

Designed and copyrighted to Dominic Watters @SingleDadSW



POVERTY, AND FOOD INSECURITY

presentation by Dominic Watters, @SingleDadSW

social

work



Norfolk
County Council



FOOD IS
CARE



ABOUT ME PROFESSIONALLY

- **Qualified Social Worker**
- **FoodisCare campaign founder**
- **Editorial board of the British Journal of Social Work [BJSW]**
- **Author**
- **Speaker**

@SINGLEDADSW



What we will cover...

My Story

What is food insecurity?

Why food insecurity has be a blind spot in social work

Gaps in policy & practice

Food Inequality Framework

Poverty & Food Insecurity Training

Q&A



FOOD INSECURITY



"Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. In this regard, concerted action at all levels is required."

UN FAO 2015



MY STORY



I am a single dad. I live in a council estate with my amazing daughter. Surviving on Universal Credit, child benefit, free school meal vouchers, and we've always had a pay-as-you-go gas & electric meter. I began to notice how the inequalities I experience living in poverty are shared with many of the people we serve.



#ESTATELIFE



Placement

- 16–21 year old young people in care
- Reliance on food banks
- Food used to control behaviour



Food Deserts

"Where people do not have easy access to healthy, fresh foods, particularly if they are poor and have limited mobility",
(Elliot, 1997)



Combating Shame & Stigma...



Shifting the Agenda



23.06.2020

BASW

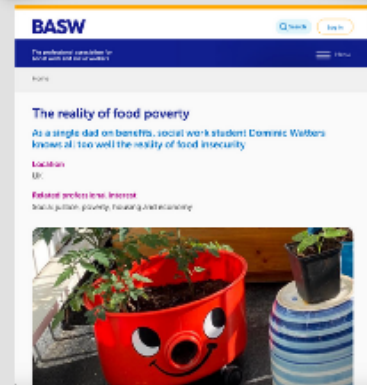
The professional association for
social work and social workers



Shifting the Agenda



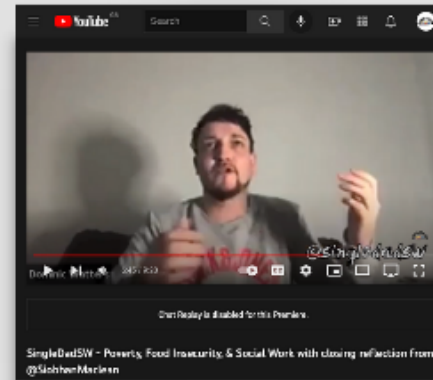
Article published in **Social Work Covid-19 Journal**
Food Insecurity and Social Work: Reflections From My Placement



Two Page Article in the **Professional Social Work Magazine 2020**
The Reality of Food Poverty

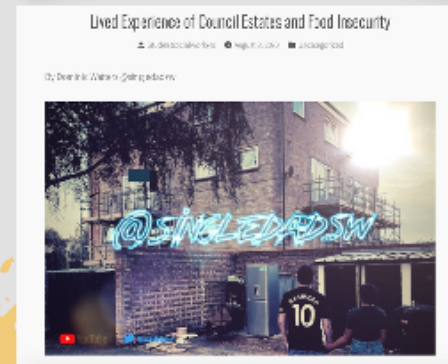


Central Voice in **BASW's** Response to the **IRCSC**
I am still an active participant of this steering group and just recently elected as **BASW England Committee member**



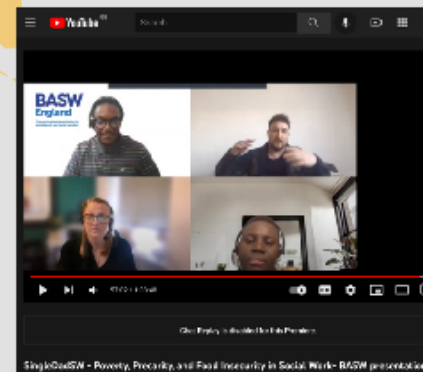
Invited to be speak at **Siobhan Maclean's Anti-Poverty event**

The event was widely attended and host a host of leading social work academics together with **ATD Forth World**.



Lived Experience of council estates and Food Insecurity

Article for student lead social work hub - **@SWBohemians**



Key Speaker at **BASW Annual Conference 2021**

Receiving feedback from leading social work academics & practioners

Shifting the Agenda

Lived Vs Living Experience

**..the tension and urgency of
inequality**

Dominic Watters



FOOD INSECURITY



Redefined as...

"The living experience of food poverty"

(Watters. D, 2021)



..and raising awareness



CommunityCare
The best of over 100 care sector websites

Menu

Jobs Live Inform

'It's taking a deprived single dad to highlight issues of food insecurity'

A newly qualified social worker is using his experiences of poverty to campaign for change and inform other practitioners

by Lauryn Pierre on March 24, 2022 in Workforce

Dominic Watters

The Food Foundation

NEWS
23 MAY 2022

Breadline Voices: A food desert in the garden of England

PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS FOLLOW UP

VIEWPOINT FOOD POVERTY

Food security must be part of our care duty

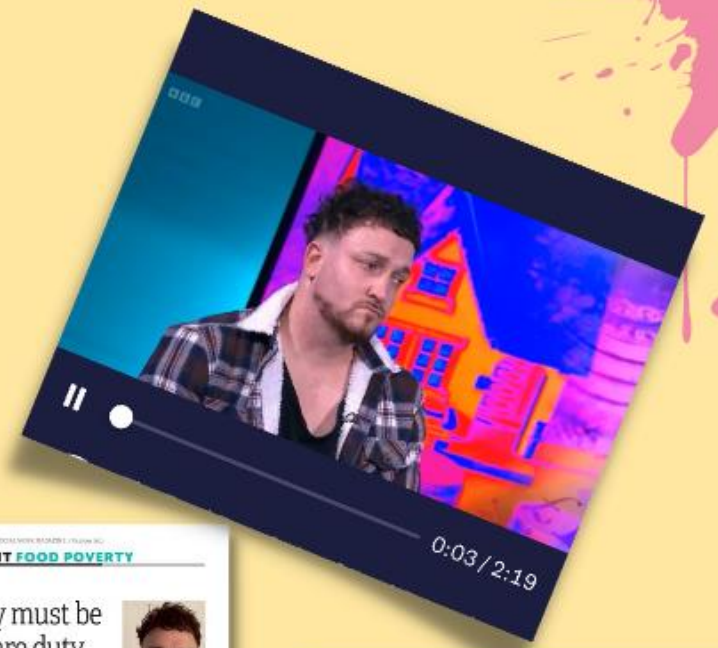
Dominic Watters explains why he is launching the Breadline Voices campaign based on his own living experience of food poverty

Why to care: Social workers are demanding the impact of food poverty

It is a starkly personal issue for Dominic Watters, a newly qualified social worker who has experienced food poverty in his own home. In a digital media landscape where headlines are often written for the sake of being first, it is a stark headline. In a digital media landscape where headlines are often written for the sake of being first, it is a stark headline. In a digital media landscape where headlines are often written for the sake of being first, it is a stark headline.

Why to care: Social workers are demanding the impact of food poverty

It is a starkly personal issue for Dominic Watters, a newly qualified social worker who has experienced food poverty in his own home. In a digital media landscape where headlines are often written for the sake of being first, it is a stark headline. In a digital media landscape where headlines are often written for the sake of being first, it is a stark headline.



sky Sky News @SkyNews

"In the Queen's speech I didn't hear anything that addressed that I'm living in a food and fuel desert in the garden of England."

Dominic Watters says he is 'gripped with a sense of despair' because of the cost of living crisis.

#KayBurley: trib.al/eYQQ49A

BREAKING NEWS

BBC Menu

The Food Chain

Home Episodes Clips Podcast More

Listen now

Food poverty in a rich country

Three UK citizens discuss how difficult it can be to feed a family on a low income

Show more

Download

Available now

27 minutes



Barriers to change

- A blind spot of social work
- Ideas of undeserving
- Snobbery

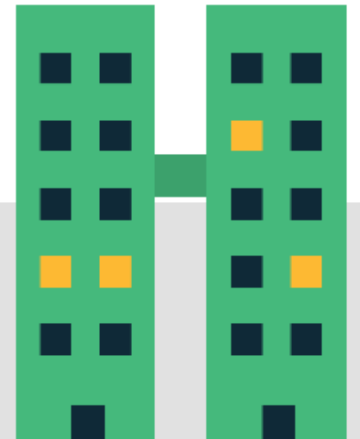




Social Work Practice

..poverty has become the wallpaper of practice, "too big to tackle and too familiar to notice"

(Morris et al. 2018)





Broken Plate 2022

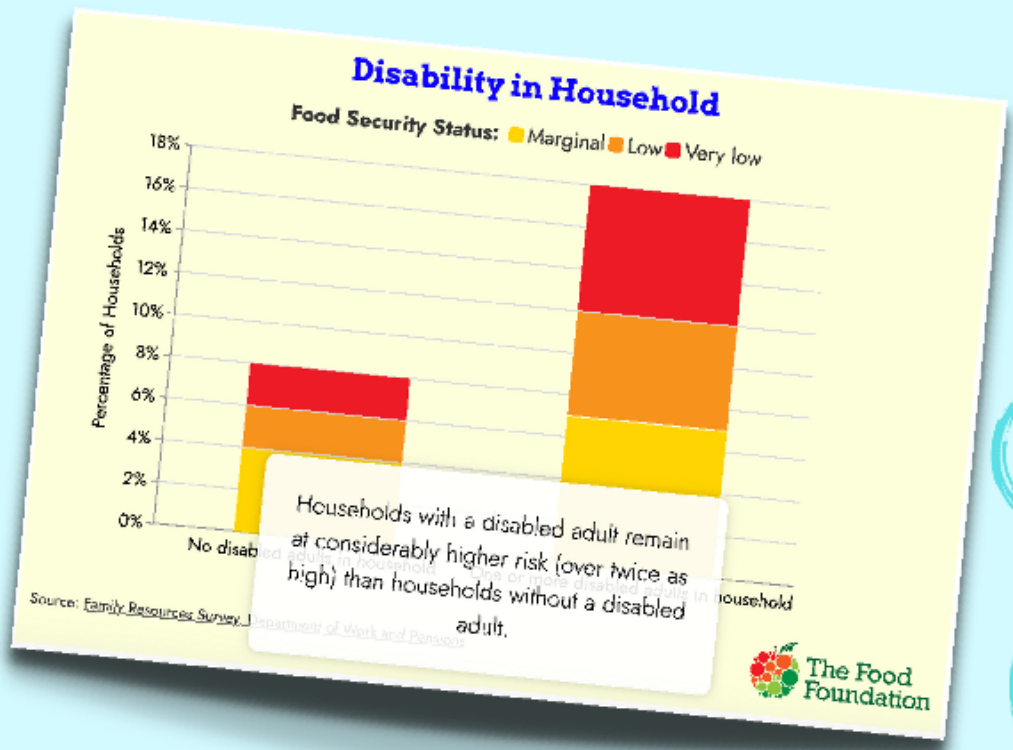
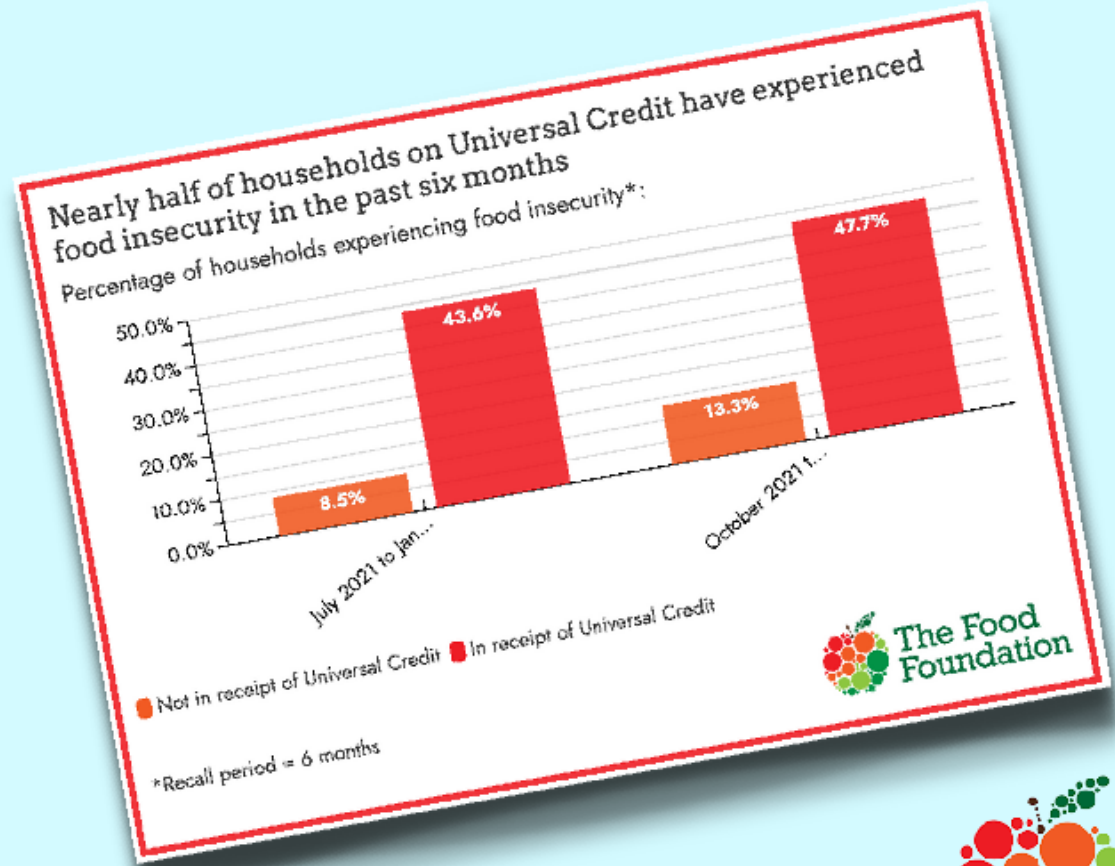
The Food
Foundation



**Highlights
issues of
poverty,
obesity, food
environments,
and policy**



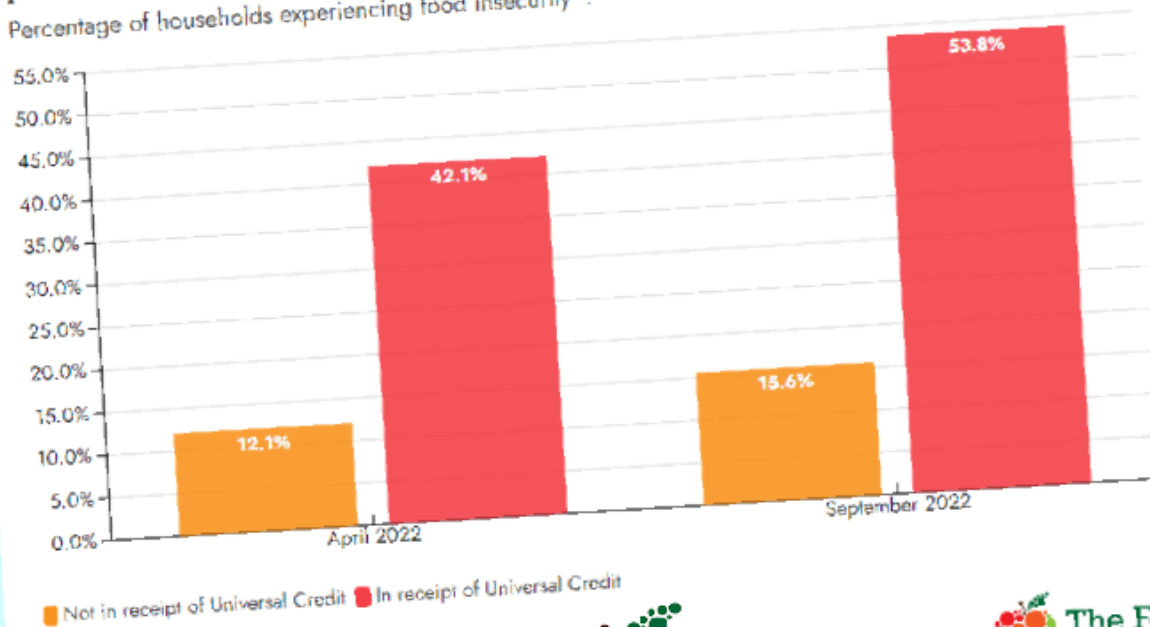
Most recent statistics...



Most recent statistics updated...

Over half of households on Universal Credit have experienced food insecurity in the past month

Percentage of households experiencing food insecurity*:



■ Not in receipt of Universal Credit ■ In receipt of Universal Credit

* 1-month recall period



Reflective Task



**"What challenges do the people
you work with have around
food?"**



FOOD INSECURITY & MENTAL HEALTH



Pryor et al. 2016

“Food insecurity co-occurs with depression, suicidal ideation and substance use problems in young adulthood. Our findings suggest that reductions in food insecurity during this important life period may help prevent mental health problems. Policies aiming to alleviate food insecurity should also address individuals’ psychiatric problems, to prevent a lifelong vicious circle of poor mental health and low socioeconomic attainment.”



Food.. is Care

Approach to
social work...

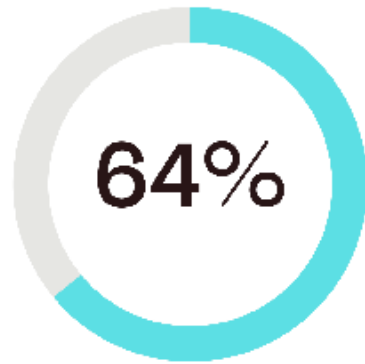
“Food is Care is a campaign letting those with influence know that poor, often single parent families in council estates, are hungry and feel unheard.”





FOOD IS CARE RESEARCH

in partnership with the **Social Workers Union**



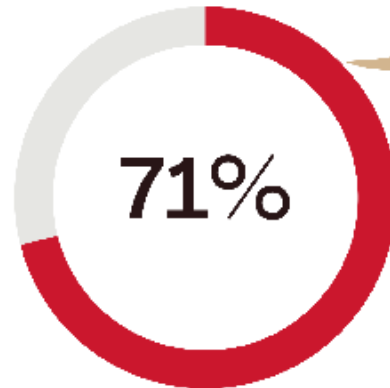
Two-thirds of social workers report concerns

Two-thirds, 64%, of social workers have reported concerns about families being able to provide food for children they work with.



Families are compromising on the quality of food

Social workers claimed that the families they work with are compromising on the quality of food to save money (71%), compromising on the quantity of food consumed to save money (59%), and skipping meals (55%).



'The issue of food in social work has been off the table for too long'

Food is Care founder, **Dominic Watters** @SingleDadSW

Food Banks



Over four-fifths (84%) said the vulnerable children and families they work with rely on food banks.



Food Insecurity in Social Work



Eight in ten (82%) of social workers are calling for the issue to be included in the profession's standards

The Food is Care survey, in partnership with Social Workers Union, questioned 119 qualified social workers working with families between December 2021 and January 2022.

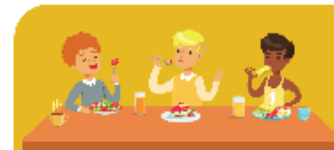
For more information contact:

Social Workers Union

Dr Shawn Major, shawn.major@swu-union.org.uk

Food is Care
Dominic Watters, foodiscare@gmail.com

Dominic Watters,
@SingleDadSW
Food is Care founder



Letters to power



in partnership with
SWU Social Workers Union



14 Feb 2022.

Lord Patel
Social Work England
1 North Bank
Blonk Street
Sheffield, S3 8JY

14 Feb 2022.

Josh MacAlister
Chair of the Independent Review of Children's
Social Care

Dear Lord Patel,

I write to you as a single dad, living in a deprived council estate block with my amazing daughter, in receipt of free school meal vouchers, and as someone who experiences food poverty regularly. I started the Food is Care campaign to begin to highlight the issue of food insecurity has been off the table for too long due to how detached those in power are from the daily realities of living in poverty. The campaign has the full support of the Social Workers Union with opportunities to engage further with their large membership.

Our recent and groundbreaking survey*, demonstrates an intrinsic relationship between poverty, food insecurity, and children.

Two-thirds (64%) of social workers have reported concerns about vulnerable children and families they work with.

Four-fifths (84%) said the issue should be included in the professional standards of the social work regulation process.

Eight in ten (82%) added that the issue should be included in the professional standards of the social work regulation process.

Considering these findings, I hope you can agree this presents an opportunity to centrally locate food banks and impact the wellbeing of children and young people. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dear Josh MacAlister,

Food is Care survey results

I write to you as a single dad, living in a deprived council estate block with my amazing daughter, in receipt of free school meal vouchers, and as someone who experiences food poverty regularly. I started the Food is Care campaign to begin to highlight that the issue of food insecurity has been off the table for too long due to how detached those in power are from the daily realities of living in poverty. The campaign has the full support of the Social Workers Union with opportunities to engage further with their large membership.

Our recent and groundbreaking survey*, demonstrates not only the scope of this issue but also the intrinsic relationship between poverty, food insecurity, and social work. Finding that:

Two-thirds (64%) of social workers have reported concerns about families being able to provide food for their children.

Four-fifths (84%) said the vulnerable children and families they work with rely on food banks and social workers for support.

Eight in ten (82%) added that the issue should be included in the professions' training and guidance.

Considering these findings, I hope you can agree this presents an opportunity to centrally locate food banks and impact the wellbeing of children and young people. I look forward to hearing from you.

14 Feb 2022.

Ruth Allen
British Association of Social Workers
100 St. James Street
B2 5PP

14 Feb 2022.

Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Nadhim Zahawi,

I write to you as a single dad, living in a deprived council estate block with my amazing daughter, in receipt of free school meal vouchers, and as someone who experiences food poverty regularly. I started the Food is Care campaign to begin to highlight the issue of food insecurity has been off the table for too long due to how detached those in power are from the daily realities of living in poverty. The campaign has the full support of the Social Workers Union with opportunities to engage further with their large membership.

Our recent and groundbreaking survey*, demonstrates an intrinsic relationship between poverty, food insecurity, and children.

Two-thirds (64%) of social workers have reported concerns about vulnerable children and families they work with.

Four-fifths (84%) said the issue should be included in the professions' training and guidance.

Eight in ten (82%) added that the issue should be included in the professions' training and guidance.

Considering these findings, I hope you can agree this presents an opportunity to centrally locate food banks and impact the wellbeing of children and young people. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

How?

Change can happen?

Law

Policy

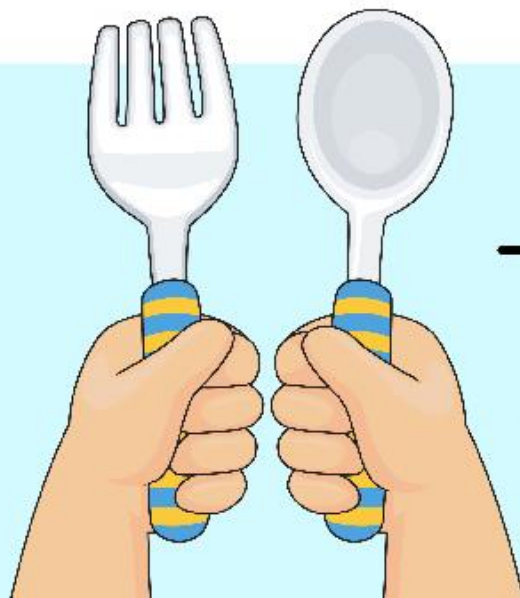
PCF's

Practice

Education

Partnerships

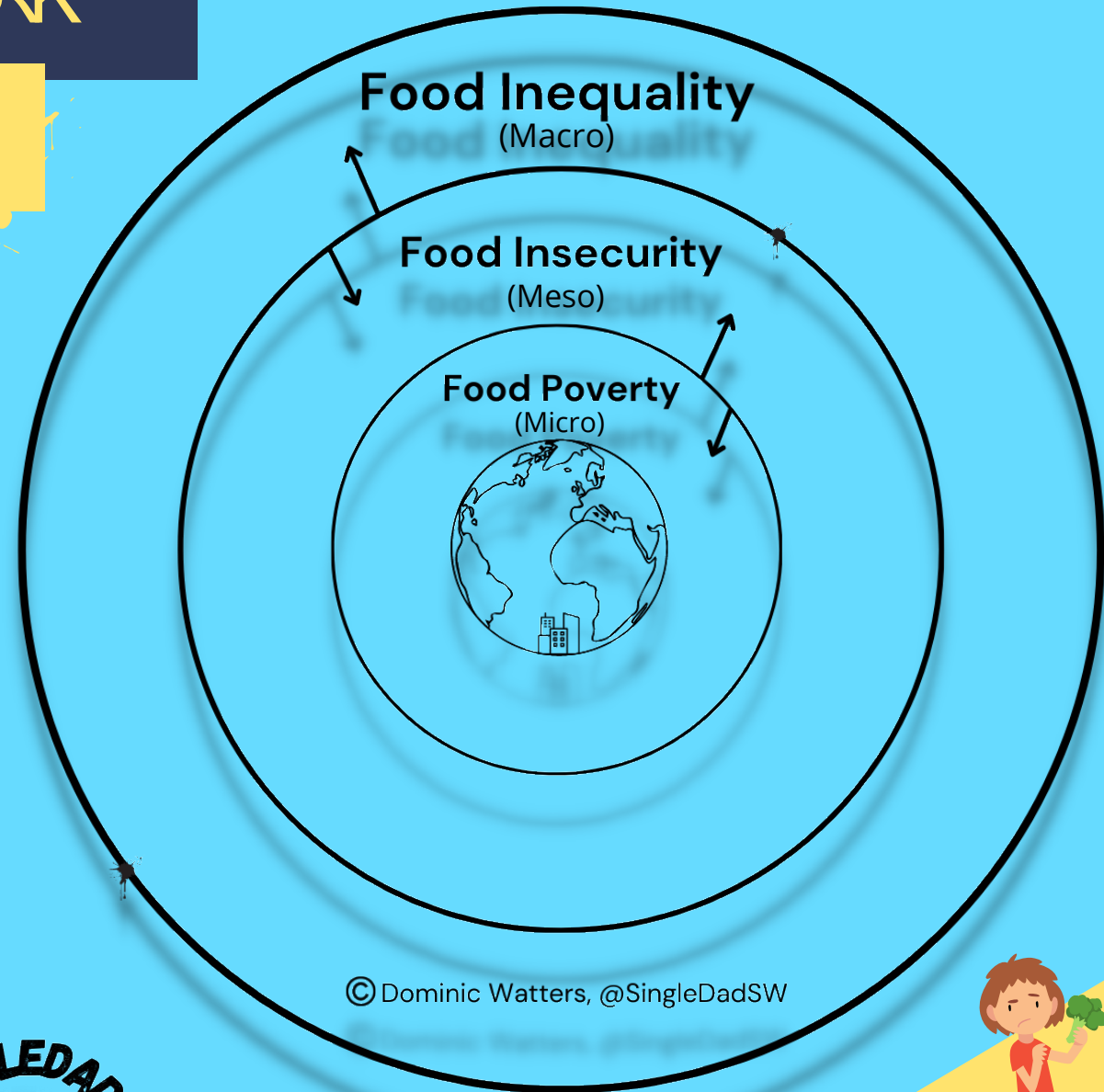
Activism



FOOD INEQUALITY FRAMEWORK

Introduced by Dominic Watters, 16.06.2022

- **Food Inequality**
call it what it is, a non-equal distribution of resources that isn't experienced in isolation
- **Food Insecurity**
the impact a lack of access to nutrition has on physical and emotional wellbeing
- **Food Poverty**
Only an economic issue, the scarcity of food in a cupboard



© Dominic Watters, @SingleDadSW



Cost of Living Crisis

sky news



BREAKING NEWS

Liberal Democrat Leader Sir Ed Davey says "we need a VAT tax cut" - facilitated by asking oil and gas companies to pay windfall tax



sky news 08:35

FTSE 7260.49

on the cost of living crisis yesterday

BREAKING NEWS

Levellin



19.4K views





Fuel Poverty this Winter

"..55% of UK households are forecast to fall into fuel poverty by January 2023 without additional interventions, risking far greater damage to health and higher rates of death associated with living in a cold home. Households with children as well as those on low incomes, living with disabilities and Black and Minority Ethnic groups are most at risk."

IHE, 2022



Food Insecurity

Free School Meals

Food Deserts

Fuel Poverty

Universal Credit

Social Mobility

Education

Undeserving

Wellbeing



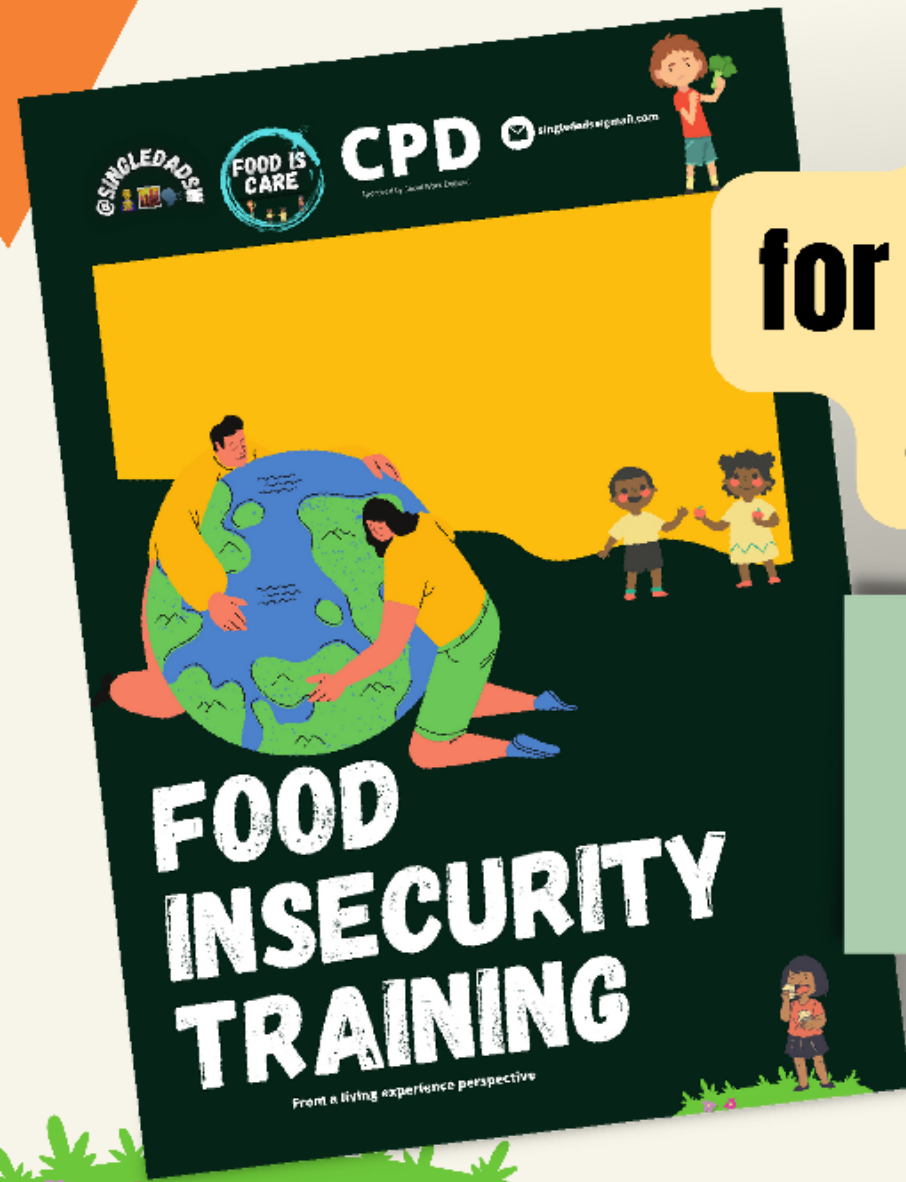
Food Insecurity Training

**Training
for professionals
and students**

Social
Work
England

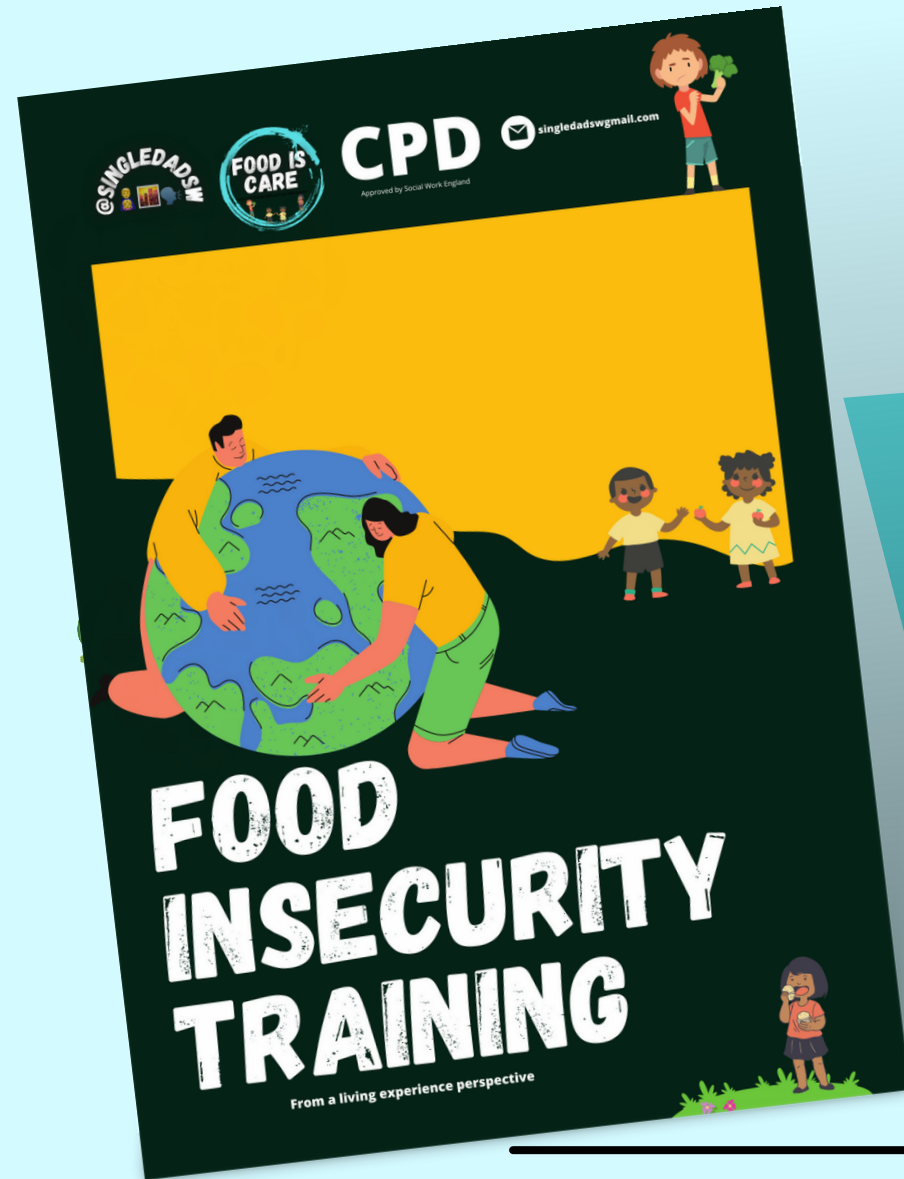
CPD

 SINGLEDADSW@GMAIL.COM



 @SINGLEDADSW

Food Insecurity Training



"I was touched by Dominic's work on his experience of poverty"

Sir Michael Marmot, Chair of WHO

"By speaking and writing so graphically from his own lived experience, Dominic has brought a vital new perspective to the way social work engages with poverty and food insecurity."

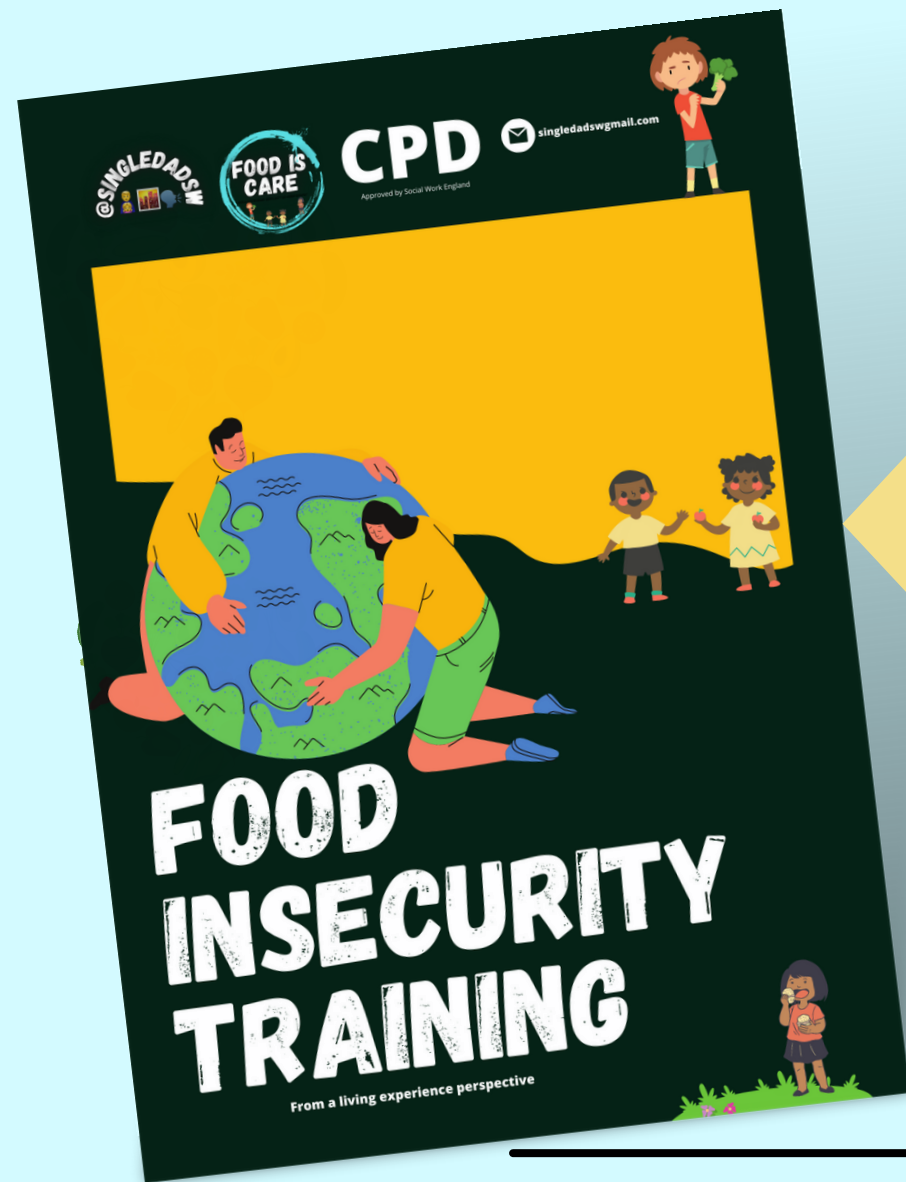
David Brindle, public services editor of the Guardian

"Dominic is providing vital insight into the living experience of food insecurity which is a reality for so many in Britain today."

Anna Taylor, OBE, Executive Director of the Food Foundation



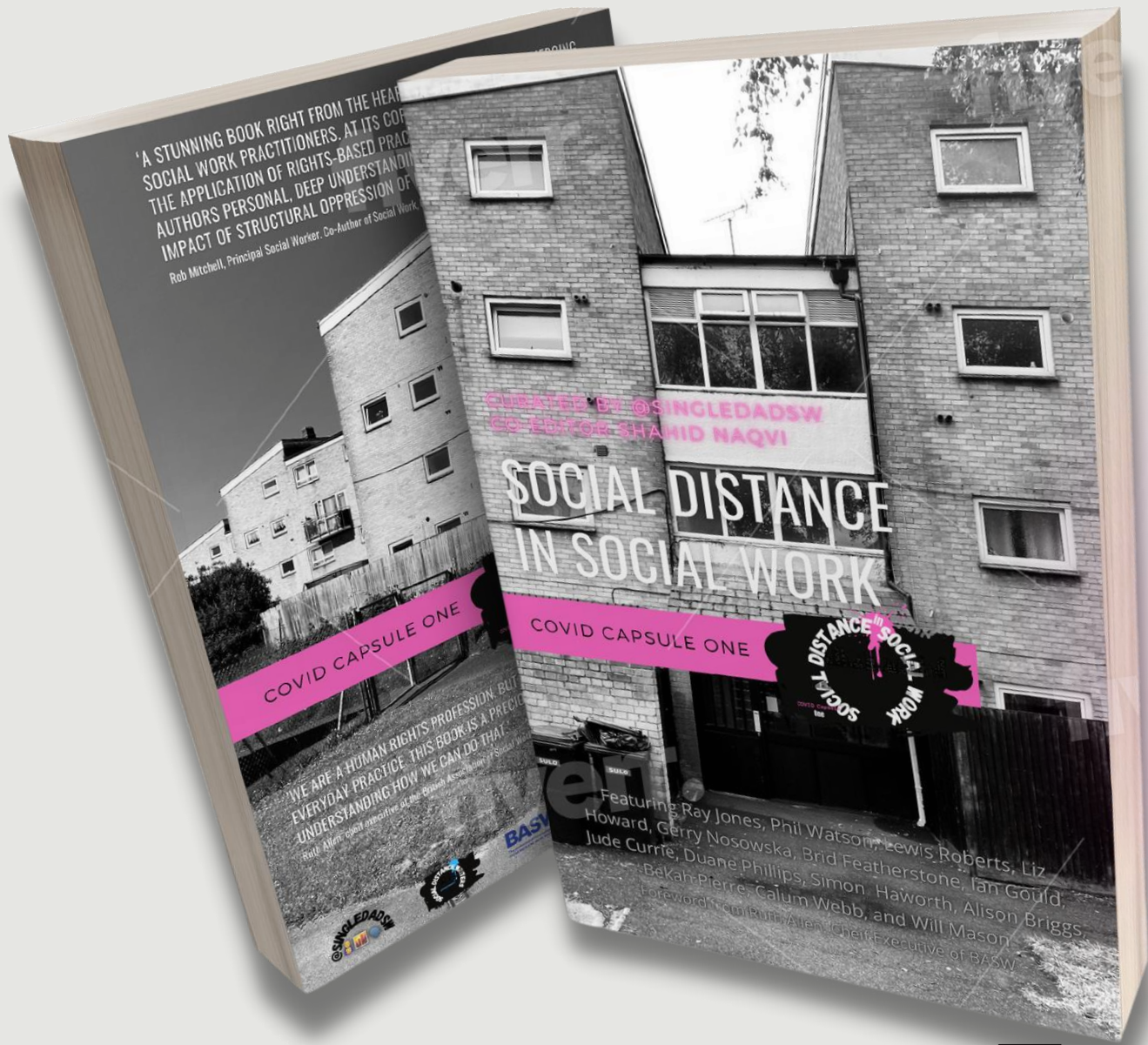
Food Insecurity Training



"Your presentation was both thought provoking and necessary for social workers within our trust to reflect on the impact of food poverty and as a consequence to widen our considerations when not only engaging with those who use our services but also when talking to our colleagues and friends as this is something that can impact on anyone. Thank you for facilitating this session, the impact of it has continued to stay with me and ensured that this is something that is discussed at all levels of the organisation."

Paula Swift, Trustwide Professional Head of Social Work





OUT NOW!!

amazon

