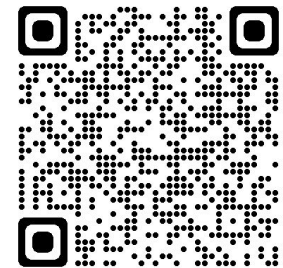


Prof. Flora Douglas

Why we need to think and act beyond infant feeding pathways as a response to infant food insecurity in the UK.

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[Professor Flora Douglas \(worktribe.com\)](https://www.worktribe.com/Flora-Douglas)



- **Maternal and infant food insecurity is a hidden problem - exacerbated by COVID pandemic and the current cost of living crisis!**
- **Co-exists with young parents' fear of disclosing economic hardship to health professionals – child protection anxieties**
- Families with young children were identified by community support, social and health care workers as an emerging group of concern in our national study of household food insecurity prevalence **in 2014!**
- **Food insecure parents were/are going without food in order to feed your children or other loved ones!**

Recommendation 3 called for better information about food insecurity experience and prevalence amongst families with young children



- 8 million adults (14.8% of households) experienced food insecurity in January 2024
- 3 million adults (5.8% of households) reported not eating for a whole day because they couldn't afford or get access to food
- 20.0% of households with children reported experiencing food insecurity compared with 12.7% of households without children
- **Single adult households with children were nearly twice as likely to be food insecure than multi adult households with children**
- **17.0% of single adult households with children reported not eating for a whole day because they couldn't afford or get access food**

- In a context of nearly two decades of UK wage stagnation, in theory, pregnant women and eligible families with children up to the age 16 years in Scotland have access to additional household income - Best Start Food Grants, the Scottish Child Payment... and access to the Scottish Welfare Fund, if eligible.
- But UK Government benefits have declined in value in recent years. (JRF and Res Foundation)
- Debt-by-deductions compounds the problem - featured in the lives northeast young mothers with infants in 2021.
- **A significant source of stress, anxiety and food insecurity experience**

[Midwives', health visitors', family nurse practitioners' and women's experiences of the NHS Grampian's Financial Inclusion Pathway in practice: a qualitative investigation of early implementation and impact. \[Report\] \(worktribe.com\)](#)

Key Questions

- What proportion of the population are food insecure during pregnancy, 6 months post partum and during lactation in Scotland?
- What are food insecure mothers' and food insecure households' experiences and decision making related to infant (milk) feeding and weaning in Scotland? How do those experiences align with (or otherwise) their feeding intentions during pregnancy?
- What are policy and practitioner expectations of food insecure women in Scotland, regarding their pregnancy experience and infant feeding practice, who may or may not be relying on a food bank or food pantry to feed themselves?
- [Diet and Health Inequalities \(DIO Food\) | The Rowett Institute | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)