

Escape. Connect. Relate.

Poverty & Homelessness

Poverty is when you don't have enough money to experience a decent standard of living. Poverty affects millions of people in the UK and billions worldwide. There are different levels of poverty and different causes, and it can be difficult to 'break the cycle' of poverty without support.

Being homeless means that you don't have a home. Homelessness affects a variety of people and can happen for lots of reasons. Some homeless people live on the street; others have a roof over their head but are still classed as homeless.





ECR Suggested Reads

Many of our suggested reads are available from your school library and from [Edinburgh Libraries](#). Some books may contain triggering or upsetting content. Please use the age ratings as guidance and ask your school librarian for help. Books are listed in alphabetical order by author's surname.



Cardboard Cowboys by Brian Conaghan

Nobody at school can see past Lenny's size to the person within. So when lessons get too tough, Lenny goes to his bench to think. At least there no one can see him. Then one day he's stopped by Bruce, who lives in a cardboard home hidden away by the banks. A bumpy start soon gives way to an unexpected friendship - and an epic road trip - that will change both of them for life...

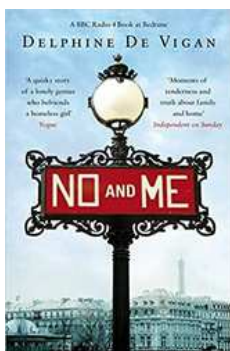
S1+, Homelessness



Toffee by Sarah Crossan

Allison runs away and hides out in the shed of an old house. An elderly woman with dementia named Marla lives there and mistakes Allison for a friend from her past, Toffee. Allison is used to hiding, and so becomes Toffee. It means she has a place to stay. But then Allison discovers how much Marla needs a real friend and must ask herself - where is home? What is a family? And most importantly, who am I, really?

S3+, Homelessness, Verse Novel



No and Me by Delphine De Vigan

Lou has OCD tendencies and a mother who suffers from depression. But Lou is about to change her life—and her parent's lives—because of a school project about homeless teens. Lou meets No, a homeless girl, and asks her parents if No can live with them. They agree, and must come to terms with a secret tragedy. But can this shaky, newfound family continue to live together when No's own past comes back to haunt her?

S1+, Homelessness



The Boy Who Steals Houses by C G Drews

Sam and his autistic older brother Avery have been abandoned. Sam's trying to build a life for them, surviving by breaking into houses when the owners are away. Until the day he's caught out. To his amazement, this large, chaotic family takes him under their wing - each assuming Sam is the friend of another. Sam finds himself caught up in their life, and falling for Moxie. But his past is about to catch up with him.

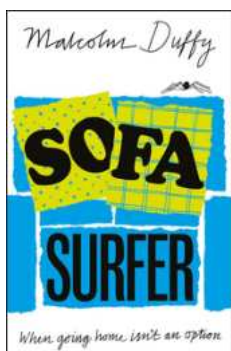
S3+, Autism



The Bones of Me by Kel Duckhouse

Living on an East London council estate has its worries - and life for Molly hasn't always been easy. But she has a dream to be a boxer just like her older brother, Denny. When he agrees to train her, she couldn't be more excited. But one night everything changes. There's an assault outside Molly's boxing club, Denny's missing and the police are after him. Molly must prove her brother's innocence and delve into the underbelly of East London, and her family history where secrets are revealed...

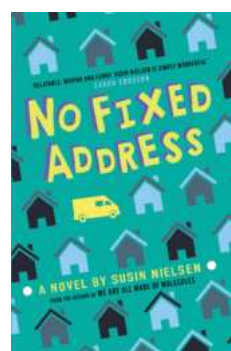
S3+, Poverty



Sofa Surfer by Malcolm Duffy

Tyler's teenage angst turns to outright rebellion when his family leave London for a new life in Yorkshire. He's angry with his parents about the upheaval and furious at losing his home. A chance meeting with a skinny girl called Spider will lead Tyler into a world he never knew existed - Spider is sofa surfing, and Tyler finds himself spinning a tangled web of lies in his efforts to help her escape her world of fear and insecurity.

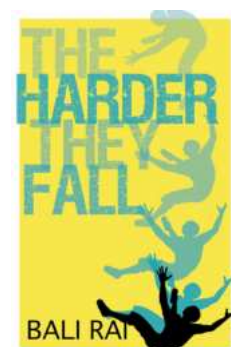
S3+, Homelessness



No Fixed Address by Susin Nielsen

Felix loves trivia. His mom is loving, but she can't keep a job. When they get evicted from their home, they have to move into a van. He can't tell anyone about it or he'll be put in foster care. As their circumstances go from bad to worse, Felix gets a chance to audition for a trivia show, and he's determined to earn a spot. Winning the cash could make everything okay again. But it doesn't turn out the way he expects. . . .

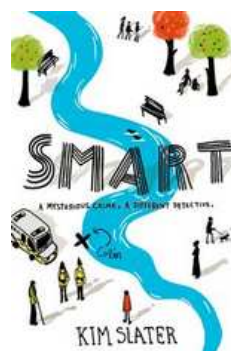
S1+, Homelessness



The Harder They Fall by Bali Rai

Cal's family are proud to live in an 'analogue' world - no wifi in their house, just an ancient black-and-white TV. At school, Cal has no choice but to live in the 21st century, coping with a range of bullies and chancers on a daily basis. When Cal's mum decides to 'rebalance' the family with a stint as volunteers at a local foodbank, Cal inadvertently discovers new kid Jacob's secret, and Jacob flips.

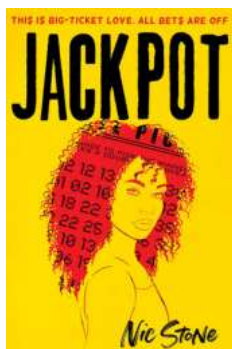
S1+, Poverty, Dyslexia-Friendly



Smart by Kim Slater

"I found Jean's friend dead in the river. His name was Colin Kirk. He was a homeless man, but he still wanted to live." There's been a murder, but the police don't care. It was only a homeless old man. Kieran cares and he's going to find out what really happened. But being a detective is difficult when you're amazing at drawing but terrible at fitting in. And when there are dangerous secrets everywhere...

S1+, Homelessness



Jackpot by Nic Stone

Rico is a high school senior, an afternoon-shift cashier, and has to race home to take care of her younger brother. Every. Single. Day. Then one day she sells a lottery-winning ticket, and thinks maybe her luck will finally change if only she and her popular and wildly rich classmate Zan can find the ticket holder who hasn't claimed the prize. But what happens when have and have-nots collide?

S3+, Poverty

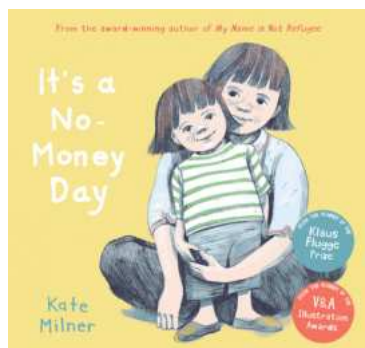


Liddle Bit by Alex Wheatle

Lemar is the second shortest guy in his year - everyone calls him Liddle Bit and his best friends tell him he has no chance with girls. His mum is hassled, his sister frustrated and his dad gone. Lemar wishes he could make life better. As a gang war breaks out, Lemar discovers that a gang leader has taken an interest in him. Before he knows what's happening, he's involved and it's dangerous. How can he possibly put things right?

S3+, Poverty

Picture Books

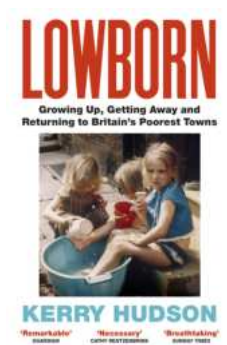


It's A No-Money Day by Kate Milner

Mum works really hard but today there is no money left and no food in the cupboards. Forced to visit the local foodbank, Mum feels ashamed that they have to rely on the kindness of others. Maybe one day things will be different but for now together they brighten up even the darkest of days.

Junior, Poverty, Dyslexia-Friendly

Information Books



Lowborn by Kerry Hudson

Kerry Hudson is proudly working class but she was never proudly poor. The poverty she grew up in was all-encompassing, grinding and often dehumanising. Now she has a secure home and access to art, music, film and books. But she often finds herself caught somehow between two worlds. This is her exploration of where she came from to try to discover what being poor really means in Britain today.

Senior, Poverty, Homelessness



Resources

Disclaimer: the ECR team does not take credit for these links, which are all offered and maintained by external providers

The Rock Trust

Support and advice for young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

<https://www.rocktrust.org/>

Four Square

Accommodation, advice and support for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

<https://www.foursquare.org.uk/>

The Poverty Alliance

A Scottish network working together to end poverty

<https://www.povertyalliance.org/>

Shelter Scotland

Advice, support and legal services for people experiencing homelessness

https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness

Crisis

Education, training and support for homeless people with a view to empowering them to move out of homelessness

<https://www.crisis.org.uk/about-us/scotland/>

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

Support for low-income families in Scotland

<https://cpag.org.uk/scotland>