



# Emotional & behavioural difficulties and bullying

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# Design of the child cohort

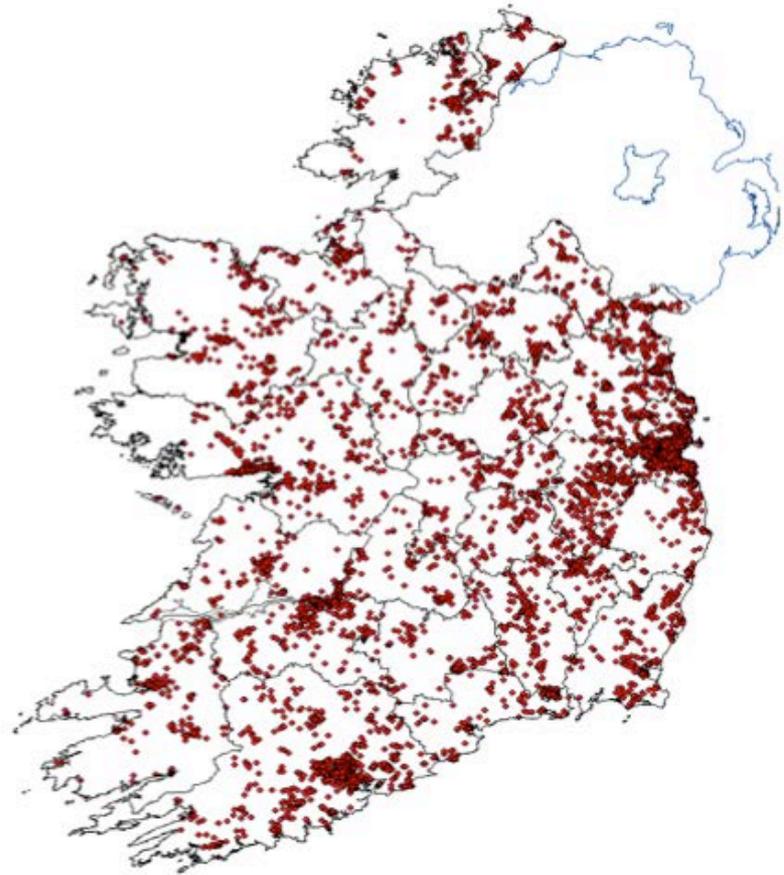
- ❖ Children recruited at 9 years of age, re-interviewed at 13 years
- ❖ Design based on Primary School system
- ❖ 3,200 Primary School in Ireland. Random sample of 910 recruited into the sample. 9-year-olds in those schools then recruited to the project.
- ❖ School was key to securing informed consent
- ❖ 8,568 children, families, teachers, Principal took part at 9 years (Drumcondra Reading and Maths tests in the schools)
- ❖ 7,700 children, families, Principals took part at 13 years (Drumcondra Reasoning Test completed in the home)



# Scale and scope: child cohort

## Child Cohort, at 9 years

National sample of 8,568  
9-year-olds, their parents,  
carers, teachers,  
Principals





# What is already known?

- Childhood bullying is associated with adverse effects on physical and emotional wellbeing
- May lead to a higher risk for self-aggressive behaviour
- It is well known that children and adolescents are bullied because of their race, ethnicity, religion or appearance

Reulbach U, Ladewig EL et al. 2013: *Weight, body image and bullying in 9-year-old children.*

McMahon EM, Reulbach U et al. 2010: *Bullying victimisation, self harm and associated factors in Irish adolescent boys.*

McMahon EM, Reulbach U et al. 2010: *Factors associated with deliberate self-harm among Irish adolescents.*



# Key findings

- **Being victimised was significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) associated with general emotional and behavioural difficulties**, independently if victimisation was reported by the study child or the primary caregiver.
- Children who reported that they were victimised by bullying in the past year had a **2.10 fold** [95% CI: 1.76 – 2.49] **higher risk** of emotional and behavioural difficulties and children where their primary caregiver reported a victimisation had a **4.85 fold** [4.10 – 5.75] **higher risk** of emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Source: Reulbach U. *A multi-level analysis of health and well-being in nine-year-old children (2013)*.



## Key findings (contd.)

- **Picking on someone** was significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) associated with a **2.28 fold** [1.87 – 2.79] **higher risk** of emotional and behavioural behaviour.
- Children who were upset a lot by bullying **and** children who were not upset by it at all had a significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) higher prevalence of emotional and behavioural difficulties when compared to children who were a little upset by it.

Source: Reulbach U. *A multi-level analysis of health and well-being in nine-year-old children (2013)*.



# Victimisation and emotional & behavioural difficulties

	Prevalence [95% CI] of emotional & behavioural difficulties regarding			
	Emotionality	Conduct problems	Hyperactivity	Peer problems
<b>Victimisation of study child (reported by primary caregiver)</b>				
<b>no</b>	10.6% [9.8 – 11.3%]	8.0% [7.4 – 8.7%]	9.5% [8.8 – 10.3%]	4.5% [4.0 – 5.0%]
<b>yes</b>	25.1% [23.3 – 27.1%]	15.1% [13.6 – 16.8%]	18.6% [17.0 – 20.4%]	21.3% [19.6 – 23.1%]
<b>Victimisation of study child (reported by study child)</b>				
<b>no</b>	11.8% [11.0 – 12.8%]	7.7% [7.0 - 8.5%]	9.8% [9.0 – 10.7%]	5.6% [5.0 – 6.3%]
<b>yes</b>	17.3% [16.0 –	12.2% [11.1 – 13.3%]	14.0% [12.8 –	12.2% [11.1 – 13.4%]



# Victimisation and specific difficulties

	Risk of victimisation based on reports by	
	Primary caregivers	Children
<b>Specific learning difficulties and coordination disorder</b>		
ADHD	3.69 [2.56 – 5.34]; $p < 0.001$	2.23 [1.53 – 3.27]; $p < 0.001$
Autism / Asperger's	2.93 [1.83 – 4.70]; $p < 0.001$	1.74 [1.04 – 2.91]; $p = 0.043$
Slow progress	1.90 [1.47 – 2.46]; $p < 0.001$	1.31 [1.02 – 1.69]; $p = 0.040$
<b>Specific speech and language difficulties</b>		
Reluctance to speak	2.52 [1.40 – 4.52]; $p = 0.003$	2.27 [1.15 – 4.47]; $p = 0.023$
Stutters/stammers	2.43 [1.56 – 3.80]; $p < 0.001$	3.38 [2.06 – 5.54]; $p < 0.001$



# Generalised linear model

Victimisation of study child reported by	Odds ratio [95% CI] for general emotional and behavioural difficulties			
	Emotionality	Conduct problems	Hyperactivity	Peer problems
primary caregivers	<b>2.52</b> [2.19 – 2.88] $p < 0.001$	<b>1.78</b> [1.51 – 2.10] $p < 0.001$	<b>1.87</b> [1.60 – 2.18] $p < 0.001$	<b>4.95</b> [4.18 – 5.87] $p < 0.001$
study child	<b>1.44</b> [1.26 – 1.65] $p < 0.001$	<b>1.48</b> [1.27 – 1.73] $p < 0.001$	<b>1.41</b> [1.22 – 1.63] $p < 0.001$	<b>2.13</b> [1.80 – 2.52] $p < 0.001$

Source: Reulbach U. *A multi-level analysis of health and well-being in nine-year-old children (2013)*.



# Conclusions

- Victimization **and** bullying were linked with emotional and behavioural difficulties with respect to emotionality, conduct problems, hyperactivity and peer problems.
- Among specific learning disorders, **ADHD and Autism / Asperger's** were predominantly linked with victimization.
- The highest victimization rate with a link to speech and language difficulties was observed regarding children **who stuttered or stammered**.



# Acknowledgments

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For more information: [www.growingup.ie](http://www.growingup.ie)
- Research is supported by the Health Research Board of Ireland through the HRB Centre for Primary Care Research under Grant HRC/2007/1.



# Accessing the data

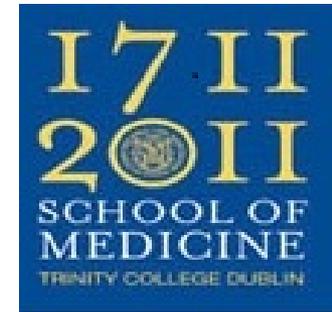
- ❖ **Wide range of publications available – see website [www.growingup.ie](http://www.growingup.ie)**
- ❖ **All microdata collected in *Growing Up in Ireland* readily available for use by interested parties**
- ❖ **Two types of datasets available:**
  - **Anonymised Microdata Files (AMF) – heavily anonymised – available from Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA)  
<http://www.ucd.ie/issda/data/growingupinireland/>**
  - **Researcher Microdata Files (RMF) – less heavily anonymised – available from Department of Children and Youth Affairs / Central Statistics Office  
[Anne-Marie\\_Brooks@dca.gov.ie](mailto:Anne-Marie_Brooks@dca.gov.ie)**
- ❖ **Data workshops on using the data run regularly by GUI team.**



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**Growing Up  
in Ireland**  
National Longitudinal  
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Carl Larsson (1890): Pontus