

## Study highlights child poverty

ALMOST a quarter of children aged three and four in Scotland live in persistent poverty, a Government report has said.

The Growing Up in Scotland survey of 8,000 families found 24% of three and four-year-olds lived in poverty in three or four years in the 2005-06 to 2008-09 period, classed as persistent poverty.

A total of 21% of five and six-year-olds were also classed as living in persistent poverty in the same timescale, the report showed.

The survey tracks youngsters from birth to teenage years and considers their circumstances, health, behaviour and their mother's mental health, with the results used by the Government to shape family policies.

A report, produced from the survey results, indicates that a key influence on poverty is children brought up in unemployed households.

Such families are also likely to experience other disadvantages, including lack of education and poor health.

Public Health Minister Shona Robison said more had to be done to end the cycle of poverty and the disadvantages the report shows it can bring.

She said: "Health in Scotland is improving, but not quickly enough and unacceptable inequalities continue to blight the lives of our most deprived communities. No-one should be condemned to a life of ill health because of where they live or their family's background. Poor health is not inevitable and we should not accept it."