**The 3rd International Conference of the International Society for Child Indicators**

**Title:** Developing a child-centric measure of child poverty

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**Abstract:** Despite the popularity of child poverty as a topic of policy and academic interest, the fight to end child poverty poses several definitional and methodological issues. Children’s developmental and legal dependence on adults rightly places a moral duty on society to attend to their material well-being. However, the implications of this dependence are not fully addressed in current policy measures, which rely on the income and material situation of the household, usually using parents as proxies for children, rather than on the situation of the child themselves.

Research questions addressed include:

* How effective are questions relating to household income (or proxies for this) in measuring child poverty?
* To what extent can it be assumed that child poverty can be measured using adult proxies and variables relating to household income?
* How accurately can children report on their material situation and the poverty of their household?
* How useful is an index of children’s material deprivation in measuring child poverty from a child-centric perspective?

This paper presents research undertaken in partnership with the University of York and the Children’s Society. Two surveys are used – the 2008 and 2010-11 waves of the Understanding Children’s Wellbeing survey – to illustrate work completed on the development of a child-centric measure of child poverty. Data from the 2008 wave of the Understanding Children’s Wellbeing survey, collected from a sample of almost 7,000 10-16 year olds, are used to establish the research problem. Following this, a proposed index of child material well-being drawing on the socially perceived necessities approach is derived from data from focus groups and a pilot study which included 300 parent-child pairs. Finally, preliminary findings are presented from the 2010-2011 wave of the survey, covering 5,000 8-16 year olds.