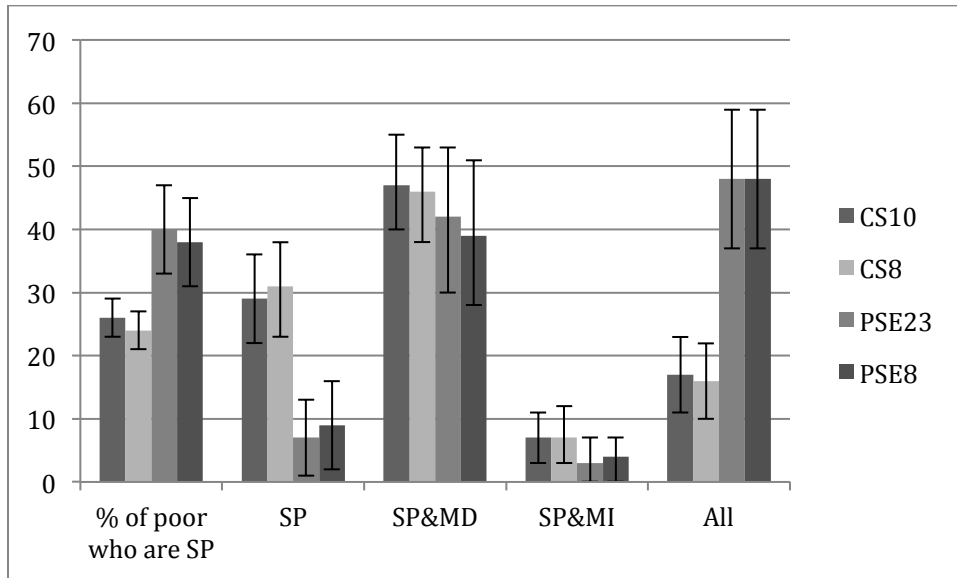
Chart 6.3: Overlaps in dimensions for children in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits



CS10 refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE23 refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data. MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

Chart 6.4 shows overlaps for those children who are in subjective poverty. For both surveys, comparatively small numbers of children poor on any dimension are poor on this dimension, although numbers are higher in the PSE 2012 survey, and in that survey are comparable to the numbers in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, whilst in the Children’s Society survey numbers in subjective poverty are lower than numbers in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. Those just in subjective poverty are substantially higher in the Children’s Society survey than in the PSE 2012, where the proportion of subjectively poor children who are just in subjective poverty is very low. As above, the proportion of children in both surveys in subjective poverty and in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits without being materially deprived is very low. Numbers in subjective poverty and material deprivation without living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits are reasonably high across surveys and material deprivation indices. Numbers poor on all three dimensions are substantially higher in the PSE 2012 data than in the Children’s Society data.

Chart 6.4: Overlaps in dimensions for subjectively poor children



CS10 refers to the 10-item Children’s Society index; CS8 refers to the 8-item common index in the Children’s Society data; PSE23 refers to the PSE 2012 index; PSE8 refers to the 8-item common index in the PSE2012 data. MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty.

Demographic composition by dimension

As a final stage in the comparison of the two surveys, the demographic characteristics of the poor were examined. The composition of the poor by sex, school year, family type and ethnicity was explored. The purpose of this analysis is to examine how the characteristics of those who are poor on different dimensions compare, and to examine whether certain demographic groups are particularly vulnerable to specific dimensions of poverty. It is intended to investigate whether risk factors for poverty differ based on whether children’s or adults’ reports of poverty are used. Results from the Children’s Society data are shown in table 6.6, and from the PSE 2012 in table 6.7.

Data on gender, age, family structure and ethnicity were examined. Looking at the different demographic characteristics:

- **Boys and girls** are reasonably similar in terms of the likelihood of them experiencing different kinds of poverty in the Children’s Society data. In the PSE2012, risks are similar for material deprivation and living in a

household likely to qualify for minimum income assistance. **Boys are more likely than girls** to live in households where adults report subjective poverty in the PSE 2012 data.

- **Younger children** in the Children's Society data (in school year six) are more likely to be living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and are less likely to be in subjective poverty. This trend is reversed for **older children** (in school year ten). **Children in the middle age group** (school year eight) are more likely to be materially deprived. No trend is evident in the PSE 2012 data.
- **Children living with both parents** in both surveys are substantially less likely to be poor on any of the domains. This trend is reversed for those in **lone parent families**. The relationship is stronger for living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and for subjective poverty, again across both surveys.
- **White children** in the Children's Society survey are less likely to be in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. Children from **other ethnicities** are more likely to live in such households. **Children from other ethnicities** in the PSE 2012 are more likely to be materially deprived.

Consideration of the different dimensions of poverty demonstrated that:

- **Material deprivation** in both surveys is most prevalent amongst children from lone parent families, and children from black or other ethnicities.
- **Living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits** is most prevalent in the Children's Society survey amongst children in year six, children from lone parent families or other family types, and children from black or other ethnic backgrounds. Children in year ten, and children living with both parents, are less likely to live in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. In the PSE 2012, children from lone parent families are more likely to live in such households, and children living with both parents are less likely to.

- **Subjective poverty** is most prevalent in both surveys amongst children from lone parent families, and less prominent amongst children living with both parents.

The results suggest, then, that whilst there are some demographic characteristics which are associated with increased vulnerability in specific dimensions of poverty, for the most part risk factors are similar across the surveys and the dimensions. In the Children's Society survey, age appeared to be the characteristic which best differentiated vulnerability between dimensions – whilst older children were less likely to be living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, they were the most likely to report subjective poverty. This trend was similar in the PSE 2012 survey, but it was not so pronounced when adults were used as proxies for children. Living in a lone parent family appears to be the most strongly associated characteristic with poverty across the dimensions, with those in lone parent families more likely to be poor on all of the dimensions.

In the following tables, numbers which are not in brackets show the composition – that is, the demographic make-up of those who are poor on that dimension. Numbers in brackets show the prevalence of poverty for the particular group – that is, the proportion of people with the demographic characteristic who are poor.

Table 6.6: Composition of the poor across the three dimensions in the Children's Society data

Variable			MD (%)		MI (%)		SP (%)	
		All (%)						
Sex	Boy	56	55	(30)	54	(16)	55	(10)
	Girl	44	45	(31)	46	(17)	45	(10)
Year group	6	30	33	(33)	40	(22)	24	(8)
	8	39	34	(26)	38	(16)	39	(10)
	10	30	33	(33)	23	(12)	37	(13)
Family type	Two parents	68	63	(28)	45	(11)	48	(7)
	Lone parent	20	24	(36)	40	(33)	38	(19)
	Step or other	11	13	(34)	15	(22)	14	(12)
Ethnicity	White	80	77	(29)	67	(14)	81	(10)
	Black	5	6	(35)	9	(29)	6	(12)
	Other	15	17	(35)	25	(27)	13	(9)
n		1,906	610		305		191	

MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty. In the last three columns the composition of the poor on the relevant domain is shown first, followed by the prevalence of poverty on the same domain in brackets.

Table 6.7: Composition of the poor across the three dimensions in the PSE 2012

Variable			MD (%)		MI (%)		SP (%)	
		All (%)						
Sex	Boy	53	54	(37)	54	(17)	60	(18)
	Girl	47	46	(36)	46	(16)	41	(13)
Year group	6	37	36	(36)	33	(15)	33	(14)
	8	31	32	(37)	31	(16)	31	(16)
	10	32	32	(36)	36	(18)	36	(18)
Family type	Two parents	74	55	(28)	40	(9)	49	(10)
	Lone parent	26	45	(63)	60	(38)	51	(30)
Ethnicity	White	88	82	(35)	86	(13)	84	(15)
	Other	12	18	(54)	14	(19)	16	(19)
n		520	240		118		111	

MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty. In the last three columns the composition of the poor on the relevant domain is shown first, followed by the prevalence of poverty on the same domain in brackets.

6.5 Conclusions

Limitations

Before concluding this chapter, some limitations of the work presented here must be acknowledged. These comprise:

- Fieldwork for the two surveys was conducted at different times, using different data collection methods (PSE 2012 was collected using

computer assisted interviewing, whilst the Children's Society survey was completed online). Duffy et al (2005) highlight that, amongst other things, social desirability and social inhibitions can tend to lead to different responses in a face-to-face situation compared to the increased anonymity of online surveys.

- As noted previously, it was not possible to check the proportion of children seeing items and activities in the child-derived index as necessities. This was a crucial step in the PSE 2012 survey, following Mack and Lansley's (1985) methodology.
- Survey context effects – the effects of the position of questions in surveys and the wider survey content - will have impacted responses to questions (for a more detailed explanation see Rea and Parker, 2012, along with many other guides to survey design). The common questions to the Children's Society and PSE 2012 surveys were located within very different survey contexts, which may account for some of the differences.
- As a result of small numbers in the PSE 2012 sample, descriptive rather than inferential statistics are presented, and whilst theoretical inferences are drawn from the findings, these are tentative. Limited numbers and different survey methodologies preclude firm conclusions about statistical significance or causality; rather, findings support the need for further research and are useful in generating, rather than testing, hypotheses.

The second of these points – concerned with whether children perceive the items included in the index as necessities – and the fourth – concerned with recruiting a sample of a suitable size to allow for inferential statistical analysis – are topics which would benefit from further research. Whilst these limitations indicate that the results presented here would benefit from further validation, nonetheless valuable conclusions can be drawn from the analysis.

Discussion

The aims of this chapter have been: to identify how far adults and children differ in their perceptions of 'necessities' identified by children; to examine how

far dimensions of poverty overlap when different indices of material deprivation are used; to examine how far dimensions of poverty overlap when child respondents, compared to adult respondents, provide data about children; and to examine whether risk factors for poverty on the three dimensions differ when child reports are used, compared to adult reports. To summarise the key findings:

- Regarding **individual items**, children and adults were found to be to a reasonably large extent in agreement about whether children needed the eight items identified for the child-derived index which were common to both surveys. Where there were disagreements, no clear pattern emerged as to why adults viewed some items and activities as necessities whilst not seeing others as such.
- Regarding the extent of **overlaps in dimensions of poverty**, in line with Nolan and Whelan's (2010) and Bradshaw and Finch's (2003) findings fairly limited overlaps were found. However, overlaps were stronger in the adult-reported data than in the child-reported data.
- The impact on findings of selecting **adults or children as respondents** was found to be stronger than the impact of selecting **adult- or child-derived indices of material deprivation**. That is, there was more difference in the results based on whether data was supplied by adult proxies or by children themselves, compared to the differences resulting from which deprivation index (adult- or child-derived) was used.
- Regarding the **composition of the poor**, risk factors were similar irrespective of whether child or adult respondents, or child- or adult-derived indices of material deprivation, were used. This supports the notion that these different dimensions of poverty are tapping into a single underlying latent condition, and that no single dimension can adequately capture this condition.

The major implications of these findings points are now noted.

Similarities and differences in adults' and children's conceptions of poverty

There is enough similarity between what adults and children view as children's necessities to support the idea that adults and children are talking about the same broad condition in discussions of material deprivation. This finding is further supported by the analysis showing that similar risk factors are associated with poverty on the different dimensions whether children's or adults' reports are used. However, as demonstrated here and previously (particularly in chapter three), there are also notable differences in how children and adults conceive of the issue. One reason for this may be the differences in adults' and children's conceptions of poverty found in Ridge's (2002) and Redmond's (2009) work – that is, that poverty is experienced as a social phenomenon, and as exclusion from social norms and groups. This explanation fits most easily with differences in perceptions of the necessity of clothes to fit in with peers – the item itself contains an inherently social aspect, and it is notable that children discussed clothes that allowed them to fit in, rather than clothes from a specific brand or of a specific quality. Referring back to the focus group findings also supports this as a possible explanation for children's valuing of brand name trainers and MP3 players. Brand name trainers were valued as the expectation was that this is what other children would be wearing, and there was some level of disdain shown for those who lacked brand name trainers and clothes. MP3 players were discussed as serving a dual purpose of providing entertainment and fitting in – children discussed these as a necessity because peers were likely to have them, as well as for their more obvious purpose of listening to music. Whilst more research, both qualitative and quantitative, would be needed to support this, it would appear that one of the key explanations for differences in adults' and children's conceptions of what is necessary may be that adults are concerned with meeting physical requirements and moving towards well-becoming, whilst children are more concerned with social requirements and fitting in here-and-now.

Limitations to the reliability of adult proxies for children

Adding weight to the findings reported in chapter four, this analysis confirms that adults and children provide similar responses to objective questions, but differ more in their responses to questions containing subjective or personal elements. As Fowler (2009) notes, whilst the use of proxy respondents for objective and non-personal information is reasonably widespread, it is rare for surveys of adults to accept proxy respondents for questions where any substantial degree of subjectivity is involved, or private/sensitive information required. Despite this, the use of adults as proxies for children, even older children, is reasonably wide-spread and includes adults acting as proxies for subjective and personal information. Examples of this can be found in the PSE 2012 survey as shown here. Adults are asked to report on whether children want items they lack, and additionally in questions about things like children's experiences of bullying at school. This is likely to compromise the quality of evidence – for example, Casas (2011) reports various differences between adults and children in their reports of children's perceptions and preferences, and Oliver and Candappa (2007) found evidence in their survey of children that children are reluctant to tell adults about their experiences of bullying. Whilst less thorough evidence is available on the shortcomings of adult proxies in other kinds of question, including those relating to poverty and material necessities, the point that parents do not have access to full information about their children's objective or subjective worlds, and if they did might be reluctant to report accurately on it, stands. Chzhen (2012), for example, postulates that parents may be reluctant to admit in surveys relating to poverty and necessities that they cannot provide for their children, and so may claim that their children do not want items which are lacked, when in reality the reason may be that parents cannot afford the item or activity, or do not prioritise it in their spending decisions. Alternatively, or additionally, Ridge (2002) found that children often hid the impacts of poverty on their lives from adults. This may suggest that even if adults were willing to give a full account of their perception of their child's situation, this may not tally with the child's experiences due to the child's deliberately withholding information.

However, the above analysis should not be taken as an unequivocal critique of the use of adult proxies. This practice is widespread and in cases where children are not the main focus of a survey, it may be impracticable in terms of time and resources to interview children as well as adults. Furthermore, in surveys where children of all ages are respondents a reasonable cut-off must be identified – few would argue that data should be collected directly from very young children and babies. However, two implications of this are raised. Firstly, surveys which have children as their primary focus, where those children are of an age to provide responses themselves, should avoid parental or other adult proxies in questions where subjectivity or personal information is required. Secondly, surveys which cannot or do not utilise children as respondents should be clear that the information gathered relates to adult perceptions of children’s feelings and experiences, rather than actually providing information on those feelings and experiences directly. So in the PSE survey the ‘lacks this and does not want it’ option may be more properly understood as ‘child lacks this and parent does not think they want it’, or possibly in some situations where children have not expressed a preference, ‘child lacks this and adult does not want it for them’.

Overlaps in dimensions: comparing adult and child reports

Being materially deprived, feeling poor, and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits have a stronger association for adult perceptions of child poverty than is evident in analyses of children’s own experiences. That is, the overlaps between different dimensions of child poverty are far greater where adult reports of child poverty are used. This may in part result from the specific questions used. Not only are the questions, particularly those relating to subjective poverty, different between the surveys, but also the question relating to subjective poverty for children relates to how well off children view their *family* (ie. not themselves), whilst the PSE 2012 question asks adults to rate their standard of living. This second question may prompt thought about family, but may equally be interpreted as relating to personal living standards.

Additionally, though, the discrepancies between overlaps when adult reports are used compared to child reports may reflect genuine differences in experiences of and conceptions of poverty between children and adults. As noted throughout this thesis, conceptions, definitions and measures of poverty are overwhelmingly adult-derived. Whilst the aim of this work has been to build up a child-derived *measure*, to an extent that has remained a piece of work undertaken within an adult-derived *conceptual framework*. It may be that the minimal overlaps between dimensions of poverty where children's reports are used reflect a conceptual difference in approaches to poverty. This suggests the need not only for child-derived measures of child poverty (of the like proposed here), but also for a wider-ranging and more philosophical exploration with children of what poverty means to them. This tallies with Redmond's (2009) recommendation that children's own understandings of what poverty means require further exploration.

Chapter 7

Child poverty and children's subjective well-being

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined how far the child-derived index of material deprivation overlapped with other dimensions of poverty, and with adult-derived indices of child material deprivation. This chapter moves from a concern with poverty measures as a method for counting the poor, to their use as a means for examining the impact of poverty on other aspects of children's lives. Since the Children's Society 2010-11 survey focussed strongly on children's subjective well-being, an examination of the links between this and child poverty is now presented. After a review of relevant literature to provide background to the study, the chapter looks at how two of the different dimensions of poverty used in the previous chapter – material deprivation and qualification for minimum income benefits – relate to children's overall subjective well-being. Subjective poverty is omitted from this analysis due to its similarity to subjective well-being – as Cummins (2000) notes, inclusion of subjective variables in explorations of the impact of poverty on subjective well-being complicates analysis⁴⁶. Next, the relationships between poverty and various domains of children's subjective well-being are examined. Finally, a more detailed analysis is performed on the relationship between material deprivation and children's subjective well-being in the domain of family, as material deprivation measured using the child-derived index was found to relate most strongly to this domain.

7.2 Background

The past few decades have seen an increase in academic interest in subjective well-being (Diener et al (1999) outline progress over the last three decades of the last century). Casas (2011) points to the Social Indicators Movement,

⁴⁶ An interesting avenue for further research on this topic would be to use Structural Equation Modelling to help interpret the relationship between objective poverty measures, subjective poverty measures, and subjective well-being.

beginning in the 1960s, as instrumental in the increased focus on subjective as well as objective facets of well-being. In social policy terms, much of this interest relates to Easterlin's (1974) finding that the relationship between happiness and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) only holds up to a fairly low level, and in richer societies gains in GDP are not accompanied by commensurate gains in happiness and social well-being. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) add to this in their research demonstrating that subjective well-being, along with many domains of objective well-being such as health outcomes and crime rates, are much more strongly related to the level of (in)equality in a society rather than the level of wealth, with more equal societies faring much better.

Internationally, Stiglitz et al (2008) recommended the collection and publication of measures of subjective well-being to complement national measures of other aspects of well-being, and the OECD (2013) issue guidance on how to implement this. Within the UK, the push for social policy to incorporate a concern with subjective well-being as well as more objective facets of well-being has been in large part driven by Layard (2011, first edition 2005). The prime minister at the time of writing, David Cameron (2010), announced plans in 2010 to begin measuring national well-being and the ONS now runs a National Well-being Programme aimed at measuring subjective well-being (see Beaumont, 2013 for some early findings from this programme relating to children's well-being).

In terms of children, whilst there is no shortage of research into objective facets of child well-being such as educational attainment and child health, Casas (2011) points out that subjective well-being has often been neglected. He postulates that one of the causes of this is the lack of political importance attributed to children's own points of view. But as Ben-Arieh (2007) notes, there is an increasing recognition that childhood should be studied with a consideration of the rights of children, and with an acknowledgement that childhood is a stage of relevance in its own right, rather than just a journey towards adulthood. Additionally, Casas (2011) notes that studies of subjective well-being and quality of life have often found that those assumed to be 'experts' frequently report very different views to those they are assumed to be

expert on – including the use of parents as ‘experts’ on the preferences and viewpoints of their own children. This has strong implications for the use of direct measurement of children’s self-reported subjective well-being. Adults, parents included, cannot be assumed to be able to represent children either in terms of responses to specific questions, or in terms of broader perceptions of what is important in their lives. This relates to the findings in chapters four and six: adults were found to be less likely to provide similar data to children when children’s subjective perspectives were involved. Increasingly, then, studies of child well-being incorporate subjective elements (for example subjective well-being is one of the dimensions of child well-being reported in UNICEF’s Report Card 11 (Adamson, 2013)), use children’s own perceptions of what is important, and use children rather than parental proxies as survey respondents (for example the Children’s Society well-being research programme⁴⁷, which draws on and develops the qualitative work undertaken with children reported by Layard and Dunn, 2009).

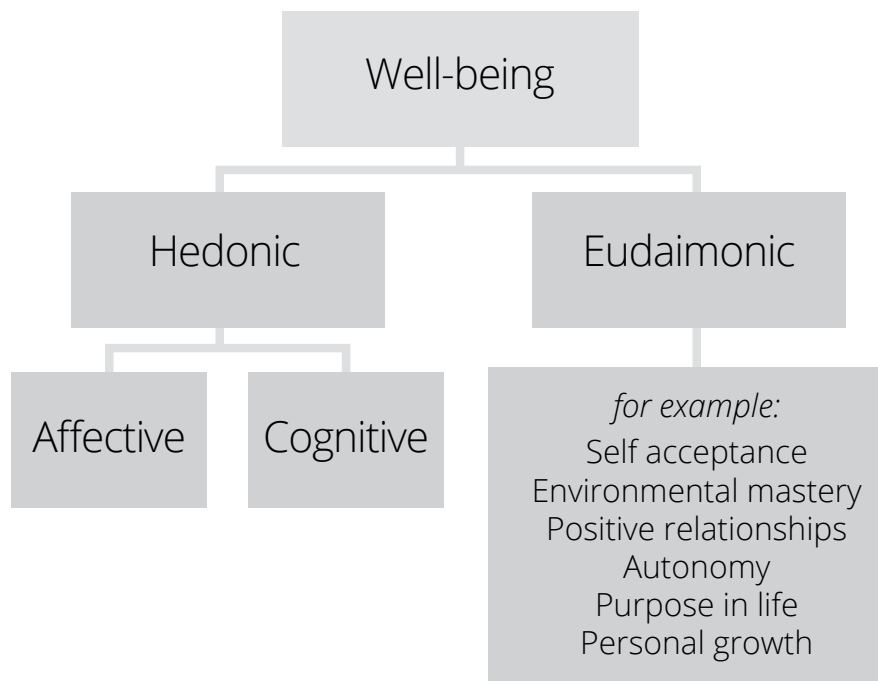
7.3 Some unresolved issues in the study of subjective well-being

The importance of subjective well-being, then, for society as a whole and for children in particular, is increasingly recognised. But the complexity in defining and measuring subjective well-being remains. Diener et al (2003: 403) note that subjective well-being “includes what lay people call happiness, peace, fulfilment, and life satisfaction” – resulting in many critiques of the field as “wooly” (Duckworth et al, 2005: 630). But whilst the topic is unquestionably diverse, complex and contestable, various studies have found that it is possible to measure subjective well-being and sub-domains of this. Diener et al (2005) report that across studies where comparisons are possible, three elements of subjective well-being – positive affect, lack of negative affect, and life satisfaction – show a degree of independence from one another, but note that in much research the measures used preclude differentiation between these elements. This tallies with a popular model of subjective well-being described by Casas (2011) which separates hedonic or affective well-being (concerned

⁴⁷ More details of this programme can be found at <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/well-being>.

with the experience of positive or negative emotional experience) and eudaimonic or cognitive well-being (concerned with life satisfaction). Rees et al's (2013) illustration of such a model is shown below in figure 7.1 – here, cognitive and affective well-being are presented as sub-domains of hedonic well-being, whilst psychological or eudaimonic well-being is highlighted as a subject where further research is needed. Rees et al (2013) also highlight that most measures of subjective well-being to date have been concerned with the cognitive aspects of hedonic well-being, rather than affective aspects of it. Both of these are important aspects of subjective well-being, but they do not, on their own or in combination, capture the whole of the concept. Nevertheless, rigorous measurement instruments have been developed in both of these domains to help measure levels of subjective well-being and examine associations with other aspects of life. Casas (2011) details some of the most tested and scientifically validated instruments which have been developed to measure subjective well-being for children specifically.

Figure 7.1: Rees et al's model of subjective well-being



In addition to wooliness, a further critique of studies of subjective well-being has been that individual levels of subjective well-being are largely inflexible and

genetically determined. Implications of subjective well-being being found to be genetically determined may include that, whilst still relevant in genetic and psychological studies, the resulting lack of policy amenability would render it irrelevant in the field of social policy. The impact of genetic makeup on subjective well-being is explored by (amongst others) Weiss et al (2008), and findings tend to indicate that there is still much to be learned in this field. As yet, the relative impact of genetics, personality and life events, and indeed interactions between the three, on subjective well-being are far from clear. All three, however, appear to play a part. Cummins and Cahill (2000) found that whilst there does appear to be a 'normal' level of subjective well-being for each individual which is relatively stable over the long term, events of high stress or trauma (such as, for example, prolonged exposure to poverty) can impact these levels. Additionally, much research exploring links between genetics, personality, life events and subjective well-being has focused on adults –this may not provide adequate evidence about how these links work for children. Roberts and DelVecchio (2000), in their review of longitudinal studies on the consistency of personality traits, report that it is widely acknowledged that personality is less stable and is responsive to environmental factors in childhood (and indeed they challenge the view that it is particularly stable and resistant to environmental changes in adulthood). Goswami's (2013) analysis of the Children's Society data on children's subjective well-being and personality found that personality traits explained about 18.5% of the variation in children's subjective well-being – leaving 81.5% unexplained. Whilst statistical models are unlikely to ever capture all of the variation in children's subjective well-being due to the vast number of both measurable and unmeasurable influences, this suggests that there is still room for its study with reference to social policy, and particularly with reference to children.

Finally, subjective well-being has been measured both as an overall construct concerned with people's lives as a whole, and as a multi-dimensional construct concerned with different aspects of people's lives. Rees et al (2010), based on detailed qualitative and quantitative research with children, have developed a ten-domain index of child well-being – the Good Childhood Index (GCI) - which

reflects aspects of children's lives which they say, and which analysis shows, are important to them. These domains comprise:

- Friends
- Time use
- Health
- The future
- Family
- Home
- Money and possessions (things)
- School
- Appearance
- Choice

The analysis presented in this chapter looks at both overall subjective well-being, and well-being in each of these ten domains.

7.4 Poverty and subjective well-being

As noted above, one motivating force in the study of subjective well-being was the Easterlin Paradox, with Easterlin's (1974) findings suggesting that above a certain level of income at which basic needs are met, increases in income did not lead to increases in well-being. However, Stevenson and Wolfers (2013) argue that whilst the relationship is not linear and increases in income make more of a difference to the subjective well-being of the poor than the rich, a point of satiation beyond which income does not impact subjective well-being at all has yet to be found – and therefore has yet to be reached, even in the richest countries. Despite this, though, researchers (including Stevenson and Wolfers, 2013; Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2001) tend to agree that the strength of the relationship between income and subjective well-being decreases as wealth increases. Cummins (2000) argues that rather than this suggesting that beyond basic needs satisfaction income is not relevant to subjective well-being, it suggests instead that the relationship between income and subjective well-being is mediated by internal and external 'buffers'. The result is that whilst

direct relationships between income and subjective well-being may be difficult to capture, the relationship does exist but interpretation of it is complicated by mediators such as low material living standards and poor health. That is, the *effects* of low income, rather than low income itself, are stronger predictors of subjective well-being but nonetheless the association is caused by low income.

The weakness of direct associations between income (or proxies for income) and subjective well-being is upheld in research with children. Knies (2011) found no association between household income, household material deprivation, or child material deprivation and subjective well-being in her analysis of data from the nationally representative UK Understanding Society survey drawing on adult-derived understandings of household and child material deprivation. Rees et al (2011) found a very limited association between household income and children's subjective well-being, with the former explaining only around 1% of the variation, in Children's Society surveys undertaken with children incorporating household income data provided by adults.

These findings pose a challenge to child poverty studies. There is no question that household poverty increases risks of a wide range of negative objective outcomes for children (see Griggs and Walker, 2008, for an overview. Bradshaw, 2011, also covers many of the domains of children's lives which are impacted by poverty in his coverage of child well-being in the UK), so the importance of poverty is not in question. But qualitative research with children in poor families (notably Ridge, 2002) suggests that they perceive themselves to be negatively impacted by the experience. If this is the perception of children in poverty, it would be reasonable to assume that their own reports of their subjective well-being would be lower. This suggests that neither measures of subjective well-being nor measures of poverty are capturing this aspect of children's experiences adequately. It may be that, as Cummins (2000) argued, the associations are more subtle than initially assumed, and that analysis to date has been unable to capture the association through a failure to pick up on the aspects of poverty or of well-being which chime with children's lives and experiences. This is an even more convincing proposition where children are

concerned, since (as has previously been highlighted), they tend to lack direct personal income and direct personal control over household resources. This renders the relationship between children's subjective well-being and household income even more indirect – the mediating effect of parental preferences and behaviours must be added to the factors confounding this relationship.

The aim of this chapter, then, is to perform an exploratory analysis of the links between poverty measured by income and material deprivation on children's subjective well-being, both overall and in various domains. Two main questions are addressed:

- How well do different measures of child poverty perform in explaining variation in children's subjective well-being?
- Which domains of child subjective well-being are most strongly impacted by the experience of poverty on the different domains?

7.5 Methods

Sources of data

Data used are taken from the Children's Society survey of child well-being, using methods described in chapter two. For this analysis, children aged 11-16 were included as all relevant questions were asked of this age group. For overall well-being, the full sample in this age range were asked relevant questions, giving a total of 4315 children. The domains of well-being covered by the Good Childhood Index (see below) were all asked of half of the sample, giving a total of 1906 children; many domains were asked of the whole sample but to ensure comparable analysis results are only reported for the half of the sample who were asked about all domains. The other half of the sample, again consisting of 1906 children, completed a set of more detailed questions on family relationships. Analyses based on these questions were completed using this half of the sample.

Measures of subjective well-being

Details of the poverty related measures – material deprivation and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits – are provided in the previous chapter. Demographic variables used as controls in this analysis are self-explanatory – these include school year group, gender, family type, and ethnicity. Subjective well-being was measured using two sets of variables. Overall subjective well-being was measured using a reduced version of the Student’s Life Satisfaction Scale, developed by Huebner (1991). The original Huebner scale has been widely tested and validated with children and young people in the UK (for example Rees et al, 2010) and internationally (for example Siyez and Kaya, 2008). In addition to validating the scale, Rees et al (2010) found that the scale worked somewhat better in a slightly reduced version. Items in the scale are as follows. Items in italics were those which Rees et al (2010) found could be dropped:

- My life is going well
- My life is just right
- *I would like to change many things in my life*
- I wish I had a different kind of life
- I have a good life
- I have what I want in life
- *My life is better than most kids*

Answers were given on a five-point scale ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. Responses to each item (with negative items reverse coded) were summed to produce a score out of 20, with 20 indicating the highest possible life satisfaction given the scale, and zero indicating the lowest possible life satisfaction.

To examine the domains of life satisfaction identified as important to children’s lives by Rees et al (2010, see above), individual questions were used on each domain. Children were asked to rate their happiness with each domain on an 11 point scale, ranging from zero to ten, with zero indicating ‘very unhappy’ and

ten indicating 'very happy'. Full questions are listed in appendix D. As noted above, satisfaction with family was found to be the domain (other than happiness with money and possessions) most strongly impacted by material deprivation. Therefore, additional analysis was performed on children's satisfaction in this domain using a range of questions included in the Children's Society survey. These questions comprised:

- I enjoy being at home with my family
- My family gets along well together
- My parents listen to my views and take me seriously
- My parents treat me fairly
- My parents and I do fun things together

Answer formats were the same as those listed above for the SLSS. Analysis was performed on individual items and on a scale based on summing responses to all items, found to have strong internal validity measured using Cronbach's Alpha (average α across the 20 imputed datasets⁴⁸=0.89).

7.6 A note on subjective well-being measurement

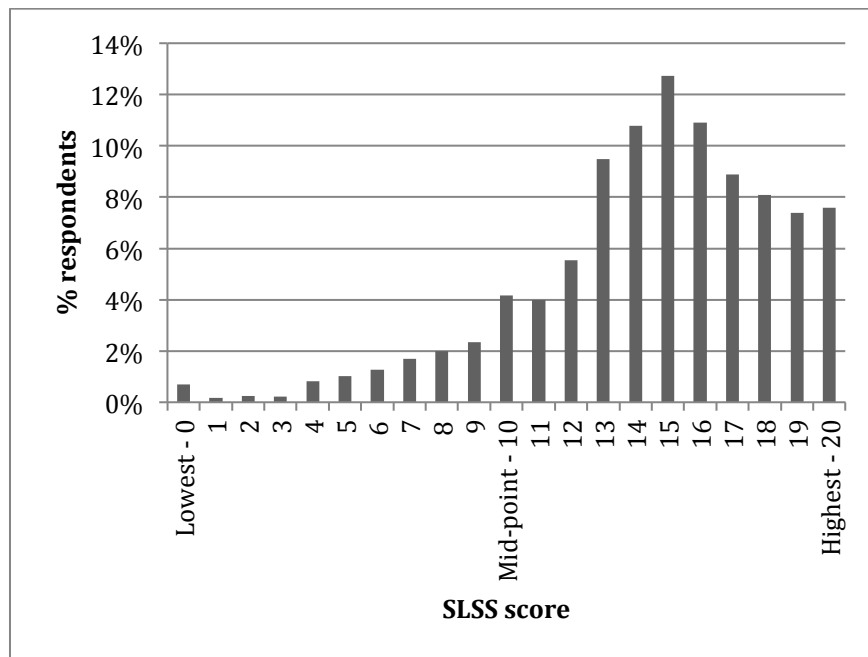
A common finding in studies of subjective well-being (reported by Casas 2011 amongst others) is that data are negatively skewed – that is, more people report higher levels of happiness than report lower levels of happiness. This may indicate that measurement instruments tend to censor the data, meaning that whilst they appear to allow for the full range of low well-being scores to be reported, they do not allow for discrimination between people reporting higher well-being. Alternatively, Casas (2011) suggests that this is a result of the optimism bias – a tendency to be 'irrationally' positive in our outlook. From an examination of the data in the Children's Society surveys, it would appear that whilst this skew is present in all types of measure, multi-item instruments tend to result in more normally distributed data than single-item measures.

Examples of the distributions produced by the two kinds of measure – single-

⁴⁸ As noted previously, all analysis of Children's Society data is based on imputed data following the principles of multiple imputation, drawing on 20 imputed datasets. See chapter 2 for more details on this.

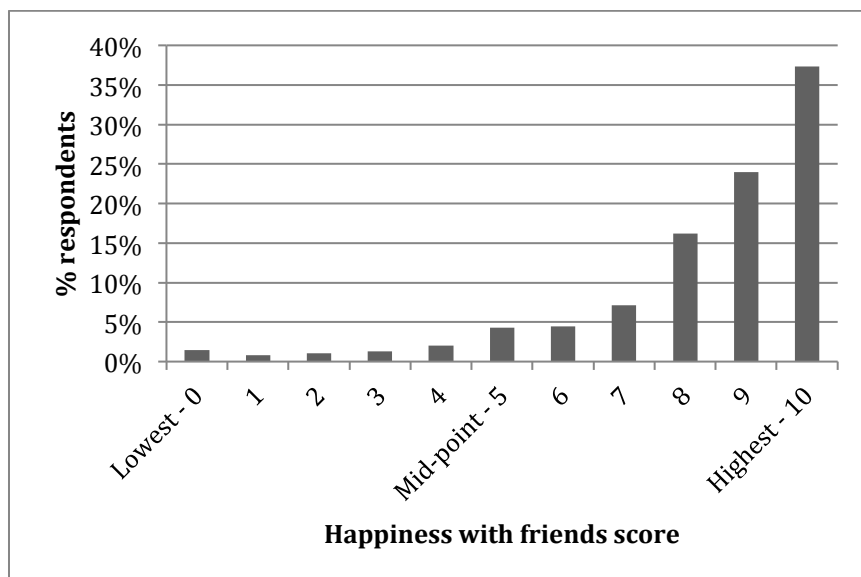
and multi-item - from the Children's Society data used in this chapter (based on the SLSS as a multi-item measure and on happiness with friends as a single-item measure) are shown below (charts 7.1 and 7.2). This has implications for the type of analysis which can be performed – parametric tests assume a normal distribution, and subjective well-being data is clearly not normally distributed. Two solutions are drawn on here. Firstly, for multi-item measures, results of tobit as well as linear regressions are presented. However, as noted in chapter two, a limitation of tobit models is that no adjusted r squared value, used to assess the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the model, is provided. Whilst an r squared value can be produced by squaring the correlation between observed and predicted values of the dependent variable, this does not produce an adjusted r squared which considers the degrees of freedom in the model, thereby allowing comparison between different models. Therefore, tobit and linear models are both presented here, with the acknowledgement that neither provides a perfect solution to working with censored data. Secondly, particularly for single-item measures where censoring is extreme, an alternative is to examine the proportion of respondents in the tail of the distribution (ie. those who are below the mid-point of the scale, indicating overall unhappiness or dissatisfaction). This is done by creating binary variables from the subjective well-being data and using logistic regression models for analysis.

Chart 7.1: Example of the distribution on a multi-item subjective well-being measure: The SLSS



SLSS – Student’s life satisfaction scale.

Chart 7.2: Example of the distribution on a single-item subjective well-being measure: Happiness with friends



7.7 Findings

Findings are split into three sections: firstly, an examination of the relationship between poverty-related variables and overall subjective well-being is presented. Secondly, an examination of the impact of poverty variables on subjective well-being across a range of domains is presented. Finally, a more detailed examination of the relationship between poverty and subjective well-being in relation to children's perceptions of their relationship with their family is presented.

Overall subjective well-being

As noted above, previous research has found that the relationship between poverty and subjective well-being amongst children is elusive. Here, associations between the child-derived measure of material deprivation, living in a household that is likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and subjective well-being are examined. Based on previous research, it would be expected that associations between living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and subjective well-being will be minimal or non-existent. However, there is less background on the possible association between material deprivation and subjective well-being. Whilst, as reported above, Knies (2011) found no association between household or child material deprivation and subjective well-being, the study was based on adult-derived measures of material deprivation. Therefore, it is possible that a child-derived measure will relate more strongly to subjective well-being, since children's reports of what they need to avoid material deprivation may be more related to their day-to-day lived experiences of the condition.

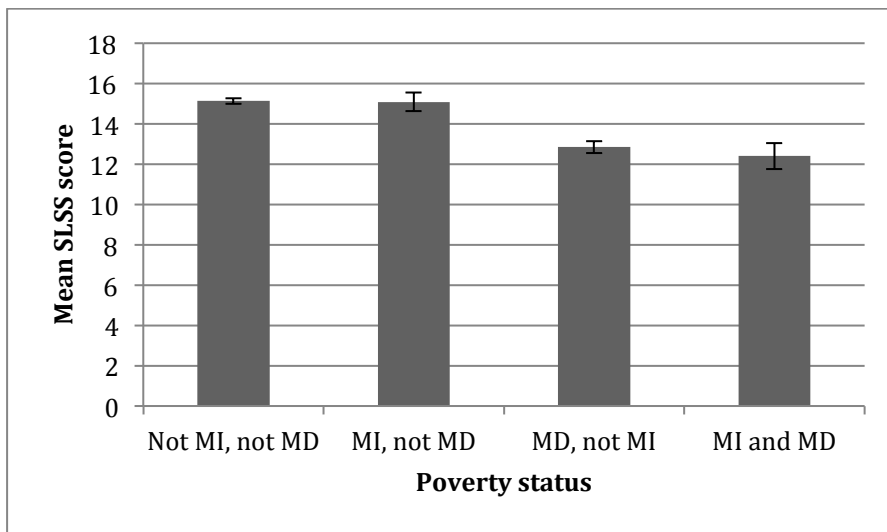
Chart 7.3 shows the relationship between subjective well-being, living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, and material deprivation. Four categories of children are examined:

- Non-poor children – ie. those who are not living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and are not materially deprived⁴⁹.
- Children in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits, but who are nevertheless not materially deprived.
- Children who are materially deprived but do not live in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits. And
- Children who are both living in households likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and are materially deprived.

Abbreviations are used as in the previous chapter. The chart clearly demonstrates that, as expected, there is no significant link between living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits and lower subjective well-being. Children who are not materially deprived, irrespective of their household's income status, have similar levels of subjective well-being. Conversely, there is a clear relationship between material deprivation status and lower subjective well-being. As before, this relationship between material deprivation and subjective well-being holds true irrespective of household income status. Based on the fact that confidence intervals for children's subjective well-being when comparing those who are materially deprived (irrespective of income status) to those who are not do not overlap, this relationship is likely to be statistically significant – a conclusion which is tested below in regression analysis.

⁴⁹ It should again be acknowledged here that this does not capture all income-poor children – indeed, the majority of income-poor children are likely missed by this income measure as Adams et al (2012) show that the majority of poor children in the UK are in in-work poverty. The label 'non-poor' is therefore used as a convenient shorthand, rather than an indication that these children are necessarily not in income poverty.

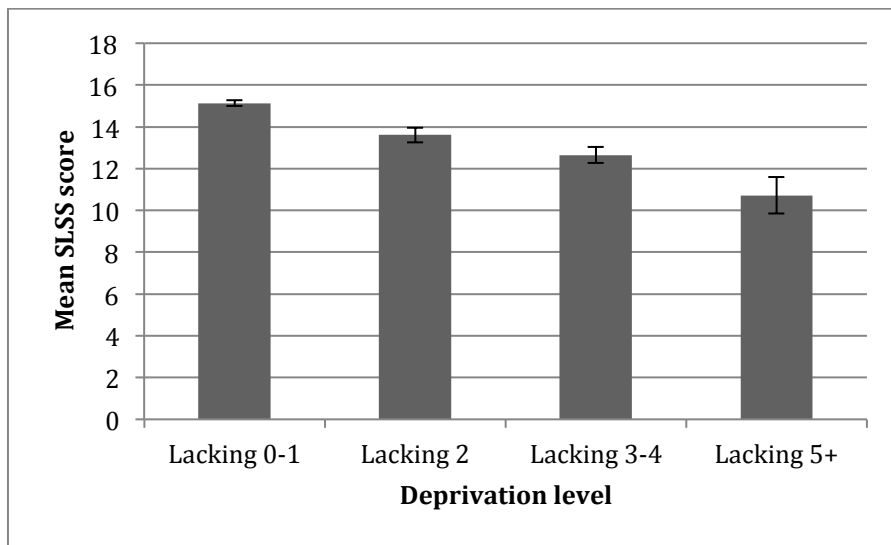
Chart 7.3: The relationship between minimum income, material deprivation, and subjective well-being



MD – being materially deprived; MI – living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits; SP – being in subjective poverty. SLSS – Student’s life satisfaction scale.

Material deprivation, then, appears to be associated with subjective well-being. However, another pertinent question is whether the effect becomes more pronounced as levels of material deprivation increase – that is, whether children who are more materially deprived experience a greater drop in subjective well-being than those who are less deprived. Chart 7.4 shows the relationship between increasing levels of deprivation and subjective well-being. Following the recommendations made in chapter five, deprivation is grouped into those lacking none or one (not deprived), those lacking two, lacking three or four and lacking five or more. These cut-off points were selected based on maintaining sufficient numbers in each group to allow for meaningful analysis. A steady decline in subjective well-being can be seen based on increasing levels of deprivation.

Chart 7.4: Subjective well-being by increasing levels of material deprivation



SLSS – Student’s life satisfaction scale.

Next, regression analyses were performed to test whether, having controlled for demographic variables, deprivation and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits were significantly associated with lower levels of overall subjective well-being. Firstly, linear and tobit regressions were run as described above. Secondly, logistic regressions were used to look at the odds of children having low subjective well-being.

Table 7.1 shows results of the linear and tobit regression analyses on the impact of material deprivation and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits on overall subjective well-being. As noted above, only very small differences are found in the coefficient estimates when these two models are compared. Looking firstly at just year group, gender and ethnicity, in columns two to five of the table, these demographic variables explain around 6% of the variation in subjective well-being. Older children, girls, and non-white children fare slightly worse than their younger, male, white counterparts. Family type was entered separately as this may relate to poverty – Adams et al (2012) confirm the well-established finding that lone parents are more likely to experience income poverty than couple families. This is shown in columns six to nine of the table. Family type was found to impact significantly on levels of

subjective well-being, with those in lone or other family types faring worse than those living with both parents. Other variables entered in the first model remain significant. In all, this model explains about 9% of the variation in overall subjective well-being. Finally, the minimum income indicator and deprivation measure were entered into the model. As would be expected based on the descriptive analysis above, living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits is not significantly associated with overall subjective well-being. Once these variables are entered into the model, being black is no longer associated with lower well-being, although being from another ethnic group is still associated with lower well-being, and other demographic variables retain significant associations. However, material deprivation has the strongest relationship to subjective well-being of the variables in the model, with children who are deprived of two items losing around 1.6-1.8 points on the 20 point scale; those lacking three or four items losing around 2.6-2.8 points; and those lacking five or more items losing 4.3-4.5 points. This model doubles the proportion of variation in overall subjective well-being explained to 18%, suggesting that material deprivation may explain around 9% of the variation in subjective well-being. All possible combinations of interactions between income poverty, material deprivation, family type and ethnicity were examined, with none making a significant contribution to the model.

Table 7.1: Regressions examining the impact of minimum income and material deprivation on subjective well-being

	Linear		Tobit		Linear		Tobit		Linear		Tobit	
	b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig	b	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	**	-1.03	**	-1.11	**	-1.06	**	-1.40	**	-1.50	**
	10	**	-2.27	**	-2.44	**	-2.25	**	-2.46	**	-2.65	**
Sex (boy as reference)		**	-0.56	**	-0.57	**	-0.60	**	-0.70	**	-0.72	**
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	*	-0.84	*	-0.94	*	-0.72	*	-0.24	NS	-0.29	NS
	Other	*	-0.61	*	-0.64	*	-0.76	**	-0.51	*	-0.53	*
Family type (two parents as reference)	Lone parent						-1.43	**	-1.18	**	-1.26	**
	Step or other						-1.47	**	-1.28	**	-1.35	**
Minimum income indicator									-0.05	NS	-0.07	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0 or 1 as reference)	2								-1.63	**	-1.78	**
	3-4								-2.62	**	-2.79	**
	5+								-4.28	**	-4.54	**
Adjusted r ²		0.06					0.09			0.18		

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level, NS indicates non-significant association. b refers to the unstandardised beta coefficient in linear or tobit regression.

Table 7.2 shows a similar series of multivariate logistic regressions checking the impact of minimum income and material deprivation on the odds of having low subjective well-being. In the first model, older children, girls, and children who are not white are significantly more likely to have low well-being. When family type is added into the model, these demographic variables remain significant and additionally children in lone or other family types are significantly more likely to have low well-being. When poverty-related variables are entered, living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits is not significantly associated and ethnicity is no longer significantly associated with low well-being. Older children, girls, and children from lone- or other family types remain more likely to have low well-being. Children lacking two items are twice as likely as those lacking no or only one item to have low well-being; those lacking three or four items are just over four times as likely; and those lacking five or more items are eight times as likely. As above, no significant interactions were found.

Table 7.2: Odds of having low well-being by minimum income and material deprivation

		Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig	Odds Ratio	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	1.4	*	1.5	*	1.9	**
	10	2.3	**	2.3	**	2.8	**
Sex (boy as reference)		1.5	**	1.6	**	1.7	**
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	1.9	*	1.8	*	1.3	NS
	Other	1.5	*	1.7	**	1.5	NS
Family type (two parents as reference)	Lone parent			2.5	**	2.2	**
	Step or other			2.7	**	2.6	**
Minimum income						1.1	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0-1 as reference)	2					2.0	**
	3-4					4.1	**
	5+					8.0	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

Domains of the Good Childhood Index

This section explores the impact of material deprivation on the different domains of subjective well-being identified in the Rees et al's (2010) GCI. Chart 7.5 and table 7.3 show the impact of increasing levels of material deprivation on happiness in the ten domains of the index. Chart 7.5 shows mean scores for different deprivation levels across the domains, and table 7.3 shows the F statistics resulting from ANOVA tests run to determine whether differences are statistically significant. A uniform pattern is evident across the domains – as material deprivation deepens, the impact on children's happiness in each domain increases. However, whilst associations with all of the domains are statistically significant, the relationships vary in strength across the domains. Associations with material deprivation are particularly strong for two domains. Unsurprisingly, the association between material deprivation and happiness with things (money and possessions) is one of the two joint highest. The other domain which has the strongest association with material deprivation is family.

Chart 7.5: Happiness in the GCI domains by material deprivation

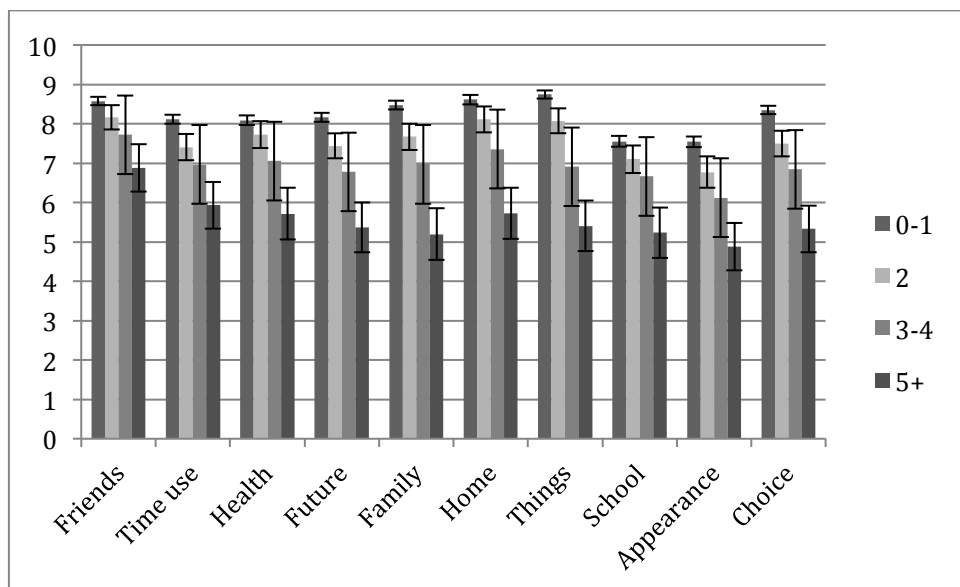


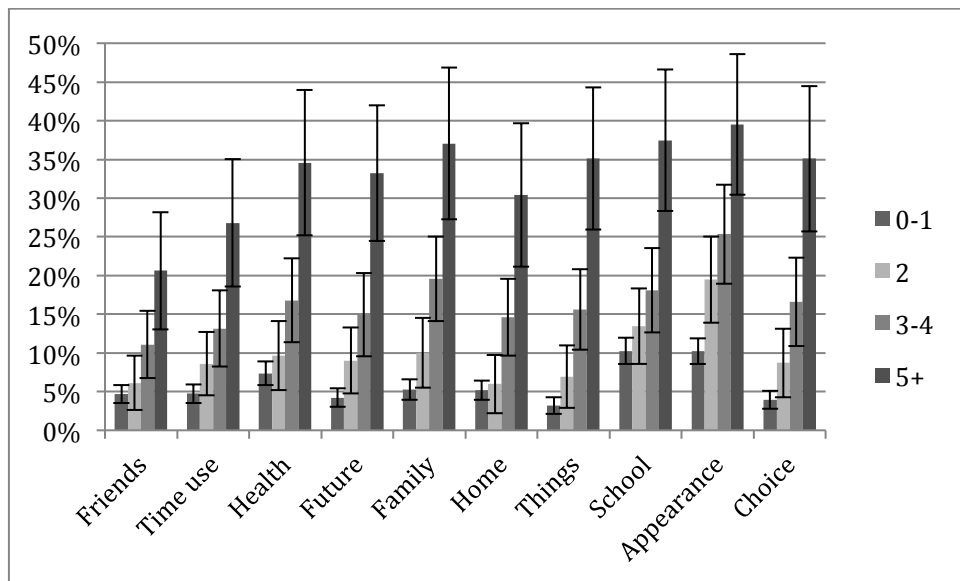
Table 7.3: Strength of the association between material deprivation and GCI domains

	SWB difference (lacking 0-1 compared to lacking 5+)	F	Sig
Family	3.3	(3, 371.9) 71.3	**
Things	3.3	(3, 336.1) 93.9	**
Choice	3.0	(3, 376.7) 73.4	**
Home	2.9	(3, 343.4) 51.9	**
Future	2.8	(3, 522.6) 60.0	**
Appearance	2.7	(3, 616.6) 44.4	**
Health	2.4	(3, 407.3) 33.7	**
School	2.3	(3, 848.4) 31.1	**
Time use	2.2	(3, 564.3) 41.0	**
Friends	1.7	(3, 591.0) 25.5	**

F statistics are reported with the between-groups degrees of freedom, and the within-groups degrees of freedom, in brackets before the F statistic itself. In general a higher F statistic indicates a larger effect size, but this is partly dependent on degrees of freedom in the specified model. SWB – subjective well-being. * indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level.

Next, the odds of being in the tail of each domain of subjective well-being in the GCI were explored. This approach was taken rather than using linear and tobit regressions as above since the single-item measures result in extremely skewed data. Chart 7.6 shows the proportion unhappy on each domain by material deprivation. Unhappiness is defined as scoring below the mid-point on the relevant measure (ie. in this case scoring below 5), as noted above. Across the domains, as material deprivation deepens a higher proportion of children are in the tail of the distribution. As with examining mean scores on the domains, the relationship is consistent across domains but varying in strength, with the strongest differences between non-deprived and severely deprived (lacking five or more) children being in the domains of things and family. In these two domains, 32% more children are unhappy amongst those lacking five or more items, than are amongst those lacking none or one items.

Chart 7.6: Proportion of children unhappy on GCI domains by material deprivation



These relationships were examined further in multivariate logistic regressions. Results are shown in table 7.4. For most domains of subjective well-being, all levels of deprivation are associated with significantly higher odds of being unhappy (the exceptions are friends, health, home and school). For all domains, lacking three or four or five or more items are associated with increased odds of reporting unhappiness. For those lacking five or more items, the odds of being unhappy on each domain range from 4.4-14.5 times more likely than those lacking none or one items. The domains where the relationship is strongest are things, choice and family. The odds of being unhappy with things increase to 14.5 for those lacking five or more items; for being unhappy with choice the odds increase to 11.8; and for family they increase to 10.2.

Table 7.4: Odds of being unhappy in the GCI domains

		Friends	Sig	Time use	Sig	Health	Sig	Future	Sig	Family	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	0.8	NS	1.0	NS	1.3	NS	1.4	NS	1.4	NS
	10	0.9	NS	1.6	*	1.8	*	2.0	*	2.1	*
Sex (boy as reference)		1.6	*	1.2	NS	1.1	NS	1.0	NS	1.6	*
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	0.7	NS	0.7	NS	0.9	NS	0.8	NS	1.0	NS
	Other	1.1	NS	1.6	NS	1.3	NS	1.7	*	1.1	NS
Family type (two parents as reference)	Lone parent	1.7	*	1.3	NS	1.3	NS	1.3	NS	2.1	**
	Step or other	1.3	NS	0.9	NS	1.7	*	1.2	NS	2.1	*
Minimum income		1.5	NS	1.2	NS	1.8	*	1.3	NS	0.8	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0-1 as reference)	2	1.3	NS	1.9	*	1.3	NS	2.3	*	2.0	*
	3-4	2.3	*	2.9	**	2.4	**	3.8	**	4.4	**
	5+	4.7	**	6.7	**	5.7	**	9.8	**	10.2	**

		Home	Sig	Things	Sig	School	Sig	Appearance	Sig	Choice	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	1.6	NS	2.1	*	1.1	NS	2.2	**	1.5	NS
	10	1.9	*	2.5	*	1.6	*	2.9	**	2.2	*
Sex (boy as reference)		1.1	NS	1.6	*	0.8	NS	2.2	**	1.3	NS
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	0.9	NS	1.7	NS	1.0	NS	0.5	NS	0.9	NS
	Other	1.3	NS	1.7	*	1.6	*	1.2	NS	1.1	NS
Family type (two parents as reference)	Lone parent	1.6	*	1.5	NS	1.9	**	1.4	NS	1.5	NS
	Step or other	2.3	*	1.4	NS	1.9	*	1.6	*	2.5	*
Minimum income		1.5	NS	1.3	NS	1.2	NS	1.2	NS	1.5	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0-1 as reference)	2	1.1	NS	2.4	*	1.3	NS	2.3	**	2.3	*
	3-4	3.0	**	5.7	**	1.8	*	3.1	**	4.7	**
	5+	6.8	**	14.5	**	4.4	**	5.9	**	11.8	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

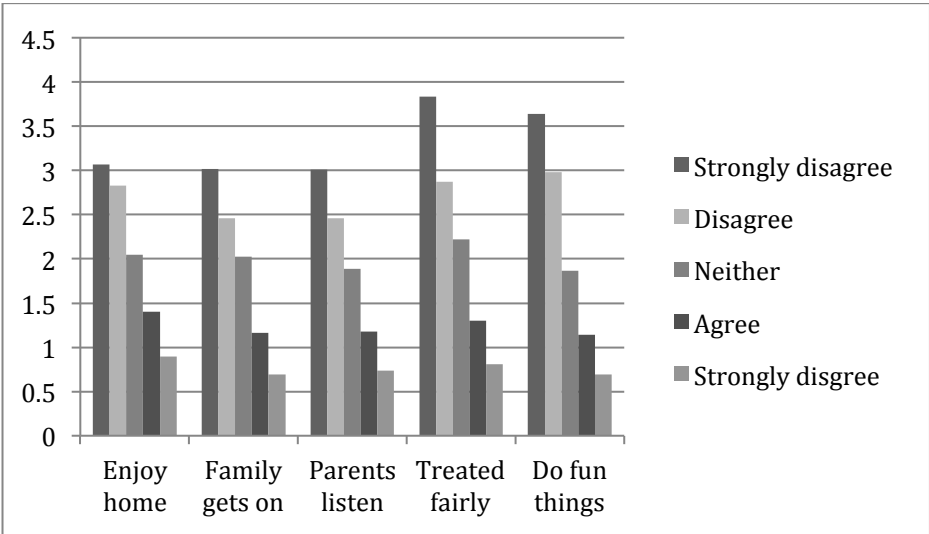
Subjective family well-being

Other than happiness with things, family stands out as one of the domains where material deprivation appears to have the strongest relationship to decreases in subjective well-being, and the odds of having low subjective well-being. As noted above, family comes second only to things in terms of the mean number of points lost on the single-item subjective well-being measure, and comes third to things and choice when the odds of being unhappy are examined. This is possibly not surprising – as noted in chapter one, family can act as a mediating factor between the economic status of a household and the material status of a child. Parents can protect children from the worst impacts of poverty, but children may also perceive their own material well-being as dependent on their relationships with family as well as their family's resources. Poverty is also widely acknowledged as putting strain on family relationships (see Pemberton et al, 2013). For all of these reasons, the relationship between material deprivation and children's subjective well-being in the domain of family is worthy of further examination.

The impact of material deprivation on subjective well-being in the domain of family was examined using each of the five questions listed above, and using a scale formed by summing those items. Chart 7.7 shows the relationship between mean scores on the deprivation scale (ranging from zero to ten) according to responses to the five questions (which were on a five point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'). On each question, the mean deprivation score was higher if children disagreed (ie. if they reported worse relationships in the aspect of family life covered by the question). This is particularly notable for the questions relating to children feeling that they are treated fairly by their parents, and that they do fun things with their parents. The second of these perhaps has a more straightforward explanation – it is not surprising that families who are surviving on lower incomes would both be unable to provide their children with a range of material goods that may provide fun for children, and would be less likely to be able to afford activities children consider to be fun. However, fun activities are not necessarily expensive activities, so the relationship still bears further examination. The

relationship to perceptions of fairness may reflect children’s perceptions of inequitable intra-household distributions – children whose parents cannot or will not provide them with the material goods children see as necessities may feel that this is a matter of choice rather than necessity on the part of their parents, and so may feel that they lose out in household resource distributions.

Chart 7.7: Mean deprivation score by family well-being variables



The relationship between material deprivation and subjective family well-being, having controlled for demographic factors, was examined using linear and tobit regression analysis. Results are shown in table 7.5. As found previously, coefficients were fairly similar whether linear or tobit regression was used. Older children, girls and those living in lone parent or other family types reported lower family well-being. Ethnicity and minimum income were not significantly associated with family well-being. The strongest association of the variables included was with material deprivation. Children lacking two items faced a drop on average of 2.1-2.6 points on the 20 point scale. Children lacking three or four items lost 2.8-3.3 points, and those lacking five or more items lost 5.0-5.6 points. The linear model explains about 26% of the variation in children’s subjective family well-being.

Table 7.5: Regressions examining the impact of material deprivation on subjective family well-being

		Linear		Tobit	
		b	Sig	b	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	-1.52	**	-1.93	**
	10	-3.11	**	-3.64	**
Sex (boy as reference)		-0.83	**	-1.00	**
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	0.12	NS	0.17	NS
	Other	0.20	NS	0.37	NS
Family type (two parents as reference)	Lone parent	-1.03	**	-1.22	**
	Step or other	-1.29	**	-1.49	**
Minimum income		0.36	NS	0.47	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0-1 as reference)	2	-2.12	**	-2.55	**
	3-4	-2.81	**	-3.30	**
	5+	-5.04	**	-5.59	**
Adjusted r squared		0.26			

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level, NS indicates non-significant association. b refers to the unstandardised beta coefficient in linear or tobit regression.

Finally, multivariate logistic regression was used to explore the impact of material deprivation on the odds of having low family well-being. Results are shown in table 7.6. Older children, girls, and children in step or other family types were more likely to have low family well-being. Ethnicity, living in a lone-parent family, and living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits were not associated with increased odds of having low well-being. Children lacking two items were three times as likely as children lacking none or one items to have low well-being; those lacking three or four items were 4.6 times as likely; and those lacking five or more items were over 13 times as likely to report low family well-being.

Table 7.6: Odds of having low family well-being

		Odds Ratio	Sig
Year group (6 as reference)	8	3.4	**
	10	9.1	**
Sex (boy as reference)		1.7	*
Ethnicity (white as reference)	Black	0.9	NS
	Other	0.8	NS
Family type (both parents as reference)	Lone parent	1.5	NS
	Step or other	2.5	**
Minimum income		1.0	NS
Material deprivation (lacking 0-1 as reference)	2	3.1	**
	3-4	4.6	**
	5+	13.3	**

* indicates significance at the 0.05 level; ** indicates significance at the <0.01 level; NS indicates non-significant association.

7.8 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter has been to examine the impact of poverty-related variables on subjective well-being, both overall and using the domains in the GCI. The impact of very low income (using proxies for living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits) was compared to that of material deprivation. Analysis identified subjective family well-being as a domain where material deprivation has a particularly strong impact, so additional analyses were performed on this sub-domain.

Unlike previous research into the relationship between poverty and subjective well-being amongst children, significant and medium-strength associations were found. Whilst the limitations of the indicator for very low income in this dataset (outlined in the previous chapter) must be acknowledged, these findings support those of Knies (2011) and Rees (2010) that income and indicators of income are not particularly successful in explaining variation in subjective well-being. However, as Cummins (2000) highlights, it is unlikely that this lack of a relationship reflects a genuine lack of association between poverty and subjective well-being – as numerous qualitative studies of poverty (including Ridge’s (2002) child-specific study) show, living in poverty strongly impacts people’s life experiences and their happiness. Rather, Cummins points out, it is likely that it is the effects of poverty, more than low income per se,

which will be useful in demonstrating these links. Knies's (2010) finding that adult-derived measures of household and child material deprivation were similarly not associated with subjective well-being may be seen as challenging this, but it is also possible that the lack of an association in her work is a result of differences in perceptions of what items and activities are necessities between adults and children. Given that *subjective* well-being is to do with personal rather than expert or external perceptions of well-being, it is likely that items and activities which children themselves deem to be important will be better at explaining variation than those which adults, as 'experts' on children's needs, deem necessary. This is borne out by the findings here – the child-derived index of material deprivation was significantly associated with subjective well-being, a finding which was consistent across overall subjective well-being and the various domains of the GCI. This conclusion can only be tentative at this stage – Knies (2010) was working with different data, different respondents (adults provided data on children's possessions in the Understanding Society data which she used), and different measures of subjective well-being. However, the findings here suggest that this is a topic worthy of further exploration.

Looking in more detail at the different domains of subjective well-being, as noted above, it is probably unsurprising that subjective family well-being is strongly associated with material deprivation. This appears to be particularly the case in perceptions of fair treatment and fun within the family setting. Whilst some tentative explanations for this are provided above, more detailed qualitative and quantitative research would be necessary to test the validity of these. Happiness with the amount of choice they had was another domain where, perhaps unsurprisingly, material deprivation was found to have a stronger impact. This relationship may operate on a basic level – poor children may live in families who are unable to allow them the same choices as their richer peers because many of these choices will involve a financial cost – for example whether to go out to the cinema with friends is not only an issue of parental consent, but for most children is an issue of whether parents can and will provide the money for this to be an option. However, it may also or

alternatively reflect a broader lack of choice associated with social exclusion and feeling unable to fully participate in society irrespective of whether such participation involves a direct financial cost – the “narrowing of horizons” amongst poor children noted by Attree (2006: 54). As above, either or both of these explanations require further research to support or challenge them.

However, in some domains of well-being results are somewhat surprising. Notably, happiness with time use, friends and school show weaker associations with material deprivation than many of the other domains in the index. Given that qualitative research suggests that social exclusion chimes with children’s experiences of poverty (Ridge, 2002; Redmond, 2009), it is surprising that happiness with friends, time use and school are not more strongly impacted. Friends and school could be reasonably assumed to be interlinked – children spend a great deal of their time at school with peers. Indeed, Ridge (2002) notes the importance of various aspects of exclusion from school-based activities and school-level norms such as uniform, other clothing and school trips to the misery caused to children by their experiences of poverty. One possible explanation for the lack of a stronger association may be that many schools within the UK are comparatively economically homogenous – poor children tend to live in geographical areas where there are higher rates of poverty and to attend schools where there is a higher prevalence of poor pupils (Smith, 2010). Whilst children may be disadvantaged compared to national standards, then, they may not perceive themselves to be so in relation to other children in their schools, leaving their happiness with friends and schools comparatively intact. In terms of time use, a stronger relationship may have been expected for the reasons outlined above – if poor children feel socially excluded, it would seem reasonable to assume that part of that exclusion is from activities which they would like to spend time doing. A possible reason for the lack of a stronger association (as above, requiring a great deal of further exploration) may be found in the increasing acknowledgement, outlined for example by Power et al (2003), that children from middle class families face a great deal of pressure to succeed academically. This may reduce their happiness with time use since they feel pressured to spend less time than they

would like to on enjoyable activities in favour of studying. That is, the lack of an association may not indicate that poorer children are happier than would be expected, but rather than richer children may be less happy than might reasonably be assumed to be the case.

Section 4

Conclusions and implications

Chapter 8

Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This thesis has detailed the rationale for, development of, and use of a new, child-derived measure of child material deprivation. Its intended purpose has been to assess the potential for children's views of what constitutes material deprivation to be incorporated into the range of available scientifically valid and practically useful measures of poverty. The instrument is intended to be used alongside other measures of child poverty. This purpose is in line with increasing academic awareness of the importance of research with children being informed by the diverse range of children's own perspectives and values, an awareness which has been translated into various policy commitments to consider children's perspectives in decisions which will impact on their lives. This conclusion begins with a discussion of the limitations of this research. It then summarises the key findings and conclusions from previous chapters, and details their implications for research and policy.

8.2 Limitations

Whilst efforts have been made to acknowledge specific limitations and justify key decisions throughout this thesis, many of these bear repeating as they have implications for the work as a whole. Conclusions, policy implications, and future research agendas should therefore be considered in light of these limitations.

Limitations are detailed under three broad headings. These are: conceptual and theoretical; data and analysis; and implications of the work.

Conceptual and theoretical limitations

As noted in the literature review, there are many and varied approaches to poverty measurement, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. The

focus of this thesis has been on material deprivation, specifically following as far as possible the socially perceived necessities approach pioneered by Mack and Lansley (1985) and developed by Gordon and Pantazis (1997) and Pantazis et al (2006). Reasons for taking this approach are outlined in chapters one and two, but it is important to acknowledge that other, equally valid conceptions of poverty could have been adopted, which may have resulted in different findings. Secondly, as noted in chapter two, it is vital to acknowledge the limited extent to which this research is child-centric, and the measure child-derived. This work is intended as a first step in incorporating children's perspectives – it is very far from being the last word in the matter. It is hoped, however, that this work will serve as both a stimulus and an encouragement to further research.

Inherent limitations in data and analysis

As stated previously, the conclusions drawn are constrained by the data collected, which is in turn constrained by the theoretical and conceptual framework. There is however a further constraint concerning the generalisability of the results. Although, as noted in chapter one, 'child' and 'children' are used as convenient shorthand throughout, it must be acknowledged that the respondents were limited to children living in England, for the most part attending mainstream schools, and aged 8-16 but in many cases further limited to 11-16 year olds due to the different questions asked of different age groups. Data limitations in the lack of details needed for probability weighting and complex sample consideration mean that, whilst the sample is largely representative of the population specified in the previous sentence, findings cannot be assumed to be fully generalisable to this population. Although findings are likely to be indicative of similar trends in the wider population, they can only really be assumed to apply to the specific sample.

Limitations to the space available in the survey meant that it was not possible to entirely follow Mack and Lansley's (1985) methodology in terms of socially perceived necessities. Children were not asked whether they viewed items and activities as necessities, but rather focus group findings and prevalence of

ownership were used as indicators that items and activities were probably viewed as necessities. Similarly, it was not possible to fully follow Gordon and Nandy's (2012) methodology for creating a politically and scientifically valid index, as detailed in chapter five. However, efforts were made to follow this as far as possible within these limitations.

Additionally, it was not possible to ask children about all facets of poverty. Topics such as household income are not suitable for inclusion in surveys where children are the only respondents, and indicators of low income which can be asked of children tend to be relatively extreme – for example only the very poorest of poor households qualify for free school meals for children or have no adults in paid work. Whilst it is possible therefore to compare children who are materially deprived and those likely to be in severe income poverty, it is not possible to identify the majority of income-poor children in the data available. The issue of what kinds of question to ask children to identify income poor children, and indeed of whether this is a realistic aim in surveys of children without links to adult-supplied data, is worthy of further consideration and exploration. However, it should also be noted, as detailed in Chapter 1, that low income as a measure of poverty is itself highly problematic and does not necessarily provide a good indication of low living standards.

It is important to acknowledge that not only practical limitations but also knowledge limitations at the time of survey design (and indeed throughout) contributed to these shortcomings – with hindsight different questions may have been included. A great deal has been learnt through the process of doing the research which may have led to very different decisions had the knowledge been in place at the beginning of the process! One example of this would be to have included questions on subjective poverty which matched more closely those included in surveys of adults (ensuring of course their suitability to child respondents). This would have allowed for the incorporation of children's perceptions of their own, rather than their family's, material situation. It would also have allowed for more direct comparisons between the PSE and the Children's Society data. Additionally, drawing on the wealth of experience available through the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Minimum Income

Standards work (see Davis et al, 2012, for details) in the focus group methods may have helped to better convey the notion of relative poverty to children, although it must be stressed that children did appear to grasp this concept using the methods detailed here.

Limitations to implications

All of the above limitations have implications for how informative findings are, and how much future work is needed to validate and develop the work that has begun here. Additionally, some further limitations to the implications of this thesis must be acknowledged.

Firstly, it must be noted that the findings presented here are unlikely to gain widespread policy and popular acceptance. In part this may reflect some of the (arguable) injustices faced by children in terms of an entrenched reluctance to take their views and experiences seriously (detailed at length in the literature within the new sociology of childhood). The findings presented here may add to the weight of evidence challenging this reluctance, but they can only be interpreted as shedding light on the specific topics addressed here, rather than on children's social position as a whole. An important consideration in this context is whether the work here falls foul of Piachaud's (1987) position that studies of poverty should contribute to the moral imperative of addressing poverty, or risk being voyeuristic in nature and thus contributing to the stigmatisation of the poor rather than helping them. However, it could be argued that another important imperative in researching marginalised groups is, where such challenges can be supported by evidence, to challenge the rationale mainstream actors have for marginalising these groups. The research presented here offers such a challenge, with some concrete implications (outlined below) for what this means in research and policy arenas. However, it should also be acknowledged that many more of the implications for policy are not concrete – indeed, they are indirect and their translation into specific implications may require a great deal more research. These findings and implications are now presented, and should be read in the context of the limitations outlined here.

8.3 Key findings and implications

Several key findings have been noted in the preceding chapters. Following the structure of the thesis, these findings can be split into those which are primarily methodological and those which directly address the nature and challenge of combating child poverty.

Methodological findings

Children as research participants

The results presented in this thesis indicate that when research is designed with children in mind, child respondents are capable of providing valid and useful data. Chapter three details the production of such data in qualitative focus groups with children, and the remainder of the thesis details it in quantitative surveys. This finding adds to the body of literature challenging perceptions of children as incompetent ‘becomings’, unable to provide useful or reliable evidence. Indeed, it affirms the position of many authors within the new sociology of childhood such as Wyness (1999) that children are reflective actors, with an awareness of, and engaged in shaping, their own lives.

As noted previously, the use of adults as proxy respondents for children is relatively widespread. A major finding of this thesis was that whilst adults and children tended to agree in their responses to objective survey questions, the introduction of any degree of subjectivity reduced levels of agreement. In this situation, it is difficult to justify an assumption that adults are better reporters than children on children’s own subjective feelings and perceptions – particularly in light of Ridge’s (2002) finding that many children protect parents from a full knowledge of the impact poverty has on them. This challenges the widely held assumption that the commonly accepted limitations of proxy respondents (see Fowler, 2009) do not apply where using adults as proxies for children is concerned. This assumption is well summarised by Hendershot (2004, online) who writes that “In surveys about children ... the respondent rule usually specifies an adult proxy respondent ... because children are not accurate reporters of some kinds of information about themselves”.

Whilst this may be true about *some kinds* of information, and for *some groups* of children, this research highlights that it is in fact not the case for school children within the 8-16 age range answering questions relating to some objective and subjective facets of poverty experiences. This has been implicitly assumed to be the case in many major UK surveys of poverty (the FRS and the PSE amongst them) which ask parents for subjective details of their children's lives. More careful and rigorous testing of this assumption is therefore indicated in future research. It is important to acknowledge that practical and resource limitations will often preclude the use of children as direct respondents in large-scale surveys which are not directly and solely concerned with children. But where adult proxies are used it may be more appropriate to either limit questions to objective and impersonal aspects of children's lives, or to collect data with an understanding that it will reflect adult perceptions of children's subjective and private states, rather than providing a direct and accurate reflection of those states themselves.

The validity of a child-derived measure

Focus group content confirmed children's capacity to engage with complex and subtle discussions about absolute and relative poverty, material needs, and socially perceived necessities. This supports the use of the selected approach to poverty in developing a child-derived measure (although it does not preclude the use of alternative approaches). Overlapping but distinct approaches to material needs were evident in children's and adults' reports, and as noted above this suggests that the same concept is being viewed, albeit through different lenses. These findings challenge the credibility of the dismissal of children's views and reports as irrelevant or unreliable. Incorporating children's views of what child poverty is broadens our understanding of the issue, and children's reports reveal subtle differences between adults and children in how poverty is perceived and experienced.

An overarching purpose of this thesis was to develop a scientifically valid and reliable instrument to measure child material deprivation based on children's own ideas about what constitutes material deprivation. Gordon and Nandy's

(2012) steps for establishing such a scale were used to test the instrument as far as possible within the limitations of available data. Whilst there is no doubt that there is room for improvement in the scale produced here, this purpose has been broadly achieved.

The findings noted here have implications for how child poverty is measured, in light of policy commitments to children's rights. The policy commitment noted above - to include children's views in decisions concerning them - may have been enacted to some extent in micro-level decisions such as children's rights to express their opinions in their dealings with schools, health services, and personal and family legal proceedings (Potter (2008) discusses the implementation of children's rights legislation in family law proceedings, and Participation Works (2008) provide details for children on their rights in various settings). However, there is less evidence of its translation into macro-level decisions, such as how things like child poverty and child well-being are measured and addressed at a national scale. Indeed, Redmond (2009) highlights a lack of research into child poverty which is concerned with children's own perceptions of the concept and of their needs. Whilst the aims of this thesis are far more modest than to make any claims about how and whether to include children's views in the wide range of policy domains which impact their lives, some small contribution to the debate can be drawn from the finding that children's views can be incorporated into a scientific method for contributing to the measurement of child poverty.

In terms of specific implications of this finding, many surveys relating to both children and poverty incorporate questions on children's personal and household material status, and on children's possessions. A detailed list of such questions in a wide range of surveys is presented in appendix A. The index detailed here may provide a useful addition or alternative for inclusion in these surveys - particularly surveys such as the British Household Panel Survey (now Understanding Society) and the Millennium Cohort Survey which already incorporate child-reported sections, and do not yet address child poverty in these sections. Based on the findings presented here, the scale could also be of value in surveys concerned with child poverty when proxy respondents for

children are required, as long as parental perceptions of children's wanting or not wanting items are treated as that – parental perceptions – rather than as children's genuine preferences. Similarly the scale may be of value in surveys which currently draw on the Family Affluence Scale, a measure created for the Health Behaviours in School-age Children survey, when children's own material well-being, independently from that of their family, is of interest.

Implications for understanding and addressing child poverty

Assessing the nature of child poverty – the UK Child Poverty Strategy

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, child poverty is high on the UK political agenda. Whilst consecutive Labour and Coalition governments have agreed that its eradication is of primary importance, debate persists as to how best to define and measure the problem. Indeed, these two activities – definition and measurement – are not distinguished in policy documents adequately for a coherent message around either to be deduced. Current poverty measures – based on income levels and incorporating some elements of material deprivation – were introduced under the Labour government, and are outlined in chapter one. More recently, the Coalition's Child Poverty Strategy criticises these approaches for being overly narrow. The aim of the Strategy is to change the way that child poverty is measured to reflect a broader understanding of the issue, based on aspects of poverty which go beyond income and material deprivation – full details can be found in DWP (2011) and DWP (2012). But whilst alternative measures of child poverty are proposed both within the Strategy and in the Coalition's widely criticised (for example Bradshaw, 2013; Veit-Wilson, 2013; Besemer and Main, 2013) consultation about measures, nowhere is a coherent definition of poverty presented. In this section, the proposals are assessed in relation to the findings of this thesis. However, the broader criticism – that without a working definition of poverty, proposed measures are difficult to assess coherently – must be borne in mind as this limits ability to address issues from a comparable conceptual framework. Three prominent themes in the Child Poverty Strategy and the related Consultation which are pertinent to this thesis include a focus on families rather

than on children per se; a focus on well-becoming rather than on well-being; and a focus on behaviours rather than on available resources.

As noted in chapter one, children's lives are entwined with those of their families; given children's enforced social and legal dependence on adults, noted in chapter two, a full understanding of child poverty requires an understanding of the wider (including usually family) circumstances in which children live. However, findings presented in this thesis suggest that family circumstances, whilst important, do not tell the full story. Qualitative data presented in chapter three suggests that children do not necessarily feel that their families have a full understanding of their material needs; and quantitative data suggests both that children's and adults' perceptions of their material status do not necessarily match (in chapters four and six), and that a child's poverty status is not necessarily accurately proxied by the status of their household (in chapter five). Priorities outlined in the Child Poverty Strategy include ensuring that 'families' (presumably parents rather than children themselves) are motivated to be 'hard-working' rather than dependent on the benefits system; improving 'family stability'; and improving the parenting skills of adults bringing children up in impoverished circumstances. In relation to the first of these, the majority of income-poor children in the UK live in households with at least one adult in paid work, demonstrating that child income poverty cannot be addressed through parental activation alone; additionally, the existence of poor (materially deprived) children in non-income-poor families found in this research suggests that there is a need to monitor not only household work and income, but also the ways in which resources are allocated within the household. In relation to the second, whilst non-nuclear family types were associated with increased odds of experiencing material deprivation, the most obvious explanation for this would appear to be lower levels of financial resources available to these families. This is illustrated in analysis of the HBAI data which showed similar proportions of children in income poverty in working lone parent families compared to working couple families (24% as compared to 19%), and similar rates of child poverty in these two family types when households are workless (65% in lone parent families, and 69% in couple

families) (JRF, 2013). Increasing the resources available to workless- or low-income families is therefore posited as a more effective method for addressing child poverty than is increasing family stability. Regarding the final point, a finding of this and other research (in the UK setting, see Middleton et al 1997; Gordon et al, 2013) is that many income-poor parents sacrifice their own needs to provide for their children – something which suggests protective parental behaviour, and certainly does not suggest a deficit in parenting skills amongst the poor. As Bradshaw (2013) notes, children are in poverty in households across the distribution of parental skills. A more effective approach would be to address deficits in parenting skills where such deficits are found, and address deficits in income and material resources where poverty is found, rather than conflate the two issues.

In addition to the issue of children's and family's lives as intertwined but non-identical, a further consideration noted in chapter one is the balance between considerations of children's well-being – ie. their happiness and wellness in the present – and their well-becoming – ie. their progression towards happiness and wellness in adulthood. Ben-Arieh (2008) notes a pre-occupation with well-becoming in much of the earlier child-related research, and Uprichard (2008) suggests that a simultaneous consideration of both is essential to developing a full understanding of children's lives. A strong focus of the Child Poverty Strategy and the associated Consultation are on life chances – that is, on attempting to improve poor children's future outcomes through higher educational attainment and decreasing behaviours with associated long-term health risks. Whilst these are valuable goals in their own right, as Bradshaw (2013) notes, they are well-becoming concerns, not well-being concerns. Findings presented in chapter seven of this thesis demonstrate links between child poverty and well-being, and it is postulated that the social exclusion resulting from lacking what peers take for granted is a root cause of the deficit in well-being between poor and non-poor children. Therefore, an increased focus compared to what is evident in the Strategy on well-being, and on social processes and material provision which facilitate this, is indicated.

The final issue noted above is that the Strategy focuses on behaviours rather than on resources. Family stability, noted above, is one example of this – behaviours and choices around living arrangements, rather than availability of material resources, are emphasised. Similarly, the Strategy highlights the importance of drug and alcohol use and addiction – issues which affect people across the income distribution. Whilst such issues may have important implications for children’s overall well-being, their measurement as indicators of child *poverty* results in the loss of a link between poverty and inadequate material provision (discussed in chapter one). As noted above, the investigation of behaviours relating to intra-household sharing may be valuable in measuring child poverty – this thesis has supported findings of previous work (for example Ridge, 2002; Middleton et al, 1997; Cockburn et al, 2006) that intra-household distributions are not always equitable and that both poor children can exist in non-poor families and non-poor children can exist in poor families. However, the behaviours proposed in the Strategy do not relate to this. Even where the behaviours proposed as indicators of child poverty in the Strategy may be linked to what is known about child poverty, the links are indirect and the proposed behaviours or choices are not the pertinent ones. For example, following Duflo’s (2000), Gordon et al’s (2003) and Middleton et al’s (1997) findings that women tend to prioritise spending on children, in measuring family stability it may be the case that children moving from two parent families including a male adult to single parent or step families including only female adults may become better off, or at least may begin to receive a more equitable share of household resources. However, this is not the thrust of the proposed measure, and in any case if getting at intra-household distributions were the purpose of this measure, more efficient and direct methods such as that proposed in this thesis are available.

To sum up the implications of this work for the Child Poverty Strategy, this thesis has demonstrated that a narrower definition and operationalisation of poverty can maintain intuitive understandings of the concept, and can also be developed in a way that associations between poverty and other forms of disadvantage and deprivation can be examined. As outlined in chapter one,

narrower approaches to poverty such as income and material deprivation have the advantage of intuitive comprehensibility; they align with popular conceptions of what 'poverty' means. Whilst the value of broader approaches is acknowledged, these need careful theoretical justification and empirical testing. Without such testing, there is a high risk that *causes and effects* of poverty will be conflated with *definitions* of poverty. The Strategy is criticised by many respondents to the consultation – for example Bradshaw (2013), Veit-Wilson (2013), Besemer and Main (2013) - for falling foul of just this principle. Issues such as worklessness, which increase risks of poverty, are conflated with poverty itself – a conflation which, if enacted in the measurement of child poverty, would preclude or at best hamper investigations into the links between the two. This is particularly important since, whilst most children in workless households in the UK are in poverty, most children in poverty in the UK are not in workless households. Numerous similar conflation are made in the Strategy with regard to family stability, parental addiction, household debt, parental skill levels, and so forth.

Identifying poor children

The child-derived material deprivation measure of child poverty presented in this thesis was found to identify similar types of children as vulnerable to poverty as adult-derived measures. The groups of children identified in previous research as at higher risk of poverty, for example by Sharma (2007) and by Bradshaw (2011), were similar to those identified here. This lends further credibility to the measure as capturing a different aspect of a similar underlying construct to that which is captured by adult-derived measures. The measure therefore provides a useful addition to existing income and material deprivation measures, with the potential to contribute to both academic research and policy interventions.

A major aim of this thesis was to create a measure which could identify children's poverty status independently of that of their household. Whilst adult-derived measures may provide some insight into this, their limitations are outlined in chapter one. Details of the success of this measure in achieving this

aim are presented in chapter five. Whilst it is hard to see how the distinction between child and household poverty outlined in the previous paragraph could directly inform policy, its precedents in the academic study of poverty (notably Pahl, 1989, 2000a, 2000b, 2005) are detailed in chapter one. An interesting future direction for academic work would be to examine characteristics of and outcomes for the four categories of children identified in chapter one.

Furthermore, there are direct policy implications of these results. Given Pahl's, Middleton et al's (1997), Grogan's (2004) and Lundberg et al's (1997) findings that women are more likely to contribute household resources to children, and the findings here that it is possible to identify children who appear either less or more impoverished than their household's characteristics would suggest, it would lend support to the position that benefits for families on low incomes should be paid to the children's main carer (usually the woman) rather than to the head of household. The introduction of Universal Credit, a single benefits payment replacing most previous benefits, is doing away with this. Previously, as the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) (2012) note, child-related benefits payments tended to be made by default to the children's main carer. Under Universal Credit, this will end and payments will be made to one nominated household representative – intra-household distributions will be considered a private matter. In cases where the nominated representative is not the main carer for children, an increase in the prevalence and depth of child poverty which is invisible to income-only measures of poverty may reasonably be expected.

Comparing children's and adults' perspectives

As noted previously, a major finding of this thesis is that children's views of what constitutes poverty appear to be overlapping with but not identical to adults' views. Chapter three provides evidence that children were aware that their perceptions of necessities did not necessarily tally fully with adult perceptions, and chapter six examines this using child- and adult-reported data. Children's views of what constitute necessities, in line with Ridge's (2002) work, tend to be more focused on *social* necessities – that is, items and activities

which allow or facilitate social inclusion and participation. Whilst adults' perceptions of children's necessities also include some socially-focused items and activities, these are not necessarily those which are seen as most important by or make the most difference to children's lives.

These differences in perceptions have implications for research into child poverty. Current policy measures of material deprivation rely on the results of surveys measuring poverty 'democratically' such as the PSE 1999 and 2012, which value the fact that items and activities treated as necessities are perceived to be such by the population of interest. Whilst this is the case for adult necessities, however, if the population of interest in child poverty research is children, the child poverty measures cannot be described as democratic. Rather, the identifiers of necessities have shifted from being one kind of expert (academics) to another (adults). The finding (detailed in chapter six) that items identified by children as necessities but rejected as such by parents have just as strong if not a stronger impact on children's subjective well-being poses some challenges to the validity of adults' expertise in this arena. By no means does this suggest that adults' opinions should be ignored – it is accepted that adults will have access to a wider range of information and therefore may at times make different and possibly better judgements than children about children's needs. But neither does this mean that it is justified to ignore children's needs and well-being in the present. As Uprichard (2008) argues, a simultaneous focus on well-being and well-becoming, balancing the views and expertise of children as experts on themselves and of adults as experts on children, is required. To date, the balance has been severely skewed in favour of adults as experts on children.

Findings around the limitations in overlaps between different dimensions of child poverty, which were particularly strong when child-reports were used, have further implications for the measurement of child poverty. The selected dimensions of poverty are better at capturing a coherent underlying construct for adults than they are at doing so for children. That is, these dimensions of poverty appear to make more sense in relation to adults' understandings of poverty than they do to children's understandings. This finding, in line with

Redmond's (2009) recommendation, would suggest that more qualitative and quantitative exploration of children's perceptions and experiences of poverty is required. Such research could lead to the development of additional measurement instruments which may help in developing a fuller understanding of what poverty means to children, how it impacts their lives, and eventually how best to address and eradicate it.

Associations with subjective well-being

Finally, a further major finding of this research was that the child-derived index of material deprivation fared substantially better than low income measures in explaining variation in children's subjective well-being. This links to Rees et al's (2011) research which found very limited associations between low income and subjective well-being, and Knies's (2010) research which found no significant associations between income or adult-derived measures of child and household material deprivation, and subjective well-being. However, research by Ridge (2002) indicates that children feel themselves to be strongly impacted by the experience of poverty. This supports Cummins's (2000) position that poverty is relevant to subjective well-being, but that the impact of income may be mediated by more direct impacts of poverty. The significant association found between the child-derived index of material deprivation and children's subjective well-being offers a potential insight into this issue. Findings suggest that children are indeed impacted by poverty, but based on their own conceptions of poverty, and based on their own resources (that are not perfectly proxied by the resources of the household to which they belong). Further research into the nature of the relationship between various dimensions of child poverty as children themselves understand it would be very valuable in further elucidating the links between childhood poverty and children's subjective well-being.

In terms of associations with the domains of subjective well-being identified by Rees et al (2010) in the Good Childhood Index, associations with material deprivation were strongest in three domains – money and possessions; family; and the amount of choice children have. These are the same three domains

found by Rees et al to have the strongest associations with overall subjective well-being. This finding indicates that material deprivation impacts children most in the domains of their lives which are most important to their overall subjective well-being, highlighting the importance of academic efforts at understanding this association, and policy efforts at reducing or eradicating material deprivation amongst children. It also lends further support to Cummins's (2000) position detailed above, that the impacts of income poverty on subjective well-being exist but are mediated by the impacts of more direct facets of poverty such as material deprivation. Regarding their implications for further and future research, these findings would suggest that addressing child poverty, and incorporating children's perspectives for example by using the child-derived index of material deprivation in poverty measurement, may help to achieve the policy goal of increasing children's subjective well-being.

Appendix A

List of survey questions relevant to child poverty considered in developing the deprivation scale and used to inform focus group agendas

Surveys completed by children about themselves

ALSPAC

- Ownership of computer games (Some More About Me, question B1.j)
- Access to the internet or email at home (Some More About Me, question B4.a)
- Having pets (Some More About me, questions C9 and 10)
- Having own bedroom (My World, question A1)
- Sharing bed (My World, question A4)
- Items owned in bedroom (My World, question A7, including cuddly toys, other toys, TV, computer, books, comics, radio, clock, games e.g. Snakes and Ladders, table, desk, furry pets (e.g. hamster), posters/drawings, certificates e.g. for, swimming, music, hanging mobiles e.g. windchimes, Dreamcatchers, fish, other pet)
- Owning a mobile phone (Rings and Things, question A1 (indirect))
- Owning a watch/watches (Watches and Funny Feelings, question A4)
- Use of a computer at home (Watches and Funny Feelings, question C1)
- Household ownership of car (Travelling, Leisure and School, question D5; Life of a 16+ Teenager, question M12)
- Owning a bike and bike helmet (Travelling, Leisure and School, questions D8 and 9; Life of a 16+ Teenager M19 and 20)
- Part-time work alongside education (Life of a 16+ Teenager, question N2 and 3)
- Details of past jobs (Life of a 16+ Teenager, questions N5 and 6)
- Details of education-related possessions including computer, internet, books, quiet space to work, private tuition. (Year 11 Questionnaire, question A14)

BHPS youth survey

- (Indirect – the question asks whether participants use a computer at home, with an option for not owning a computer) Ownership of a computer (Q4)
- Ownership of a mobile phone (Q8)

Families and Children Survey

- Family ownership of a computer (Q2)
- Holidays away in the last year (Q11)
- Ownership of a mobile phone (Q11)
- Money received in the past week (Q32)
- Use of own money (Q33)

Health Behaviours of School-age Children - Family Affluence Scale

- Family ownership of motor vehicle – no, yes – 1, yes – 2 or more
- Having own bedroom
- Number of holidays in past 12 months – none, 1, 2, more than 2
- Number of computers owned by family – none, 1, 2, more than 2

Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England

- Ownership of mobile phone (MobPho1)
- Receipt of pocket money (FamSup)
- (Indirect – the question asks how many hours of TV participants watch, with an option for not owning a TV) ownership of a TV (TV)

Scope Money Matters questionnaire

- How often do you worry about your family's finances?
- Personal savings?

Children's Worlds pilot

- Satisfaction with things owned
- Amount of money to spend each week
- Perceived comparative wealth of family
- Perceived comparative personal wealth
- Number of adults in household with paid job
- Participation in paid work
- Experience of going to bed hungry in past month
- Experience of worrying about money
- Ownership of mobile, laptop/computer, TV, warm winter coat, two pairs of waterproof shoes, quiet place to study, fresh fruit daily, money for hobbies/leisure, annual week holiday away from home, own bedroom, bike, friends round for meal/snack, more than ten books, swimming once per month.

World Vision questionnaire

- Number of books owned by family
- Having own room
- Possessions owned in own room (TV, video/DVD player, CD/cassette player, computer/laptop, playstation or similar, gameboy or similar)
- Ever been to another country, and reason for visit if so
- Amount of pocket money per week
- Receipt of gifts of money
- Satisfaction with amount of money personally available
- Lending money to friends

Young People's Social Attitudes Survey

- Amount of money to spend on everyday things (more than enough, enough, or not enough) (question 253 [ypmoney]).

Questionnaires completed by adults, relating to children or potentially adaptable to children

BHPS – Individual questionnaire

- How well participant feels they are managing financially (living comfortably, doing alright, just about getting by, finding it quite difficult, finding it very difficult, don't know) (F4, followed up with questions about how this compares with a year ago – F5, F6 – and how likely participant feels the situation is to change within a year – F7)
- Amount of monthly savings, purpose of savings (specific or general), regular/as and when saving, saving for long/short term (F11-F13)
- Amount of money spent on eating out, leisure/entertainment/hobbies (F40)
- Access to a car or van (F51)
- Ownership of mobile phone (F52)

BHPS – Self-completion questionnaire

- Satisfaction with household income on a 1-7 scale (3b)
- Shortage of money preventing participant from doing things they want to (6i)

BHPS – Household questionnaire

- Ownership of colour TV, DVD/video player, satellite/sky/cable TV, freezer, washing machine, tumble drier, dish washer, microwave, computer, CD player, landline, mobile phone (H54)
- Access to the internet at home (H55)
- Whether household can afford certain things – adequate heating, annual holiday away from home, replace worn out furniture, new clothes (not second hand), meat/chicken/fish every other day, friends/family for a meal/drink once a month, two pairs of all weather shoes, money to decorate when needed (H59)

EU SILC

- Ownership of some new (not second hand) clothes; two pairs of properly fitting shoes including one pair of all-weather shoes; children's books at home; outdoor leisure equipment; indoor games.
- Ability to afford meat/chicken/fish/vegetarian equivalent once a day; to have fresh fruit and vegetables every day; to have 3 meals per day; to participate in a regular leisure activity; to have celebrations on special occasions; to invite friends round to play and eat from time to time; to participate in school trips and events that cost money; to go on holiday for one week per year.
- Having a suitable place for study and homework
- Having an outdoor space to play safely
- Having regular dental checkups
- Poverty preventing access to doctor, dentist, medicine, or medical equipment.

Expenditure and Food Survey

- Ownership of certain household items: TV (QDURABLE.TV, QDURABLE.TVNum), video recorder (QDURABLE.Video), freezer (QDURABLE.Freezer), washing machine (QDURABLE.WashMach), tumble drier (QDURABLE.Drier), dish washer (QDURABLE.DishWash), microwave (QDURABLE.MicroWve), mobile/landline phone (QDURABLE.Telephon), CD player (QDURABLE.CDPlay), DVD player (QDURABLE.DVD), computer (QDURABLE.Computer), internet (QDURABLE.Inter)
- Continuous use of a motor vehicle (QBVeh.VhFilt1)
- Receipt of free milk, fruit, meals (QWLFMLK.WfmlkFilt, QSCLMLK.SMlkFilt, QFREEFRT.FreeFrt, QSCMEAL.ScMIFilt)
- Receipt of EMA (QEDGRANT.EMAFilt)

Family and children survey

- Entitlement to free public transport (Travcst)

- Having a quiet place in the home to do homework (HwQt)
- Ability to keep the house warm enough and areas where the house is not warm enough, reasons house is not warm enough (Househe1, Househe2, Househe4)
- Access to motor vehicle (Ed21)
- Ability to have/afford: 2 pairs of all-weather shoes (ExpShoeA); celebrations with presents on special occasions (ExpCeleb); toys and sports gear for children (ExpToys); one week holiday away from home per year not with relatives (ExpHol); a night out each month (ExpNight); friends/relatives round for a meal once per month (ExpFriend); ownership of car or van (ExpCar)
- Access to the internet at home (IntAcc)
- Frequency of worrying about money – almost all the time, quite often, only sometimes, never (Exp19)
- How well family are managing financially – manage very well, manage quite well, get by alright, don't manage very well, have some financial difficulties, are in deep financial trouble (Exp20)
- Duration and perceived reasons for financial situation (Exp21-24)

Family Expenditure Survey

- Receipt of free milk (540.5, 550.5)
- Receipt of free school meals (560.25)

FRS – household questionnaire

- Type of school attended
- Ownership of colour TV (ConTV[1]), black and white TV (ConTV[2])
- Ownership of car/motor vehicle (UseVcl)
- Receipt of free school meals and milk (FreeItem)
- Attendance at playgroup or pre-school , nursery or crèche, infant school, primary school, holiday scheme/club, children's centre (ChAtt)

FRS - Benefit unit questionnaire

- Income of children – source, amount, period covered (KidInc, ChEarns, ChYrErn, ChYrTst, ChWkErn, ChWkTst, ChAmtErn, ChAmtTst, ChPdErn, ChPdTst, ChEMAamt, ChEMApd)
- Ability to afford socially agreed necessities: holidays for 1 week per year (AddHol), friends or family round for a meal once per month (AddMel), two pairs of all weather shoes (AddShoe), money to decorate home (AddDec), saving £10 per month (AddMon), money to replace worn out furniture (AdepFur), money to repair electrical goods (Af1), money each week to spend on self (AfDep2), money for hobby or leisure activity (AdDepLes), keeping the house warm enough (Houshe1), holiday for children (CdepHol), separate rooms for 10+ children of different sexes (CdepBed), leisure equipment for children (Cdepqp), birthday/special occasion celebrations (CdepCel), swimming once a month for children (CdepSum), hobby/leisure activity for children (CdepLes), children's friends round for tea/snack once per fortnight (CdepTEa), attendance at nursery/equivalent once a week (Cplay), going on school trips (CdepTrp), outdoor space to play safely (Cdelply)
- Child ownership of financial products, including child trust fund (Cfund, CfundTp, GivCFnd, Fundamt, CfundH), bank account (ChSave, Totsave)

General Household Survey – household questionnaire

- Possession of colour TV (46, 47), washing machine (48,49), phone (50,51), computer (52, 53), use of motor vehicles (54, 63)

General Household Survey – individual questionnaire

- Ability to afford a week's annual holiday away from home, meat/chicken/fish/vegetarian equivalent every other day, pay unexpected but necessary £500, keep home adequately warm (3 Afford)
- Children's earned income (94 INCSOR, 95 ChInc, 96 Chpypd)

Health Behaviours of School-age Children

Focus is on whether children have engaged in behaviours rather than their ability to engage in the behaviours, so potentially relevant questions (for example regarding daily eating of fruit) are not phrased in a way that indicates whether lack of fruit is a result of choice or of unavailability of fruit.

Millennium Cohort Study – main parent questionnaire

- Reasons for paid work (financial for family, financial for extra money, career, enjoyment, time for self, adult company, other) (RWRK)
- Possession of items if wanted – waterproof coat for child (STWC, WAWC), new shoes that fit for child (STFS, WAFS), fresh fruit or vegetables once a day for child (STFV, WAFV), hobby or leisure activity for self (STHL, WAHL), two pairs of weather-proof shoes for self (STSY, WASY), a small amount of weekly spending money for self (STMW, WAMW), annual holiday not with relatives (STAW, WAAW), money to replace worn-out furniture (STWF, WAWF).
- Possession of phone (PHON)
- Use of car (CARU, CARN)
- Possession of pets (PETH)

Millennium Cohort Study – older siblings questionnaire

- Working for money (1l, 1m, 1n)

National Child Development Survey

- Financial situation – living comfortably, doing all right, just about getting by, finding it quite difficult, finding it very difficult (FINNOW)
- Possession of a computer (PCHOME)

The Opinions Survey

- Perceived family necessities: space to eat together, at least one basic mobile, regular family outings, car, money to keep home warm enough (NNAA1)
- Necessities for parents: warm winter coat, replace/repair electrical goods, childcare for social outings, small amount of weekly money for self, annual holiday away from home without relatives, presentable home to bring friends/family to, friends/family round for drink/meal monthly, money to decorate home, money to replace worn out furniture, regular savings of £50/month, keeping up with bills/debt repayments, ability to pay unexpected £250, two pairs of all weather shoes, household contents insurance, hobby/leisure activity, meat/fish/vegetarian equivalent every other day. (NNAA2, NNAA3, NNAA4)
- Necessities for children: outdoor space to play safely, toys/games/books to support development, one regular organised activity out of school per week, annual family holiday, fresh fruit/vegetables every day, new properly fitted shoes, warm winter coat, separate bedrooms for 10+ children of different sexes, leisure equipment, celebrations on special occasions, monthly swimming, hobby/leisure activity, meat/fish/vegetarian equivalent every other day, friends round for tea/snack once a fortnight, school trips, nursery/playgroup, all required school uniform, computer and internet access at home. (NNAA5, NNAA6, NNAA7)

Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain 1999

- Satisfaction with housing (very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, slightly dissatisfied, very dissatisfied) (AccmSt)
- State of repair of house (good, adequate, poor) (Repair)
- Issues with accommodation (shortage of space, too dark, inadequate heating, leaky roof, damp, rot, mould, no outside space) (AccPrb)

- Times in the last year participant has felt isolated and cut off from society or depressed because of a lack of money (neither, yes – isolated, no – not isolated, yes – depressed, no – not depressed) (IsoDep)
- Feeling isolated/cut off for other reasons (paid work, childcare responsibilities, other caring responsibilities, lack of own transport, irregular/expensive public transport, no friends, no family, physical access problems, sexism, racism, homophobia, disability discrimination) (IsoOth)
- Lack of money preventing contact with family/friends (WhyNoSe)
- Possession/desire for socially agreed necessities (two meals per day, meat/fish/vegetarian equivalent every other day, heating to warm home, dressing gown, two pairs of all-weather shoes, new (not second hand) clothes, TV, roast joint/vegetarian equivalent once a week, carpets in living room and bedrooms, telephone, fridge, beds and bedding for all household members, damp-free home, car, dictionary, presents for family/friends once a year, warm waterproof coat, washing machine, dishwasher, monthly savings of £10, video recorder, money to maintain decent decoration, insurance, fresh fruit and vegetables every day, home computer, outfit for social/family occasions, microwave, mobile, tumble drier, freezer, satellite TV, CD player, money to replace worn-out furniture, money to replace broken electrical goods, appropriate clothes for job interviews, all prescription medication, internet access, small amount of weekly spending money for self, daily newspaper) (HaveNec)
- Ability to afford socially perceived necessities (evening out once a fortnight, hobby/leisure activity, annual holiday away from home not with relatives, celebrations on special occasions, meal out once a month, holiday abroad once a year, coach/train fares to visit family/friends four times a year, family/friends round for meal/snack/drink, visits to friends/family, pub once a fortnight, wedding/funeral/other attendance, visiting friends/family in hospital/similar, attending place of worship, collecting children from school, visits to school) (DoNec)
- Ability to afford items deemed necessary for children (3 meals per day, toys, leisure equipment, bedrooms for children over 10 of different

- sexes, computer games, warm waterproof coat, books of their own, bike, construction toys, educational games, new properly fitted shoes, 7 pairs of pants in good condition bought new, 4 jumpers/cardigans/sweatshirts, all school uniform, 4 pairs trousers/leggings/jeans/jogging bottoms, 50 pence per week on sweets, meat/fish/vegetarian equivalent twice a day, computer for school work, fresh fruit/vegetables once a day, garden to play in, some new clothes – not second hand, carpet in bedroom, bed and bedding to self) (ChHave)
- Ability to afford activities for children (hobby/leisure activity, celebrations on special occasions, swimming once a month, playgroup once a week, holiday with family one week per year, school trip once a term, friends round for tea/snack once a fortnight) (ChDoAc)
 - Access to household car (CarAcc)
 - Things gone without due to lack of money: clothes, shoes, food, heating, phoning friends and family, going out, pub visits, hobby/sport, holiday, school trip, pocket money (GoneWot, ChldWO)
 - Frequency of feeling poor (all the time, sometimes, never) (GenPor)
 - Living in poverty over lifetime (never, rarely, occasionally, often, most of the time) (LvInPv)
 - Events and expected events that may change standard of living (AnyImp, ExpImp)
 - Impact of school poverty on child – teacher shortages, shared books, lack of books, lack of computers, large class sizes, poor repair of school buildings, other problems (SchProb)

Appendix B: Focus group schedule

Introduction, ground rules and ice breaker [10 minutes]

We have been asking thousands of children and young people all over the country about the different things in their lives that are important to them. Sometimes we ask young people to write down their answers in a questionnaire, and sometimes we go into schools and talk to groups of children and young people like we are today.

Once we have finished all of this work, we will put all the ideas that children and young people have given us together into a report. Then we can go to the Government, to schools and to other adults and tell them about the things that young people need for a good life, and what changes they could make to make things better for children and young people.

We really appreciate you taking part today and we're really excited to hear your ideas.

A few things to say before we start:

- First of all, there are no right or wrong answers, we want to hear your ideas whatever they are.
- Second, we may not always agree with each other's ideas but please can we listen respectfully to each other and not be rude if we disagree.
- Please can we take it in turns to speak and not talk over each other.
- We don't expect you to talk about your own personal stuff, so when we ask you questions about the things that young people need in their lives, you can think about young people your age that you know at school and in your local area.
- What you tell us will be private, which means that we will not name names outside of this room. We may talk about the things that you say in the report that we write but because we won't use your name, no-one will know what you said personally.

- The only exception to this is if you tell us something that suggests that you are unsafe, in which case we will have to tell your teacher.
- Are you all happy to take part now that you know more about what we're going to do? If you change your mind at any point and you don't want to take part any more, just let us know.
- We would also like to record what we say so that we don't have to write everything down as we go along, which will be tiring for us! Is that ok?

Is that all ok? Does anyone have ideas about any other ground rules that we should add? Ok, so let's get started!

ICE-BREAKER

The line from rich to poor, and from need to want [10 minutes]

Being rich and being poor mean different things to different people. Sometimes being poor means not being able to afford the things you need to stay alive, like food. Sometimes it means not being able to afford the things that you need to have a normal life compared to your friends and the people around you, like being able to pay to go somewhere with your friends.

Here's a line, which goes from 'as poor as anyone can be' to 'as rich as anyone can be'.

- What sorts of things do even the very poorest people have?
- What sorts of things do the very richest people have?
- What sorts of things do the people that are somewhere in the middle have (who are neither rich nor poor)?

We can draw another line and think of it in another way. At one end are the things that we need to survive and at the other end are the things that we may want but we definitely don't need... In the middle are the things that we need for a normal kind of life, so that we fit in with our friends and the people around us.

- Can you think of an example of something that you need to survive?
- Can you think of an example of something that you need to have a good normal life?
- Can you think of an example of something that you want but you don't really need?

Free time [10 minutes]

We need different *kinds* of things for a normal kind of life. Sometimes we need our own possessions and things to enjoy our free time, sometimes we need money for the bus to go somewhere, or money for going out or to a sports club or something like that.

- Q. What kind of things does someone your age need to enjoy your free time? [e.g. space, things and money]

Things you might do or use in your free time

- What about activities like going to a sports club, or a drama, music or art club or something like that in your free time, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a bike or something to use in your leisure time, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a safe space in your local area where you can hang out with your friends, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about money for the bus or train so you can do things you want to in your spare time, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about books to read, are they something that someone your age needs, or just wants?

Possessions [10 minutes]

Sometimes we might feel like we need things to fit in with our friends.

Q. What things does someone your age need for yourself so that you fit in with your friends?

Things that you might have for yourself

- What about something like a mobile phone of your own, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about new clothes or shoes that aren't second hand, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about designer clothes or trainers, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about fresh fruit and vegetables every day, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about treats, sweets, chocolate, crisps, chips, pizza or takeaway food, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a small amount of money to spend on yourself or going out, like pocket money, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about enough money of your own to save some up each week so you can get something bigger, or buy a present for someone else, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?

Home and family [10 minutes]

Sometimes we need things at home, and sometimes we need money and time to do things together as a family like have a day out together.

Q. What kinds of things does someone your age need at home?

Q. What kind of things does someone your age need for enjoying time with your family?

Things you might have in your home

- What about a house that is nicely decorated and in a good condition, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about your own bedroom, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about presents on your birthday, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a car, is that something that a family needs or just wants?
- What about a TV at home, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a computer at home, a PC or a laptop, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about internet access, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a CD player or something to play music on at home, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a games console, so like a playstation, an Xbox, a DS or something like that, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?

Things you might do with your family or friends

- What about a holiday away from home with your family, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about having a friend round to your house for dinner or a snack or something like that, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?

Learning and school [5 minutes]

Sometimes we need things so that we can make the most of school and learning...

Q. What kind of things does someone your age need to make the most of school and learning?

Things to do with learning and school

- What about books you can use for schoolwork, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about having your parents come to the school for events like sports day, school plays and parents' evenings, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about a computer that you can use for school work, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?
- What about going on school trips, is that something that someone your age needs, or just wants?

Wrap-up [5 minutes]

Ok, so that's all the questions we wanted to ask you today. Thank you very, very much for all your ideas, you've been great and you've given us lots of things to think about.

Have you got any questions?

Did you enjoy the discussion that we had today? Is there anything you didn't like? Is there anything you would change about it?

Thanks again for all your help.

Appendix C

Child and adult necessities in the PSE survey

Child necessities	Adult necessities
Three meals a day	Enough money to keep your home in a decent state of decoration
New, properly fitting shoes	Replace or repair broken electrical goods such as refrigerator or washing machine
Some new, not second hand, clothes	Two pairs of all-weather shoes
Fresh fruit or vegetables at least once a day	Regular savings (of at least £20 a month) for rainy days
Outdoor leisure equipment such as roller skates, skateboards, footballs etc	A warm waterproof coat
Enough bedrooms for every child of 10 or over of a different sex to have their own bedroom	Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent every other day
A warm winter coat	Heating to keep home adequately warm
Books at home suitable for their ages	Two meals a day
A garden or outdoor space nearby where they can play safely	Fresh fruit and vegetables every day
Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent at least once a day	Appropriate clothes to wear for job interviews
A suitable space at home to study or do homework	All recommended dental work/treatment
Indoor games suitable for their ages	Regular payments into an occupational or private pension
At least 4 pairs of trousers, leggings, jeans or jogging bottoms	A hobby or leisure activity
Construction toys such as Duplo or Lego	Celebrations on special occasions such as Christmas

Pocket money	Attending weddings, funerals and other such occasions
Money to save	Visiting friends or family in hospital or other institutions
Computer and internet for homework	Taking part in sport/exercise activities or classes
A hobby or leisure activity	No damp in the house
Celebrations on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas or other religious festivals	Household contents insurance
A holiday away from home for at least one week a year	A table with chairs, at which all the family can eat
Toddler group or nursery or play group at least once a week for pre-school aged children	Curtains or window blinds
Going on a school trip at least once a term	Ability to pay unexpected but necessary expense of £500
Day trips with family once a month	
Children's clubs or activities such as drama or football training	

Appendix D

The Children's Society 2010 Surveys

1. Survey for children aged 8

Well-Being Survey 2010

Questionnaire: year 4

About this survey

Who we are

The Children's Society is a children's charity that aims to improve the lives of children and young people. We are doing this survey jointly with researchers at the University of York.

What this survey is about

The survey is about how you feel about your life.

We will use the findings from the survey to let other people know what is most important for young people to have a good life.

We also plan to do the same survey again in the future to see if things have got better or worse for young people.

About the questionnaire

This questionnaire

- is **anonymous**
(we don't ask your name)
- is **confidential**
(we won't know who you are and we won't pass on any information you give us)
- takes about 20 minutes to do.

There are no right or wrong answers

You don't have to answer any questions you don't want to.

About you

1. How old are you?

8 years old

9 years old

2. Are you a boy or a girl?

A boy

A girl

About your life

The questions on this page are about how you feel about your life as a whole.

3. Here is a picture of a ladder.

The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you.

In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment?

Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand.

<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Best possible life
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Worst possible life

A lot of the questions in this questionnaire ask you how happy with things in your life. These questions use a scale from 0 to 10. On this scale:

- 0 means you feel very unhappy
- 10 means you feel very happy
- 5 means that you feel neither happy nor unhappy

For these questions please tick one of the boxes to say how happy you feel.

So, please answer the question below about how happy you are with your life as a whole.

4. How happy are you with your life as a whole?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

About your home and the people you live with

The questions on this page are about the home you live in.

5. Which of the following best describes the home you live in:

- I live with my family ⇒ Route to Question 7
- I live in a foster home ⇨ Route to Question 6
- I live in a children's home ⇨ Route to Question 6
- I live in another type of home ⇨ Route to Question 6

(⇒ If no response, route to Question 7 i.e. give respondent the opportunity to answer the family questions)

6. How happy are you with your relationships with the people that you live with?

				NOT HAPPY							
VERY				OR						VERY	
UNHAPPY				UNHAPPY						HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

(⇒ Now route to Question 20)

The next question is about the people you live with. Some children live in more than one home. (For example, they might live with their mother in one home and their father in another home).

7. Do you live in one or two homes (not including holiday or summer houses)?

One ⇒ Route to Question 8

Two ⇒ Route to Question 9

8. Which people do you live with?

Mother

Father

Step-mother

Step-father

Sister(s)

Brother(s)

Grandmother

Grandfather

Other relatives

Other adults

(⇒ Now route to Question 11)

9. Which people do you live with in your first home?

Mother

Father

Step-mother

Stepfather

Sister(s)

- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

10. Which people do you live with in your second home?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother
- Step-father
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

11. Were you living with the same adults this time last year?

- Yes, the same adults
- No, there have been some changes
- Not sure

12. How many brothers do you live with?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

13. How many sisters do you live with?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

14. How many adults that you live with have a paid job?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| None | One | Two | More than
two | Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. How happy are you with your relationships with your family?

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| VERY
UNHAPPY | | | | | OR
UNHAPPY | | | | | VERY
HAPPY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

16. How happy are you with your relationship with your mother? (⇒ If haven't said that they live with their mother, route so this question is skipped.)

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| VERY
UNHAPPY | | | | | OR
UNHAPPY | | | | | VERY
HAPPY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

17. How happy are you with your relationship with your father? (⇒ If haven't said that they live with their father, route so this question is skipped.)

	NOT HAPPY										
VERY						OR					VERY
UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY										HAPPY
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

18. How happy are you with your relationship with your brother(s) and sister(s)? (⇒ If haven't said that they live with a brother or sister, route so this question is skipped.)

	NOT HAPPY										
VERY						OR					VERY
UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY										HAPPY
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

19. Please say how much you agree or disagree with the sentences below, which are about your relationships with your family/parents. If you don't live with your parents, please answer these questions about the people who care for you.

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ON EACH LINE

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I enjoy being at home with my family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family gets along well together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents listen to my	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

views and take me seriously

My parents treat me fairly

My parents and I do fun things together

Now, thinking about the home that you live in:

20. Do you have a bedroom of your own?

I have my own bedroom

I share a bedroom

21. How happy are you with the home that you live in?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

About money and the things you own

22. How happy are you with the things you have (like money and the things you own)?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

23. On average how much pocket money do you get each week?

- None
- Less than £1
- £1 to £1.99
- £2 to £4.99
- £5 to £9.99
- £10 to £14.99
- £15 and more
- Not sure

24. Here is a list of items that some children of your age have. Please tell us whether you have each item on the list.

	I have this	I don't have this but I would like it	I don't have this and I don't want or need it	Don't know
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself				
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home				
A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans)				
An iPod or other personal music player				
Cable or satellite TV at home				
A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends				
A family car for transport when you need it				

The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age				
At least one holiday away from home each year with your family				
Trips or days out with your family at least once a month				

About your friends and other people

25. How happy are you with your relationships with your friends?

					NOT HAPPY						
					OR						
VERY					UNHAPPY					VERY	
UNHAPPY										HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

The next question is about whether you have been bullied by other children.

26. How often, if at all, you been bullied in the last three months?

				More than 3	
Never	Once	2 or 3 times	times	Not sure	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

About how you use your time

Now, thinking about your time outside of school:

27. How happy are you with the way you use your time?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

28. How happy are you with the time you have to play?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

About school

We would now like you to think about school...

29. How happy are you with the school that you go to?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

30. How happy are you with your relationships with the children in your class?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

About your health

31. How happy are you with your health (feeling well or unwell)?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

32. How happy are you with how much sleep you usually get?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

How you feel about yourself

33. How happy are you with your appearance (the way that you look)?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

34. How happy are you with how much choice you have in life?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

35. How happy are you with what may happen to you later on in life (in the future)?

					Not happy						
Very					or unhappy					Very happy	
unhappy											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

36. How happy are you with how safe you feel?

					NOT HAPPY						
VERY					OR					VERY	
UNHAPPY					UNHAPPY					HAPPY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Finally ... some more things about you

37. In which country were you born?

- UK
- Other
- Not sure

38. What is your ethnic group?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| White | British | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any other White background | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Mixed | White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | White and Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any other Mixed background | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Asian or Asian British | Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any other Asian background | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Black or Black British | Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any other Black background | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| Chinese or other ethnic group | Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| | Not sure | <input type="checkbox"/> |

39. Are you disabled?

- Yes
No
Not sure

40. What would you say is your religion?

- Buddhist
Christian
Hindu
Jewish
Muslim
Sikh
Other
None ⇒ Route to end of questionnaire
Not sure ⇒ Route to end of questionnaire

41. How important is religion to you?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very | Quite | Not very | Not at all | |
| important | important | important | important | Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

42. In the last year, how often did you attend religious services?

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | More than | |
| | A few | Once a | Once a | once a | |
| Never | times | month | week | week | Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire

2. Survey A for half children aged 10-15

Well-Being Survey 2010

Draft questionnaire: years 8 and 10

Who we are

The Children's Society is a children's charity that aims to improve the lives of children and young people. We are doing this survey jointly with researchers at the University of York.

What this survey is about

The survey is about how you feel about your life.

We will use the findings from the survey to let other people know what is most important for young people to have a good life.

We also plan to do the same survey again in the future to see if things have got better or worse for young people.

About the questionnaire

This questionnaire

- is **anonymous** (we don't ask your name)
- is **confidential** (we won't know who you are and we won't pass on any information you give us)
- takes about 25-30 minutes to do.

Answering the questions

There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

If there is a question that you do not want to answer you can miss it out.

Thank you for helping us

About you

1. How old are you?

10

11

12

13

14

15

2. Are you female or male?

Female

Male

How you feel about life in general

3. Here is a picture of a ladder.

The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you.

In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment?

Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand.

<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Best possible life
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Worst possible life

4. A lot of the questions in this questionnaire are like the one below. For these questions, please say how much you agree or disagree with each of the sentences.

		Neither					
		agree				Strongly	Don't
	Strongly	Agree	disagree	Disagree	Disagree	disagree	know
	agree		nor				
My life is going well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My life is just right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wish I had a different kind of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have what I want in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Some of the questions ask you how happy you are with things in your life.

These questions use a scale from 0 to 10. On this scale:

- 0 means you feel very unhappy
- 10 means you feel very happy
- 5 means that you feel neither happy nor unhappy

For these questions please tick one of the boxes to say how happy you feel.

So, please answer the question below about how happy you are with your life as a whole.

5. How happy are you with your life as a whole?

Very					Not happy						
unhappy					or unhappy				Very happy		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

About your home and the people you live with

6. Which best describes the home you live in:

- I live with my family Route to Question 8
- I live in a foster home Route to Question 7
- I live in a children's home Route to Question 7
- I live in another type of home Route to Question 7

Note: Non-response also routes to Question 8

7. How happy are you with your relationships with the people you live with?

Very												Not happy								
unhappy												or unhappy								Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										

(⇒ Now route to Question 18)

The next question is about the people you live with. Some children live in more than one home. (For example, they might live with their mother in one home and their father in another home).

8. Do you live in one or two homes (not including holiday or summer houses)?

- One ⇒ Route to Question 9
- Two ⇒ Route to Question 10

9. Which people do you live with?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother

- Step-father
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

(⇒ Now route to Question 12)

10. Which people do you live with in your first home?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother
- Stepfather
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

11. Which people do you live with in your second home?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother
- Step-father
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather

Other relatives

Other adults

12. Were you living with the same adults this time last year?

Yes, the same adults

No, there have been some changes

Not sure

13. How many brothers do you live with?

0

1

2

3 or more

14. How many sisters do you live with?

0

1

2

3 or more

15. How many adults that you live with have a paid job?

None

One

Two

More than

two

Not sure

16. How well off do you think your family is?

Very well off	Quite well off	Average	Not very well off	Not well off at all	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The next questions are about your family relationships.

How happy are you with your relationships with your family?

Very unhappy	Not happy or unhappy	Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	5	10

17. Please say how much you agree or disagree with the sentences below

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I enjoy being at home with my family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family gets along well together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents listen to my views and take me seriously	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents treat me fairly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents and I do fun things together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Now, thinking about the home that you live in:

18. Do you have a bedroom of your own?

I have my own bedroom

I share a bedroom

19. How happy are you with the home you live in?

Very unhappy											Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

20. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My home is nice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel safe at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough privacy at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like my bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My home is very comfortable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About your friends

21. How happy are you with your relationships with your friends?

	Very	Not happy						Very happy			
	unhappy	or unhappy									
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

22. Below are some sentences about you and your friends. Please tick a box on each line to say how much you agree or disagree with each.

	Strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly	Don't
	agree		agree nor		disagree	know
			disagree			
My friends treat me well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel safe when I am with my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wish I had different friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friends are mean to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friends are great	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a bad time with my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a lot of fun with my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friends will help me if I need it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The next question is about whether you have been bullied by other young people

23. How often, if at all, have you been bullied in the last three months?

			More than 3	
Never	Once	2 or 3 times	times	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About school

We would now like you to think about school...

24. How happy are you with the school that you go to?

Very											
unhappy											Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

25. Do you receive free school meals?

Yes	No	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. How well do you feel you are doing at school at the moment?

		Not very	Not at all	
Very well	Quite well	well	well	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences about school?

			Neither			
	Strongly		agree nor		Strongly	Don't
	agree	Agree	disagree	Disagree	disagree	know
I feel safe at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I look forward to going to school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

School is interesting

I like being in school

28. How important do you think it is for you to get good marks in your school work, exams or tests?

Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About how you use your time

The next set of questions are about how you use your time.

29. How happy are you with the way you use your time?

	Very							Not happy			Very happy
	unhappy						or unhappy				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

30. How do you feel about the amount of time you spend on these things?

	Too much time	About the right amount of time	Not enough time	Not sure
Spending time with friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spending time with family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time to yourself / relaxing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities (hobbies, clubs, sports, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping round the home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About money and the things you own

31. How happy are you with the things you have (like money and the things you own)?

Very unhappy											Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

32. On average, how much money of your own do you have to spend each week?

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less than £5	<input type="checkbox"/>
£5 to £9.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£10 to £14.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£15 to £19.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£20 to £24.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£25 and more	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. Compared to your friends (on average) how much money do you usually have to spend for yourself?

		About the				
A lot more	A bit more	same	A bit less	A lot less	Not sure	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

34. How often does not having money stop you from:

	Very often	Quite often	Some- times	Hardly ever	Never	Not sure
Doing something you want to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying something you need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying something you want	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seeing your friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. Here is a list of items that some young people of your age have. Please tell us whether you have each item on the list.

	I have this	I don't have this but I would like it	I don't have this and I don't want or need it	Don't know
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An iPod or other personal music player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cable or satellite TV at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A family car for transport when you need it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least one holiday away from home each year with your family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trips or days out with your family at least once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About your health

36. How happy are you with your health?

Very unhappy					Not happy or unhappy						Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

37. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences about your health?

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I always have plenty of energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often feel tired	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often feel ill or unwell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a very healthy person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. Would you say that your health is ...

Very good	Good	Fair	Bad	Very bad	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About you

The next questions are about how you feel yourself.

39. First of all please say how much you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Overall I have a lot to be proud of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A lot of things about me are good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can do most things as well as other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I do something, I do it well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

40. How happy are you with your appearance (the way that you look)?

Very unhappy	Not happy or unhappy	Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	5	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	7	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	8	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	9	<input type="checkbox"/>

41. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I like the way I look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to change things about the way I look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often wish I looked like someone else	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often worry about the way I look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About the amount of choice you have

42. How happy are you with how much choice you have in life?

Very unhappy						Not happy or unhappy					Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

43. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I feel pressured in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to live my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I can pretty much be myself in my daily life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough choice about how I spend my time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About the future

44. How happy are you with what may happen to you later on in life?

Very unhappy					Not happy or unhappy						Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

45. What do you hope to do when you leave school?

- Get a job at 16
- Study then get a job at 18
- Study to go to university
- Something else
- Don't know yet

46. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
If something can go wrong for me, it will	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm always positive about my future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I hardly ever expect things to go my way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I rarely expect good things to happen to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall, I expect more bad
things to happen to me than
good

Finally ... some more things about you

47. Would you say that you are ...

	Yes	No	Not sure
... disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... have difficulties with learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

48. In which country were you born?

- UK
- Other
- Not sure

49. What is your ethnic group?

White	British	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Asian or Asian British	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Black or Black British	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
	African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Black background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Chinese or other ethnic group	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

50. What would you say your religion is?

- None
- Sikh
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Christian
- Buddhist

Not sure

Other

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire

3. Survey B for half children aged 10-15

Well-Being Survey 2010

Draft questionnaire: years 8 and 10

Who we are

The Children's Society is a children's charity that aims to improve the lives of children and young people. We are doing this survey jointly with researchers at the University of York.

What this survey is about

The survey is about how you feel about your life.

We will use the findings from the survey to let other people know what is most important for young people to have a good life. We also plan to do the same survey again in the future to see if things have got better or worse for young people.

About the questionnaire

This questionnaire

- is **anonymous** (we don't ask your name)
- is **confidential** (we won't know who you are and we won't pass on any information you give us)
- takes about 25-30 minutes to do.

Answering the questions

There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

If there is a question that you do not want to answer you can miss it out.

Thank you for helping us

About you

51. How old are you?

10

11

12

13

14

15

52. Are you female or male?

Female

Male

How you feel about life in general

53. Here is a picture of a ladder.

The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment?

Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand.

<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Best possible life
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Worst possible life

54. A lot of the questions in this questionnaire are like the one below. For these questions, please say how much you agree or disagree with each of the sentences.

		Strongly		Neither		Strongly		Don't
	agree	Agree	disagree	nor	Disagree	disagree	know	
My life is going well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My life is just right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wish I had a different kind of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have what I want in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Some of the questions ask you how happy you are with things in your life.

These questions use a scale from 0 to 10. On this scale:

- 0 means you feel very unhappy
- 10 means you feel very happy
- 5 means that you feel neither happy nor unhappy

For these questions please tick one of the boxes to say how happy you feel.

So, please answer the question below about how happy you are with your life as a whole.

55. How happy are you with your life as a whole?

Very											
unhappy					or					Very	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very happy

About your home and the people you live with

56. Which best describes the home you live in:

- I live with my family Route to Question 8
I live in a foster home Route to Question 7
I live in a children's home Route to Question 7
I live in another type of home Route to Question 7

Note: Non-response also routes to Question 8

57. How happy are you with your relationships with the people you live with?

Very unhappy	Not happy or unhappy						Very happy			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(⇒ Now route to Question 15)

The next question is about the people you live with. Some children live in more than one home. (For example, they might live with their mother in one home and their father in another home).

58. Do you live in one or two homes (not including holiday or summer houses)?

- One ⇒ Route to Question 9
Two ⇒ Route to Question 10

59. Which people do you live with?

- Mother
Father

- Step-mother
- Step-father
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

(⇒ Now route to Question 12)

60. Which people do you live with in your first home?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother
- Stepfather
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

61. Which people do you live with in your second home?

- Mother
- Father
- Step-mother
- Step-father
- Sister(s)
- Brother(s)
- Grandmother

- Grandfather
- Other relatives
- Other adults

62. Were you living with the same adults this time last year?

- Yes, the same adults
- No, there have been some changes
- Not sure

63. How many adults that you live with have a paid job?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | More than | |
| None | One | Two | two | Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The next question is about your family relationships.

64. How happy are you with your relationships with your family?

Very												Not happy								
unhappy												or unhappy								Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										

Now, thinking about the home that you live in:

65. How happy are you with the home you live in?

Very													Not happy							
unhappy													or unhappy							Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										

66. Have you moved house in the past year?

													Yes - more than
	No		Yes - once		once		Not sure						
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						<input type="checkbox"/>

67. Did you live in the same local area a year ago as you do now?

Yes		No		Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

71. Have you changed school in the past year?

No	Yes - once	Yes - more than once	Not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

73. Here is a list of items that some young people of your age have.

Please tell us whether you have each item on the list.

	I have this	I don't have this but I would like it	I don't have this and I don't want or need it	Don't know
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pair of designer or brand name trainers (like Nike or Vans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An iPod or other personal music player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cable or satellite TV at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A garden at home or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A family car for transport when you need it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people your age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least one holiday away from home each year with your family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trips or days out with your family at least once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About you

The next questions are about how you feel yourself.

74. Please say how much you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I feel I have a number of good qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can usually think of lots of ways to solve a problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People are generally pretty friendly towards me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I certainly feel useless at times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get along with people I come into contact with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I try to stay positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a likeable person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a very determined person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I need help, there are people who will support me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At times I feel no good at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People in my life care about me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I really believe in myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have much to be proud of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are not many people that I am close to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I am good at solving problems in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am as able as most other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Things that have happened recently

The next questions are about things that sometimes happen to young people.
Please say whether each of these has happened to you **in the past three months**.

75. Please say whether each of these has happened to you in the past three months.

	Has not happened	Happened once	Happened more than once	Not sure
You got a really good mark in a test or exam	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got a really bad mark in a test or exam	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You did really badly at an activity else at school (like sport, music, drama, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got praised by a teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got told off by a teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You did really well at an activity at school (like sport, music, drama, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got detention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You felt treated unfairly by a teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got into trouble at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You got an award or prize for something you did at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

76. Please say whether each of these has happened to you in the past three months.

	Has not happened	Happened once	Happened more than once	Not sure
You were pressured by friends to do something you did not want to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You had a serious argument with a close friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You made a new friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A close friend had a serious problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You broke up with a boyfriend / girlfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You did really well at an activity outside school (like sport, music, drama, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A friend that you trusted did not keep a secret	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You stopped being friendly with a close friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You felt treated unfairly by an adult in your neighbourhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You were bullied or picked on by other young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About the amount of choice you have

77. How happy are you with how much choice you have in life?

Very unhappy						Not happy or unhappy					Very happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

78. How much do you agree or disagree with these sentences

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I feel pressured in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to live my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I can pretty much be myself in my daily life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough choice about how I spend my time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Some more questions about you

The following questions are about how you see yourself as a person.

For each question please tick the box to say how well the sentence describes you.

There are no right or wrong answers. Please describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future.

Please describe yourself in relation to other young people you know who are the same sex as you are, and roughly your age.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Make friends easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Start conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy meeting new people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't talk a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stay in the background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am interested in people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care about other people's feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Think of others first	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know how to comfort others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Love to help others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pay attention to detail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get chores done right away	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Like to tidy up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do things according to a plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make plans and stick to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get stressed out easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Worry about things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change my mood a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get irritated easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often feel depressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am interested in new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use a lot of different words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am quick to understand things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Am full of ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Love to think up new ways of doing things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Some more questions about how you feel about your life

79. How happy are you with your relationships with your friends?

Very											
unhappy											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

80. How happy are you with your health?

Very											
unhappy											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

81. How happy are you with your appearance (the way that you look)?

Very											
unhappy											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

82. How happy are you with what may happen to you later on in life?

Very											
unhappy											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

83. What do you hope to do when you leave school?

Get a job at 16

Study then get a job at 18

Study to go to university

Something else

Don't know yet

Finally ... some more things about you

84. Would you say that you are ...

	Yes	No	Not sure
... disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... have difficulties with learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

85. In which country were you born?

- UK
- Other
- Not sure

86. What is your ethnic group?

White	British	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Asian or Asian British	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Black or Black British	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
	African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other Black background	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
Chinese or other ethnic group	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>		
	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

87. What would you say your religion is?

- None
- Sikh
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu

Christian

Buddhist

Not sure

Other

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire

Abbreviations

AHC	After housing costs
ALSPAC	Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children
BHC	Before housing costs
BHPS	British Household Panel Survey
CAB	Citizen's Advice Bureaux
CASE	Collaborative Award in Science and Engineering
CPAG	Child Poverty Action Group
CS10	10-item Children's Society material deprivation index
CS8	8-item Children's Society material deprivation index
DfE	Department for Education
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU-SILC	European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FRS	Family Resources Survey
GCI	Good Childhood Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBAI	Households Below Average Income
ICE	Imputation using Chained Equations
MAR	Missing at random

MCAR	Missing completely at random
MD	Material deprivation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MI	Living in a household likely to qualify for minimum income benefits
MNAR	Missing not at random
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PSE 1999	Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 1999
PSE 2012	Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 1999
PSE23	23-item PSE 2012 material deprivation index
PSE8	8-item PSE 2012 material deprivation index
SLSS	Student's Life Satisfaction Scale
SP	Subjective poverty
SSCC	Social Science Computing Co-operative
SWB	Subjective well-being
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Statistical notation

- * Significant at the 0.05 level
- ** Significant at the 0.01 level
- NS Not significant at the 0.05 level
- α Cronbach's Alpha
- b Beta coefficient (for regression analysis)

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