



The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

14 November 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

We are a group of young single parents in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Lanarkshire. We were shocked and disgusted to find out that we, as younger parents, have been discriminated against because of our age.

Because of our age, we get £75 less in Universal Credit than single parents over 25. It's as if people in power are saying they don't care and that we don't matter as much as older parents. We feel like we're being told we are worth less and our kids don't deserve the same things as kids who have older parents.

People think you get pregnant to get money. This isn't true. We have had to make so many sacrifices. We can't remember the last time we went out and bought something for ourselves, even just a lipstick for £2! It used to cost maybe £50 for a food shop per week and now it's costing around £80. We are getting into debt just to pay for basic essentials, such as food and heating.

The Scottish Child Payment helps as it gives us a safety net, but we are still struggling. Some older parents have a chance to build up an income and they have a steady job, they get paid more and receive a higher rate of Universal Credit, so they can have a safety net. We want to work, we want to access training, but there are huge obstacles in our way. It's like we are winning the battle but losing the war.

We are proud to be parents. We had our kids when we were young but that doesn't make us any less of a good parent as someone older than us. We have had to grow up a lot faster. Many of our friends spend their money and time going out. We would always rather spend time with our kids. We'll go without so we can buy our kids new shoes, feed them, whatever it takes. We will always make sure our kids are ok. But all this comes at a cost. The cost is getting into debt to pay for food and heating for ourselves and our kids. The cost is also our own mental health.

Please don't discriminate against us. We are parents, all children deserve the best start in life.

Sincerely,

A group of young mums supported by One Parent Families Scotland in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Lanarkshire