

## Children's Budget 2018

### Key Recommendations

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are 5 times more likely to perform poorly in science, reading and maths compared to their advantaged peers.



Introduce free primary education at the cost of €103.2m per annum. This is only an extra yearly cost-per-pupil of just €185. This would provide free textbooks, classroom resources, school transport and remove voluntary contributions for all children.



Over 56% of children living in disadvantaged and deprived areas do not attend DEIS schools. Educational disadvantage cannot be tackled simply through the DEIS system.



An annual investment of €30m would provide an additional 900 Special Needs Assistants.

I want to leave school early because I can see the stress on mum trying to pay for all the books and stuff we need for school. She says no but I'll get in trouble for not having all the books anyway. Our school should give out books to those who need them.

Sarah aged 15, Dublin

Invest €54m annually for the next 5 years to clear waiting lists preventing children from accessing vital health assessments and treatment.

This investment will lead to an extra:

- 917 speech and language therapists
- 934 occupational therapists
- 1,019 physiotherapists
- 1,015 child psychologists



Because I am poor my child's quality of life is just left in the balance. What message does that give our children, because you're poor you don't matter as much.

Parent, Mayo

A record 3,048 children were homeless in August 2017. The Government must:

- End the practice of using B&Bs and hotels to house families
- Ensure Rent Supplement and Housing Assistance Payments are in line with market rents
- Build more social housing units



Anna and her family have been couch surfing now since June 2016. She is sleeping with her Mum, and two of her siblings in the one bed. There are 12 people living in a three-bedroom apartment in Dublin.

Barnardos Project Worker

Invest in early childhood care and education with a focus on improving quality and access of services to ensure Ireland reaches the target of spending 1% GDP on early years within a five year timeframe.



I can see how my son benefitted from going to childcare, if all children did it it would prepare them better for school.

Parent, Kilkenny

Allocate an additional €20m to Tusla's budget for preventative work with at-risk children and children in the care system.



I have been living with my foster family for 3 years and they are good to me but I would like to see my real mum more often now that she is well again.

Mark aged 13, Wexford