

# **Fighting poverty with books #ScottishBookTrust21**

**The Scottish Book Trust is today launching a campaign to mark its 21st anniversary by using books and reading to fight the effects of poverty.**

The charity claims that the benefits of reading are many, including improving employability, developing language skills and reducing stress and anxiety. They commissioned a survey which found that under a third of parents read to their children every day, but the number drops to half if they themselves were not read to as a child. The long term impact of reading starts at an early age. The survey also shows a link between reading and mental wellbeing with 9 in 10 Scots saying that reading allows them to switch off.



PHOTO Jonathan Ley

Marc Lambert, chief executive, Scottish Book Trust commented: "Reading and writing are fundamental life skills and without these we simply cannot break the poverty cycle. Books are so much more than a story. The benefits of reading for pleasure can significantly alleviate many of the effects of living in poverty, but those living in deprivation or difficult circumstances are far less likely to have access to books or opportunities to read and be read to.

"As poverty in Scotland continues to increase, we need vital support to reach more vulnerable adults, children and families to help improve their life chances."

The charity's patron, crime writer Val McDermid, commented: "I'm a writer because I started out as a reader, and I'm still a reader today. Reading opens the door to imagination: it's the first step on the road to change, not only for yourself but for the world around you. At Scottish Book Trust, we believe everybody should have access to the possibilities of books; to that imagination and that possibility for change."

With one in five adults, and almost one in four children, living in poverty in Scotland, the charity has launched a fundraising campaign, Scottish Book Trust 21, to increase its work where it is needed most. For many children and families across Scotland, books supplied by Scottish Book Trust will be the only ones in their home.

Scottish Book Trust is appealing for regular donors to give £21 per month, which could bring books to life for children in care, support families living in challenging social circumstances and reduce social isolation through sharing stories.

To find out more on how to support the campaign [click here.](#)

#ScottishBookTrust21



PHOTO Rachel Hein

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