

Niamh at 9 months



Niamh at 3 years



Niamh at 5 years



Five-year-olds and their Families

– preliminary results from the third wave of the Infant Cohort

27th November 2013



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 in Ireland***:

- **Infant Cohort:** families of 11,100 nine-month-old infants. First interviewed in 2008/2009.
90% successfully re-interviewed at both three years of age and five years of age – latter from March to September 2013.
- **Child Cohort:** 8,500 nine-year-olds and their families. Re-interviewed at 13 years of age.

New results from the Infant Cohort at five years of age launched today.



Growing Up in Ireland

- Five years of age marks the beginning of a very important stage in the life of the child – first major movement outside home as the transition made to school.
- Preliminary findings in four key areas launched today
 - The transition to school
 - Socio-emotional well-being
 - Well-being, play and diet
 - Family circumstances



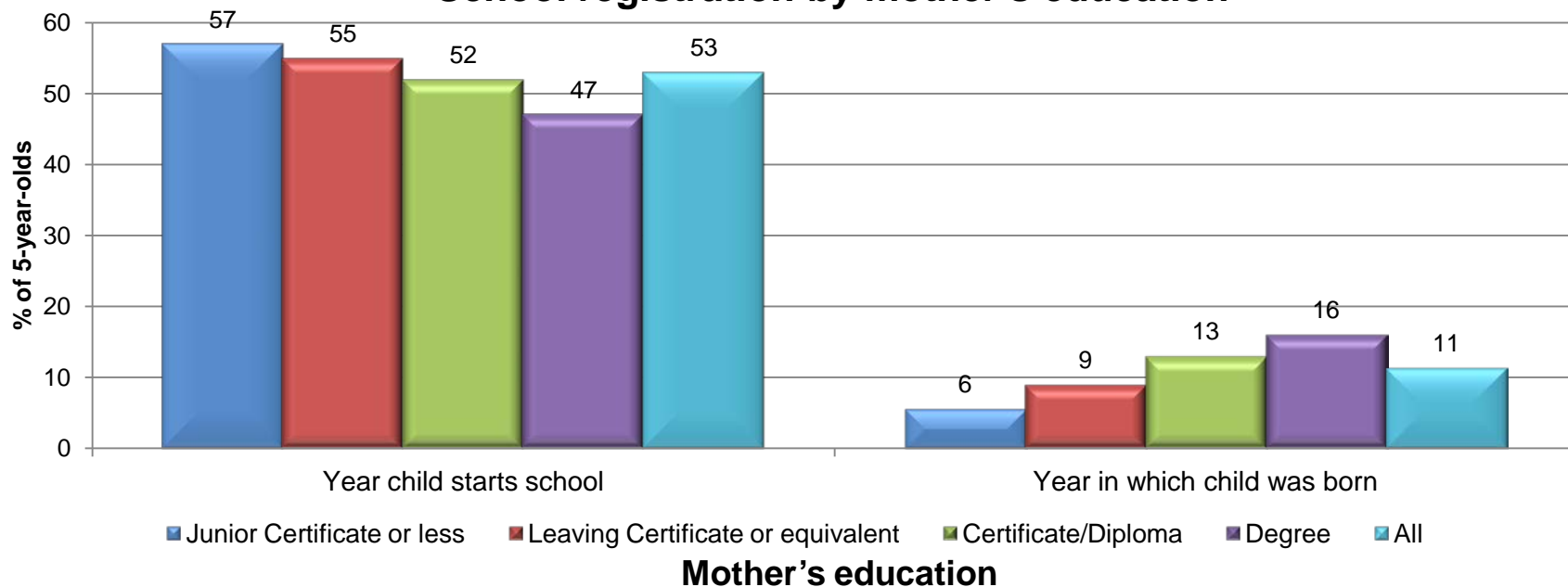
The Transition to School



Year of School Registration

- 53% of families registered the Study Child in school in the year in which the child started school; 11% registered him/her in the year in which child was born.
- Year of registration strongly related to family's level of advantage/disadvantage.

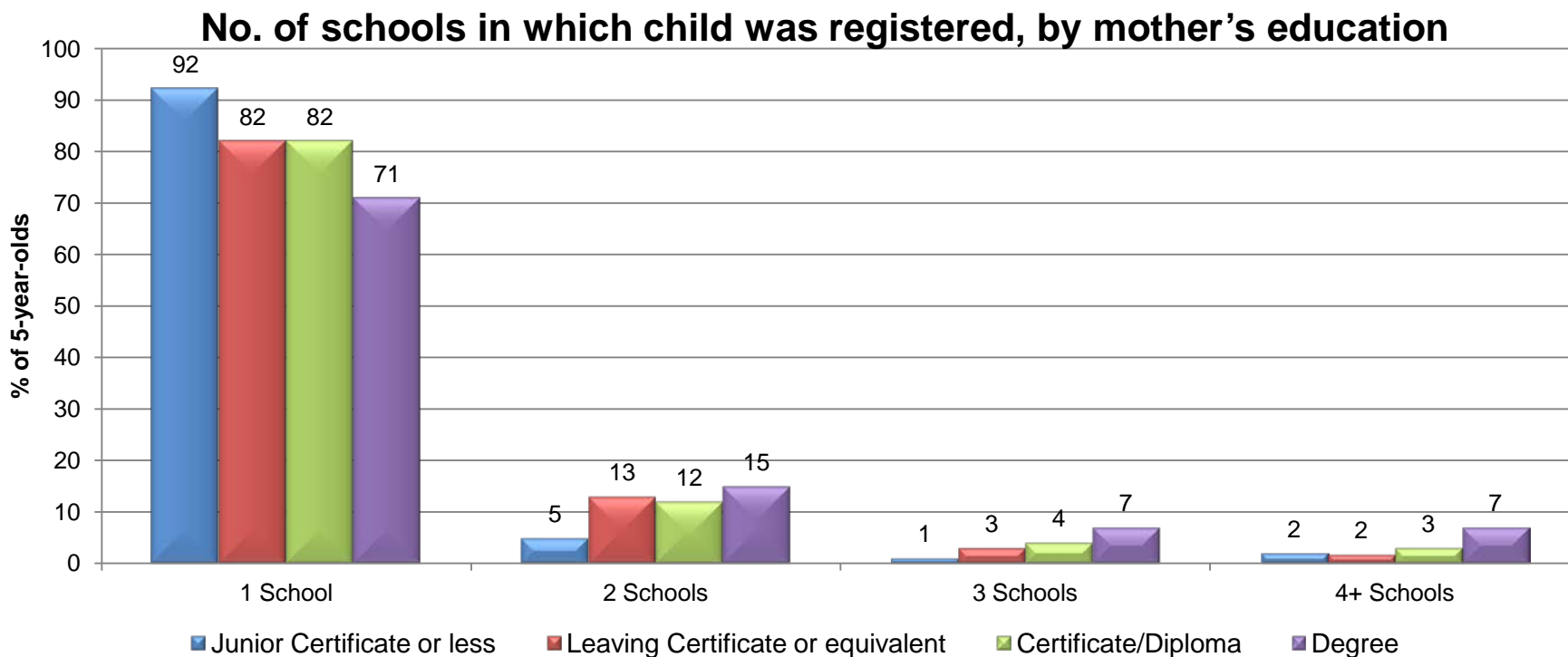
School registration by mother's education





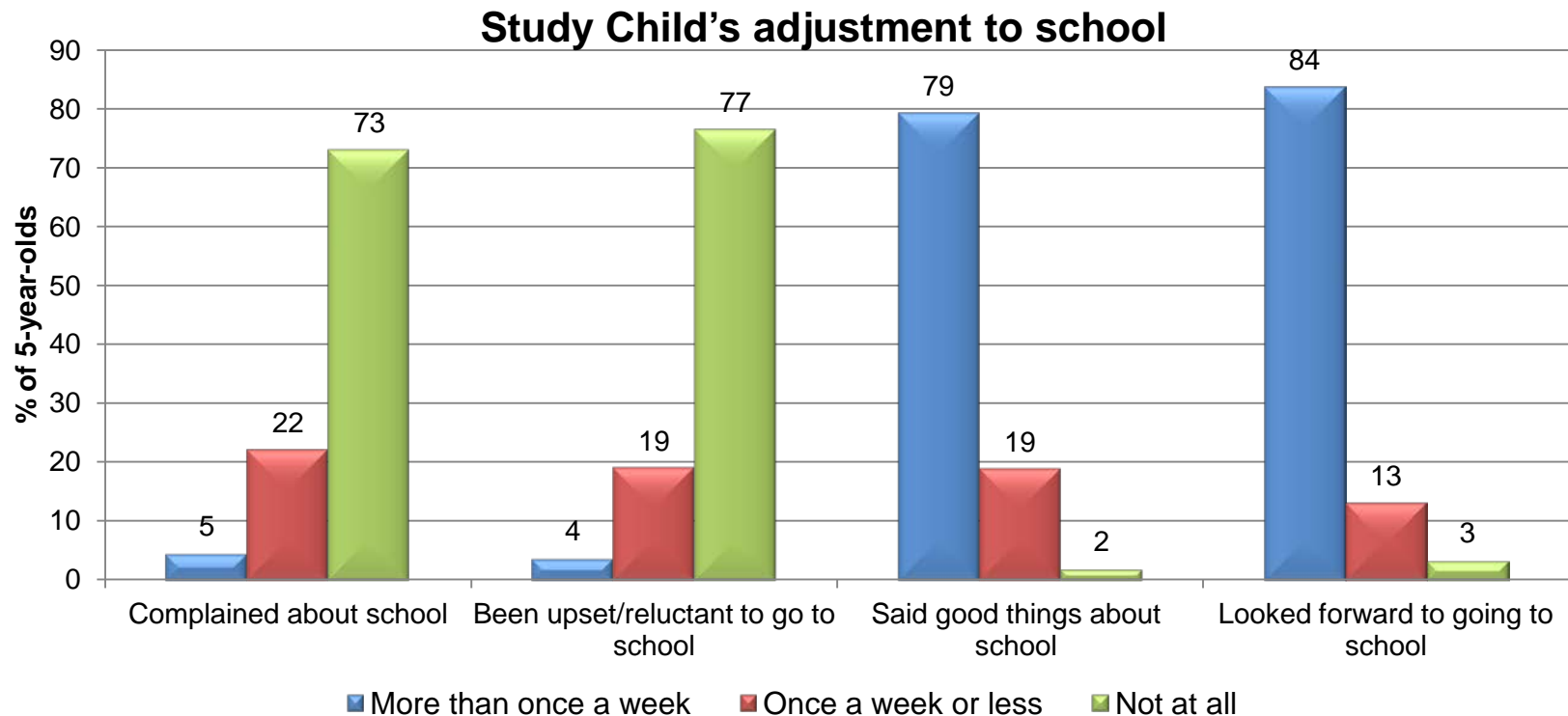
Number of schools in which registered

- 81% parents registered their child in only one school.
- Strong social gradients in multiple registrations.
- Strongly related to family's level of advantage/disadvantage.



Adjusting to School

- Majority of parents reported their child adjusting well to school.

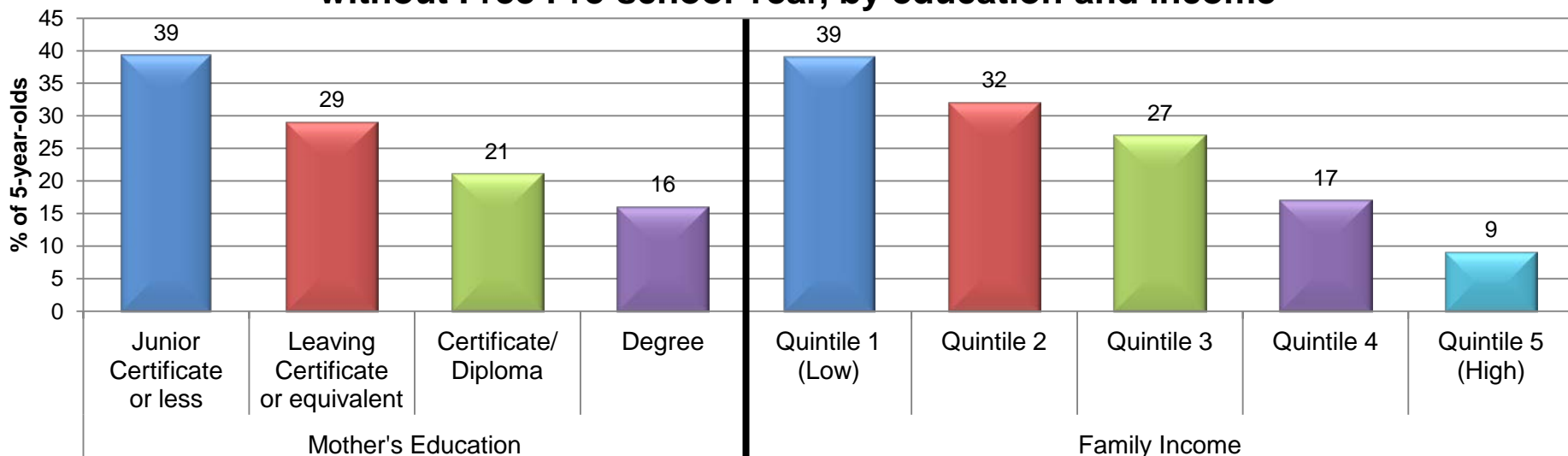




Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) - (Free Pre-School Year)

- Children aged 3 years 3 months to 4 years 6 months are entitled to free pre-school of 3 hours per day, 5 days per week over 38 weeks.
- 95% uptake among children who had started school in 2012.
- 25% of parents who availed of the scheme said they would not have been able to send child to pre-school in absence of scheme – socially structured.

Parents reporting they would not have been able to send child to pre-school without Free Pre-school Year, by education and income





**Socio-emotional well-being of
five-year-olds –
how children feel about
themselves and how they relate
to others**

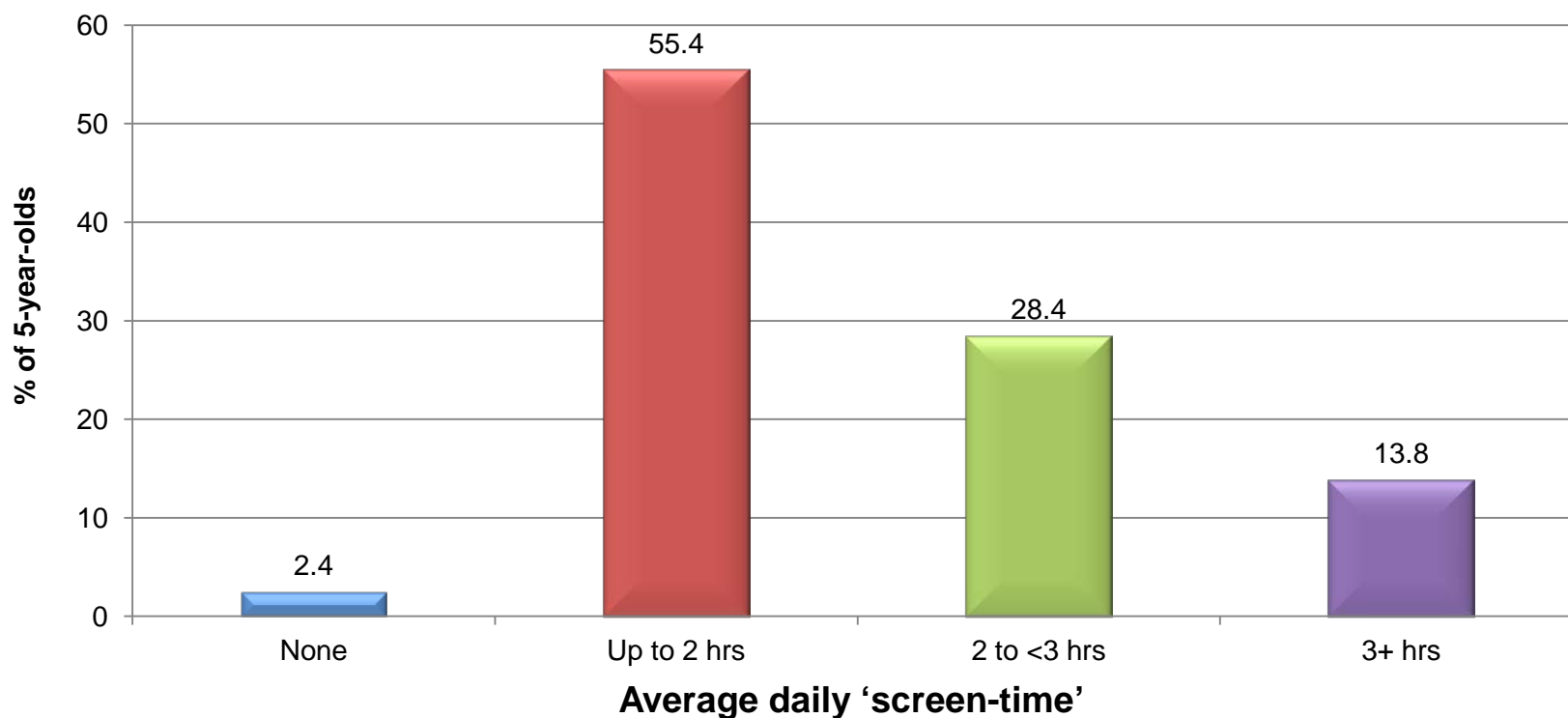


‘Screen-time’ and Emotional/ Behavioural Problems

- ‘Screen-time’ was amount of time spent in front of an electronic screen – TV, video game, DVDs, computers, smartphones, Ipads, electronic games systems etc.
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) provides a measure of the child’s emotional and behavioural difficulties. Those in the top 10 per cent are in the “problematic” range.



'Screen-time' Among Five-Year-Olds

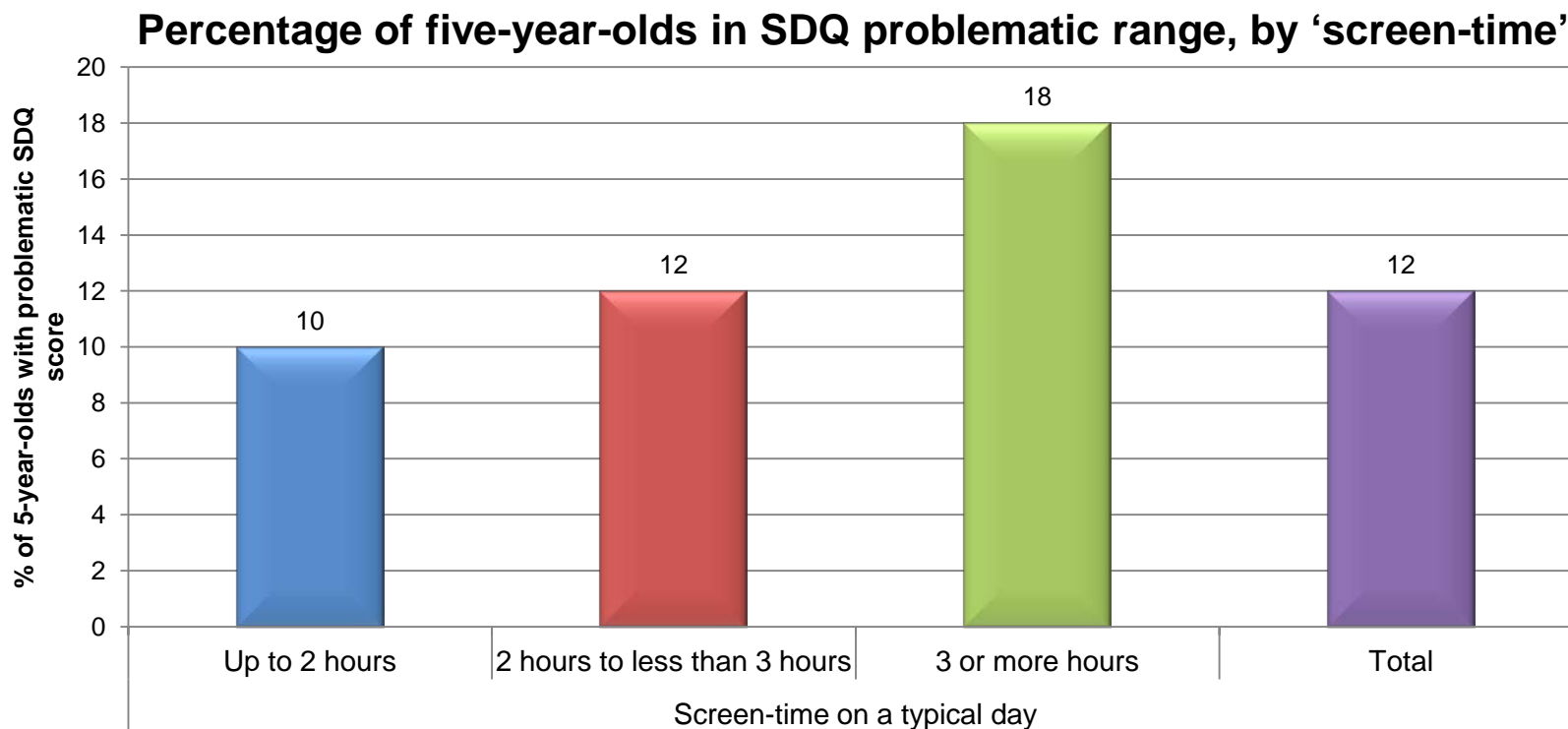


- Social gradients evident in amount of 'screen-time'. Higher levels for five-year-olds from more socially disadvantaged families.



'Screen-time' and Emotional/ Behavioural Problems

- Longer average daily 'screen-time' was associated with socio-emotional problems



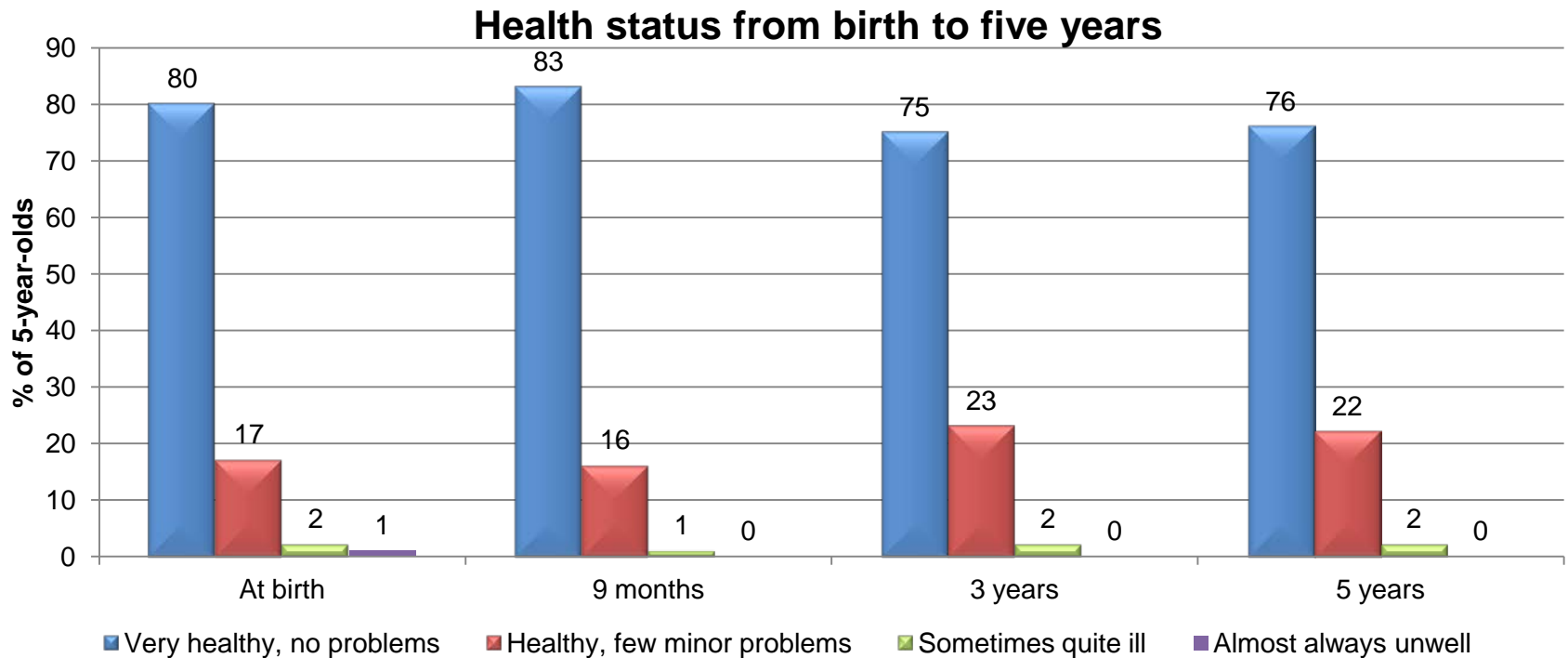


Well-being, Play and Diet Among Five-Year-Olds



Health of Five-Year-Olds

- The majority of five-year-olds were in good health.
- 98% since birth – though composition has changed somewhat between *very healthy, no problems* and *healthy, a few minor problems*.

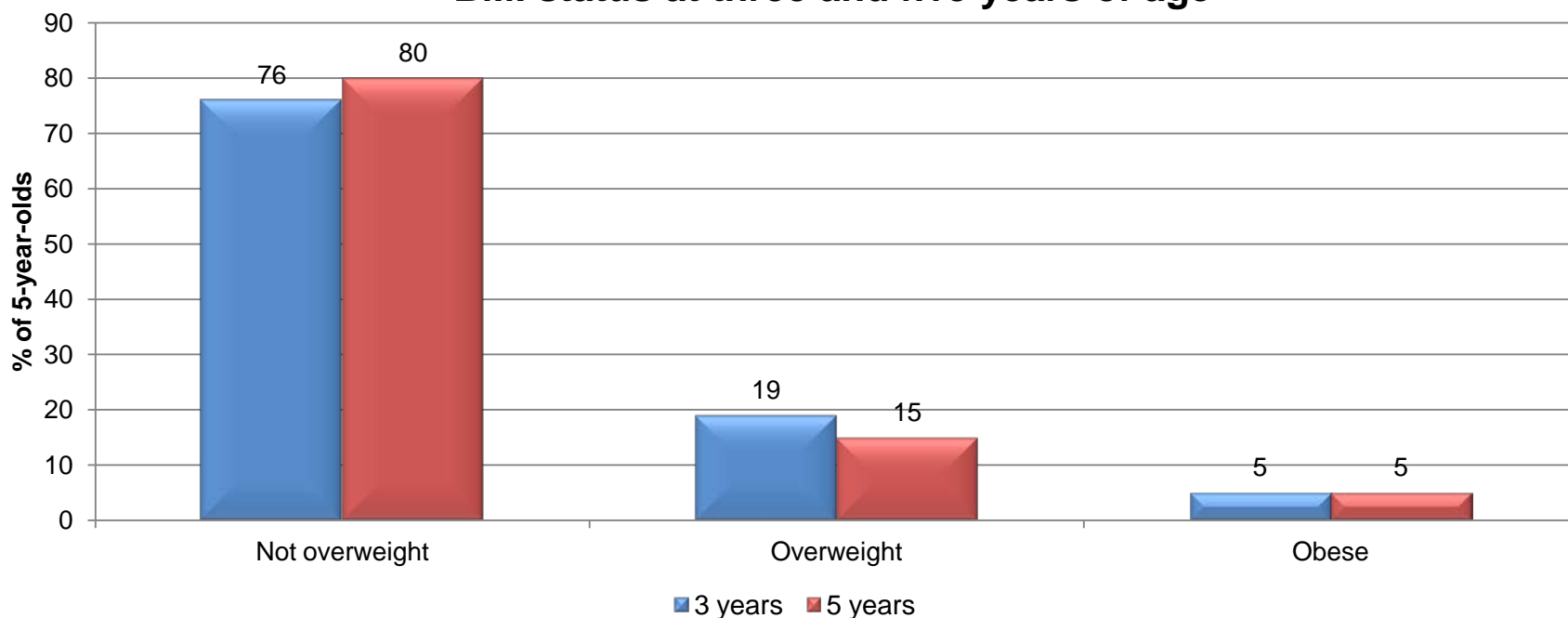




Body Mass Index (BMI) – Overweight and Obesity

- 20% of five-year-olds overweight or obese.
- Obesity levels (5%) same as at three years of age. Overweight somewhat lower (15% compared to 19% at three years)

BMI status at three and five years of age

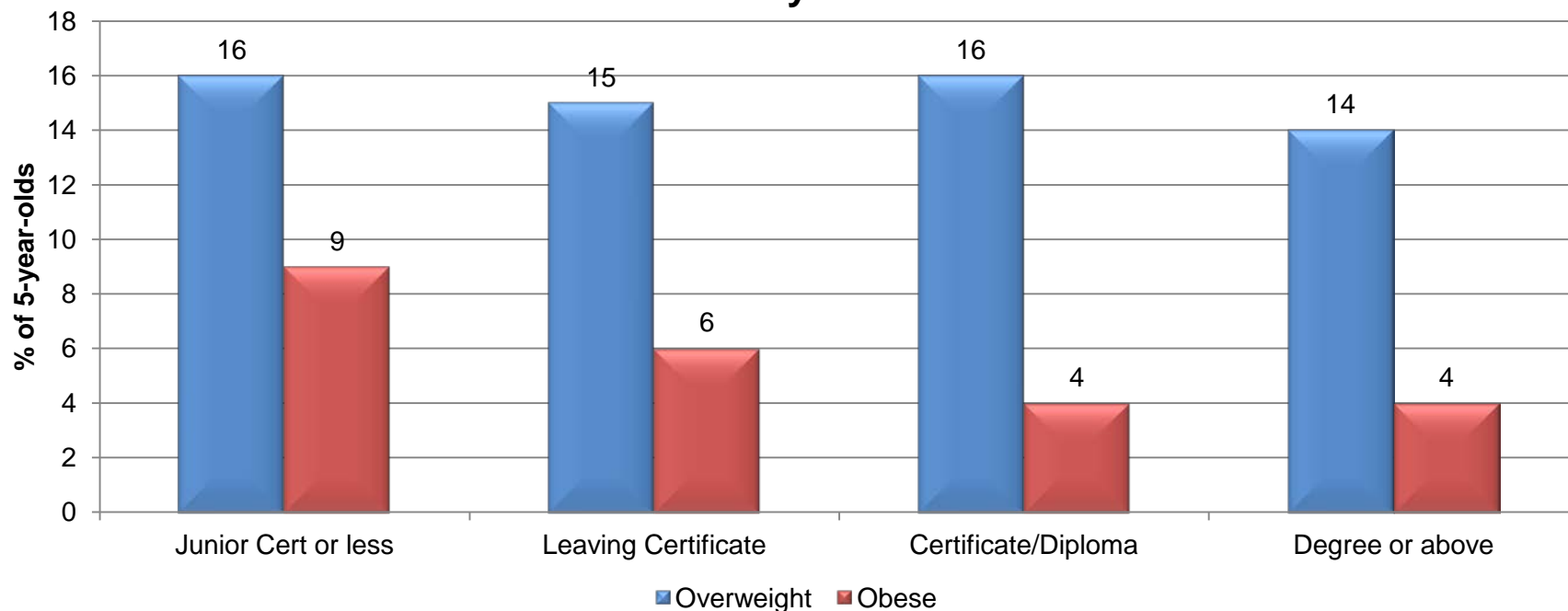




Overweight and Obesity – social factors

- As at three years of age overweight and obesity strongly linked to measures of social advantage/disadvantage

BMI status by mother's education

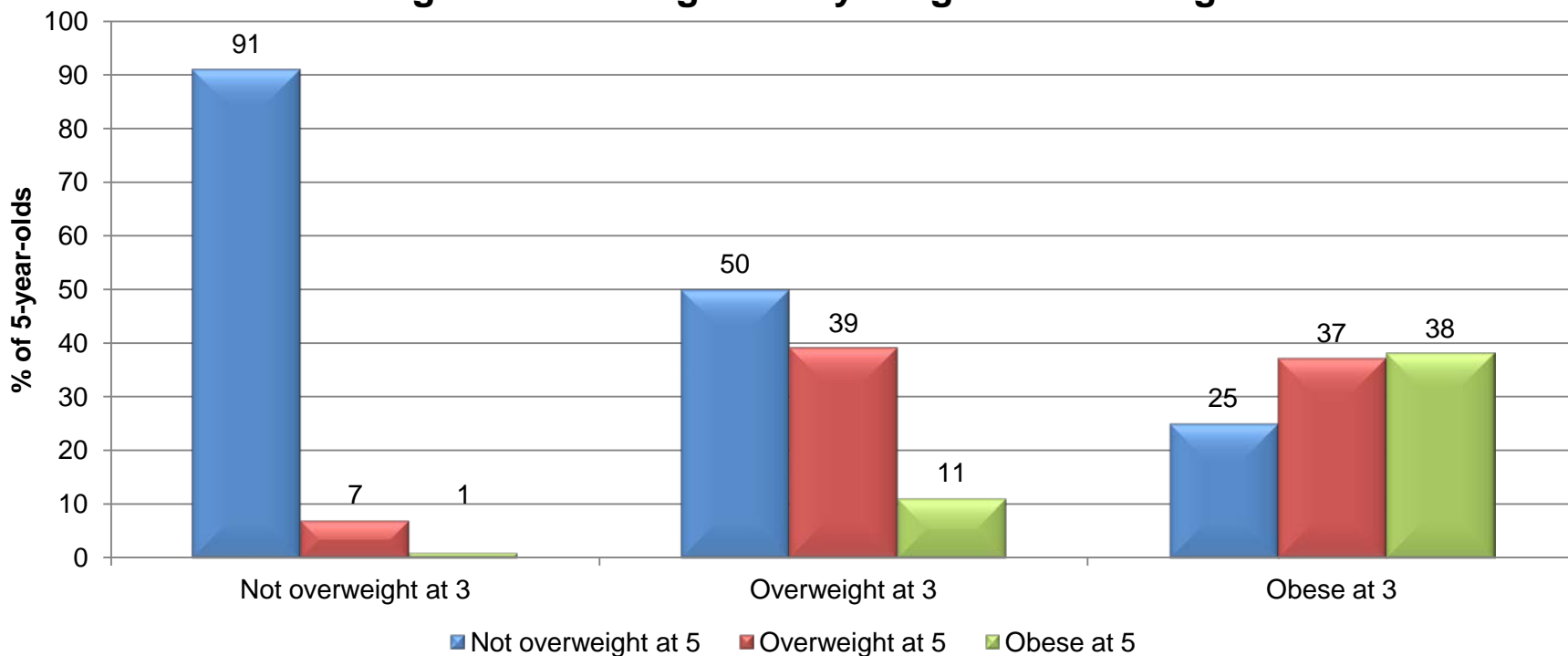




Changes in Overweight and Obesity between three and five years

- There is a change and fluctuation in weight status between three and five but 75% obese three-year-olds remain *overweight* or *obese* at five years.

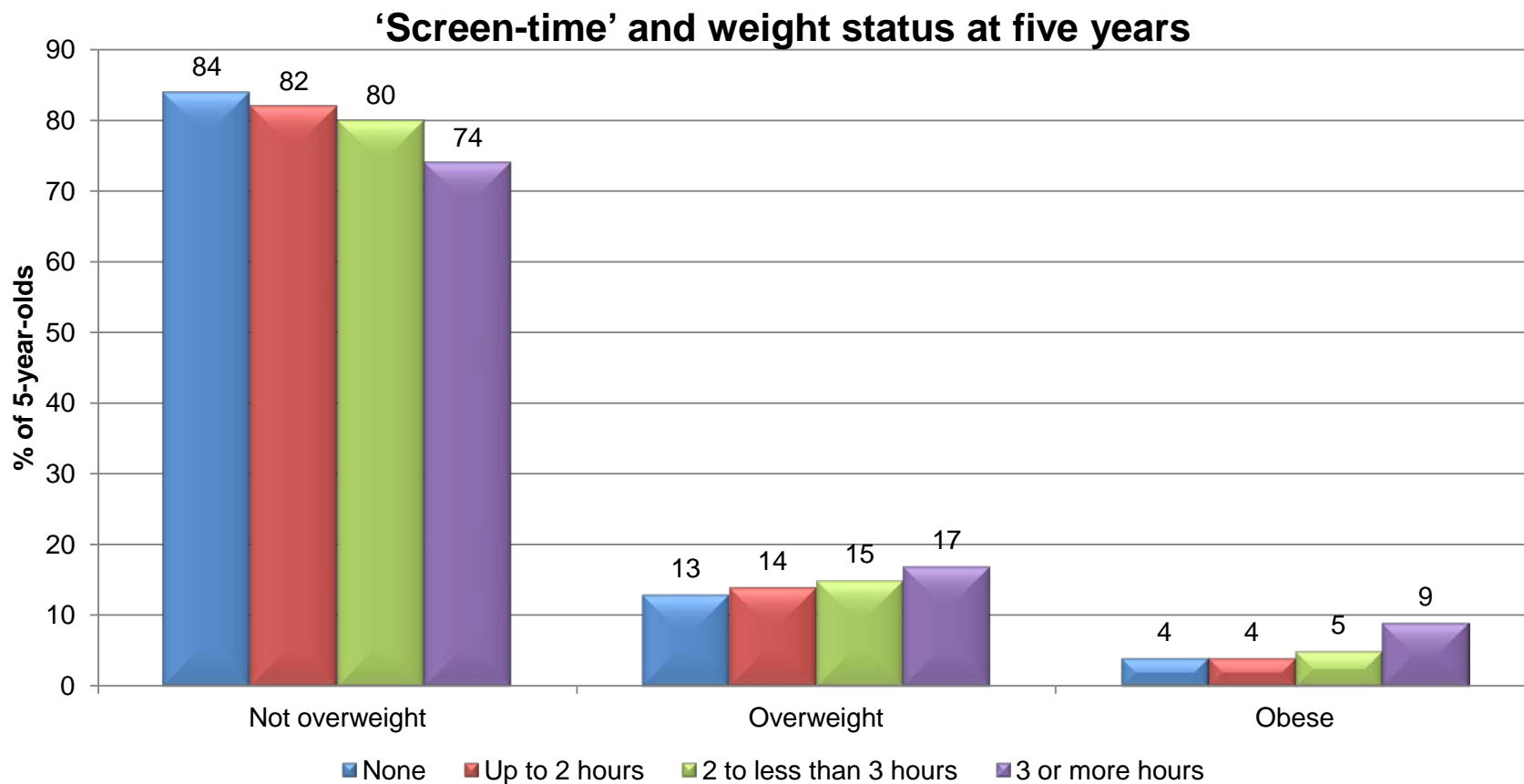
Weight status at age five by weight status at age three





'Screen-time' and Overweight and Obesity

- 'Screen-time' associated with overweight and obesity.





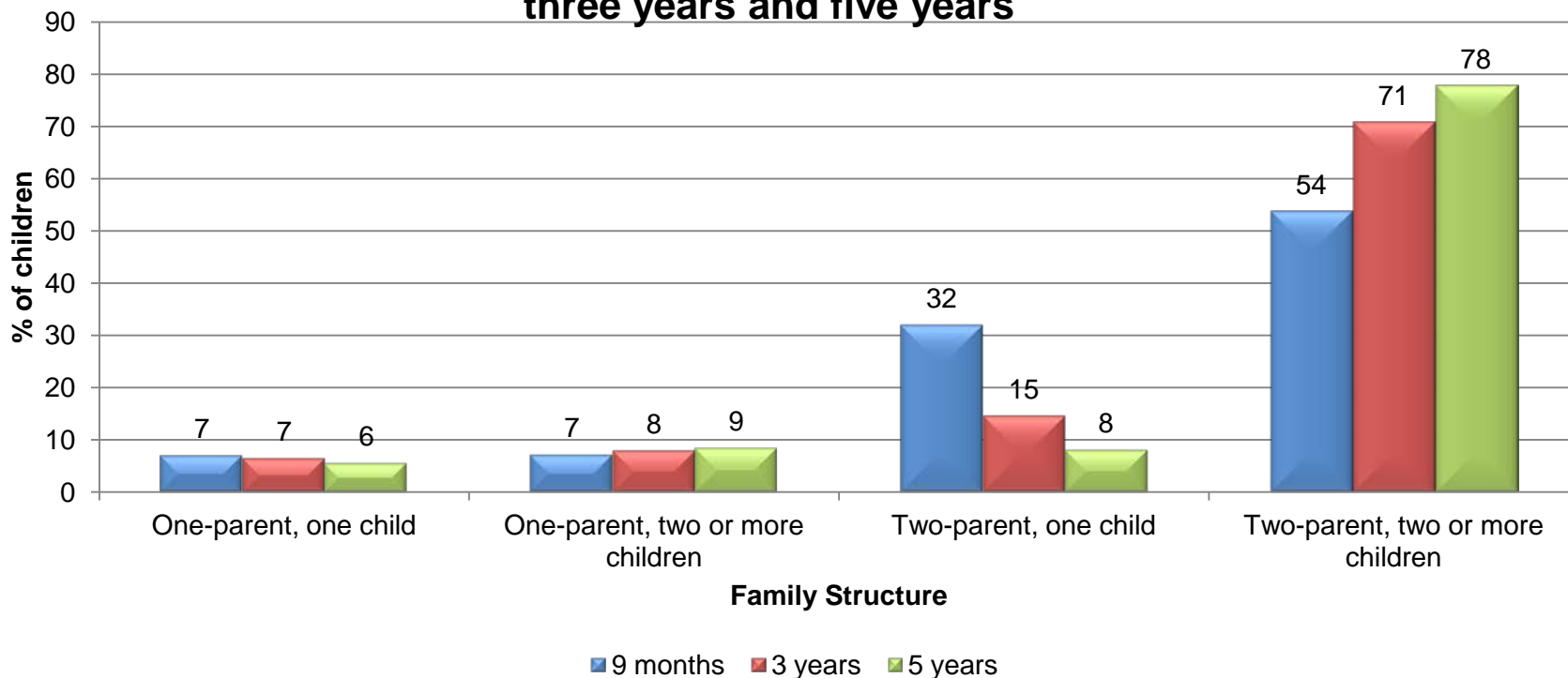
Family Circumstances of Five-Year-Olds



Family Circumstances of Five-Year-Olds

- 86% of five-year-olds lived in two-parent families.
- Consistent percentage in one- and two-parent families between nine months, three years and five years.

Percentage of children in one- and two-parent families at nine months, three years and five years

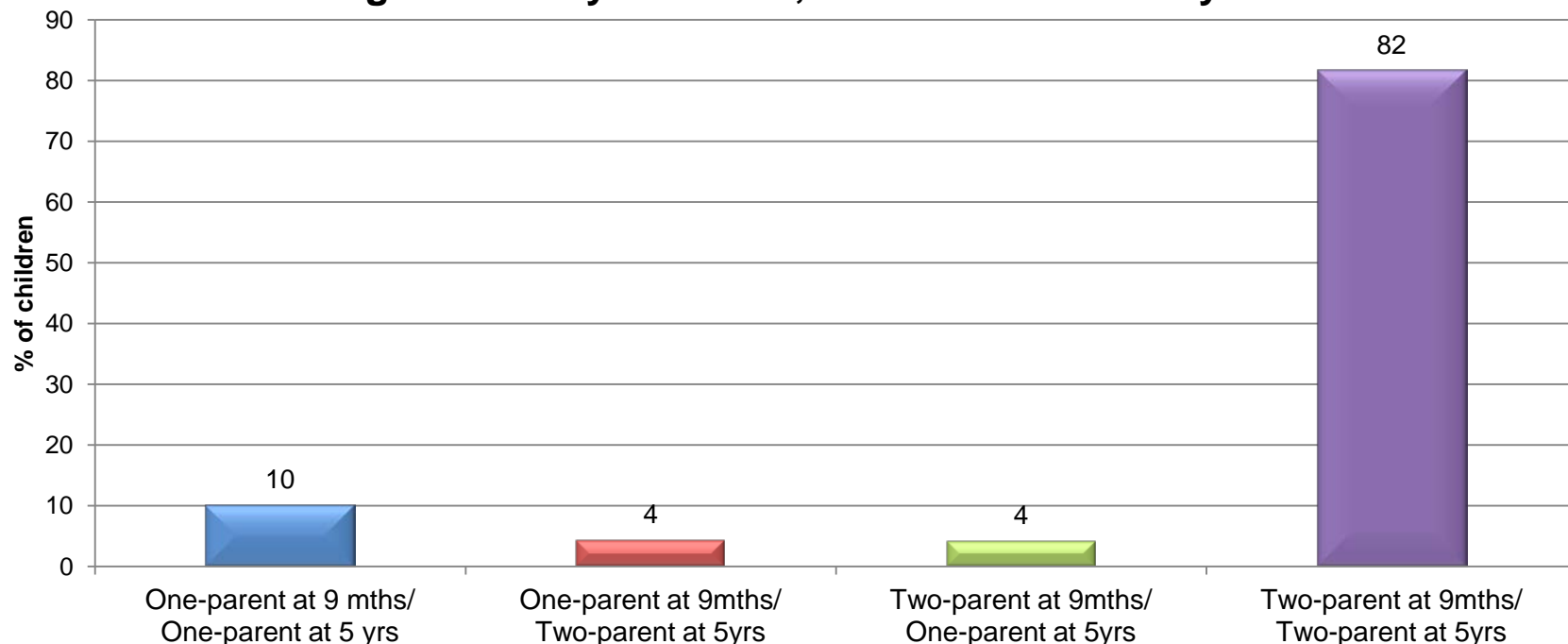




Family Circumstances of Five-Year-Olds

- However, the longitudinal study allows us to identify change at level of the individual child – counterbalancing flow of 4% of children from one- to two-parent family and two- to one-parent family between nine months and five years.

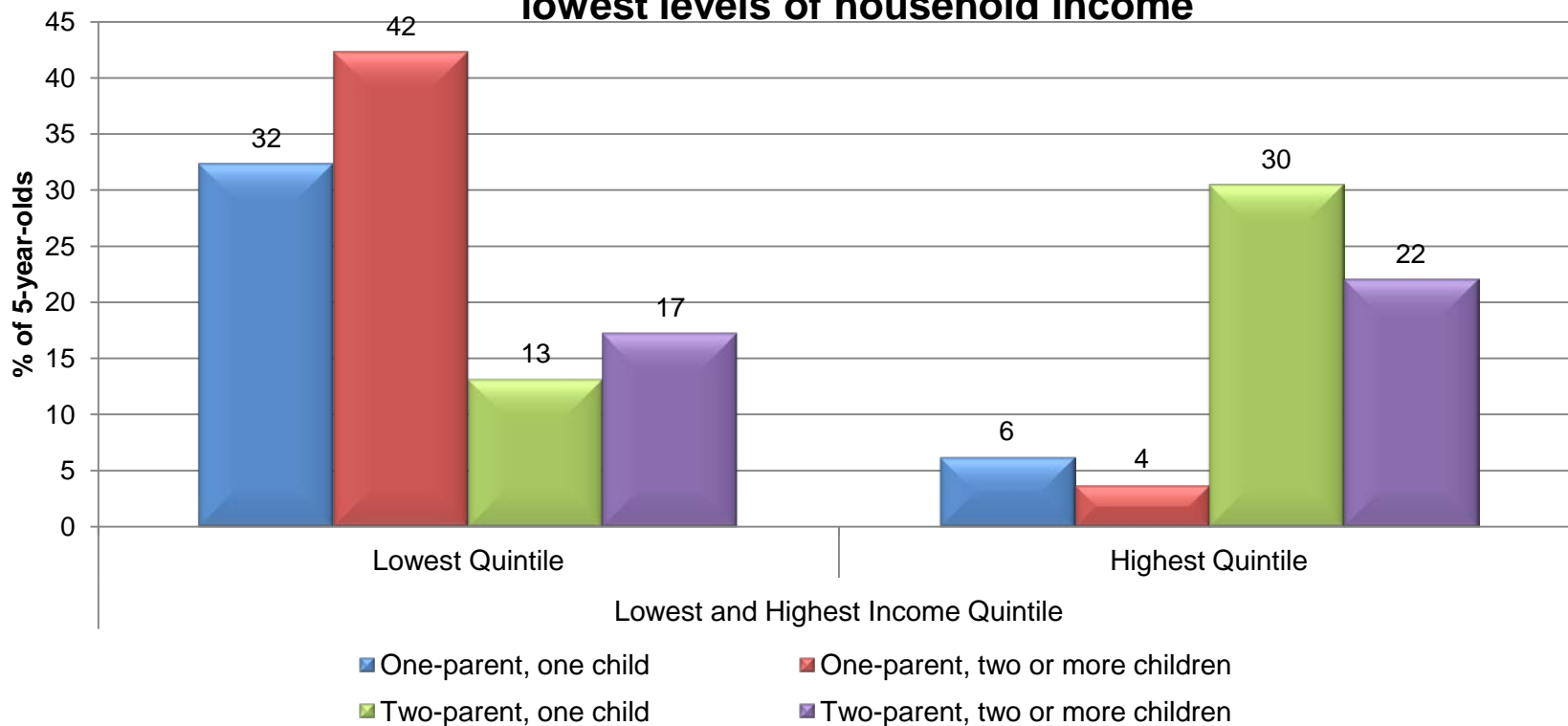
Changes in family structure, nine months to five years



Advantage/disadvantage of family types

- One-parent families were most socially disadvantaged.

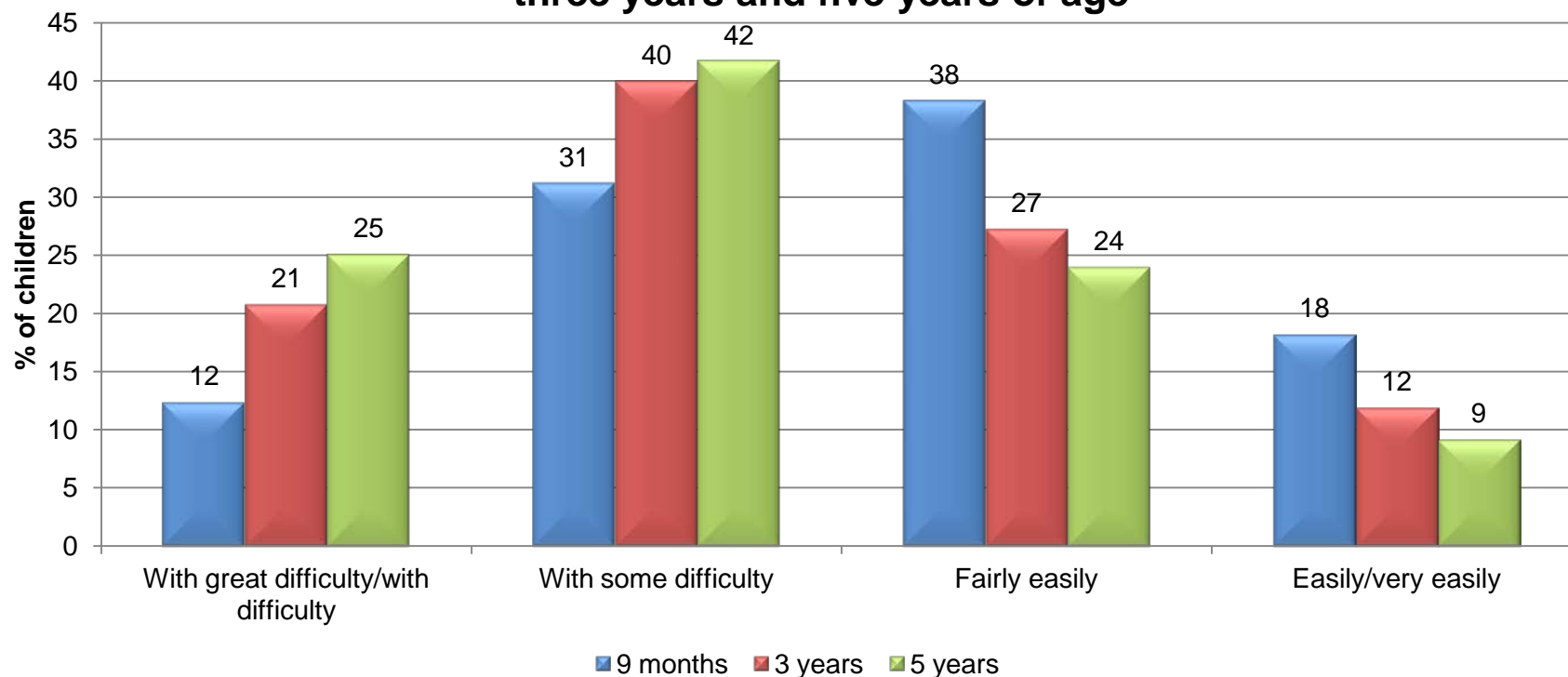
Five-year-olds in different family types, by highest and lowest levels of household income



Financial Strain

- Increasing proportions of families with young children experiencing difficulties in making ends meet between nine months, three years and five years.

Financial strain among families with young children, nine months, three years and five years of age





Financial Strain

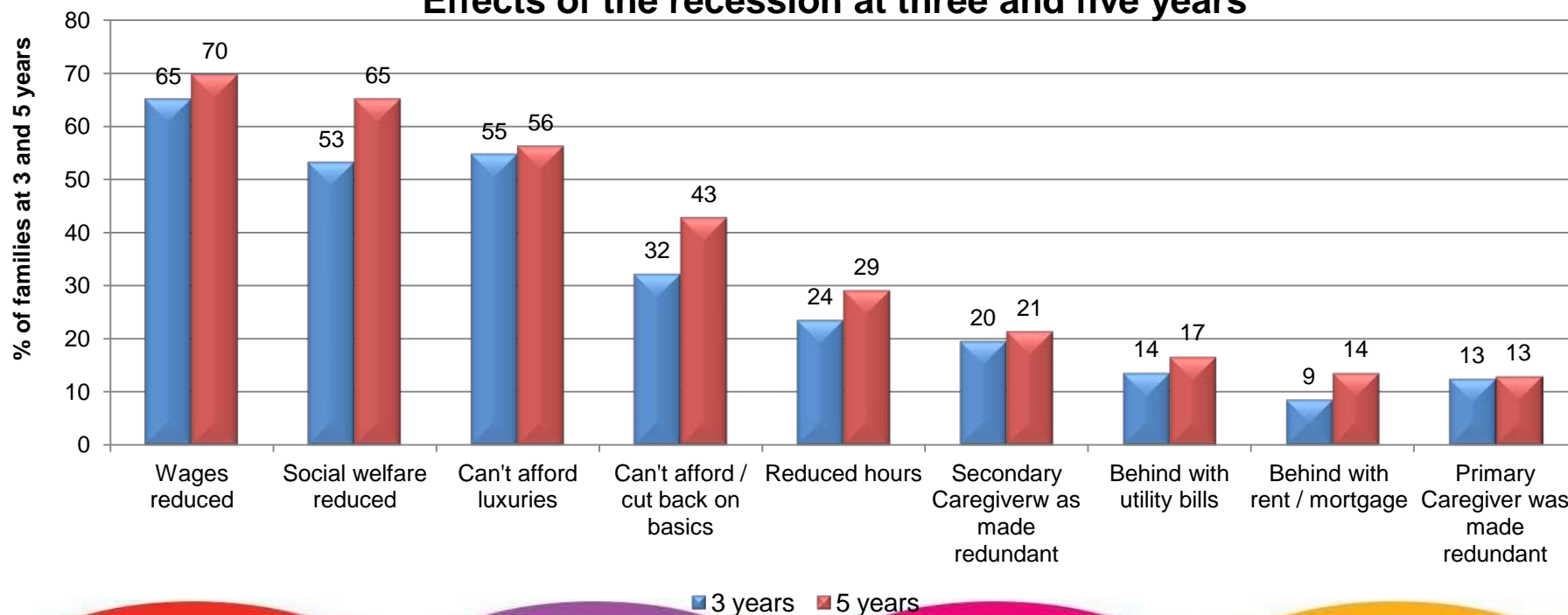
- Some families persistently experienced difficulties in making ends meet when their child was nine months, three years and five years of age.

No. of interviews when experiencing <i>great difficulty/difficulty/some difficulty</i>	% of families with five-year-olds
None	21%
One	20%
Two	27%
Three	32%
Total	100%

The Effects of the Recession

- Recession continues to have a *very significant* or *significant* effect on over two-thirds (67%) of families with a five-year-olds.
- Broad range of effects recorded. Substantial minorities mentioned they *can't afford/cut back on basics* (43%); *behind with utility bills* (17%); *behind with rent/mortgage* (14%).

Effects of the recession at three and five years





Summary

- Five-year-olds generally doing well.
- Settling into school – 84% regularly look forward to it. 79% regularly say good things about it.
- 10% of parents are registering their five-year-old in school as soon as they are born and 19% registering them in multiple schools.
- Very high uptake on the Free Pre-school year. 25% of parents say their five-year-old could not have availed of pre-school without it. Strong social gradients in percentage saying they could not have provided pre-school for their child in absence of the scheme.



Summary

- Vast majority of five-year-olds are in good health, though small percentages are not.
- Overweight and obesity among young children continue to be a major concern.
- Increasing proportion of families with young children experiencing financial strain, with substantial numbers experiencing difficulties in paying for basics, utility bills and rent/mortgage.



Where is *Growing Up in Ireland* now?

- In July Minister Fitzgerald announced a competitive tendering process for a second phase of ***Growing Up in Ireland*** running from 2015 -2019. This would involve two further interviews with both cohorts.
- The 13-year-old data will be deposited in ISSDA in February.
- Time-Use data from diaries completed by 9-year-olds have recently been deposited in ISSDA.
- Interviews with the five-year-olds and their families in the home have been completed and we are currently carrying out interviews with their Teachers and Principals. All data from five-year-olds will be in the archive by end of 2014.
- Substantial number of core reports are in the pipeline for launching next year.



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 Dr. Claire Finn, Anne-Marie Brooks and Tim Heneghan
- Members of the Project Team, especially Dr. Kasey Treadwell-Shine and Mr Cormac Halpin
- Professor Jan O Jonsson our keynote speaker
- National and international assessors and referees for their advice, guidance, including referee's reports
- Chairs for the conference today
- The Research Ethics Committee (REC)



Thank You

- Panels of Expert Advisors
- Stakeholders and interested parties with whom we consulted
- The children on the Children's Advisory Forum
- Teachers, Principals and other school staff
- The users of the data – come to a data workshop
- All the staff on the GUI team and the field interviewers.
- Biggest thanks to almost 20,000 children their parents / guardians, carers

One of our many helpers:



Niamh at nine months



Niamh at three years



Niamh at five years

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