



12th Annual
Research
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The role of socio-economic factors in access to supports for young people with disabilities in Ireland

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Background

- Cohort '98, previously referred to as the 'Child Cohort'.
- Growing Up in Ireland carried out surveys with the children and their families at wave one (age 9) wave two (age 13) and wave three (age 17/18).
- Current study looks primarily at wave three at 17/18 years.
- N at age 17/18 = 6216.

The current study

- Examines the socio-economic background of young people (YPs) with disabilities.
- Explores differences in the amount of supports accessed by YPs based on family socio-economic background.
- Looks at an example of why whole family supports are important –parental stress.

Background

In the last two decades important strides have been made to promote the rights and autonomy of YPs who are disadvantaged (O’Duffy, 2018). YPs from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and who have a disability experience a double disadvantage (Banks et al., 2018).

Important initiatives have sought to provide supports aimed at tackling inequalities in educational settings.

- National council for special education.
- DEIS – Delivering Equal Opportunities in Schools, focussed on supporting schools in disadvantaged communities.

Community supports

- There has been increased focus in family-centred approaches and inter-disciplinary working among community supports (National Disability Authority, 2015).
- Progressing disability service – initiative aimed at increasing community access to disability supports from infancy to age 18, began being implemented in 2010. Gaps have been identified in terms of geographical location.

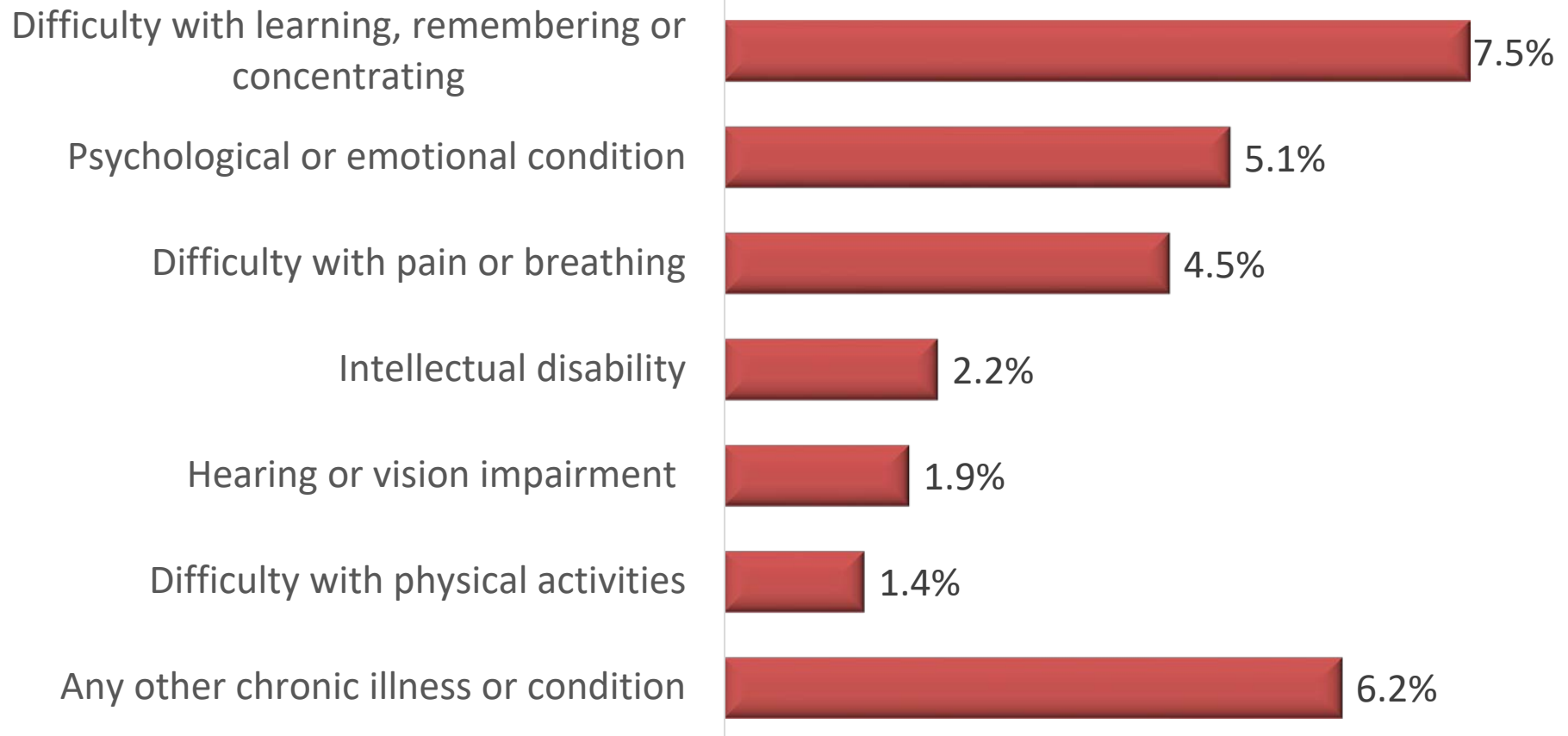
Measures

- Types of disability – taken from the 2011 Census.
- Socio-economic status: Primary Care Givers (PCGs) education and household income quintiles.
- Supports – PCGs were asked if their child accessed a variety of supports two different setting; *in school* and *outside school*.
- Financial strain – measured using a single item question on the degree to which the household is able to make ends' meet (Answers ranging from *with great difficulty* to *very easily*).
- Between group differences are examined using analysis of variance (ANOVAs).

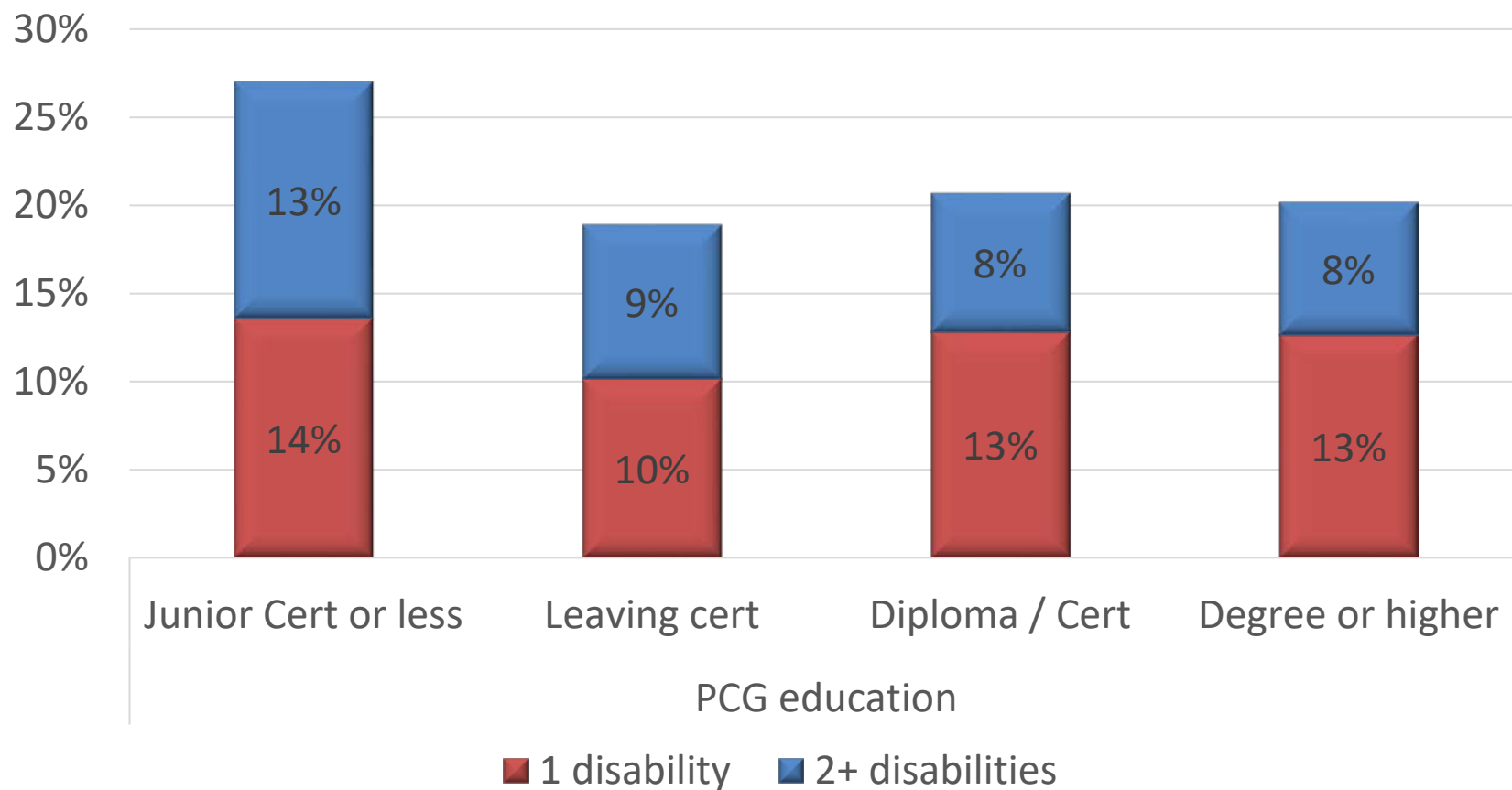
Results

- Total number at 17/18 with any of the above disabilities:
 - 12% had one disability
 - 9% had two or more disabilities
- Significantly more YPs with a disability were from one-parent families at 17/18 when compared to young people with no disability (27% versus 19%).
- Significantly more YPs with a disability had PCGs who were not at work (39% versus 33%). No difference for Secondary care-givers.

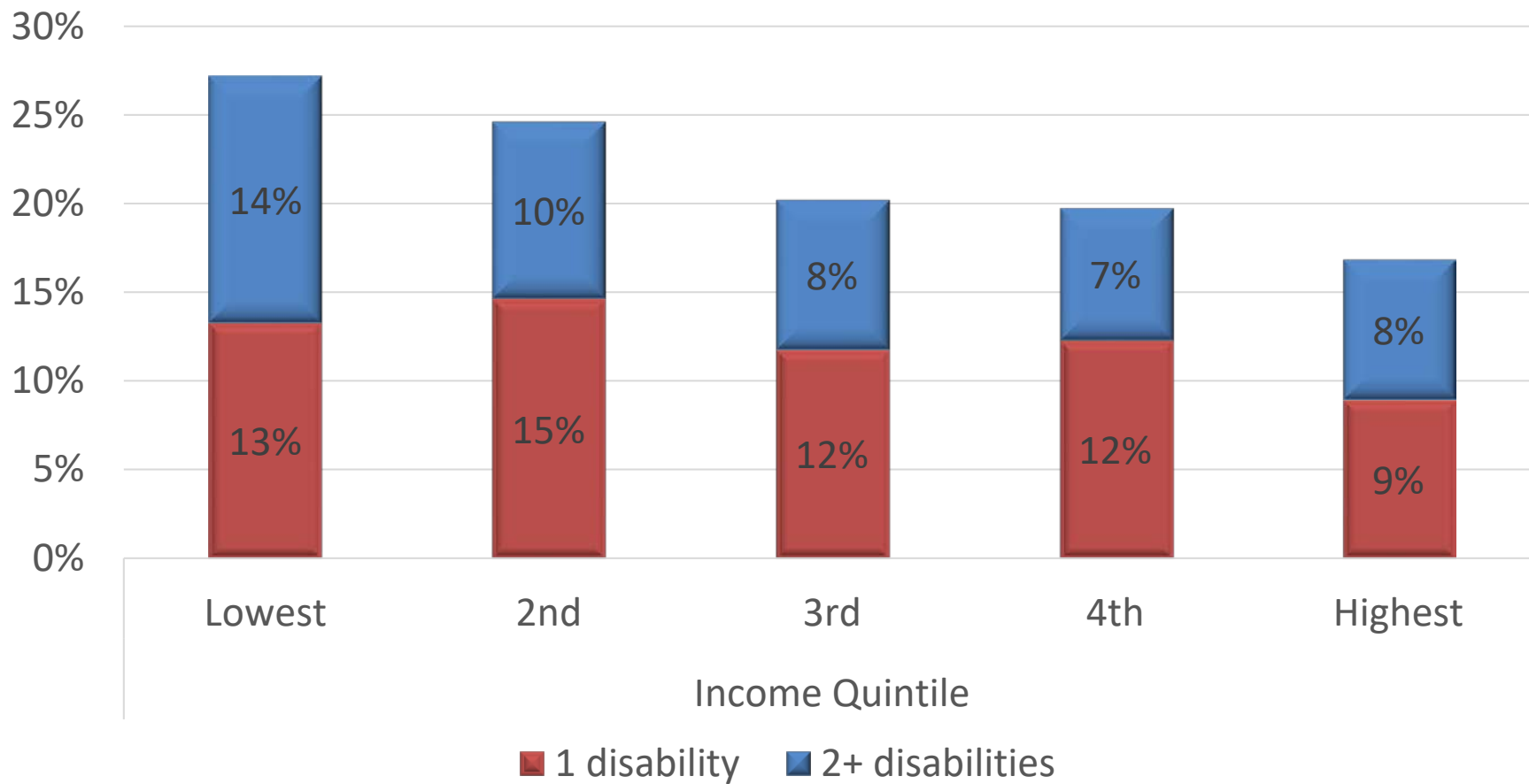
Types of disabilities among 17/18-year-olds



YP disability and PCG education

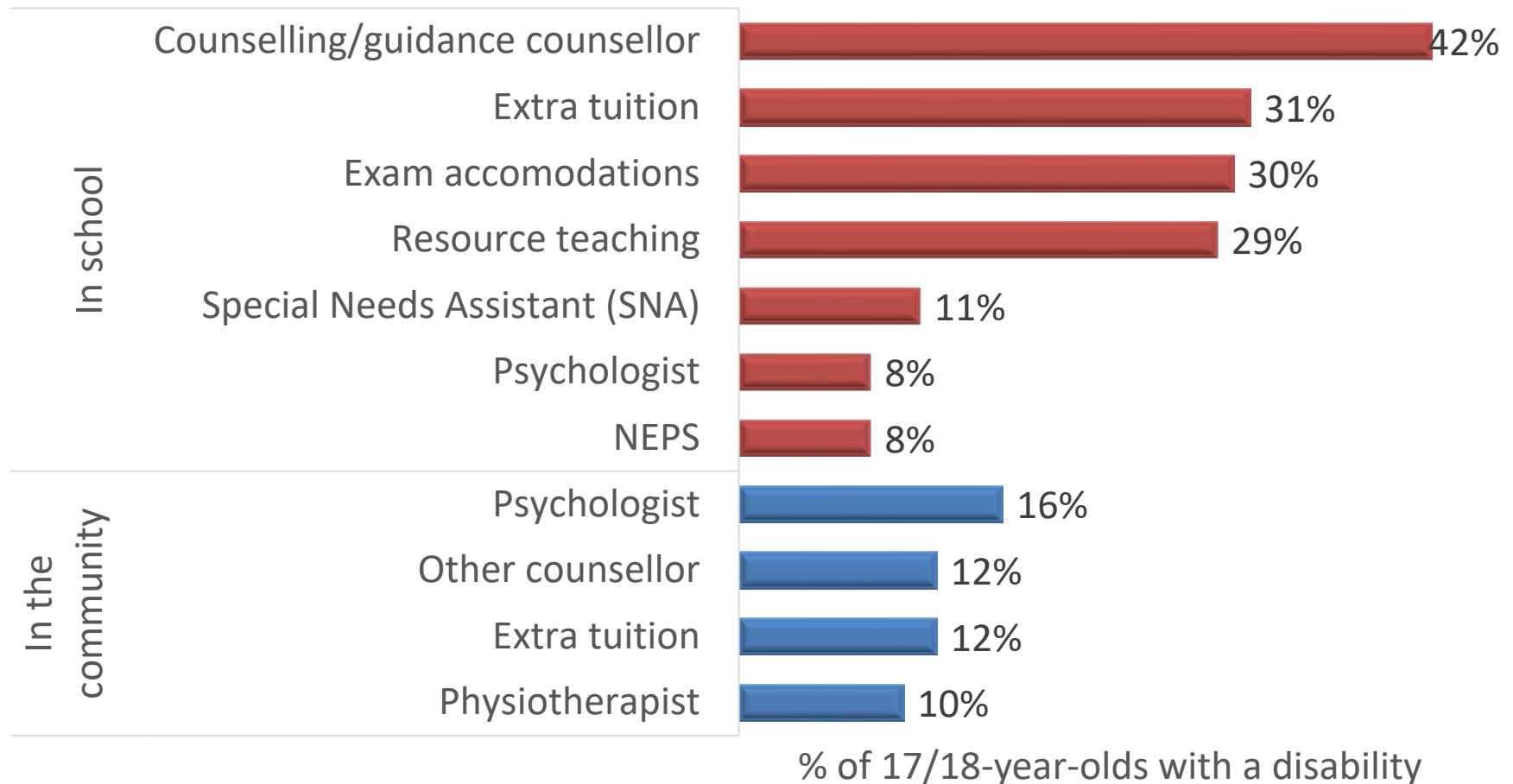


YP disability and Income Quintile



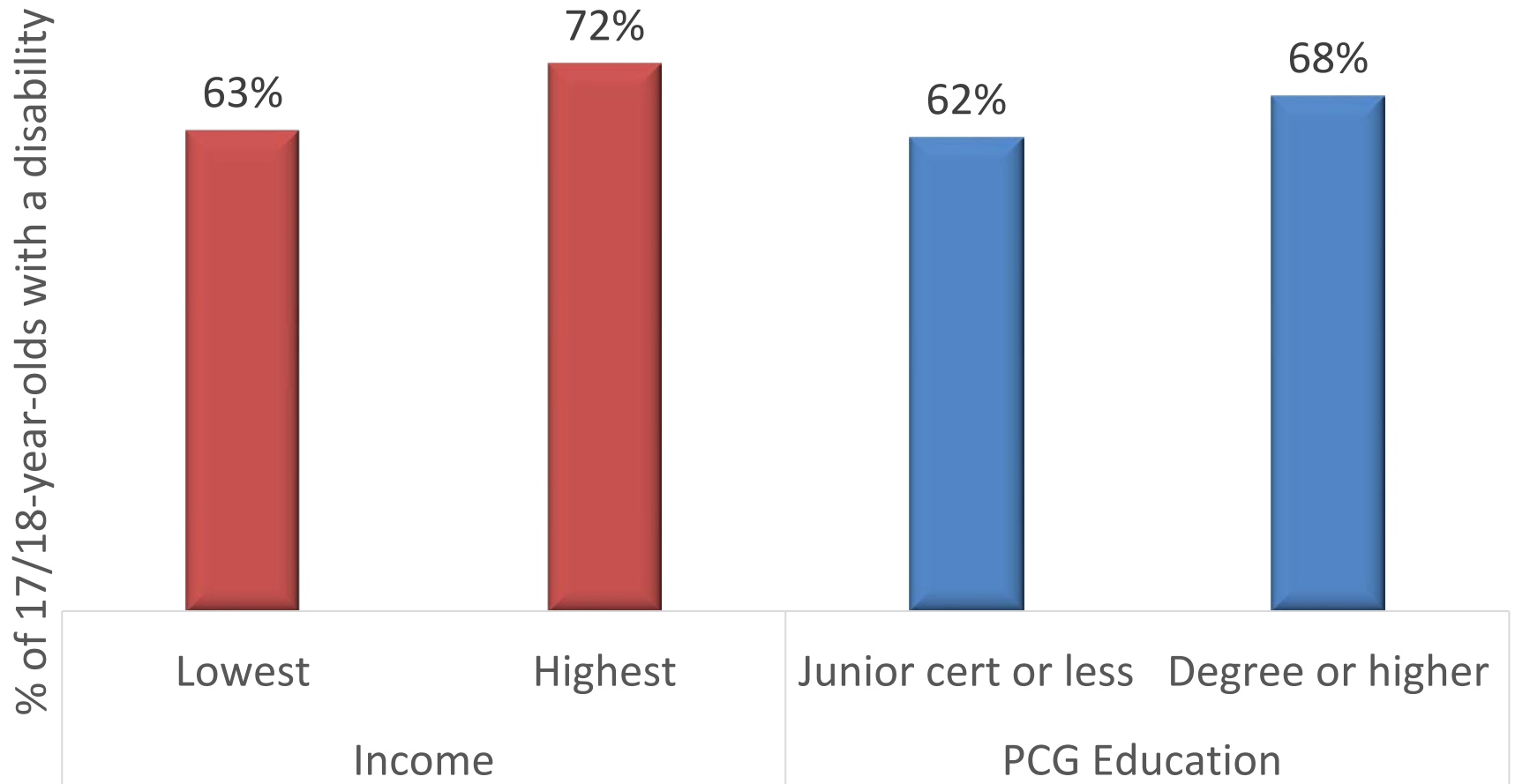
Results

Most common supports for YPs with disabilities



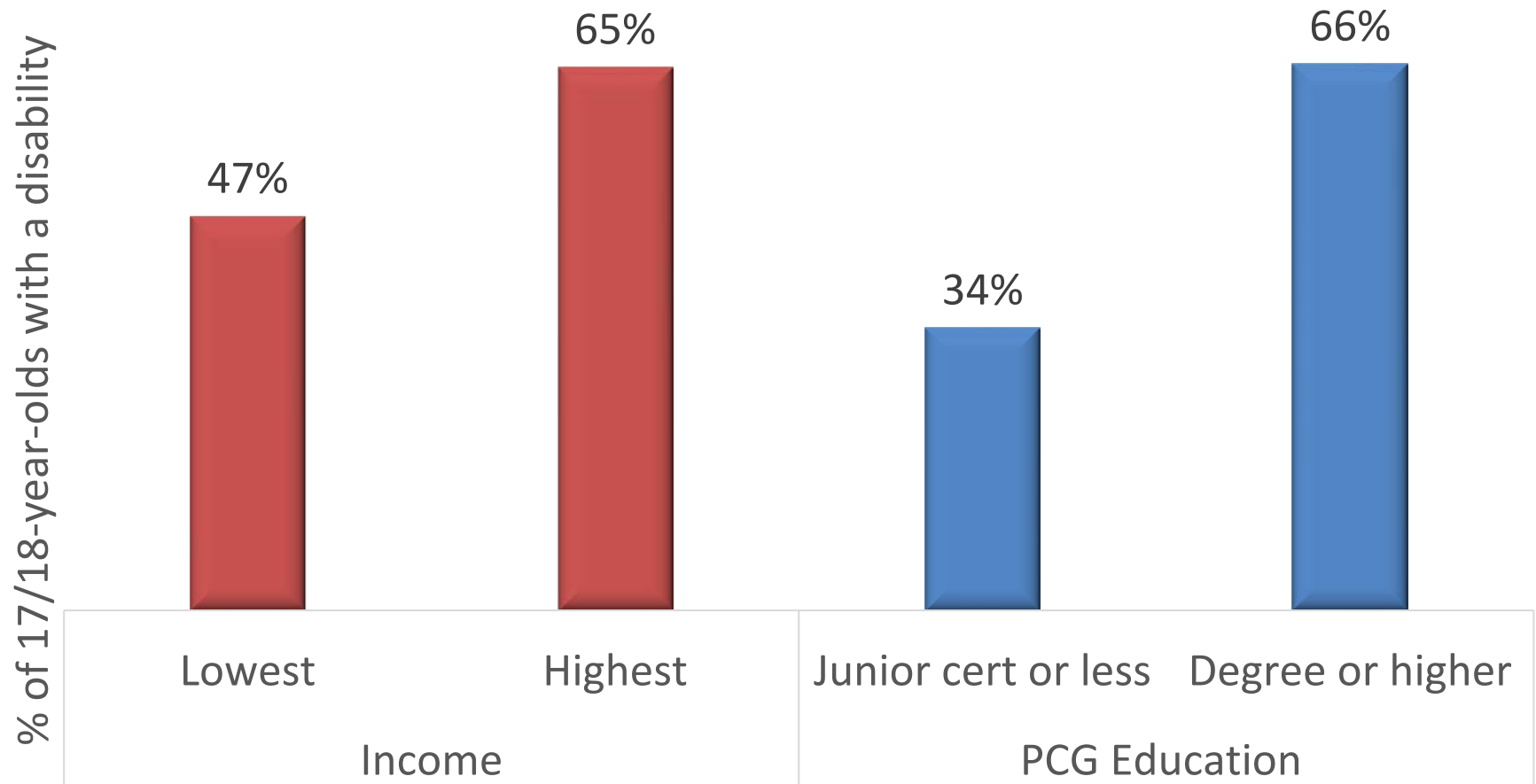
Results

Socio-economic background and school supports



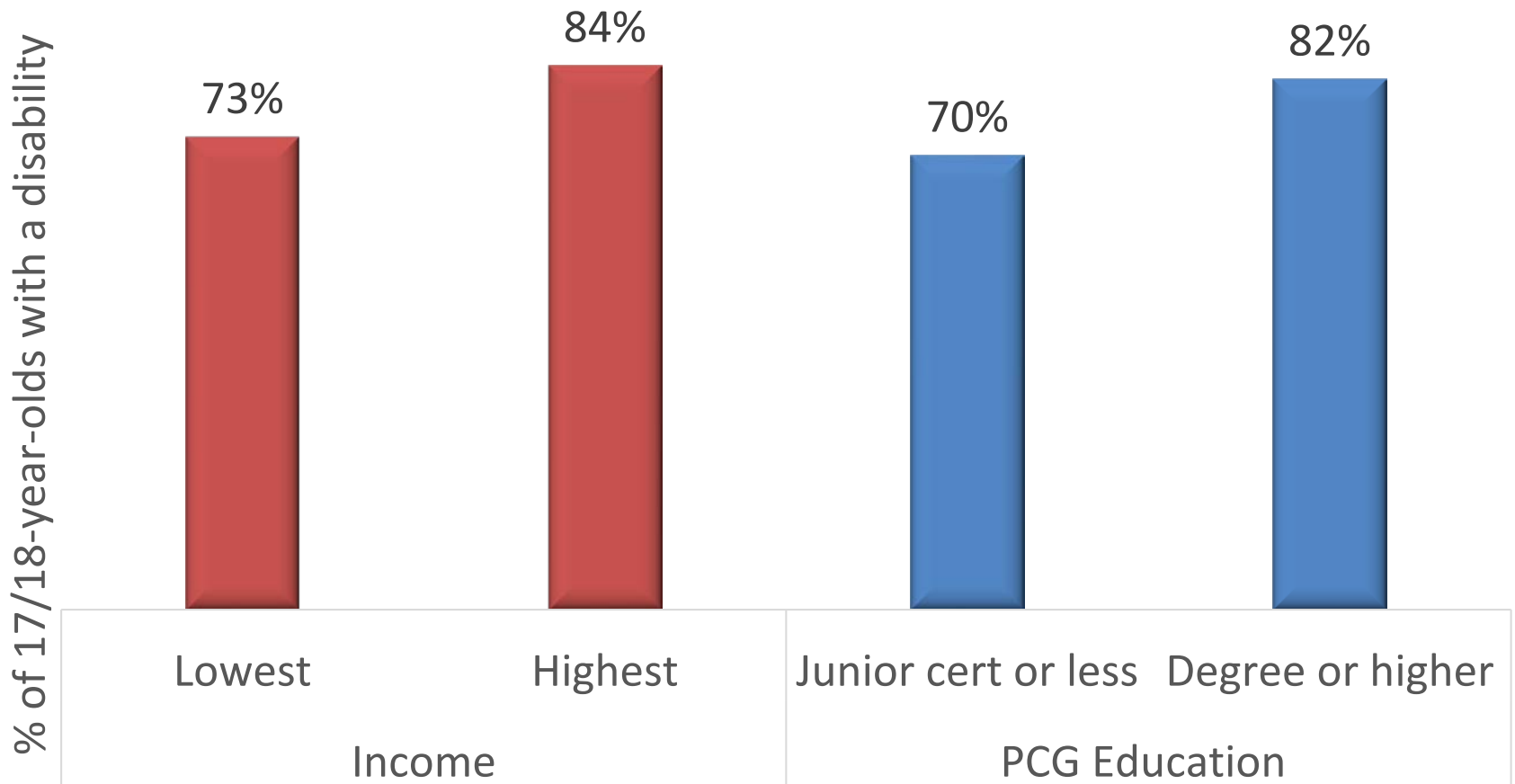
Results

Socio-economic background and community supports



Results

Socio-economic background and supports - overall

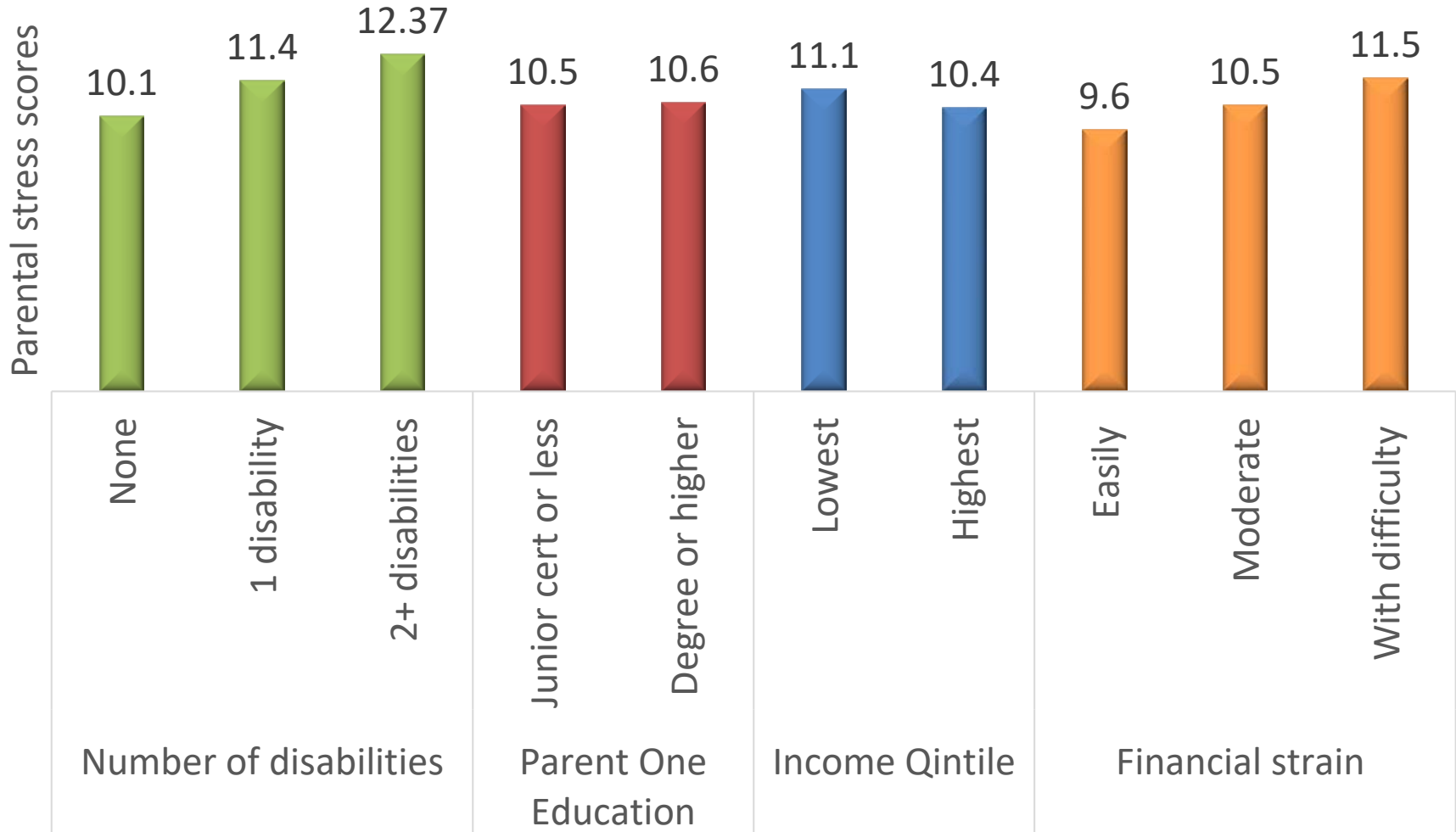


Why are community supports important – example of PCG parental stress

- Parental stress scale (Berry & Jones, 1995) with higher scores indicating higher levels of stress.
- Observed range for the whole sample was 6 to 30.
- The mean stress score for the whole sample: 10.5 (SD: 4.0).

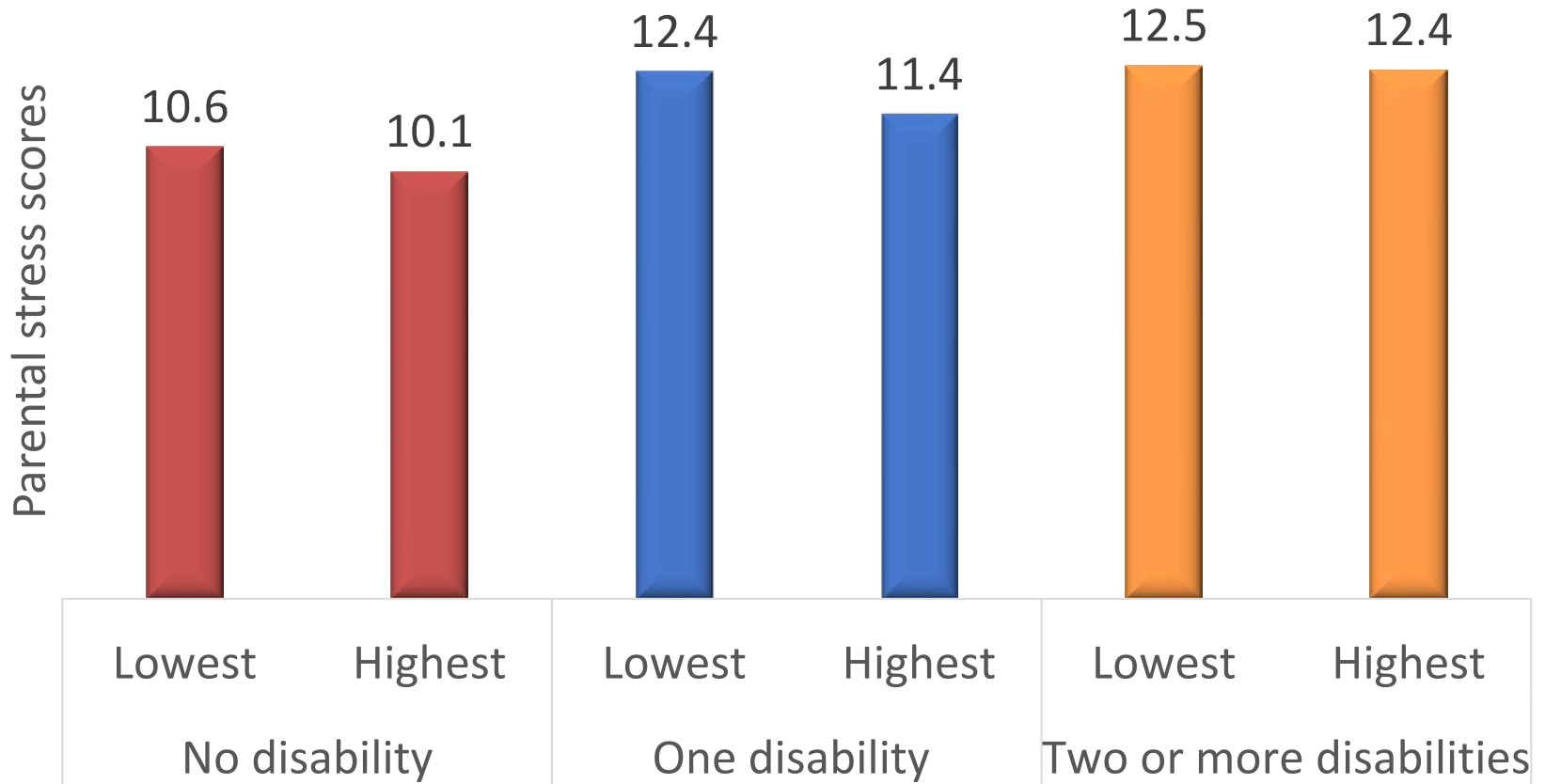
Results

Parental stress scores based on different family factors



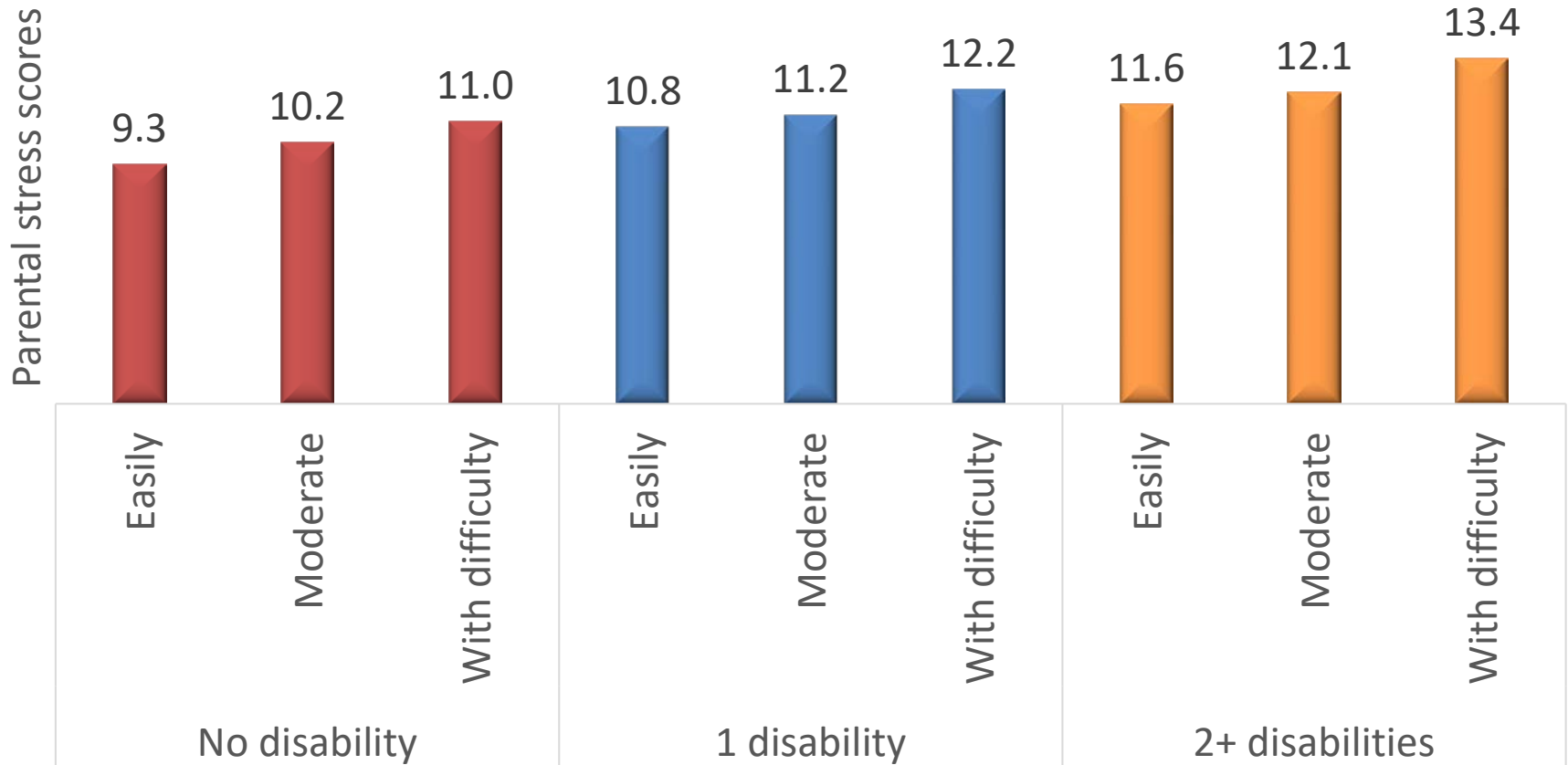
Results

Associations between parental stress, YP disability and household income



Results

Associations between parental stress, YP disability and financial strain



Conclusions

- YPs with disabilities are more highly represented in lower income families and where primary caregivers have a junior certificate or less.
- Slightly less YPs from disadvantaged backgrounds received supports in school. The difference was much greater for supports in the community. This meant that significantly less YPs from disadvantaged backgrounds received supports overall.
- Parents of YPs with disabilities experience higher parental stress on average, as do parents in financial strain. Having a child with a disability and being in financial strain typically equates to even higher stress levels.

Implications

- The current findings may have implications for initiatives aimed at increasing supports in the community, such as the progressing disability services initiative.
- While the aim of the initiative is to close gaps in services based on geographical locations, the current study suggests there may also be gaps for those YPs from more disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Given the financial implications of having a child with multiple disabilities and that parents in financial strain experience higher stress; monetary support as well as practical support could be useful for affected families.

Strengths and limitations

- As with all Growing Up in Ireland studies, a strength is that this study uses data from a nationally representative sample.
- The current study uses one cohort. Further examination using the '08 cohort could examine whether these trends exist in future, for example when community based initiatives currently in development are further implemented.
- A qualitative study could examine barriers to community supports for more disadvantaged families. This could explore possible barriers such as a lack of knowledge about services, wait-lists or financial barriers.

References

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- Berry, J. O., & Jones, W. H. (1995). The parental stress scale: Initial psychometric evidence. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 12(3), 463-472.
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Thank you!

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