

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

# Tackling child poverty

**Borough leaders have responded to the government's consultation on the Child Poverty Bill and called for greater freedoms from government in tackling child poverty in the capital.**

London Councils argues that the government's proposed new statutory duties for local authorities and their partners to tackle child poverty must allow sufficient freedoms around issues such as housing benefit, childcare and tackling worklessness to respond to residents' specific needs and tackle child poverty at a local level.

Despite the government's commitment to halving child poverty by 2010, London's

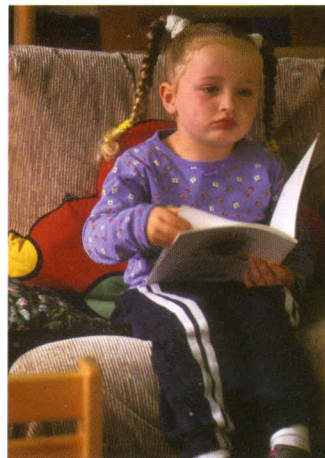
child poverty rate remains high. Forty one per cent of London children live in households with an income below 60 per cent of the national median income after housing costs.

London Councils' lead member for children and young people, Cllr James Kempton, said: "The fact that so many of our young people's lives are blighted by poverty is a source of great shame to us all. In the current economic climate, these children need our help more than ever.

"London's boroughs have already shown that they are highly committed to tackling child poverty, but government

needs to loosen the reins a bit and grant us the flexibilities we need to make a difference locally."

London Councils also works closely with the London Child Poverty Commission and supports its recommendations




Third Avenue

for tackling the causes of child poverty.

Nine boroughs have already signed up to the London Child Poverty Pledge, a commitment to improving services and supporting employment practices that help parents find and stay in work.

London Councils and the Government Office for London also launched the country's first child poverty network in the capital last month to help local authorities and their partners work closely together, share good practice and support pan-London initiatives.

 For a report on the progress of the London Child Poverty Commission's priorities, *Capital gains – one year on*, go to the London Child Poverty Commission website