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**NEW DATA REVEALS 14% OF UK FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN HAVE EXPERIENCED FOOD INSECURITY
IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS**

- The Food Foundation has joined the Child Food Poverty Task Force formed and spear-headed by Marcus Rashford which is calling on the Government to implement 3 National Food Strategy policy recommendations to support our most vulnerable children.
- New data shows that 14% of adults living with children reported experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity in the last 6 months. Four million people including 2.3 million children live in these households.
- This compares to pre-Covid-19 levels of 11.5% amongst households with children.
- The data revealed that 12% of adults living with children reported skipping meals because they could not afford or access food in the last 6 months.
- 4% of adults living with children reported having gone for a whole day without eating in the last 6 months.
- 10% of parents/guardians, affecting an estimated 1.9 million children, reported some form of child food insecurity in the past 6 months
- The Food Foundation's Covid-19 tracker shows that, despite people returning to work and children to school, food insecurity remains extremely high for families.
- While vital measures like the furlough scheme and Free School Meal vouchers may have prevented the situation worsening, a large number of children are still left in a precarious situation when it comes to securing the necessary healthy diet for them to grow, develop and participate actively in school and society.
- Marcus Rashford's Task Force is asking Government to allocate sufficient budget to implementing 3 policy recommendations included in the National Food Strategy:
 - a. Expand eligibility for the Free School Meal scheme to include every child (up to the age of 16) from a household where the parent or guardian is in receipt of Universal

Credit (or equivalent benefits¹). Under this recommendation an estimated additional 1.5 million 7-16 year olds would benefit from Free School Meals.

- b. Extend the Holiday Activity and Food Programme to all areas in England, so that summer holiday support is available to all children in receipt of Free School Meals.
- c. Increase the value of Healthy Start vouchers to £4.25 per week and expand the scheme to every pregnant woman and to all households with children under 4 where a parent or guardian is in receipt of Universal Credit or equivalent benefits.

Tuesday 8th September – New data from the Food Foundation reveals that 13.6% of adults living with children reported experiences of moderate or severe food insecurity in the past 6 months. 4 million people live in these affected households including 2.3 million children. This remains higher than pre-Covid-19 levels of 11.5% of households with children¹.

10% of parents/guardians, affecting an estimated 1.9million children, reported that food insecurity had affected their children in a variety of ways in the last 6 months forcing them to rely on only a few kinds of low cost food to feed their children (6%) and provide unbalanced meals (5%), and to resort to smaller portions (1%) or skipping meals entirely (2%).

The data, taken from a YouGov survey commissioned by The Food Foundation, demonstrates the need for urgent action to address the high numbers of families experiencing food insecurity. The Government's furlough scheme, increase in Universal Credit payments and the extension to Free School Meal vouchers throughout the summer holidays were necessary stopgap measures to prevent the situation worsening. While 30-day food insecurity rates have improved since the first few months of lockdown, the data confirms the need for long-lasting policy measures to be implemented to ensure parents and children have access to a healthy diet.

England International footballer turned campaigner Marcus Rashford's new *Child Food Poverty Task Force* has enlisted the support of national supermarkets including Aldi, Asda, Co-op, Iceland, Lidl, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose, as well as food brands Heinz and Kellogg's, online food delivery

¹ Food Standards Agency, Food and You Survey 2018. Analysed (to allow direct comparison)

Food insecurity here is based on an affirmative response to one of three questions:

In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in the household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry, but didn't eat, because there wasn't enough money for food?

In the last 12 months did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

service Deliveroo, and charities The Food Foundation and Fareshare, to endorse three policy recommendations, included in Henry Dimbleby's Part 1, National Food Strategy, ahead of The Chancellor's Budget and Spending Review. This new data from The Food Foundation highlights the urgency with which the Government needs to act.

Anna Taylor, Executive Director of Food Foundation said of the new data:

"The situation for families and their children is precarious. It's vital that the economic measures which have been put in place to protect struggling families are maintained and increased further in the Autumn budget given the economic scenario we are facing. Too many families are missing out with devastating, life-long impacts on our children. Our data shows that government action really matters and has a direct impact on people's lives and the future health and wellbeing of our children."

Marcus Rashford, Footballer and food poverty campaigner said: "As a sportsman, I have always found such power in unity and teamwork, and I'm thrilled that such influential voices have put any allegiance aside to join me on my mission to move the conversation of child food insecurity forward. 2.3 million children have been living in food insecure households over the last 6 months. The Task Force stand together to offer these vulnerable children the platform they need to have their voices heard. I encourage everyone to stop and listen. The time for action is now. I'm proud and I'm humbled to see such a reaction and commitment from the food industry, and I am confident that together we can help change the lives of those most vulnerable for the better."

Saffron Stedall, England, 16, Food Foundation Young Ambassador, said: "Lockdown has been really tough for so many young people and affected our lives in so many ways. But there is now a real possibility that government could bring in some policies to help end the stigma of poverty and improve kids' access to healthy, sustainable food. It would be good for our health and good for the planet too."

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

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¹ “Equivalent benefits” is a term drawn from DWP. It covers any of the legacy benefits which Universal Credit is replacing, i.e. working age Jobseeker’s Allowance (income-related), Employment and Support Allowance (income-related), Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

² All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2309 parents or guardians living with children under 18 years. Fieldwork, unless otherwise stated, was undertaken between 24th August and 1st September 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults aged 18+. Population Calculations made by the Food Foundation using mid-year population estimates available on request.

Social Media

Twitter: @Food_Foundation

#EndChildFoodPoverty

#Right2Food

About the Food Foundation

The [Food Foundation](#) is a charity working to influence food policy and business practice, shaping a sustainable food system which makes healthy diets affordable and accessible for all. We work in partnership with researchers, campaigners, community bodies, industry, investors, government and citizens to galvanise the UK’s diverse agents of change, using surprising and inventive ideas to drive fundamental shifts in our food system. These efforts are based on the continual re-evaluation of opportunities for action, building and synthesising strong evidence, convening powerful coalitions, harnessing citizens’ voices and delivering impactful communications.

The Food Foundation's [COVID-19 tracker](#) is live, providing analysis of key developments and insights from the front line on how coronavirus is impacting the food system, and how those changes are affecting citizens.

Registered Charity Number 1187611

About the Child Food Poverty Task Force

Formed by footballer Marcus Rashford, the Child Food Poverty Task Force is a group of businesses and charities who, over the coming weeks, will dedicate their platforms to sharing real stories of those most affected by child food insecurity in the UK, supported by real-time statistics. The task force comprises: Aldi, Asda, Co-Op, Deliveroo, The Food Foundation, Fareshare, Iceland, Heinz, Kellogg's, Lidl, Marcus Rashford, Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose & Partners.

The intention and objective of the task force is to see sufficient funds from the Chancellor's Budget and Spending Review allocated to implement the 3 policy recommendations – a unifying step to identifying a long-term solution to child food poverty in the UK.