

Out of Energy Survey results March 2022

How we conducted the survey

- Contact wanted to find out how rising energy costs are affecting families with sick and disabled children
- We ran a self-selecting online survey between 10 – 21 March 2022
- By definition the survey excludes anyone who doesn't have internet connection and includes only those who choose to take part
- We received a total of 7565 responses. We would like to thank every who took the time to complete the survey.

Methodology

- This analysis is based on 5499 respondents who are parents with one or more disabled children and are responsible for paying their household energy bills.
- Bases for questions can only reflect those that answered – some questions were skipped
- Only fully completed survey responses with analyzed
- A breakdown of results by nation and region is available

Key findings

- 85% of families with disabled children use more energy due to their child’s condition – special equipment, sometimes life-saving, powered by electricity, more washing due to continence issues, more heating due to mobility issues.

In the last 12 months (April 2021 – March 2022)

- UK households with disabled children had average energy bills of £1909 per year (£159 per month) This is around £600 a year more compared to the average household bill.*
- And their energy bills have increased by £805 per year (£67 per month)
- This winter 42% have gone without any heating due to the costs and of those 63% have had to go without heating daily or once or twice a week.
- And 8% of disabled households had to go without vital disability aids or appliances this winter because they were unaffordable to run.
- On average the extra energy costs for using their necessary disabled aids or appliances is £74 per month. The electricity powered equipment most used by families – adjustable beds, ceiling track hoists, feeding pumps, wheelchair chargers, additional fridges for medication.

Reaction to April 2022 increased energy bills

- Households with disabled children are expecting an increase of average annual energy bills of £1112 (£92 per month) from April. Taking average energy bills to more than £3000 a year (£250 per month).
- Clearly all respondents are worried about these energy bill increases - 67% are extremely worried; 26% very worried and 7% a little worried

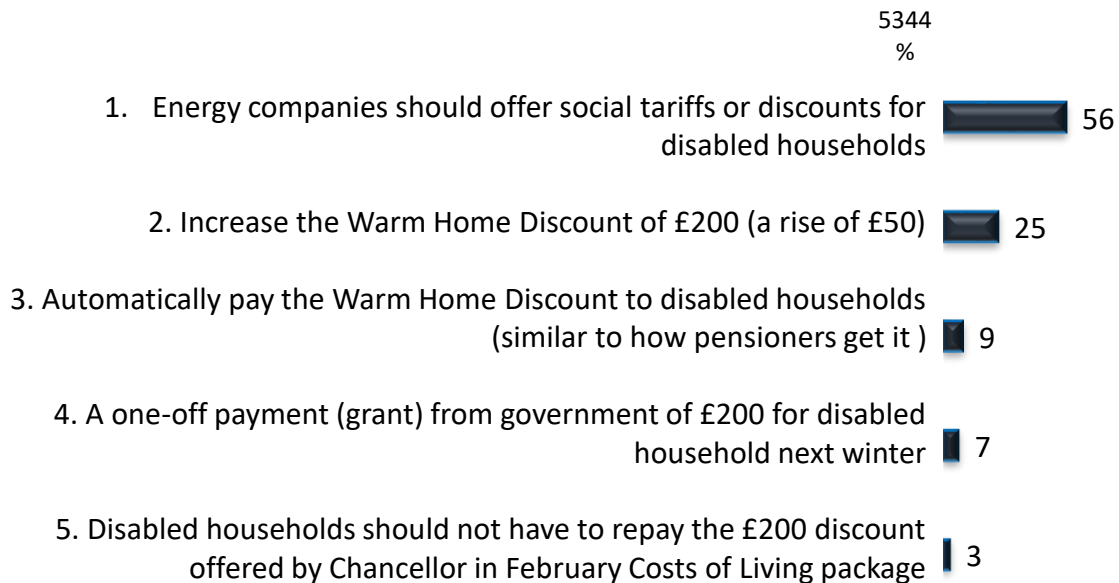
As a result:

- 75% of households with sick or disabled children say they will have to regularly turn the heating down and 53% will have to regularly turn the heating off.
- 40% report this increase is likely to make their child’s condition worse.
- 35% say they will go without basics like food and clothing to keep heating on or risk child’s condition getting worse.
- 29% are worried they will have to borrow money to pay these increased energy bills

*Source Ofgem 2021. The average UK energy bill is £1,277 per year across all UK homes for gas and electricity. This works out at £106.41 per month or £3.49 per day.

Campaigns – most important to parents of disabled children

Q35. Listed below are the five campaigns planned; please can you tell us which one of these campaigns is most important to you (tick one only)

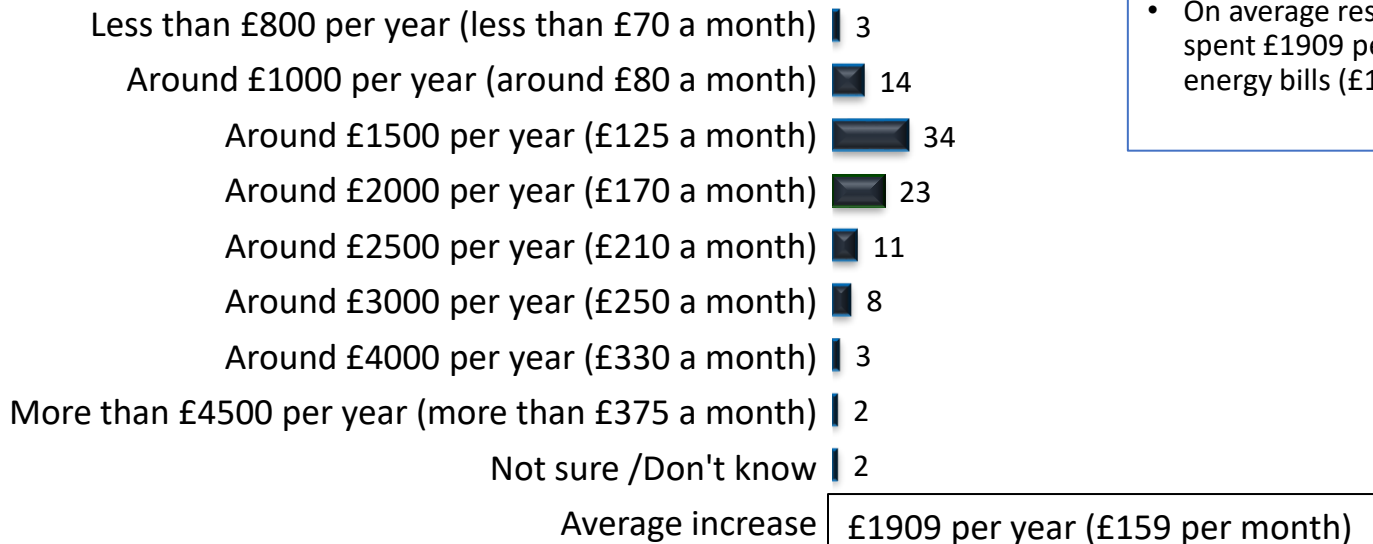


- Over half (56%) of respondents believe the most important Campaign for Contact is to persuade energy companies that they should offer social tariffs or discounts for disabled households
 - This rises to 72% of those who have 4 or more disabled children
- And a quarter (25%) say achieving an increase in the Warm Home Discount to £250 is the most important campaign for Contact

Energy Bills related -1

Q9 In the last 12 months, how much have you spent on household energy bills (choose the closest amount)?

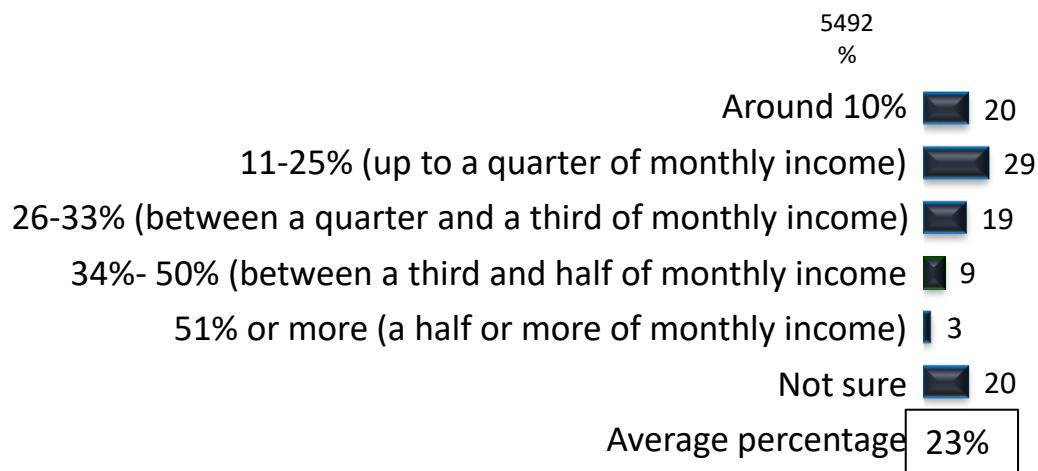
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• On average respondents have spent £1909 per year on energy bills (£159 per month)

Energy Bills related -2

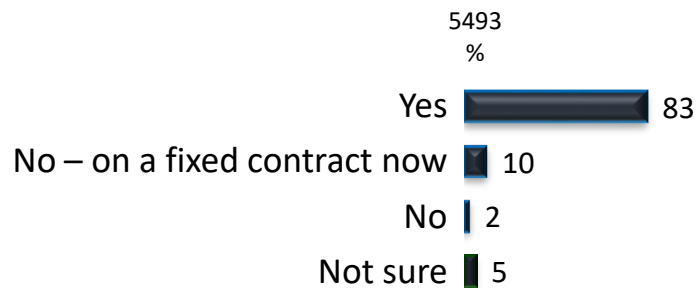
Q10 Roughly how much of your monthly income do you spend on energy bills (choose closest amount)



- On average 23% of parent's income is spent on energy bills
- Rising to 27% for parents with incomes of less than 20k per year

Energy Bills related -3

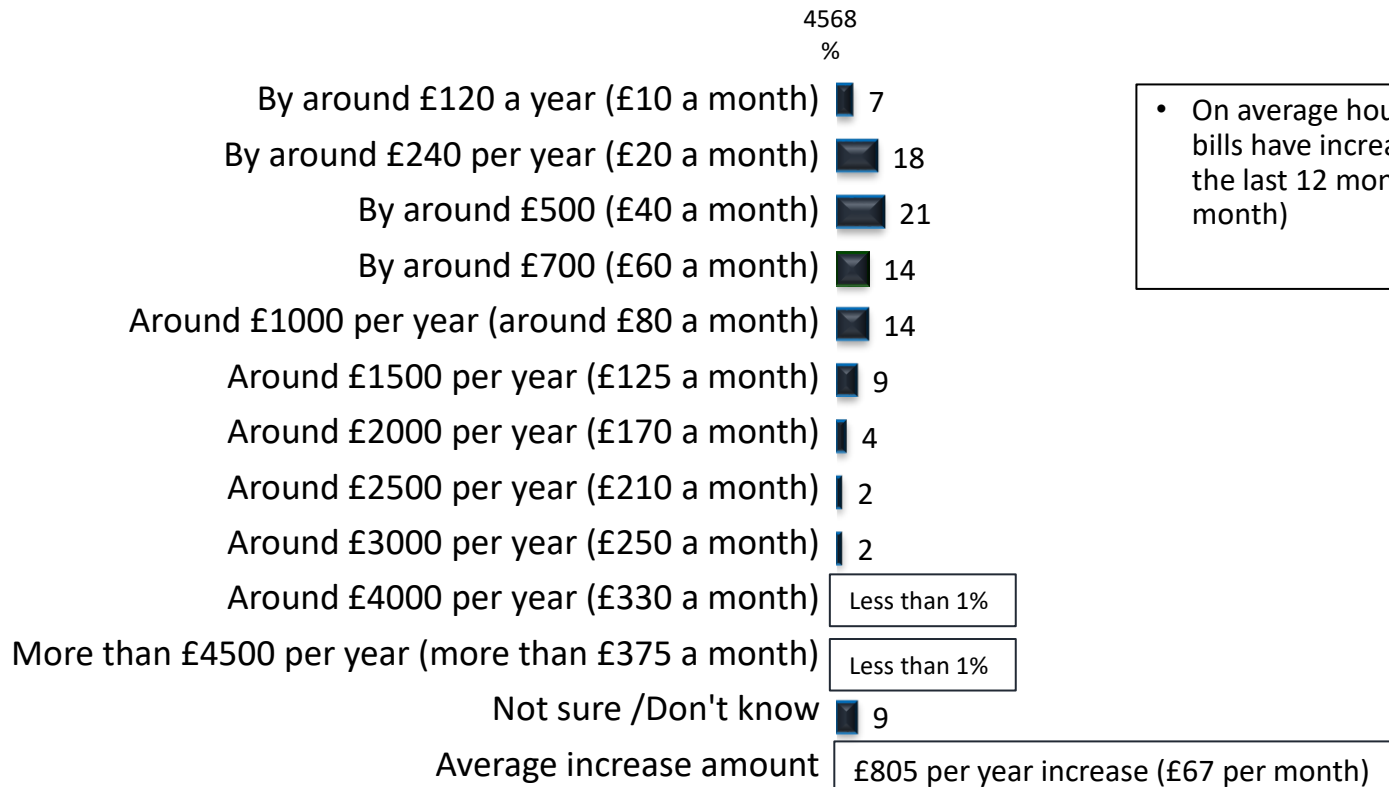
Q11 Have energy bills increased in the last 12 months



- As expected, the majority (83%) have increased energy bills in the last 12 months
- Just 10% are on fixed contracts currently which have not increased

Energy Bills related -4

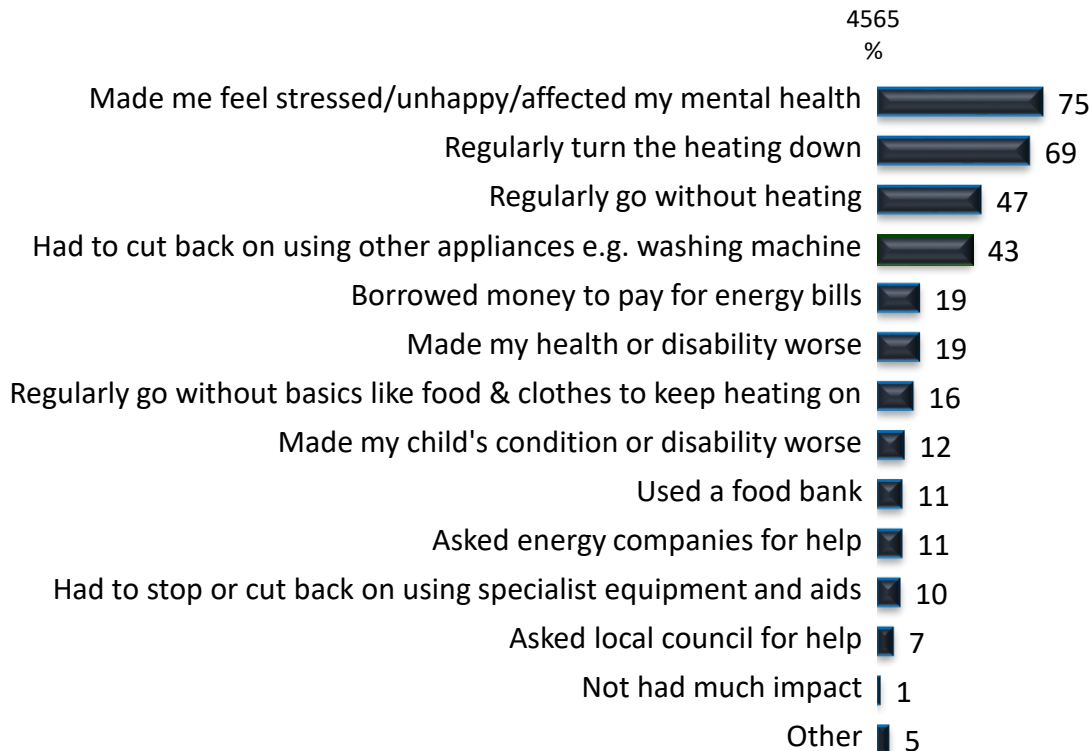
Q12 By how much have household energy bills increased in last 12 months (choose the closest amount)



- On average household energy bills have increased by £805 in the last 12 months (£67 per month)

Energy Bills related -5

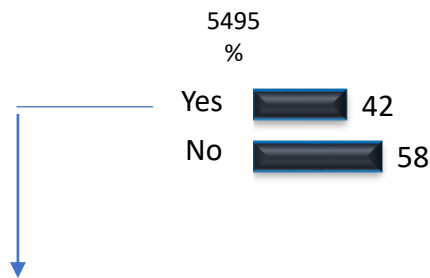
Q13 What impact has this increase in your energy bills had on you and your family?



- 75% say the increase in the energy bills has stressed them and affected their mental health
- 69% have regularly had to turn the heating down
- Almost half (47%) have regularly gone without heating
- And 43% have had to cut down on using other appliances
- 19% borrowed money to pay the energy
- 16% have had to regularly go without basics like food and clothes to keep heating on

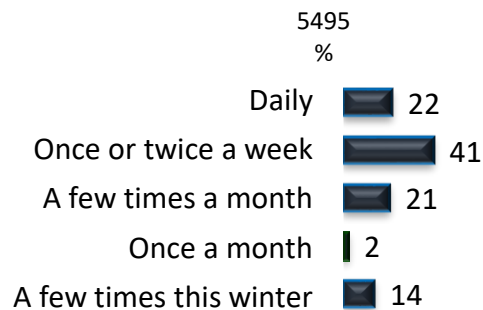
Energy Bills related -6

Q14 This winter have you had to go without heating?



- Overall, more than two in five (42%) families have had to go without heating sometime during the winter
- Rising to 55% of those with incomes of less than £20k per year and 50% of those with incomes of under £30K per year

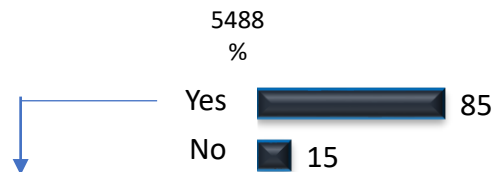
Q15 If Yes, how often have you had to go without heating this winter ?



- 63% of parents with disabled children have had to go without heating daily or once or twice a week this winter

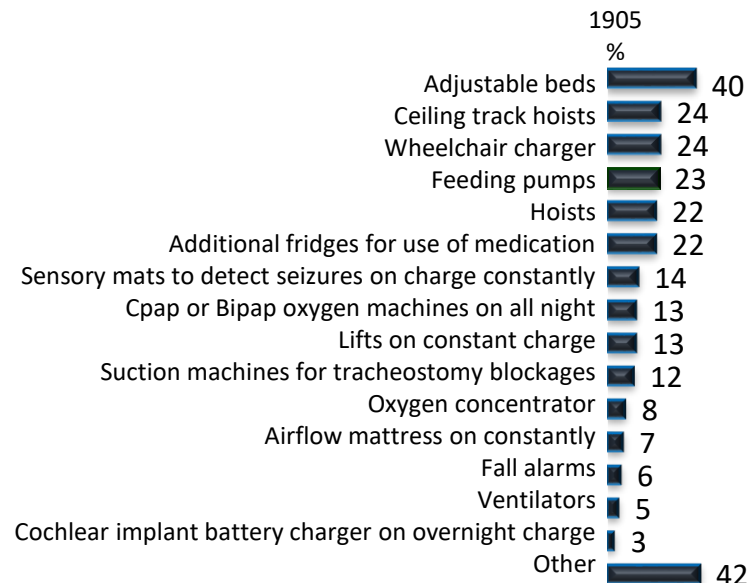
Energy Bills related -7

Q16 Does your child's disability or health condition require you to use more energy? (e.g. special equipment/aids/appliances, more washing, extra heating due to being less mobile)



- The majority 85% require more energy to run special equipment needed for child's disability or health condition

Q18 IF Yes which disability equipment do you use

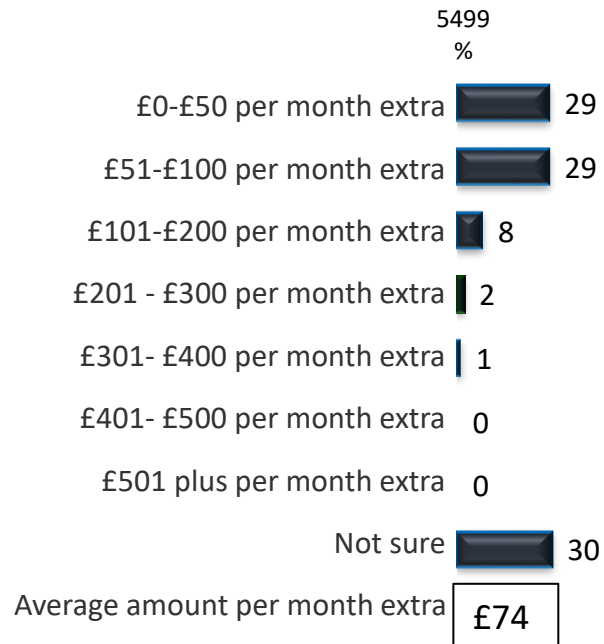


- Most often used disability equipment which use extra energy are:

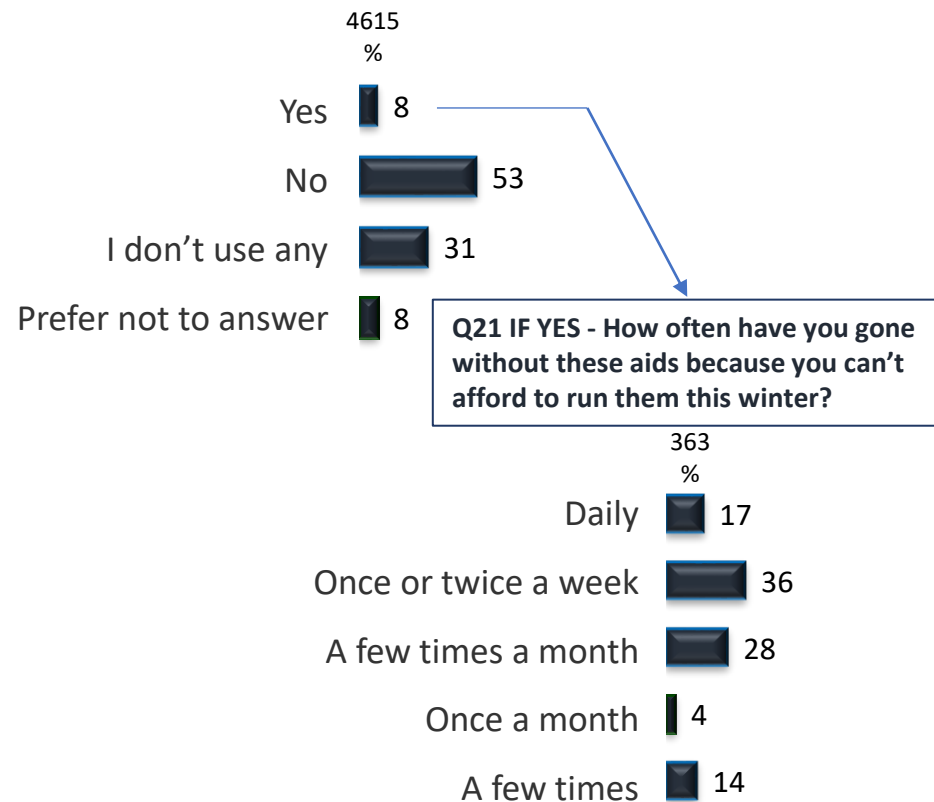
- adjustable beds,
- ceiling track hoists,
- wheelchair chargers,
- feeding pumps hoists,
- additional fridges

Energy Bills related -8

Q19 If you can, please estimate how much your disability related appliances or aids cost to run (choose closest amount)?

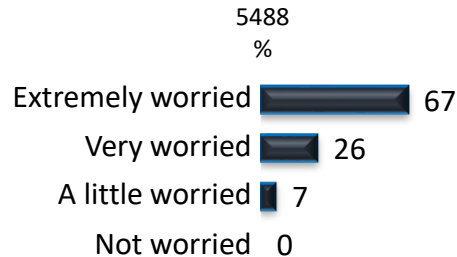


Q20 Did you have to go without any of these disability aids /appliances because you can't afford to run them

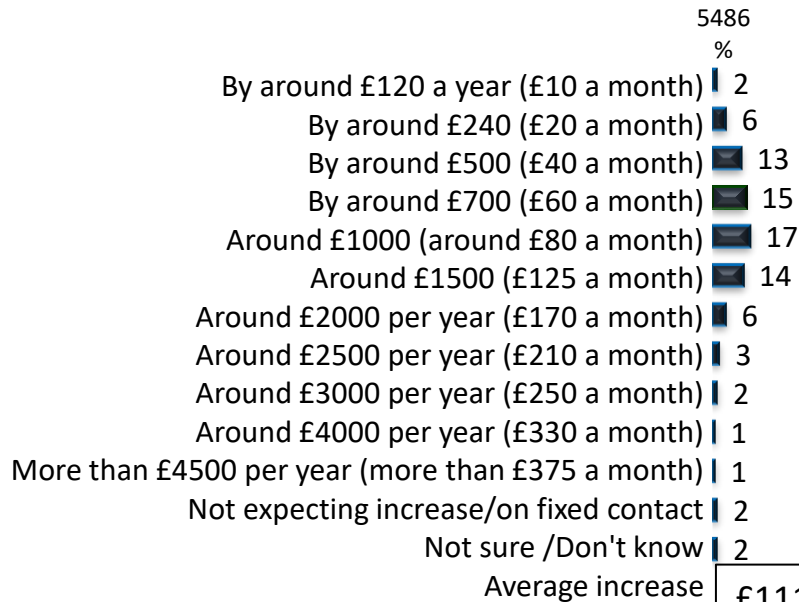


Energy Bills related -9

Q23. As you are probably aware, energy costs are due to be increased in April 2022, how worried are you about these increases in energy costs?



Q25 By how much are you expecting your energy bills to increase from next April (choose the closest amount)?

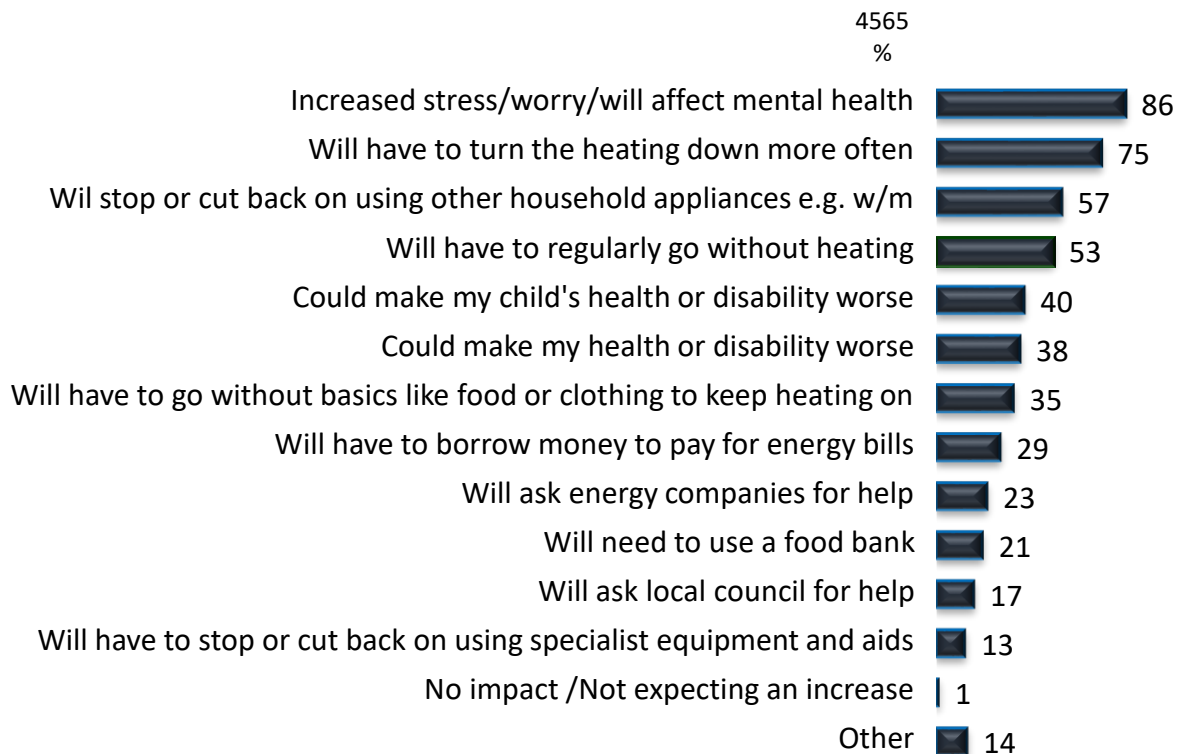


- All respondents are worried about the April 2022 increases in energy bills
- Those parents extremely worried include
 - 84% of those who have gone without heating this winter
 - 81% who have 4 plus disabled children
 - 76% who are single adult households
 - 73% who receive Universal or Tax credit

- Overall respondents say they are expecting an increase of an average of £1112 per year (£93 per month)

Energy Bills related -10

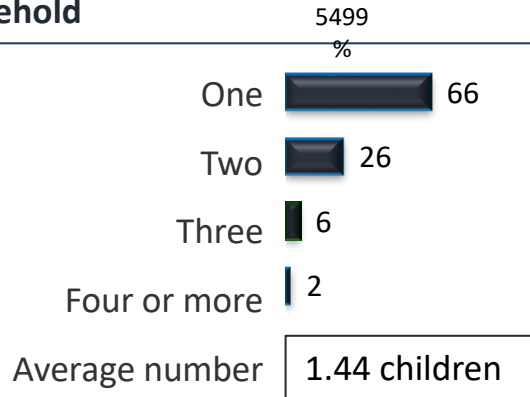
Q26 What impact has this increase in your energy bills had on you and your family?



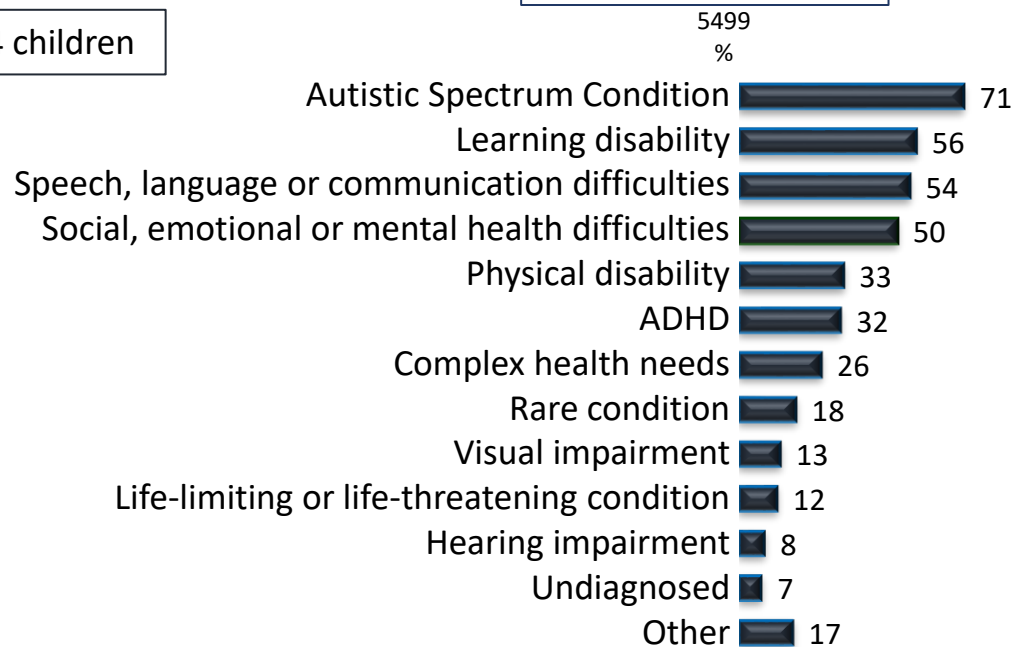
- These energy bill increases are causing increasing stress for 86% of respondents
- 75% turning heating down more often
- 57% stopping or cutting back on household appliance usage – rising to 67% for those who have gone without heating this winter
- 53% will have to regularly go without heating – rising to 78% who have gone without heating this winter
- 40% say it will make child's condition worse – rising to 53% for those who have gone without heating this winter
- 35% will have to go without basics of food and clothes – rising to 53% for those who have gone without heating this winter
- 23% will have to borrow money to pay these increased bills – rising to 40% of single adult households and 43% of those with 4 or more disabled children and 45% for those who have gone without heating this winter

About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed -1

Q1 How many disabled children live in household

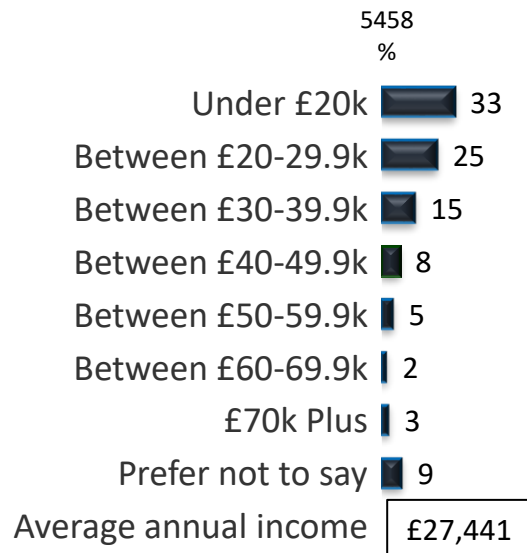


Q2 Conditions



About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 2

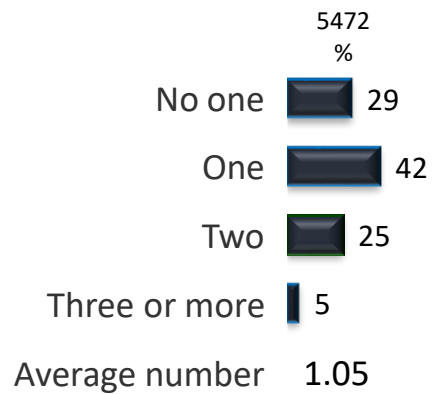
Q31 What is your total annual family household income (include any wages and/or benefits and choose the closest amount)?



- Overall average income of £27,400 pa
- 58% have incomes below £30k pa
- 29% have no one in paid employment

About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed -5

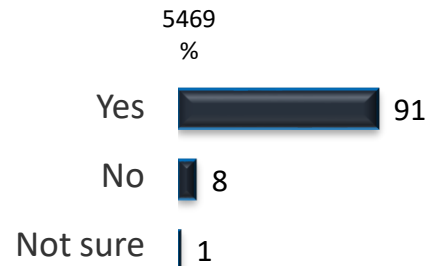
Q32 Number in household in paid employment



- 29% - No one in the household in paid employment
- Overall, only one adult is in paid employment

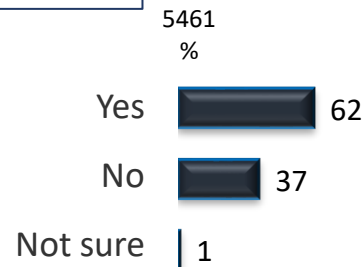
About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 3

Q29 Do you get DLA or PIP for any of your children?



- 91% of respondents receive either DLA or PIP allowances

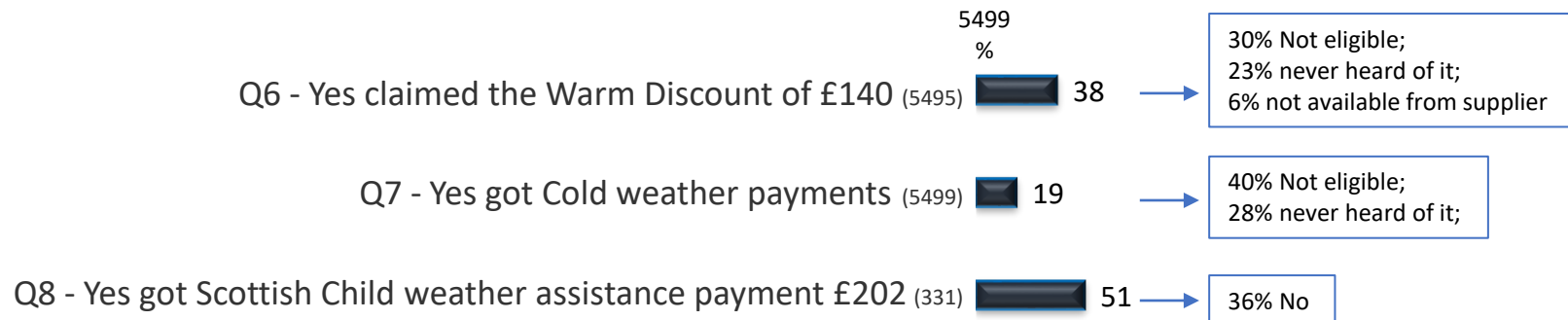
Q30 Do you get Universal Credit or Tax Credit?



- 84% of those with no one in paid employment get Universal Credit or Tax Credit
- And 64% have one person in paid employment

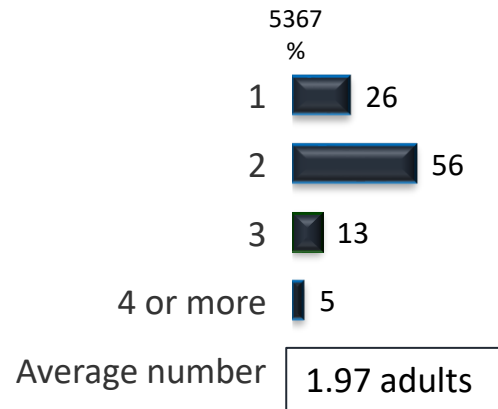
About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed -4

Warm Discounts and payments received



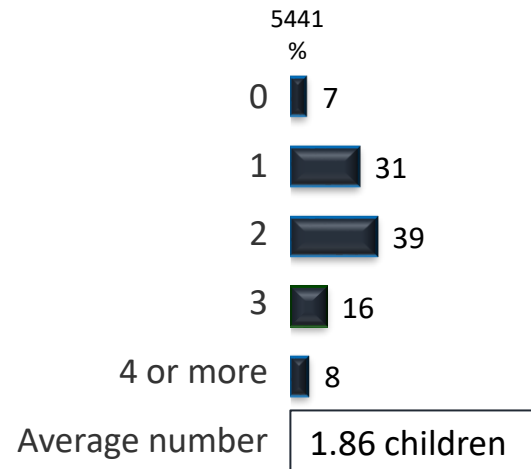
About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 6

Q33 How many adults 18 or older in your household?



- 26% of respondents live in single adult households
- On average these respondents live in 2 adult households

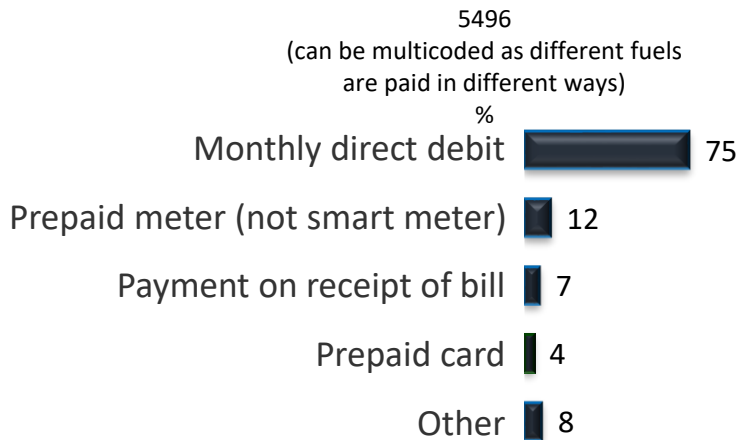
Q34 How many children 17 or under in your household?



- On average respondents live in 2 children under 17 households
- Those 7% who say they have no children 17 or younger are most likely to have adult disabled children

About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 7

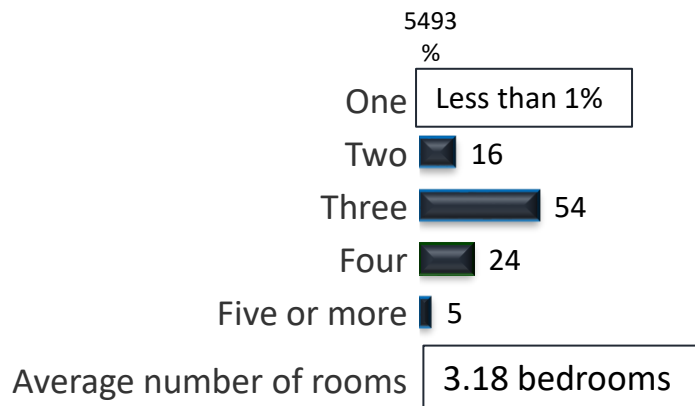
Q5 How do you pay for your energy bills?



- The majority pay energy bills by monthly direct debit
- 12% pay by prepaid meter (not smart meter)
- 4% pay by prepaid card
- 7% payment on receipt of bill

About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 8

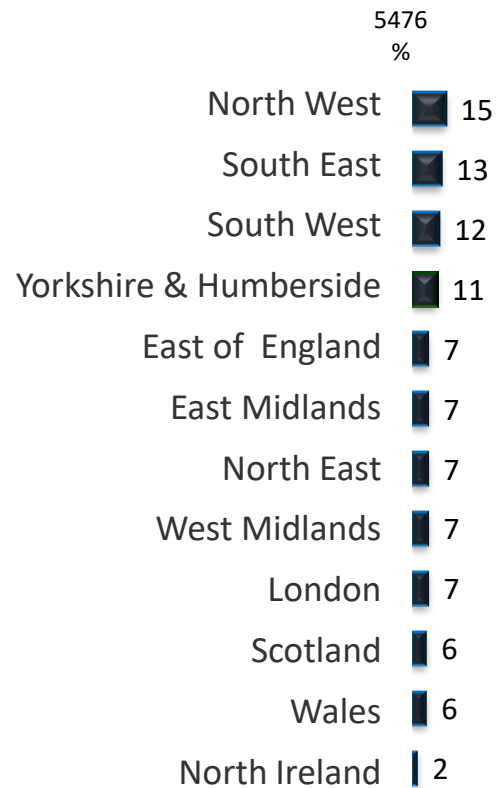
Q3 Number of bedrooms?



- 1% of those with incomes less than £20k pa have only one bedroom
- 25% of those with incomes less than £20k pa have two bedrooms

About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 9

Q27 Where respondent lives in UK



About Contact parents with disabled children surveyed - 10

Respondent Ethnicity

