



Thirteen-year-olds and their families – preliminary results from the second wave of the Child Cohort

29th November 2012

www.growingup.ie





Introduction

- ***Growing Up in Ireland*** is the national longitudinal study of children.
- Funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in association with the Department of Social Protection and the Central Statistics Office.
- Carried out by a consortium of researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College Dublin.
- Involves studying almost 20,000 children, their families, carers, teachers.
- Strong policy focus to provide evidence base for the creation of effective and responsive policies and services for children and families.



Growing Up in Ireland

Two cohorts of children in ***Growing Up***:

- **Infant Cohort:** families of 11,100 9-month-old infants. First interviewed in 2008/2009.
90% successfully re-interviewed at 3 years of age.
- **Child Cohort:** 8,500 9-year-olds and their families. First interviewed in 2007/2008.
90% re-interviewed at 13 years of age, between August 2011 – February 2012.

New results from this cohort launched today.



Release of Preliminary Findings

- 13 years of age marks extremely important stage in a young person's life – involves a range of changes and developments.
- Preliminary findings in four key areas of their lives are launched today:
 - School experiences
 - Physical activity and obesity
 - Family and Financial Circumstances
 - Relationships and behaviours

The School Experiences of 13-year-olds



School experiences among 13-year-olds

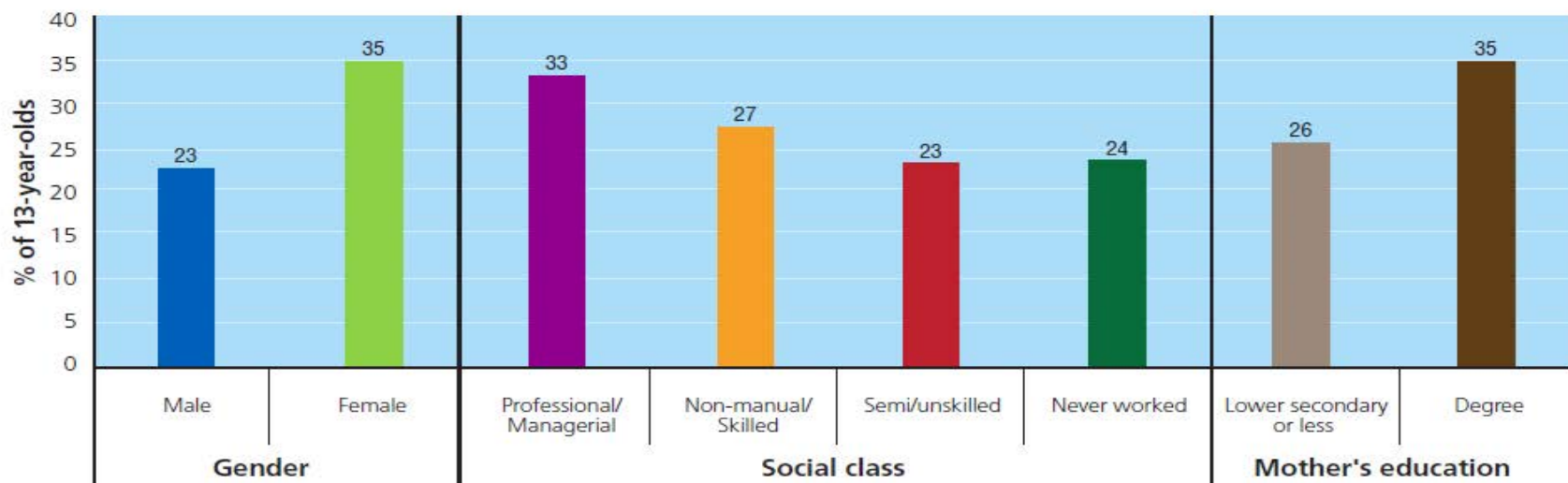
- Almost all 13-year-olds have made the transition to second-level – exposure to new subjects, new classmates, new teachers, new structures.
- Their transition to school and the quality of their interactions with school, teachers, peers will all have implications for their longer-term educational success.



School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Most 13-year-olds were positive about school – 29% liked it *very much*; 32% *quite a bit*.
- Attitudes varied by gender and social background.

Figure 1: Percentage of 13-year-olds who liked school *very much* by gender, household social class and mother's education

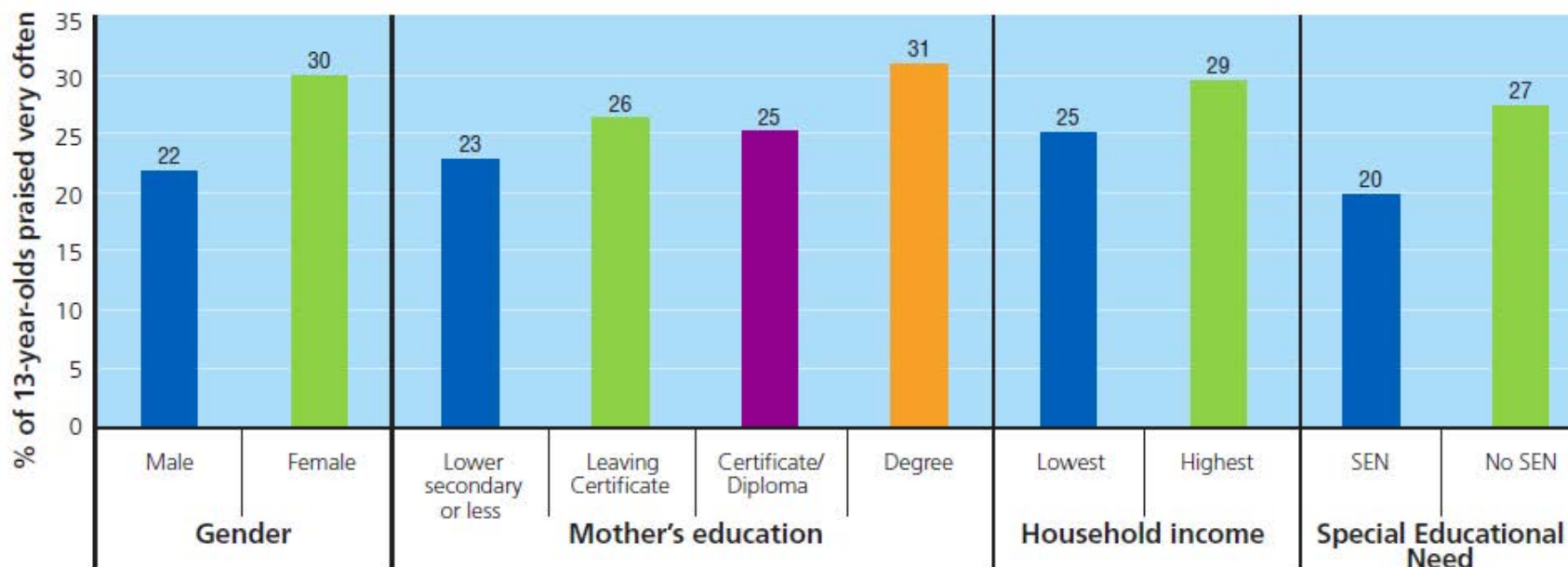


- Attitudes to school at Primary Level (at 9 years of age) strongly linked to those at 13 years of age.

School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Girls and middle class students had more positive relations with teachers – being praised for their school work or answering questions in class.

Figure 2: Percentage of 13-year-olds who reported being praised *very often* by their teachers for their schoolwork classified by gender, maternal education, household income and special educational needs (SEN)

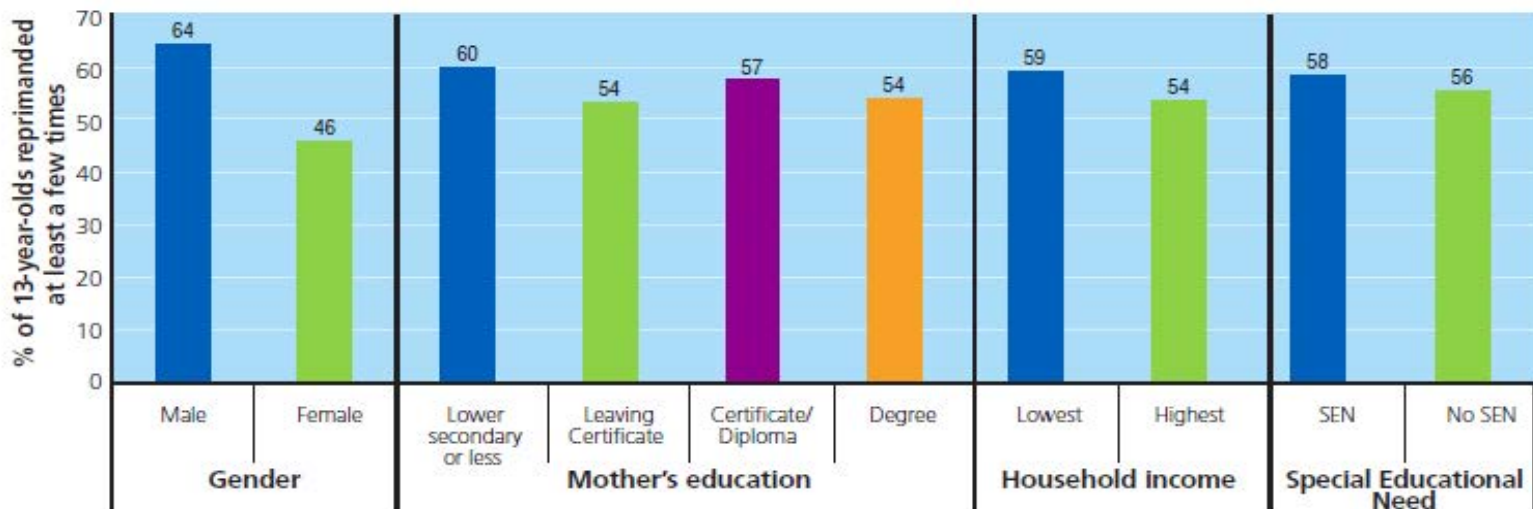




School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Young people from more disadvantaged families reported more negative interactions with teachers – were more likely to be reprimanded by them.

Figure 3: Percentage of 13-year-olds who reported being reprimanded by their teachers for misbehaviour *a few times* or more frequently

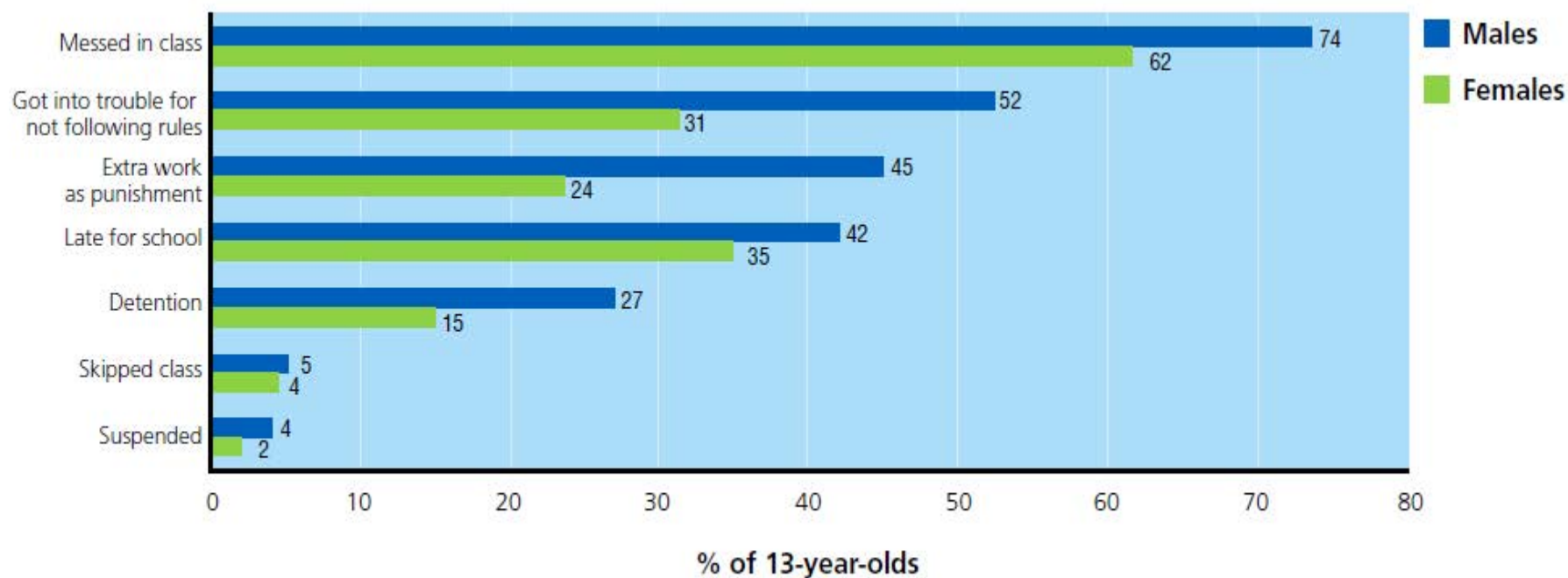


- Students in first year recorded fewer negative interactions with teachers than those in second year.

School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Significant gender gaps in levels of misbehaviour in school

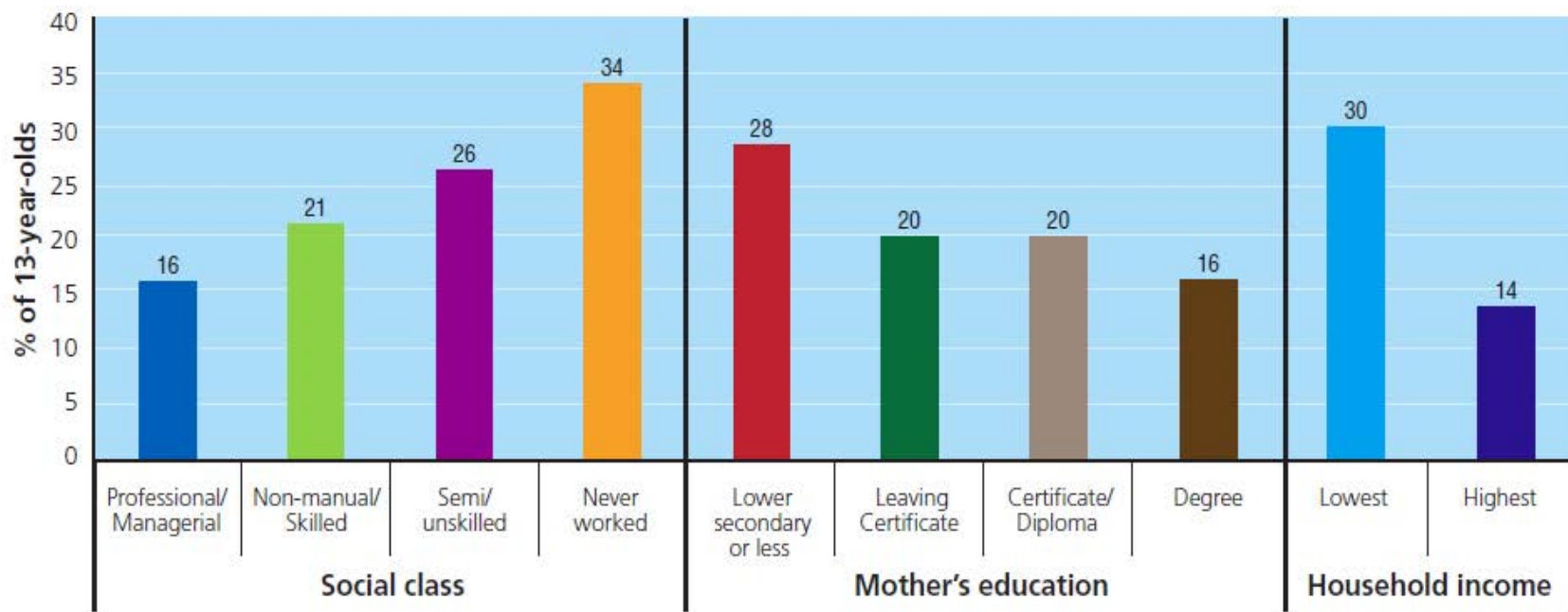
Figure 4: Frequency of misbehaviour among 13-year-olds at school, by gender



School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Trends in misbehaviour also socially structured

Figure 5: Percentage of 13-year-olds who had been given detention, by social class, mother's education and household income quintile





School experiences among 13-year-olds

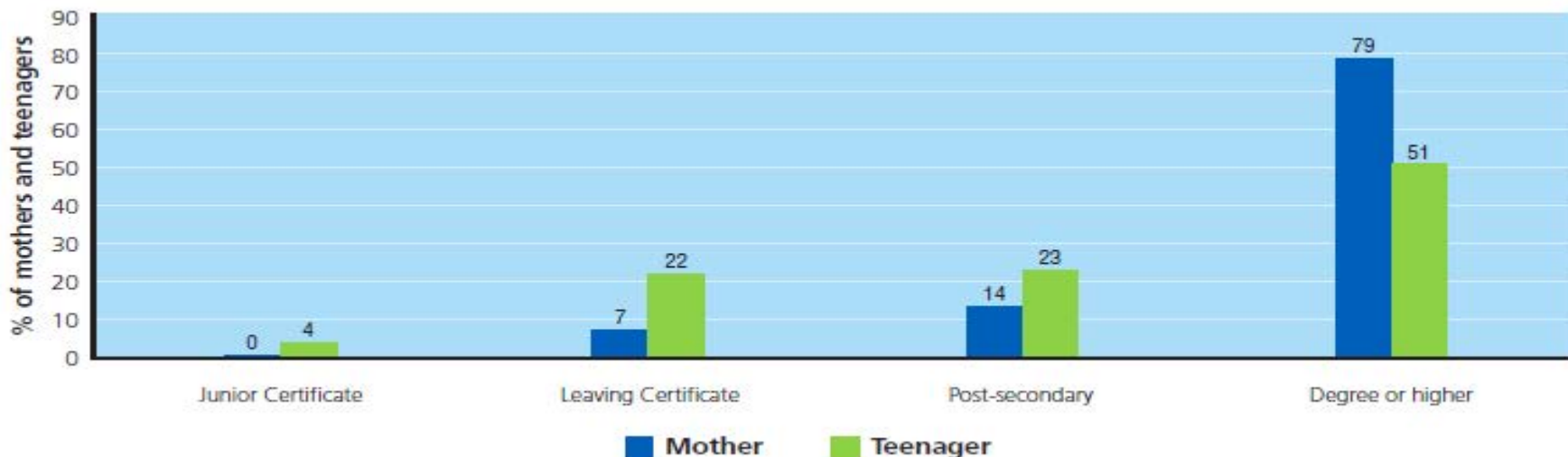
- High levels of parental engagement with their children's learning and school
 - almost all mothers said they knew how their child was getting on in school
 - 80% knew the type of homework their child was getting
 - 80% said their child wanted to tell them about school
 - Only limited social structuring in terms of mother's knowledge of how their child was getting on in school
 - More differences in terms of child's gender
 - Generally, mothers of girls were better informed about their child's school experience



School experiences among 13-year-olds

- Mother's expectations of how far in the education system the child would go higher than the child's.

Figure 6: Expectations regarding highest educational qualifications as reported by mothers and 13-year-olds



- Few gender differences among 13-year-olds in terms of how far they thought they would go in education system
- Significant differences in terms of social background. More advantaged had much higher expectations

Physical Activity and Obesity Among 13-year-olds



Physical activity and obesity among 13-year-olds

- Childhood overweight and obesity is a major public health issue among children.
- In ***Growing Up's*** younger cohort 25% of 3-year-olds were found to be overweight or obese. Similar proportion for 9-year-olds – 20% overweight and 6% obese.
- Impacts on child's quality of life as well as immediate and longer term health risks – asthma, eczema, diabetes, increased middle age mortality.
- Physical activity and exercise strongly associated with BMI and weight status



Physical activity and obesity among 13-year-olds

- 39% of 13-year-olds undertook *hard* or *light* exercise in previous two weeks.
- Rates were higher among boys than girls (47% compared to 31%)
- Rates also related to family's social class and parental education

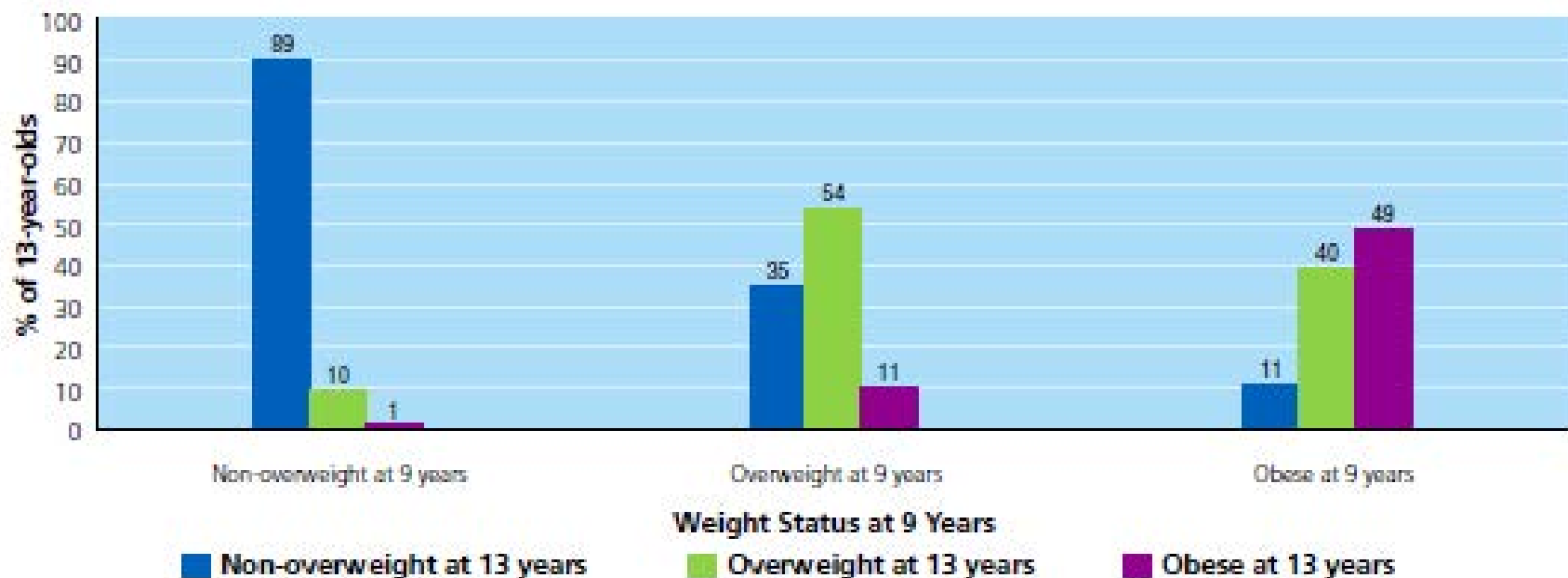
Figure 7: Frequency of exercise and mother's education



Physical activity and obesity among 13-year-olds

- 20% of 13-year-olds overweight; 6% obese
- 30% girls, 23% boys overweight or obese
- Changes in weight status between 9 and 13 years

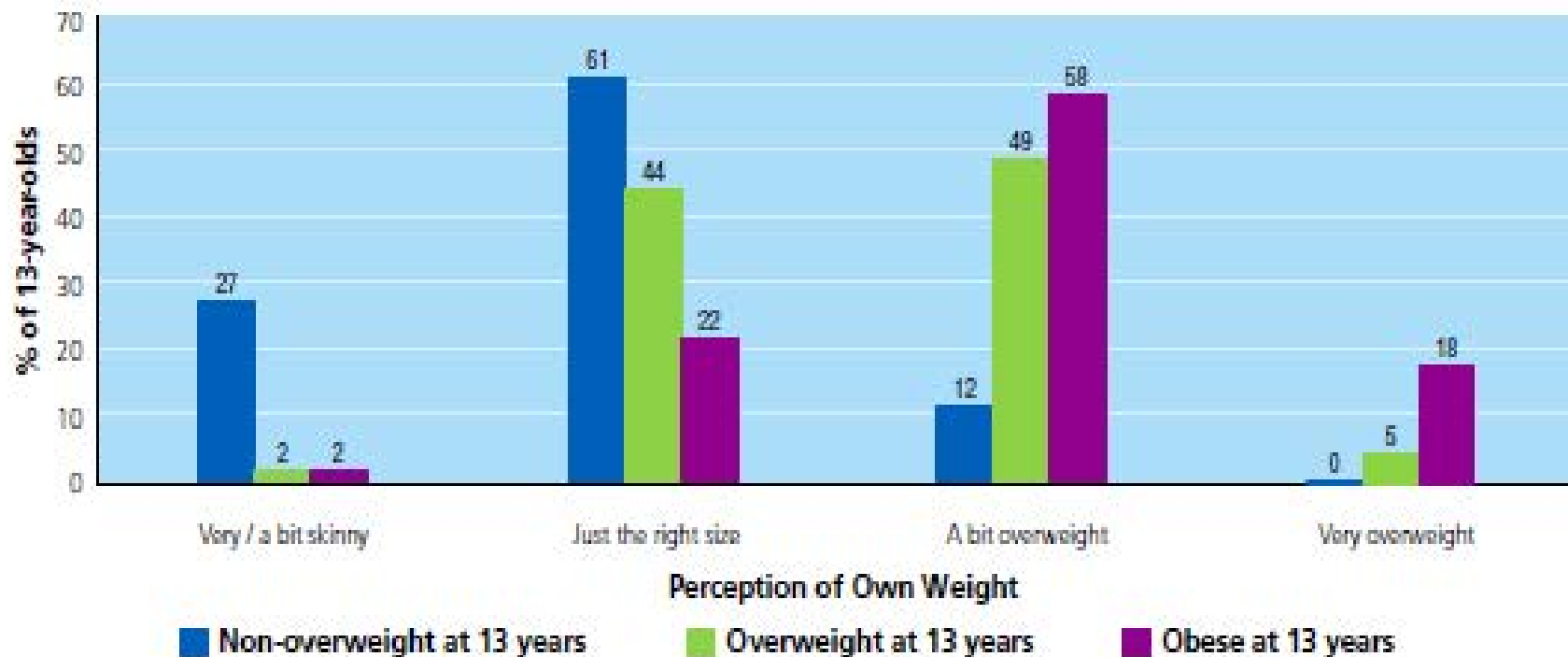
Figure 8: Weight status at age 13 by weight status at age 9



Physical activity and obesity among 13-year-olds

- Some mis-match among 13-year-olds between actual and perceived weight status

Figure 9: Actual weight and perception of weight among 13-year-olds

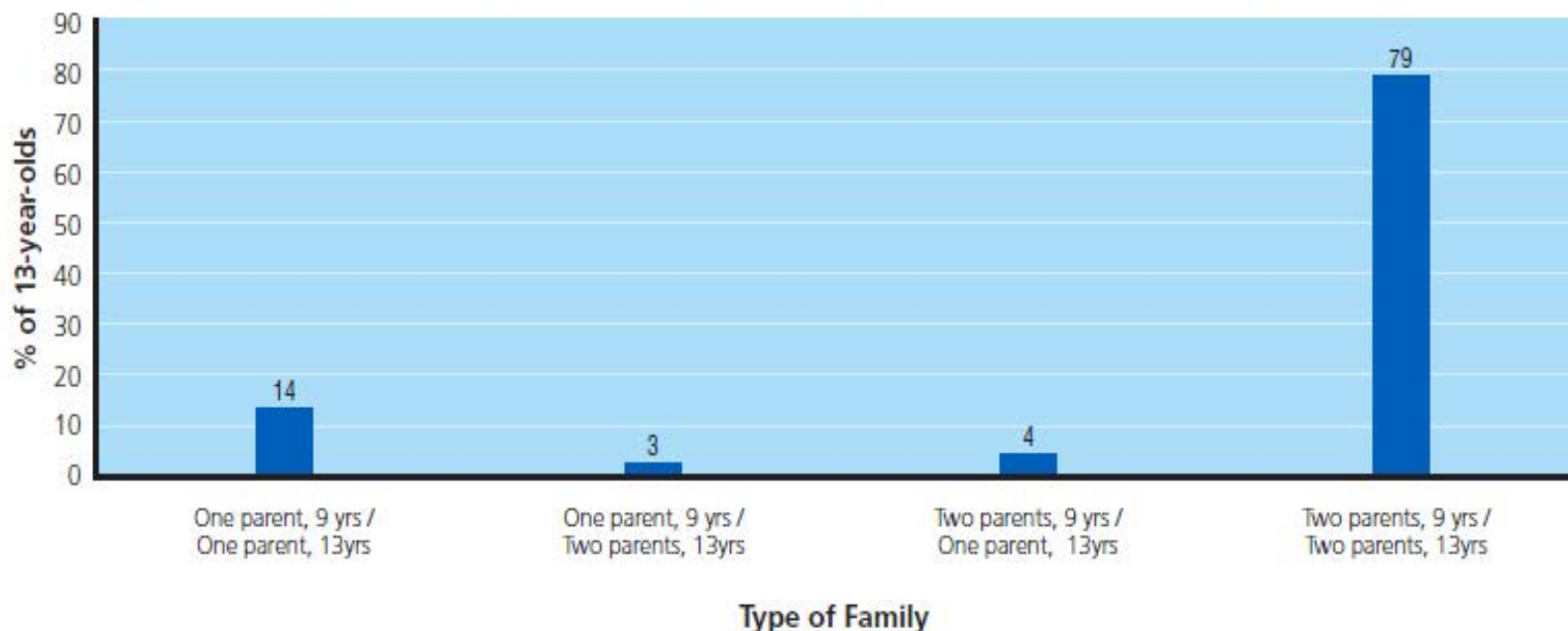


The Family and Financial Circumstances of 13-year-olds

The family and financial circumstances of 13-year-olds

- 19% of 13-year-olds live in one-parent families compared to 18% at 9 years of age.
- Family structures generally stable between 9 and 13 years but some changes. 3-4% move from one-parent to two-parent and vice versa between 9 and 13 years.

Figure 10: Changes in family structure experienced by children between 9 and 13 years of age





Mother's employment outside the home

- 59% of mothers of 13-year-olds are *at work outside the home*.

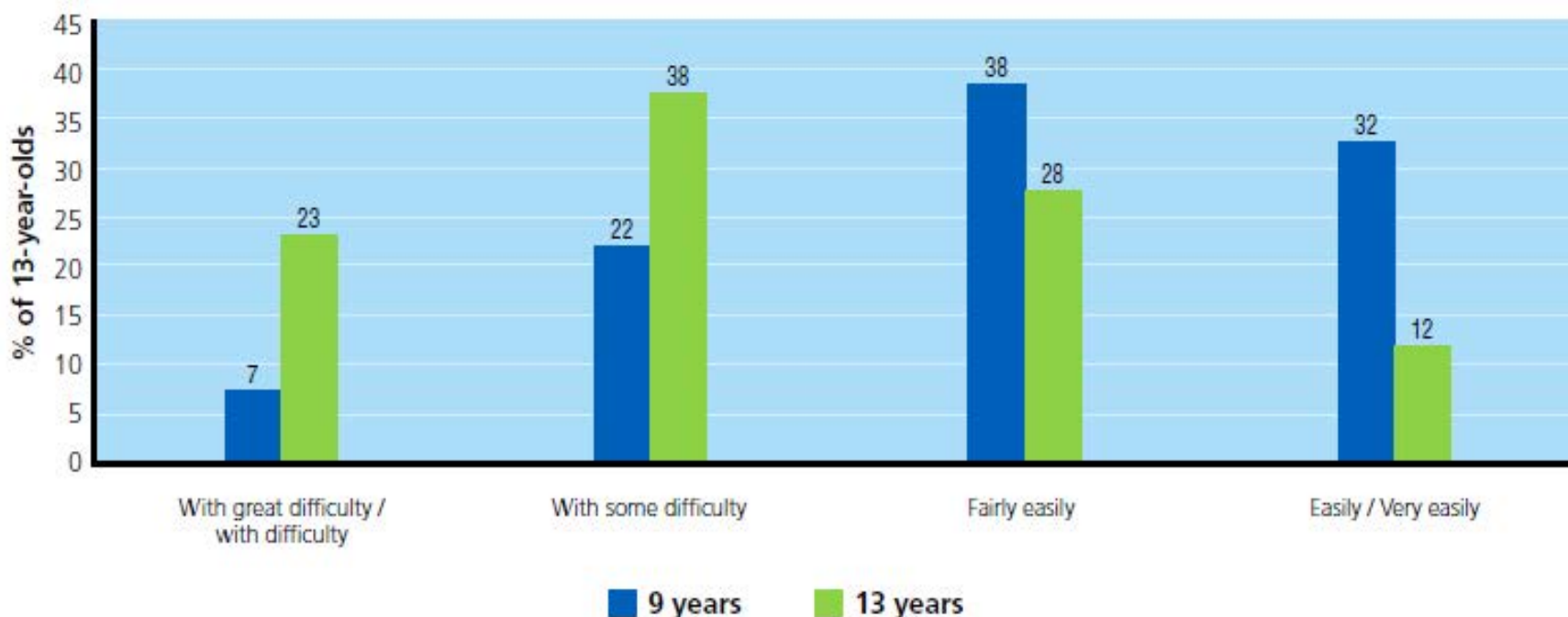
Mother's Employment Status	Per Cent
At work outside the home	59%
Engaged in home duties / looking after the home	33%
Unemployed	3%
Other	5%
Total	100%

- Maternal employment status strongly related to her education.

The family and financial circumstances of 13-year-olds

- Big increase in the percentage of families experiencing “difficulties in making ends meet” – 29% at 9 years of age; 61% at 13 years.

Figure 11: Percentage of families experiencing difficulties in making ends meet when the child was 9 and 13 years old

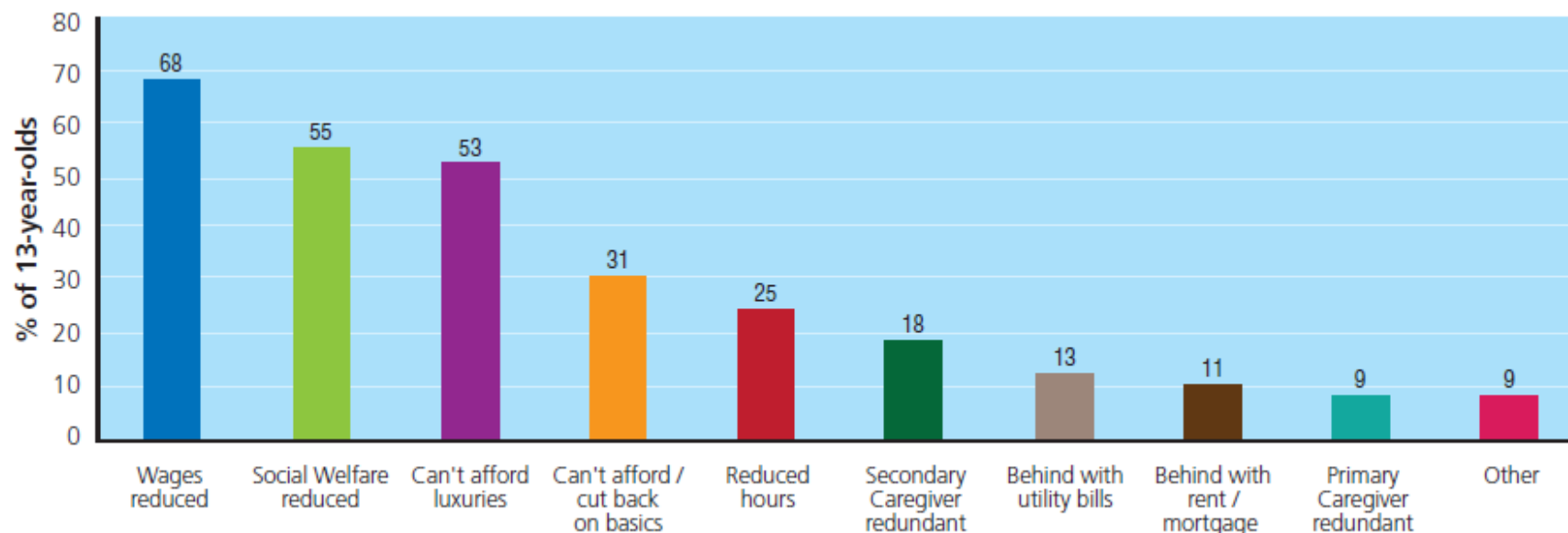




The family and financial circumstances of 13-year-olds

- 61% of families said the recession had affected them to a significant degree.
- Most frequent effect was *reduction in wages* (68%) but 31% *can't afford, had to cut back on basics*; 13% *behind with utility bills*; 11% *behind with rent/mortgage*.

Figure 12: Effects of the recession on 13-year-olds' families



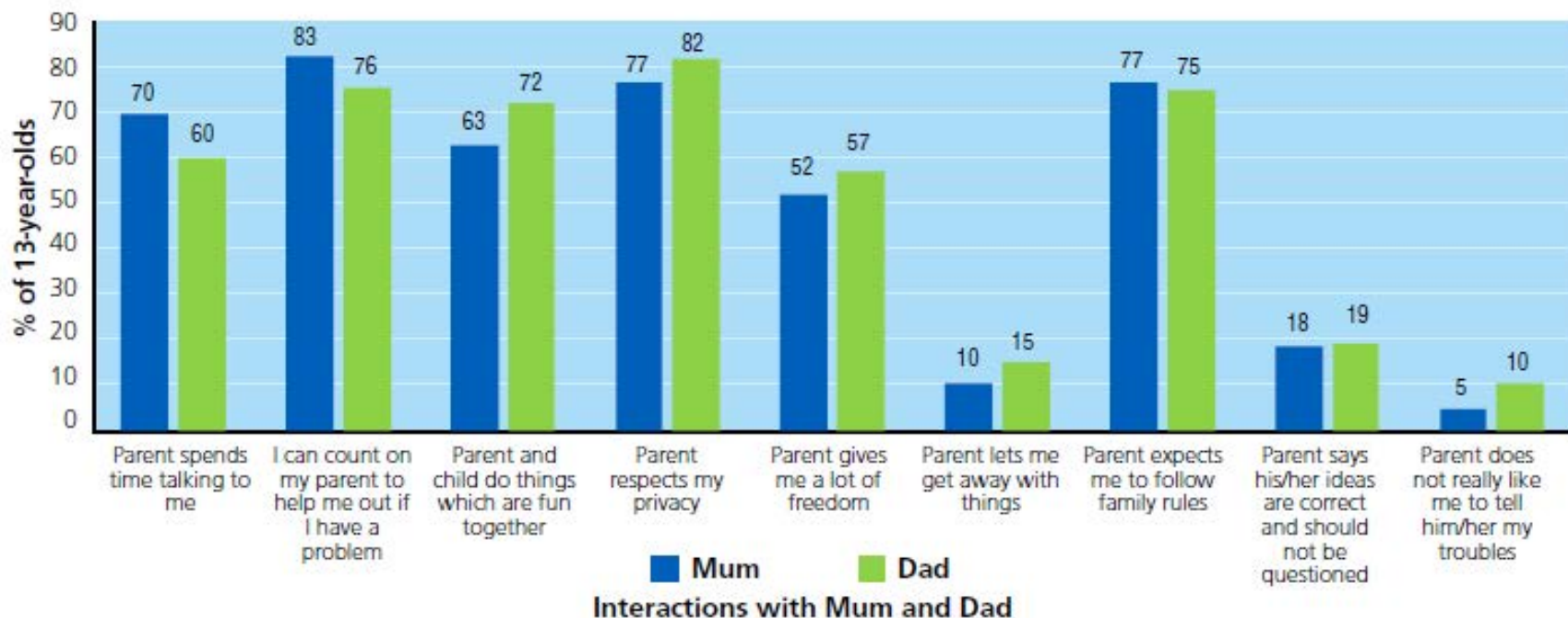


The Lives of 13-year-olds: Their Relationships, Feelings and Behaviours.

Relationships, Feelings and Behaviours of 13-year-olds

- Nearly all 13-year-olds appear to be getting on well with their parents.
- High percentages felt their parents spent time with them, talked to them, could be counted upon, respected their privacy.

Figure 13: 13-year-olds' interactions with their parents

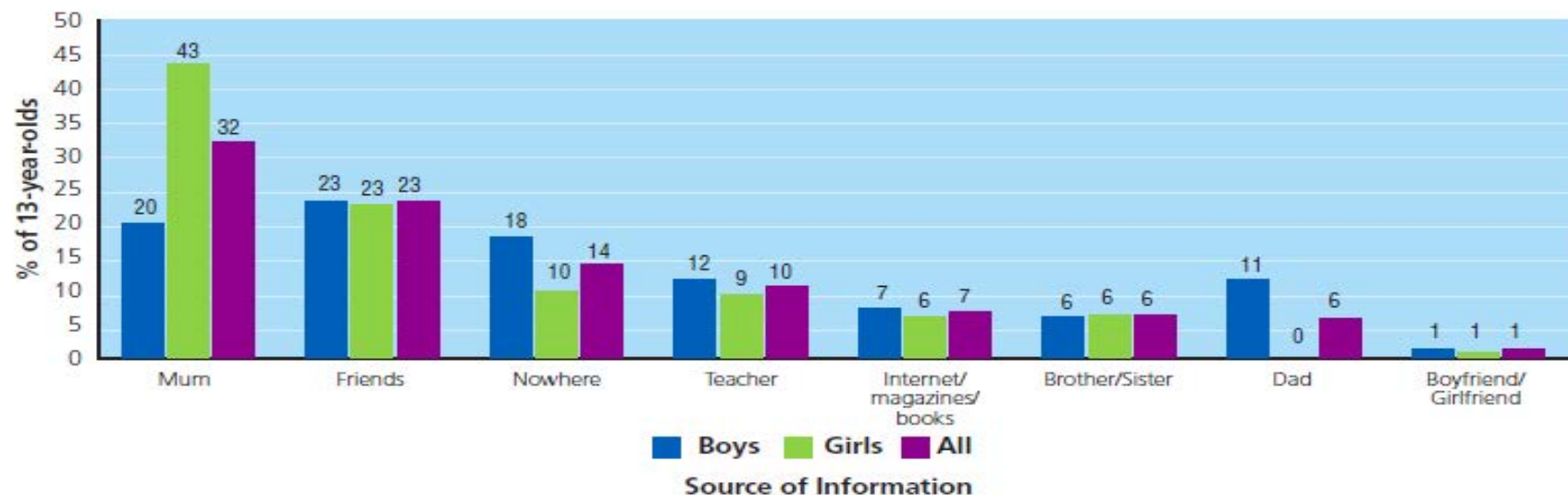




Advice on Sex / Relationship issues

- 46% of 13-year-olds had discussed sex/relationship issues with their parents – 42% of boys and 51% of girls.
- *“Where would you be most likely to go to get information or advice on sex or relationship issues?”*
 - Mother is most likely source – for boys and girls
 - 14% of 13-year-olds said *nowhere* – 18% boys and 10% girls

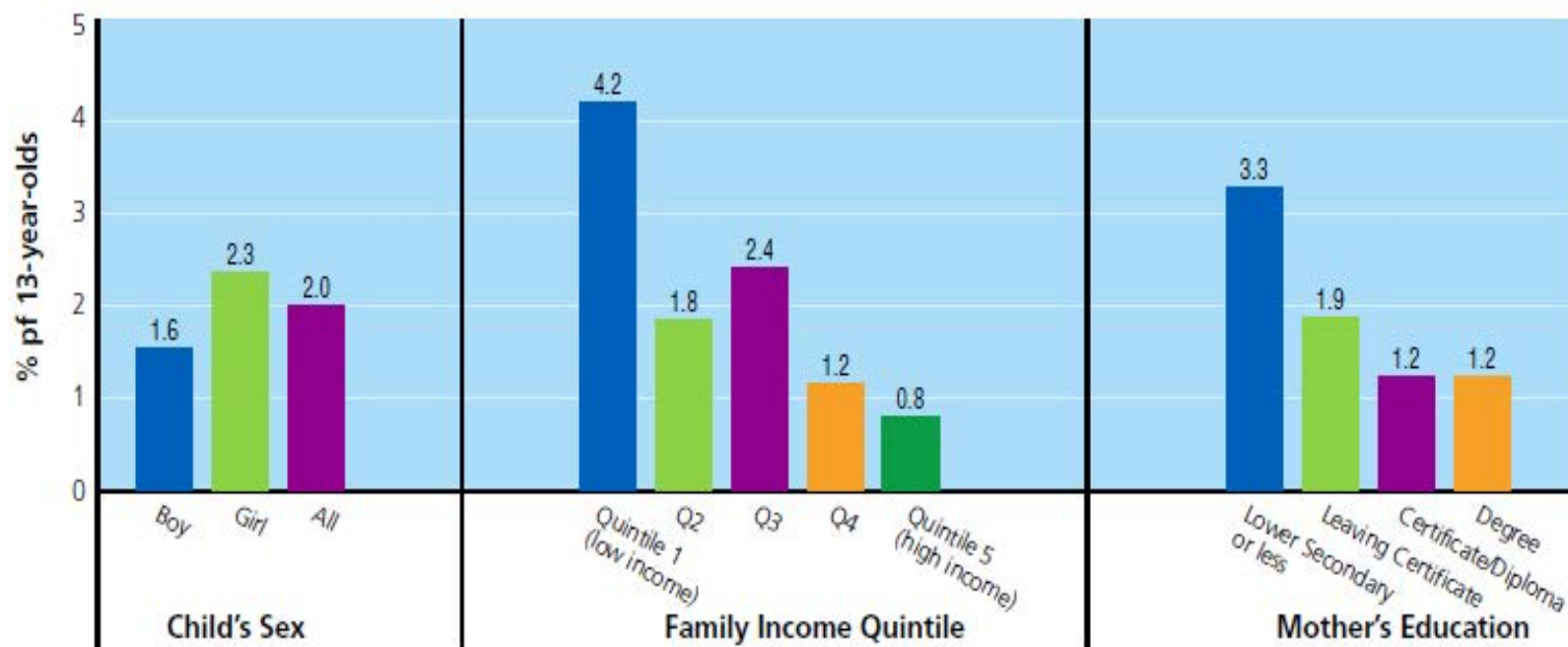
Figure 14: Most likely source of information for boys and girls on sex and relationship issues



Relationships, Feelings and Behaviours of 13-year-olds

- 91% of 13-year-olds said they had never smoked.
- 2% “currently smoked”.

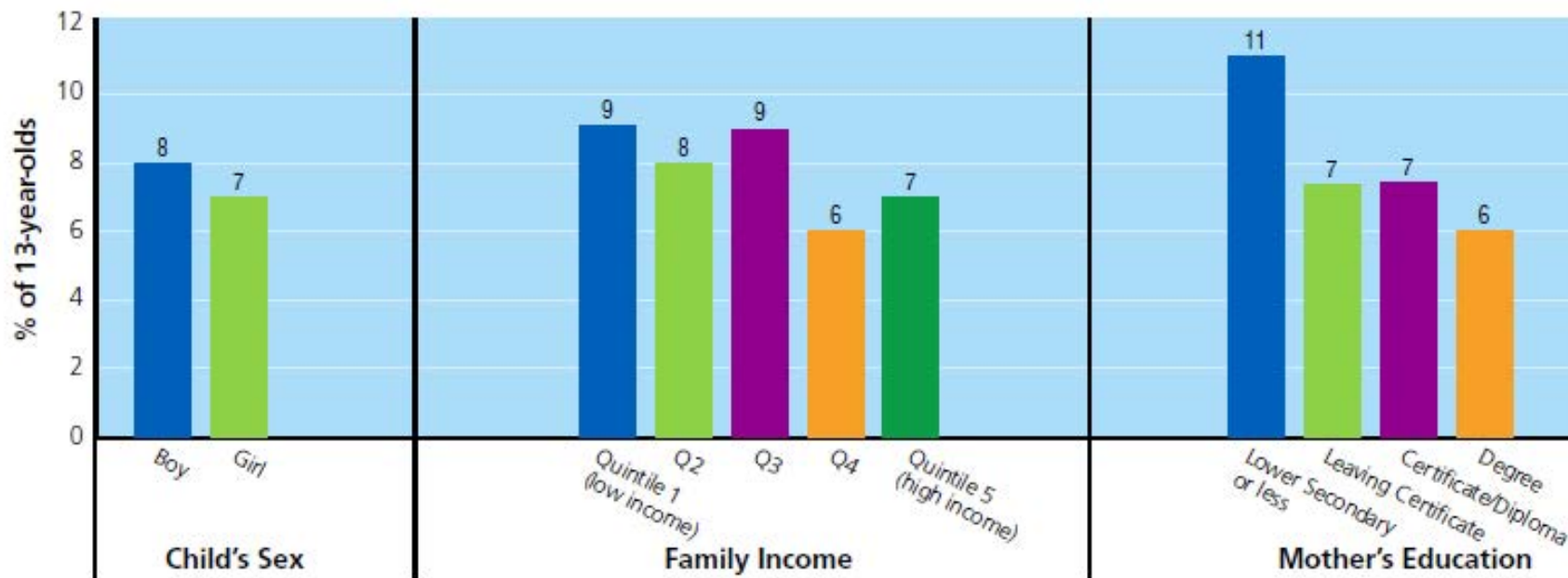
Figure 15: Percentage of 13-year-olds who currently smoked, in relation to child’s sex, mother’s education and family income (equivalised)



Relationships, Feelings and Behaviours of 13-year-olds

- 15% of 13-year-olds had tried alcohol
- 8% had taken alcohol in last year
- 0.6% said they currently drank *once a month or more*

Figure 16: Percentage of 13-year-olds who had taken alcohol in the last year, classified by child's sex, family income (equivalised) and mother's education





Summary

- Transition to second level generally positive.
- Gender and social differences emerging in relation to school engagement.
- Engagement is strongly related to longer-term academic achievement, retention levels, exam results. Underlines the need for early interventions to ensure smooth transition and high level of support.
- Physical exercise is more likely among boys and those from socially advantaged background.
- 26% of 13-year-olds are overweight or obese.



Summary

- 81% in 2 parent families. Stable family structures between 9 and 13 years of age - 3-4% of 13-year-olds have moved from one-to-two parent and two-to-one parent families since 9 years of age.
- Effects of recession of last 4 years felt strongly. 61% families experiencing difficulties in making ends meet – compared with 29% at first interview.
- 31% said they *can't afford / cut back on basics*; over 10% *behind with utility bills or behind with rent / mortgage*.
- Generally 13-year-olds are getting on well with their parents.
- 46% had discussed issues around sex/relationships with their parents.
- 9% had ever smoked – only 2% said they 'currently smoked'.
- 15% of 13-year-olds had ever tried alcohol, 8% in the last year.



The future of *Growing Up in Ireland*

- In May, Minister Fitzgerald announced an extension of the project to a third sweep of the Infant Cohort, when the children will be 5 years of age.
- Pilot work has been completed.
- Interviewing the children and their families in the home from March to September 2013.
- Interviewing the children's school principal and teacher from September 2013 to June 2014.
- Project concludes December 2014.



Thank You

On behalf of the ***Growing Up in*** Ireland team I would like to extend thanks to:

- Minister Fitzgerald for launching the Key Findings today.
- Jim Breslin, Secretary General in the DCYA, and his staff, particularly Moira O'Mara, Anne-Marie Brooks and Tim Heneghan.
- The CSO, Padraig Dalton (Director General) and Marion McCann
- Professor Lucinda Platt from the Millennium Cohort Study, keynote speaker
- National and international assessors for their detailed comments
- Chairs for the conference today
- The Research Ethics Committee (REC)
- Scientific & Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC)



Thank You

- Panels of Expert Advisors
- Stakeholders and interested parties whom we consulted with
- The children on the Children's Advisory Forum
- The users of the data
- GUI team and the field interviewers
- Biggest thanks to the almost 20,000 children their parents / guardians, carers



Data available from:

- <http://www.ucd.ie/issda/data/growingupinireland>
- <http://www.iqda.ie/content/growing-ireland>
- www.growingup.ie