

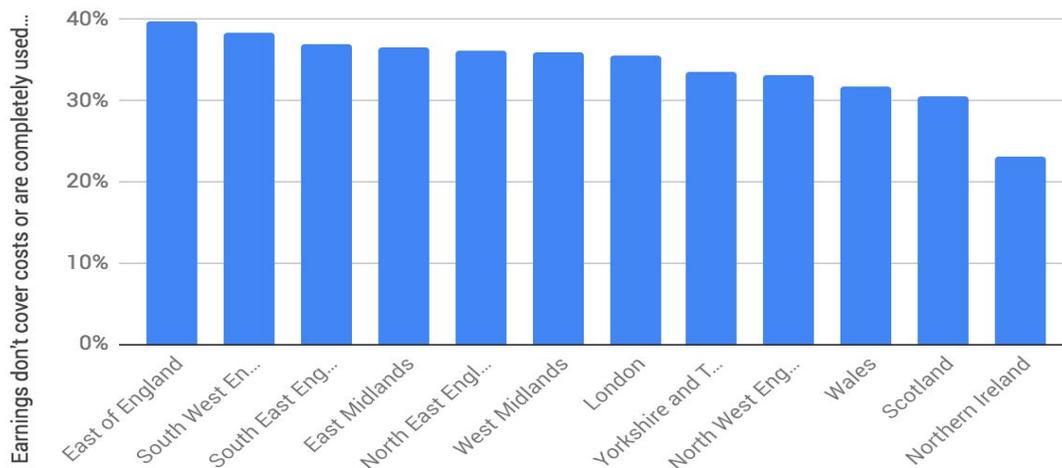
## OVER A THIRD OF PARENTS WHO RETURN TO WORK MAKE A FINANCIAL LOSS , OR ONLY BREAK EVEN DUE TO THE UNAFFORDABLE COST OF CHILDCARE

**Tuesday 10th March:** Pregnant Then Screwed is today releasing new figures from their childcare survey of 6,147 parents following a Parliamentary debate on the extension of fifteen free hours of childcare from nine months. The figures demonstrate the crippling costs of childcare for those with children under 3 years old, meaning that almost two thirds (61.7% )of those that return to work either work fewer hours, have changed jobs due or stopped working due to child care costs (8% do not work due to the cost of child care). Over a third (35.5%) of those that return to work, only just break even or make a financial loss due to the cost of child care.

The mean average daily cost of childcare for under 3's is £53.55 per day, but this rises to £73.97 in London (equating to £369.85 for five days); while the average person took home £465 after tax per week according to ONS (2020). Pregnant Then Screwed research demonstrates that the OECD are correct in stating that the UK has the second most expensive childcare system in the world. Using average income and average daily cost of childcare, the average person could spend 53% of their income on childcare (using the figures above). (OECD stated that the average person spent 35.7% of income on childcare - OECD, April 2019).

Parents in the East of England are most impacted by the cost of childcare, with 40% stating that earnings don't cover costs or are completely used on childcare costs. Whereas in parents in Northern Ireland are faring the best, with 23% of parents stating that their earnings are not covering their childcare costs.

Earnings don't cover costs or are completely used on childcare costs (by region)



Joeli Brearley, founder of Pregnant Then Screwed said: “The childcare system is not working for parents and we know it’s not working for providers. If we are to change the landscape for women, and parents, we need to provide properly subsidised childcare from 9 months old. The cost of Early years childcare (from when a parent goes back to work and is off SMP to three years old when some children get 30 free hours) is punishing, only 10% of respondents told us they had significant surplus after childcare costs; with some 35.5% of those that return to work saying their earnings don't cover costs or are completely used on childcare.”

“8% of those who responded have not returned to work due to childcare costs, and for those who have: 47.2% work fewer hours, 18.1% work more hours and 11.2% have had to change jobs because of the cost. The cost is catastrophic for all, whether you’re a cleaner, teacher, or a lawyer; and our case studies demonstrate it is not just a subset of society that is suffering but all, and regardless of location too.”

For those on Universal Credit, the picture is bleaker because there is no support in helping women get back to work. Sarah, a single parent from the South West of England who works in HR told us ‘I had to pay two full months of fees before I received any universal credit’. She says she was lucky to have help from family otherwise ‘it would have caused me significant debt or made it impossible for me to return to work’.

For others, going back to work isn’t just to provide but to be independent. Susan, another respondent told us she needed to go back to work to get away from her abusive husband. She has been unable to return to work because she cannot afford to pay for childcare.

The cost of childcare also varies drastically from region to region; with London being the most expensive and Northern Ireland being the cheapest option at £42.31 a day for under 3s.

	Average days of childcare per week for under 3s	Average cost of childcare per day for under 3s (£)	Average cost of childcare per week (under 3s) (£)
London	3.66	73.97	288.07
South East England	3.12	61.51	202.03
East of England	3.18	57.81	190.78
South West England	2.95	54.22	172.49
Scotland	3.13	52.59	169.8
North East England	3.04	52.27	162.75

Yorkshire and The Humber	3.06	50.4	170.12
West Midlands	3.17	50.24	169.26
North West England	3.21	49.65	170.92
Wales	3.1	48.86	158.22
East Midlands	3.25	48.82	168.76
Northern Ireland	3.39	42.31	151.63

-ENDS-

For further press information or case studies from Pregnant Then Screwed please contact: [celia@pregnantthenscrewed.com](mailto:celia@pregnantthenscrewed.com) or call: 07756525004.

**Notes to Editor:**

About Pregnant Then Screwed ([www.pregnantthenscrewed.com](http://www.pregnantthenscrewed.com)) is a project and campaign which protects, supports and promotes the rights of mothers who suffer the effects of systemic, cultural, and institutional discrimination through our various schemes and activities, including: A free legal advice service, a website where women post their stories of discrimination anonymously, lobbying the Government for legislative change, and a mentor scheme that supports women who are considering legal action against their employer.

**About the research:**

We surveyed a total of 6147 participants, who responded to social media prompts to complete the survey from Pregnant then Screwed pages. The survey was also shared on social media by parents and other organisations. The survey ran from 5th March to the 7th March. Participants were not incentivised to complete the survey. We only included responses from people with children **currently** under 3 years of age.