

Current statistics on the scale of child homelessness in Ireland

- In December 2015 there were a total of 1,616 children registered as homeless across Ireland. In December 2016, this had risen to 2,505 children. This is an increase of 55%. The same period saw a 28% rise in adult homelessness nationwide.
- In Christmas of 2016, the overall homeless figure recorded by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government surpassed 7,000 for the first time. There were 4,643 adults and 2,505 children recorded as homeless, giving a combined total of 7,148.
- In Dublin, during Christmas week 2016, there were 1028 families in homeless accommodation including 2096 children (Dublin Region Homeless Executive).
- Property rents are rising at a record rate of 13.5% annually according to the latest figures from Daft.ie for 2016. This is the largest annual increase since they began monitoring rents in 2002 (Daft.ie).

What that means for children and families on a daily basis:

I'm sick of sharing a bed with my little sister, I just want to find a home.

Child living in a hotel

I haven't told any of my school friends that I'm living in a hotel because they might tease me so I don't bring any of them here.

Child living in a hotel with younger sibling and mother

Life is so unstable and my children are just caught in the middle of it. I don't live any kind of life, I just exist. I'm worried about how this is affecting them. I only want the best for them.

Parent living in emergency unit with her 2 children

All of these stresses of being homeless is damaging the relationship children have with their parents. We know this relationship is a protective factor for children and its being eroded as parents struggle to cope and reassure their children.

Barnardos Project Worker

To be homeless you have to go and present as homeless that day with your children. Imagine if that was your child how you'd feel? They'd have to pack up their things and go and present as homeless with you. It's traumatic for children. We're inflicting trauma on them.

Barnardos Project Worker

Imagine having to share a single bed with your mother when you're nine, and having nowhere to play or do your homework except on the floor.

Parent

Her entire world was the space between those two beds.

Barnardos Project Worker describing the life of a two year old living in a hotel