

An equal start: the importance of evidence from longitudinal studies to support children's healthy development

Yvonne Kelly

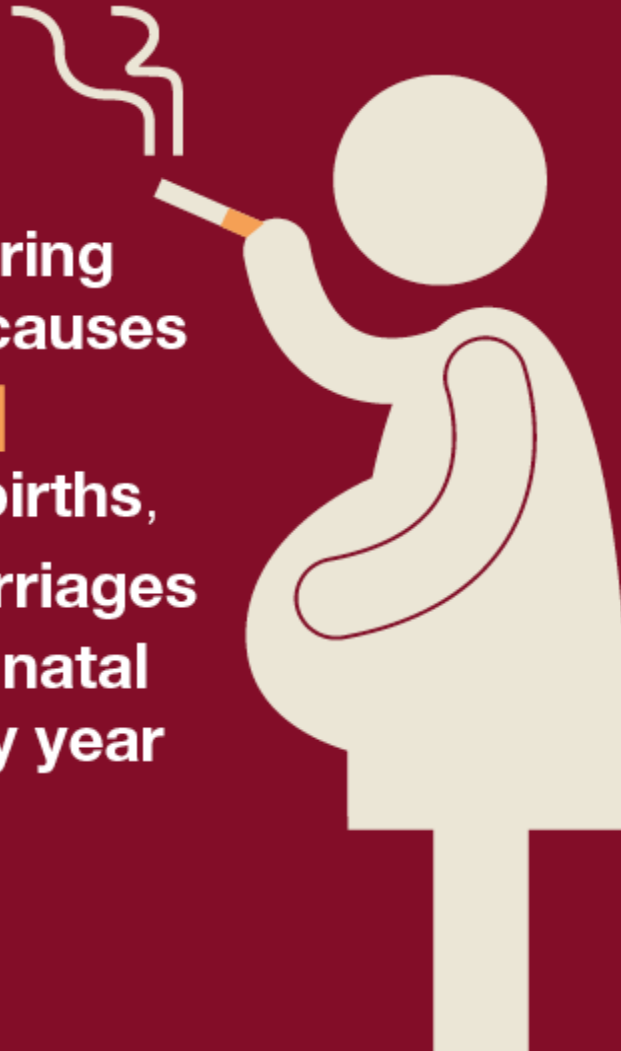
International Centre for Lifecourse Studies in Society and Health (ICLS)

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Smoking in pregnancy



Smoking during pregnancy causes up to **2,200** premature births, **5,000** miscarriages and **300** perinatal deaths every year in the UK

It also increases the risk of complications in pregnancy and of the child developing a number of conditions later on in life such as:

premature birth



low birth weight

respiratory conditions



problems of the ear, nose and throat



obesity



diabetes



6th September

Scotland set to be the first UK country to introduce a smacking ban

Kathleen Nutt [@kacnutt](#)

Journalist



Green MSP John Finnie is introducing a Bill which will stop children being smacked



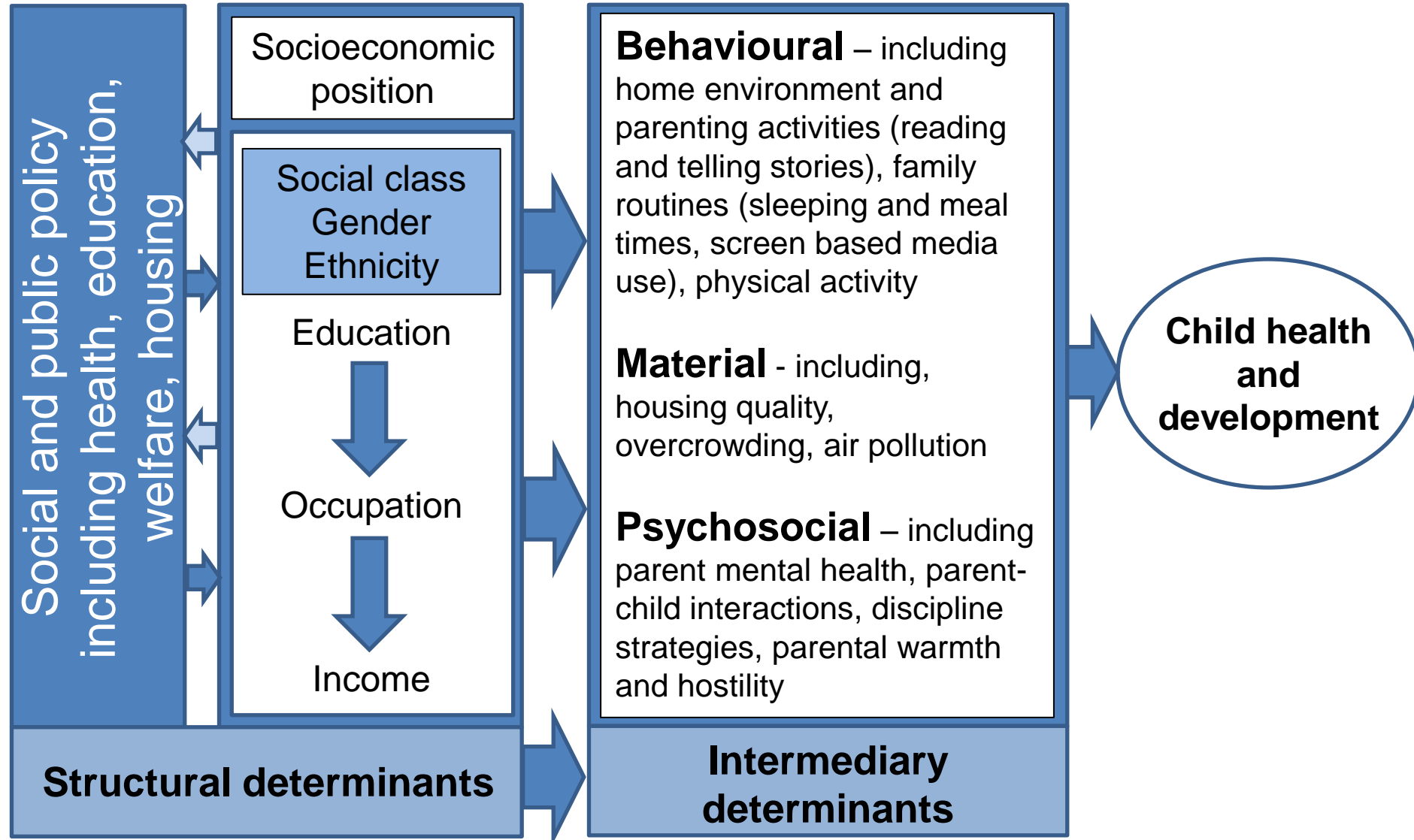
Bridging social and biological sciences

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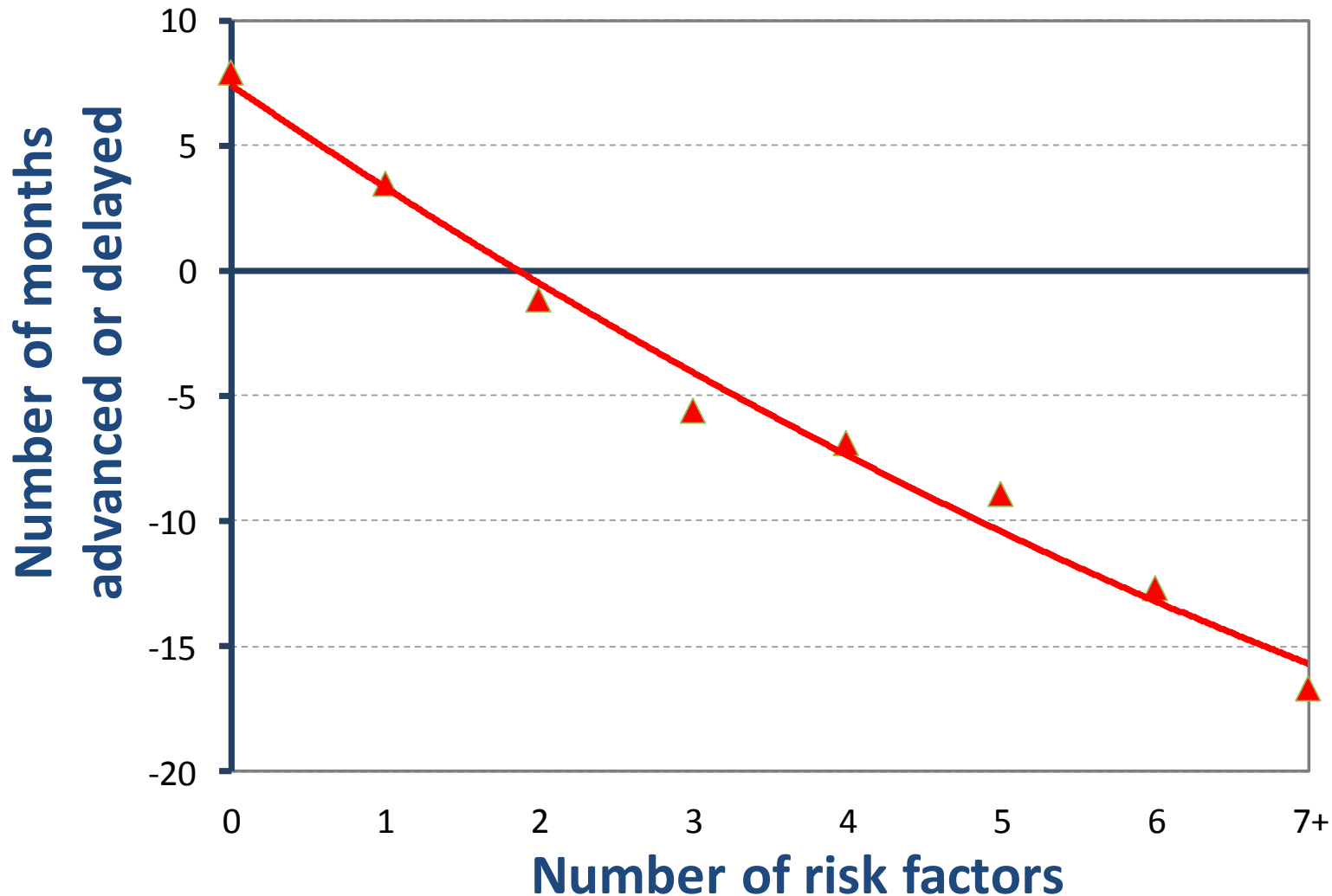
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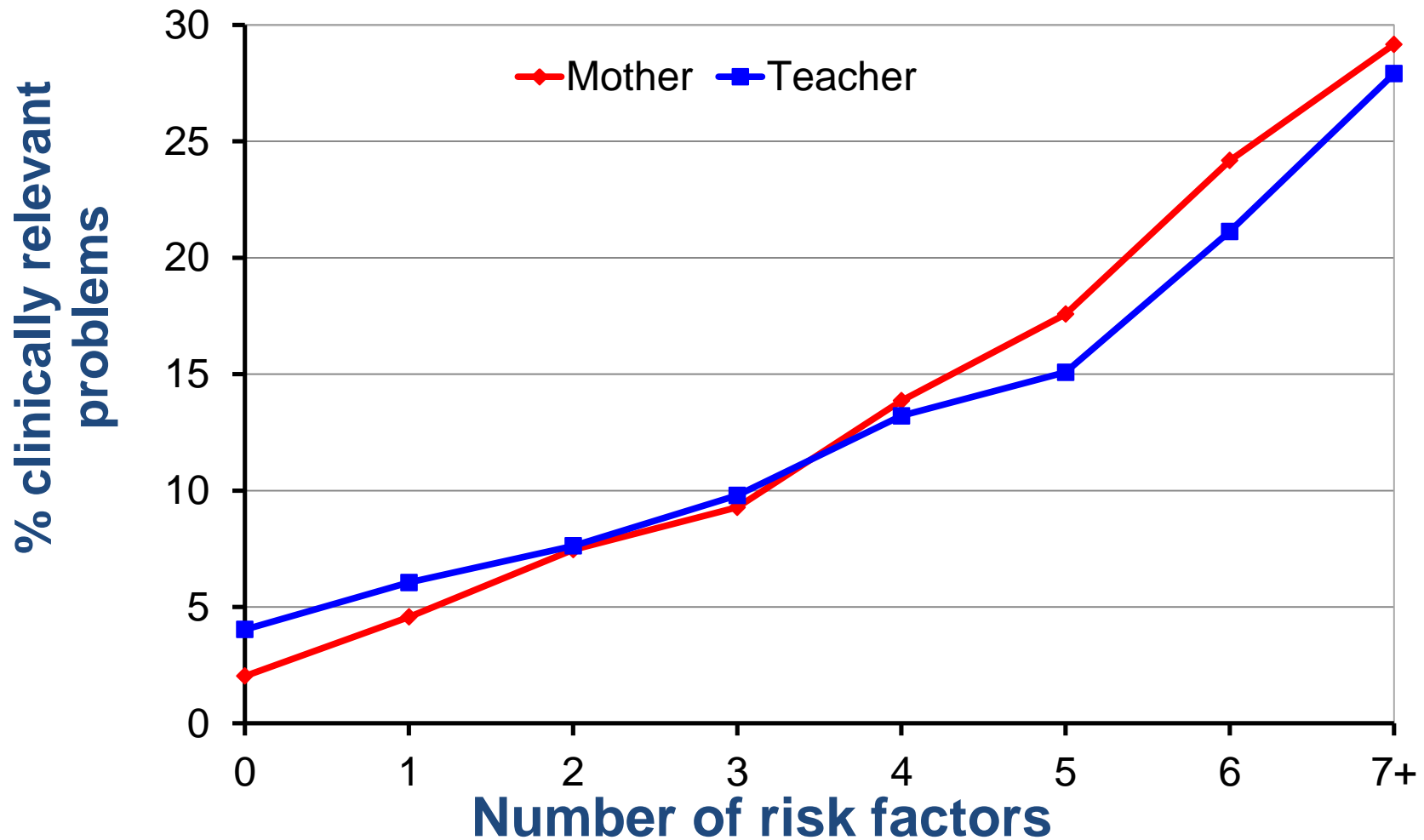
Social determinants for child health and development



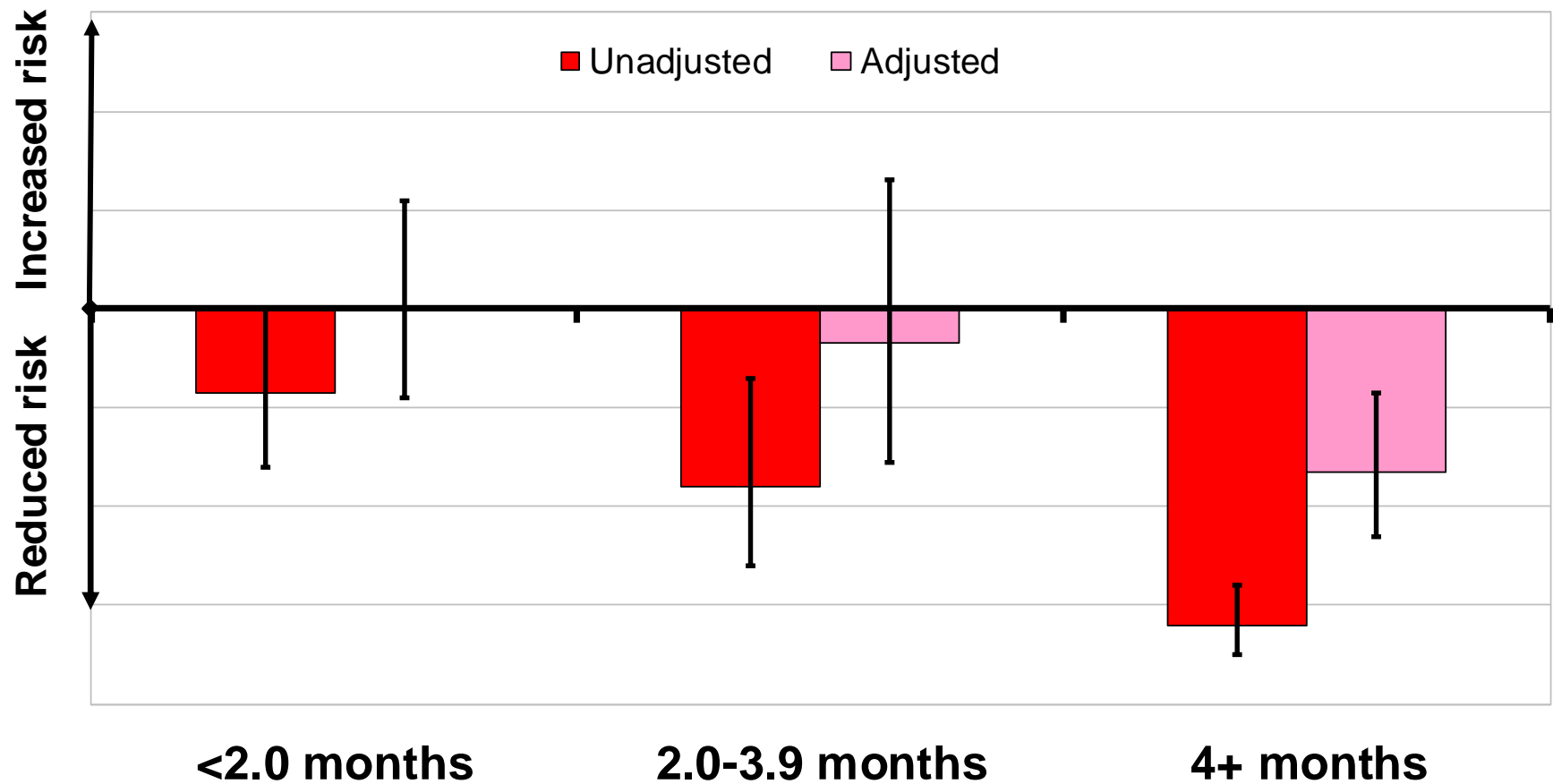
Verbal months ahead or behind at age 7 by number of risk factors



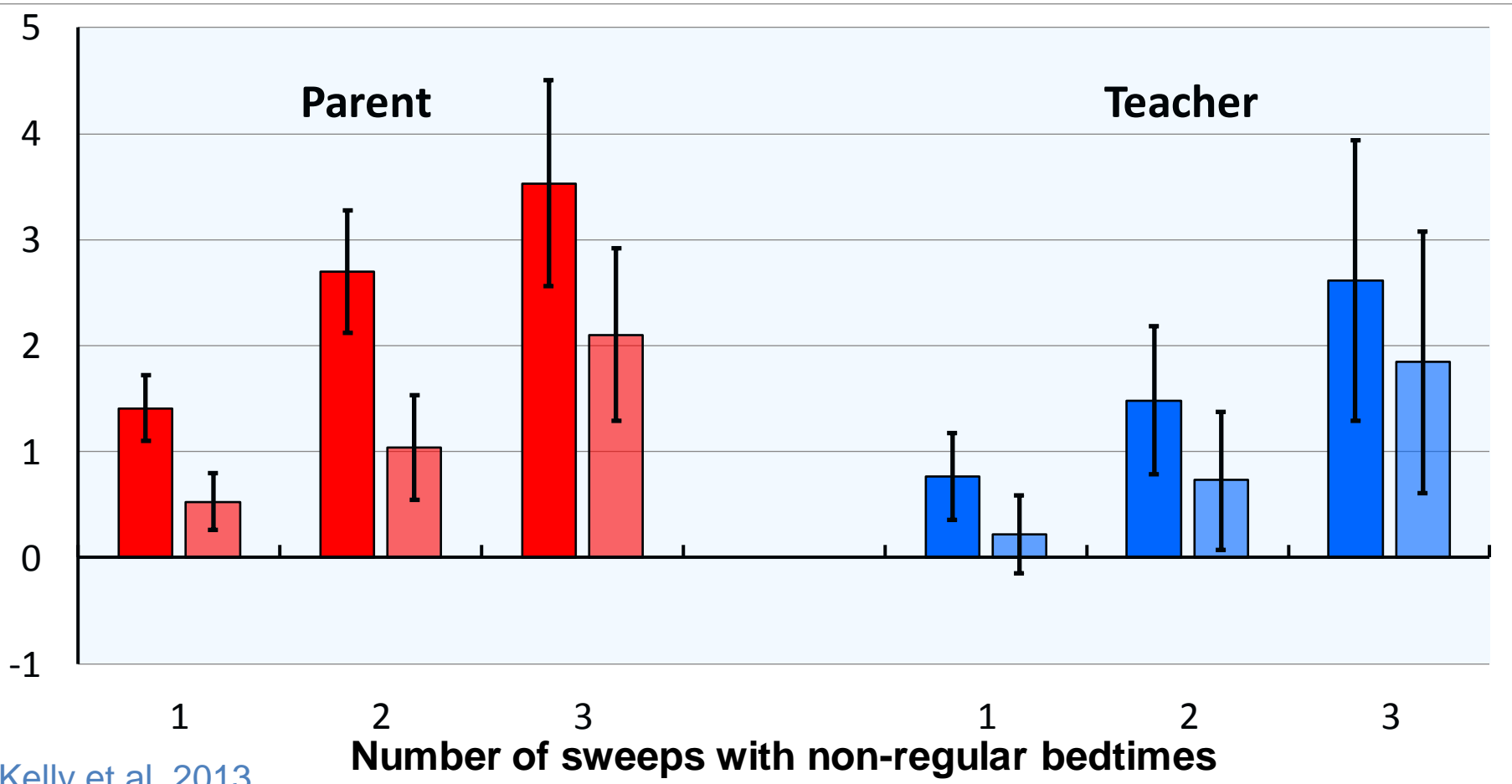
Clinically relevant behavioural problems at age 7, by number of risk factors



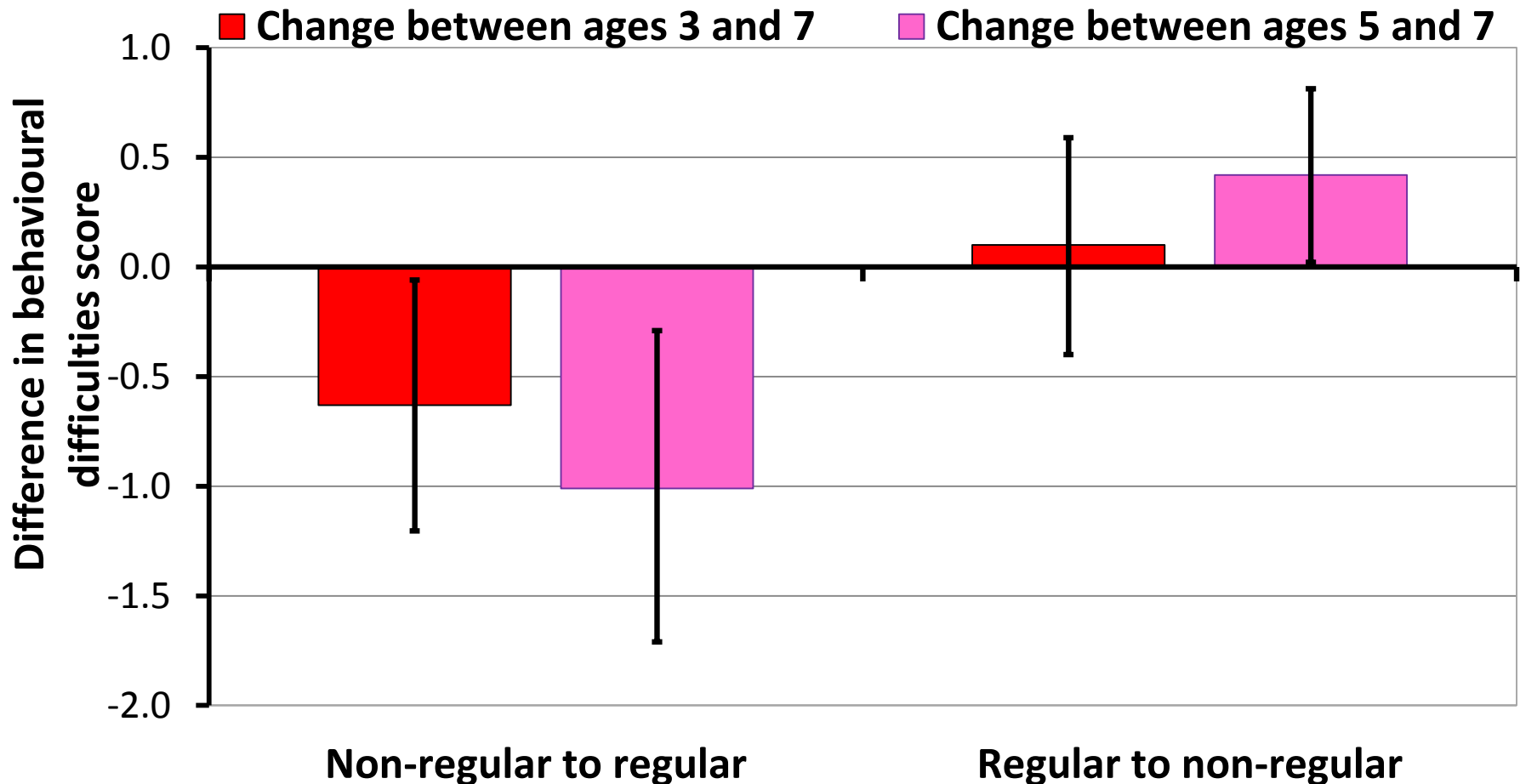
Likelihood of clinically relevant socioemotional difficulties by duration of any breastfeeding in term babies



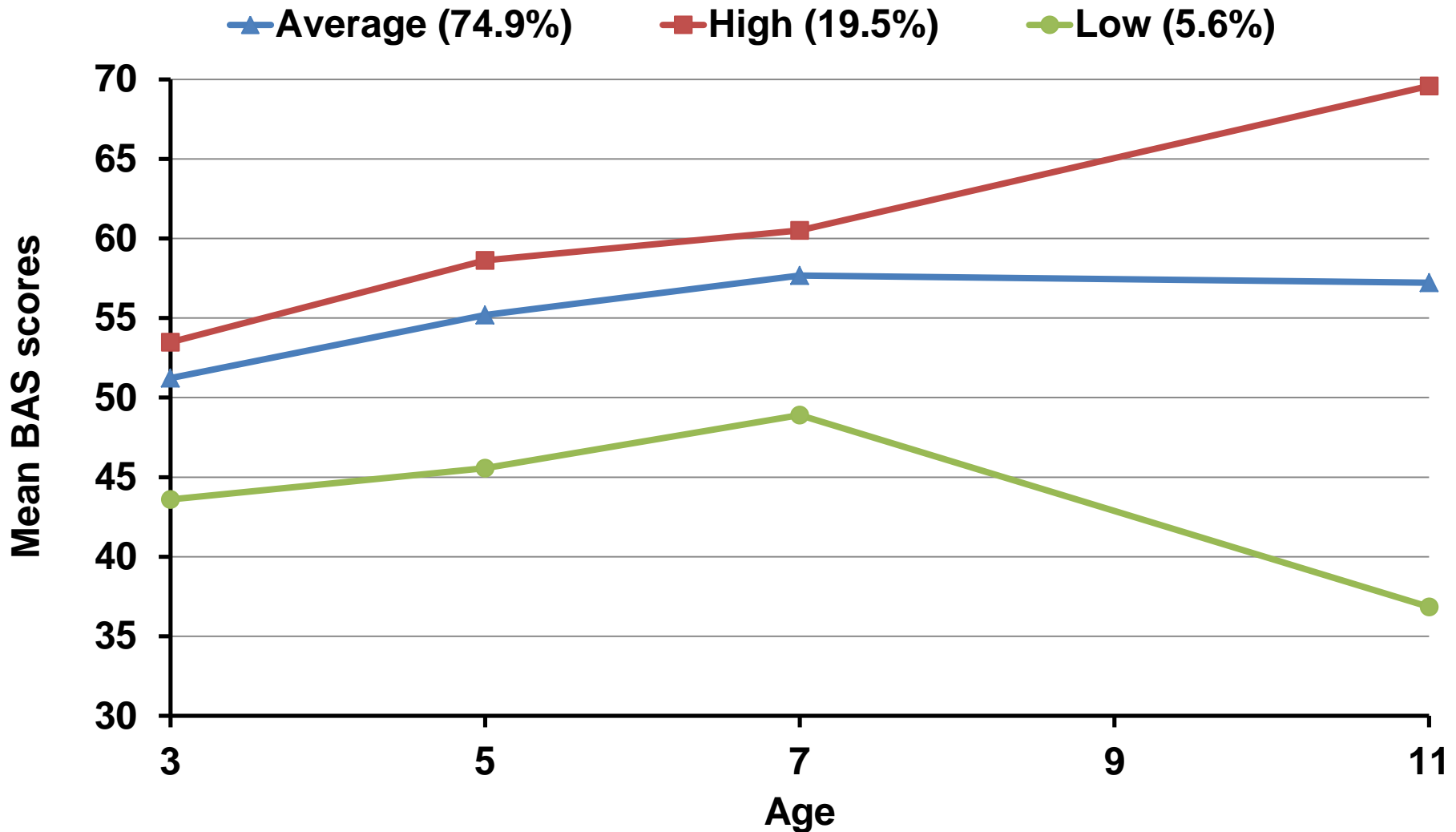
Cumulative effects, regression coefficients for SDQ total difficulties scores at age 7, by non-regular bedtimes throughout early childhood, ref = always regular bedtime.



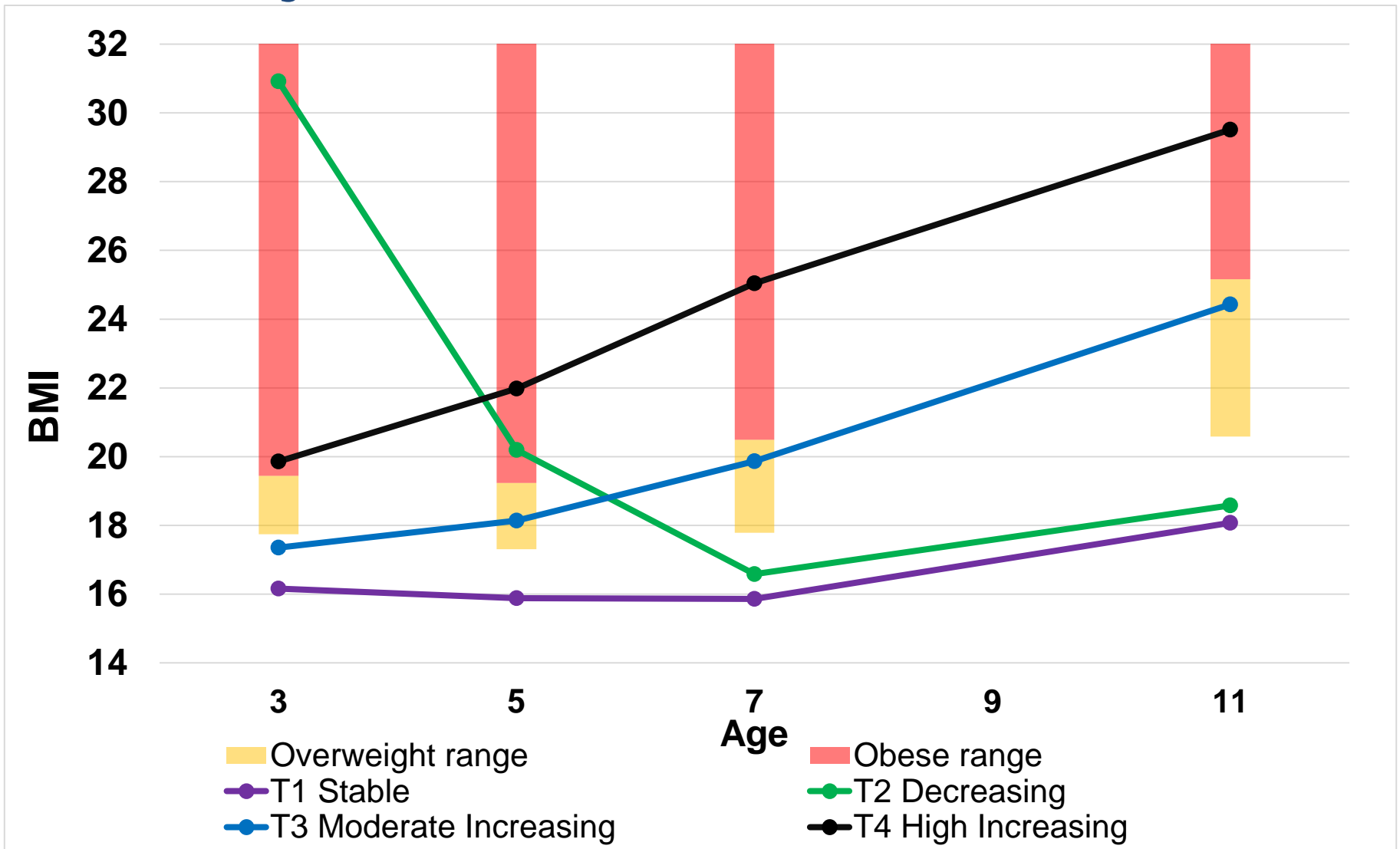
The effects of changes in the regularity of bedtimes on behavioural difficulties scores



Longitudinal Verbal Profiles

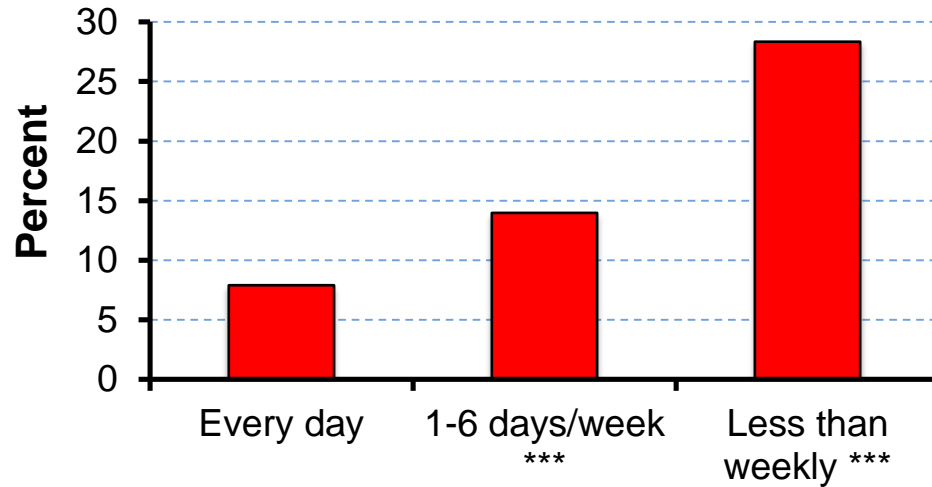


BMI trajectories in childhood

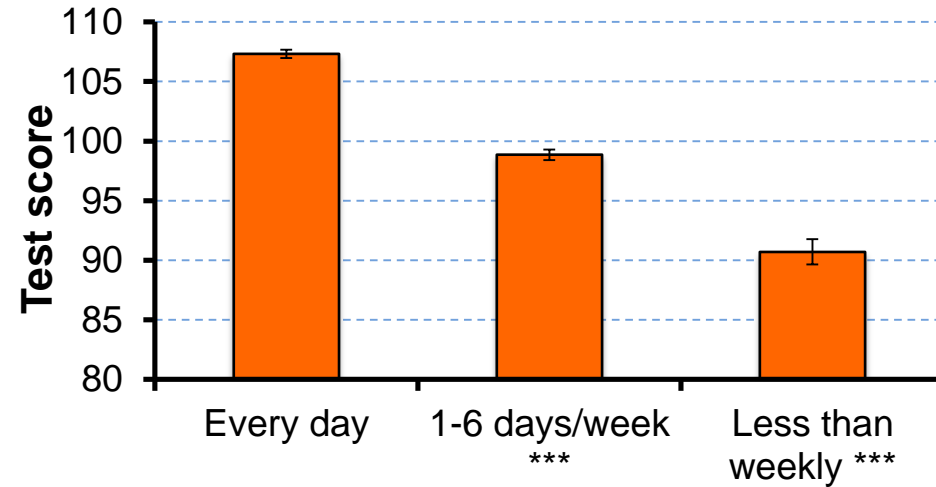


Being read to at age 3

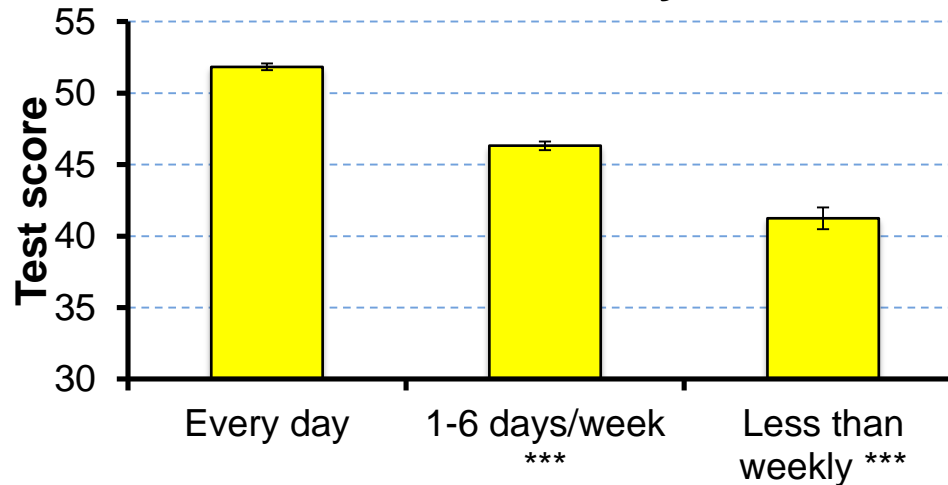
Socioemotional difficulties



School readiness

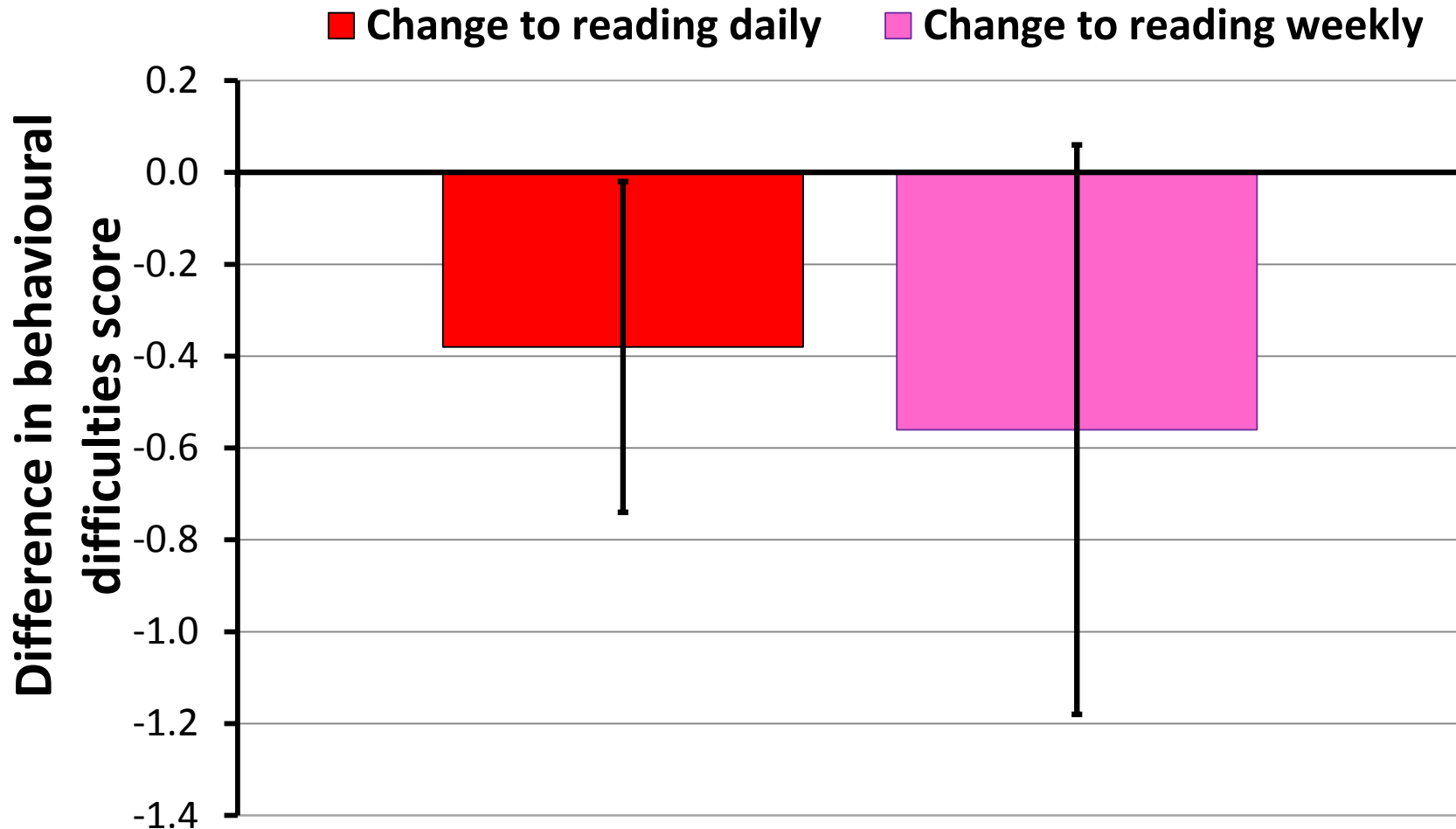


Verbal ability

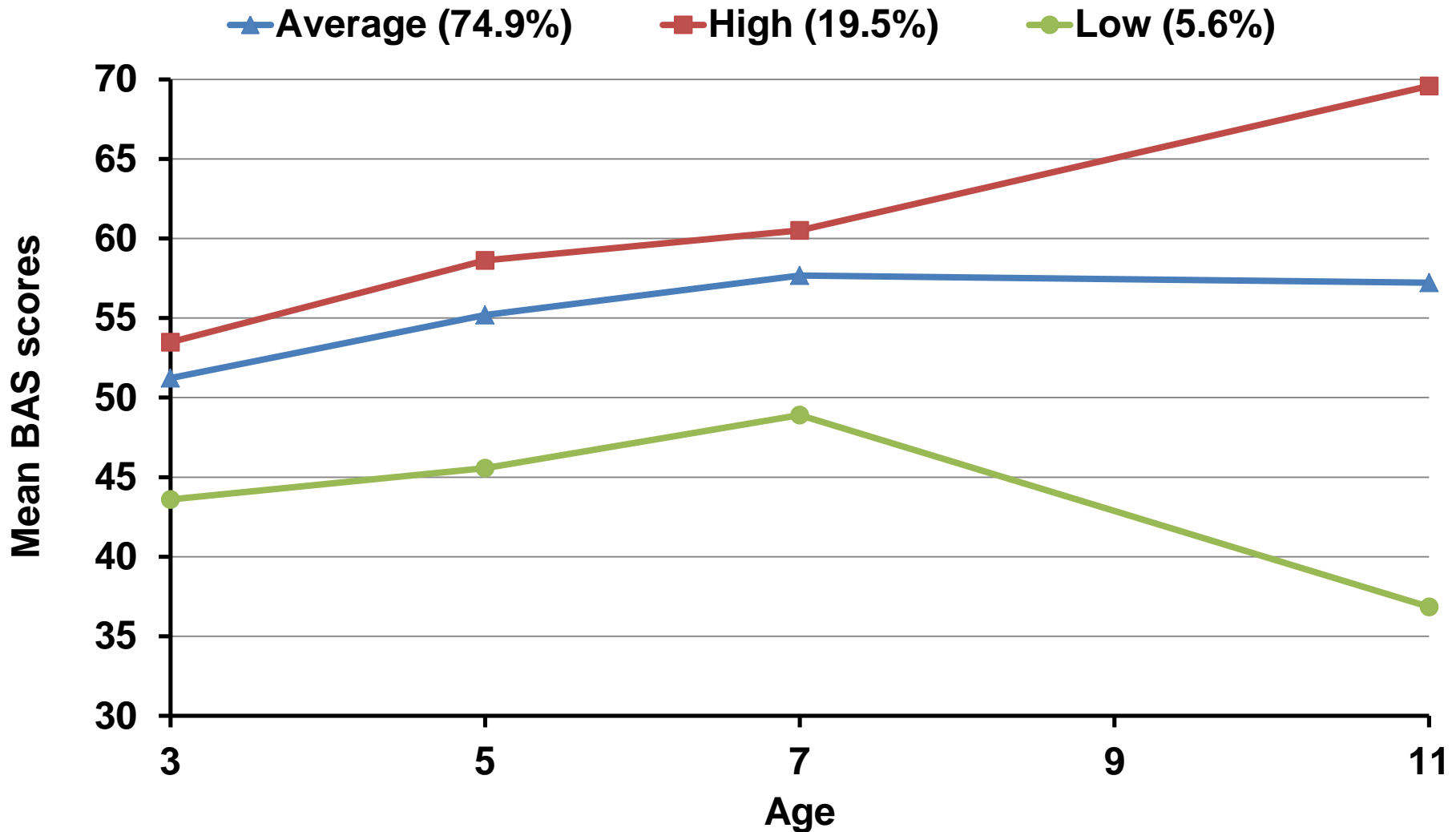


*** differences compared to those read stories to every day $p < 0.001$

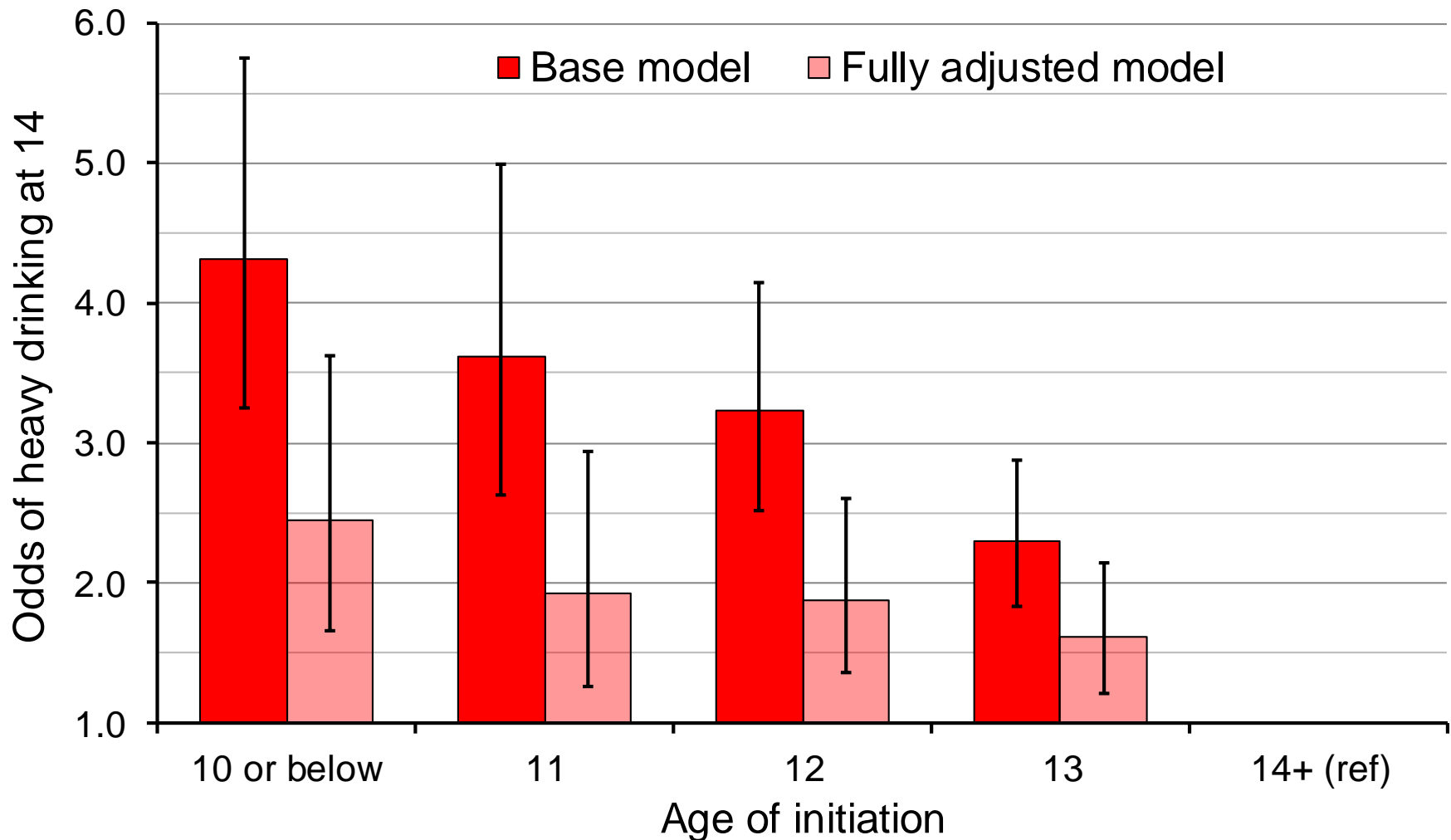
Change in frequency of being read to, ages 3 to age 5



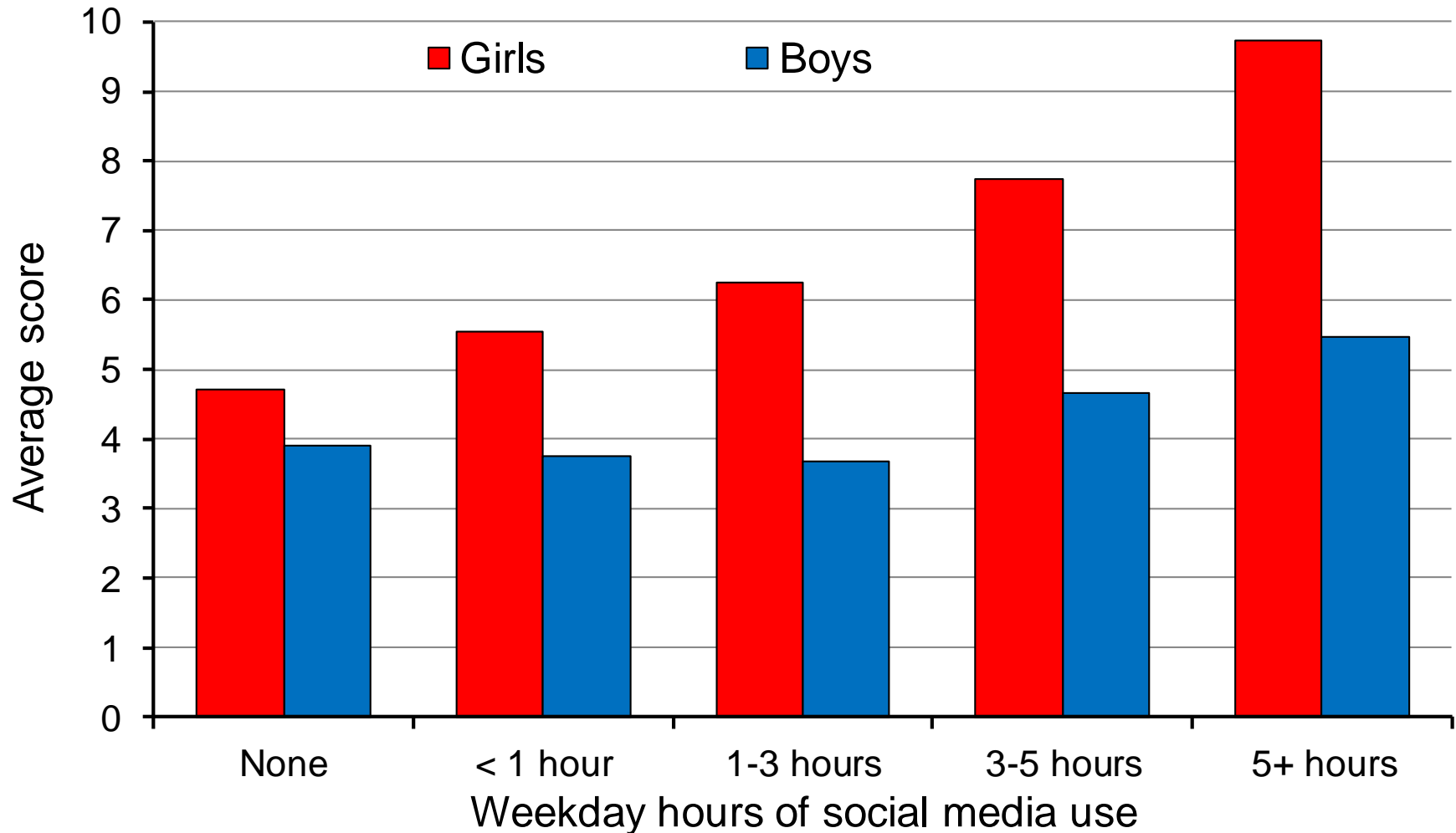
Longitudinal Verbal Profiles



Is age of alcohol initiation associated with heavy drinking patterns in early adolescence?



Depressive symptoms by (weekday) hours of social media use



Summary

- Child health and development matters – now and for the future
- Inequalities start early - structural factors shape ‘intermediary’ environments: behavioural, material, psychosocial
- Evidence from longitudinal studies crucial for understanding patterns of healthy development and to inform effective policy and practice
- Essential to refresh and keep longitudinal resources current
- To level the playing field action is needed - not just on intermediary but structural influences



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