



Relationship Between Children's Subjective Well-being and Interpersonal Relationships

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Research on social support and well-being

- A considerable amount of research showing that support from family, friends, and community networks is related to better physical health and lower levels of psychological symptomatology (S.Cohen & Syme, 1985; House, Landis & Umerson, 1988; King, Reiser & Noren, 1993).
- High social support reduced the effect of risk factors and increased the effects of positive factors (Wills & Cleary, 1996).



Research on social support and well-being

- Previous research in psychology has focused on **negative aspects** of well-being, but recently studies are focusing on **positive aspects** of individuals' well-being.
- Recent studies include judgments of **perceived quality of life** or life satisfaction (Diener & Seligman, 2004).
- The **perceived quality of parent-child relationship** has found to be positively related to life satisfaction in adolescents (Saha, Huebner, Suldo & Valois, 2009).
- **Life satisfaction** has defined as global evaluation by the person of his life and / or specific life domains (Diener et al., 1999).
- **Domains of well-being:** life as a whole, family, friends, self, schools and environment.

Recent studies on subjective well-being

Significant associations have found between perceived life satisfaction and five developmental assets: perceived support by parents, accountability to parents/other adults, self/peer values regarding risk behavior, quality of other adult support, and empathetic relationships (Valois, Zulling, Huebner & Drane, 2009).



Recent studies on subjective well-being

- Children's relationships with family are extremely important to their well-being (The Good Childhood Report 2012, The Children's Society).
- Children view relationships and particularly within their families as the most important precondition for a good life. Loving and being loved is their main need along with the ability and the opportunity to make new friends and cultivate existing friendships (Andresen & Fegter, 2009).
- Subjective well-being is correlated with other phenomena such as self-esteem, perceived control and perceived social support, among others (Casas et al., 2005).



The current study

- In light of the limited number of studies of subjective well-being of children, and given their limitations, a group of researchers from England, Germany, Spain, Israel, UNICEF and OECD collaborated in order to develop and build a tool for comparatively studying children's subjective well-being, in which the children are the source of information.
- A child-centered perspective which recognizes children as the best experts on their own lives.
- The present study is a part of this joint project.

Purpose and Hypotheses

- To examine the relationships between children's interpersonal relationships and their life satisfaction.
- To identify the importance of these relationships to the children's well-being.
- Positive relationships are expected between children's interpersonal relationships and their subjective well-being.
- Strong and positive interpersonal relationships would also increase their safety, autonomy, self-image, confidence and positive feelings about the future.

Two theoretical approaches:

- **The Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory** - which investigates the effects of family, peers, school, community/neighborhood, health, culture, technology and social politics on children's well-being.
- **The Quality of Life studies** - which refer to subjective well-being as people's satisfaction with certain life domains, and with life as a whole.

CHILDREN'S WORLDS

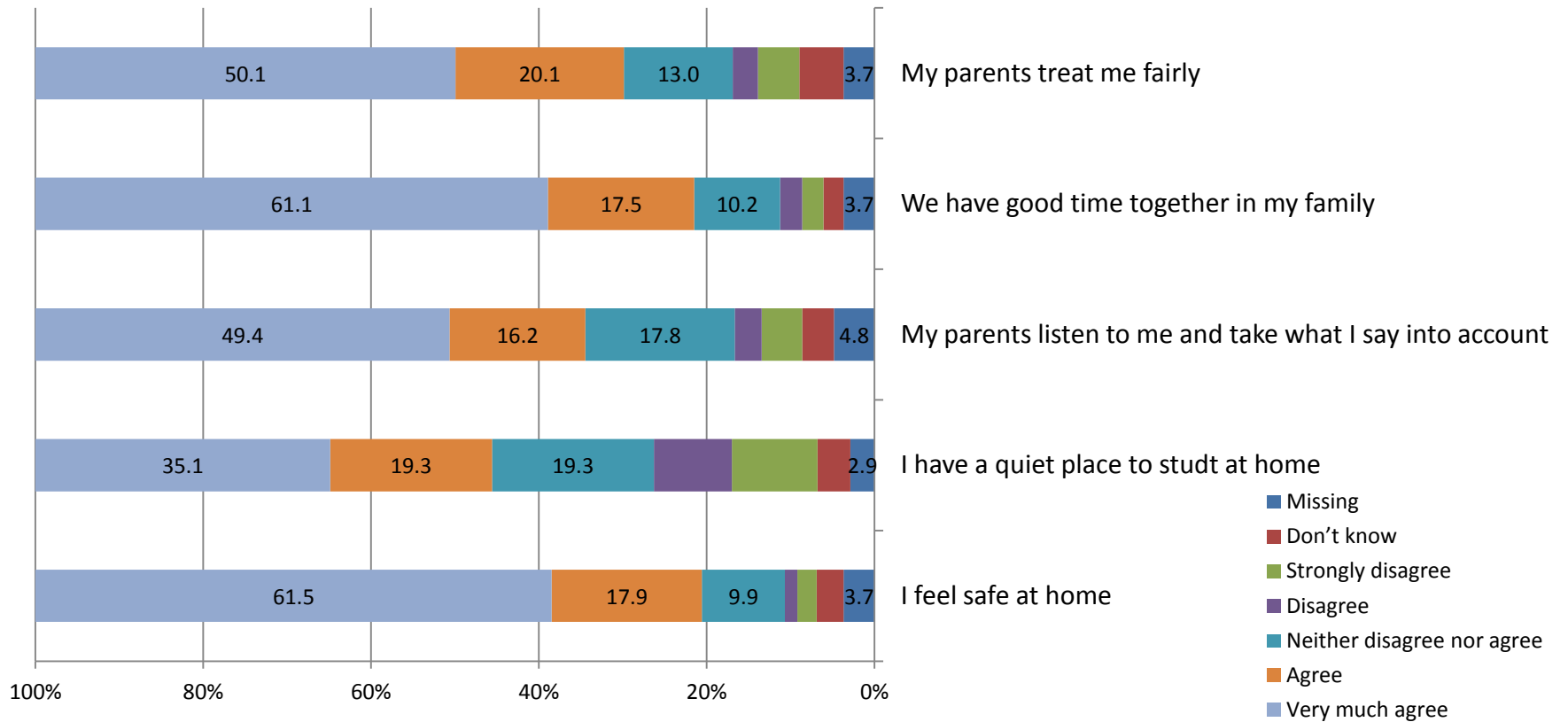


INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING (ISCWeB)

- **The Israeli sample** contains 2,500 Jews and 1,000 Arabs aged 8-12;
- Presenting findings for 871 Jewish children aged 8;
- Q20 – How happy you feel with your life as a whole? - Mean score = 88.7;
- Q24 - Up to now, are you happy with your overall life? - Mean score = 88.8 ;

Findings for 8 years old only

Your home and the people you live with



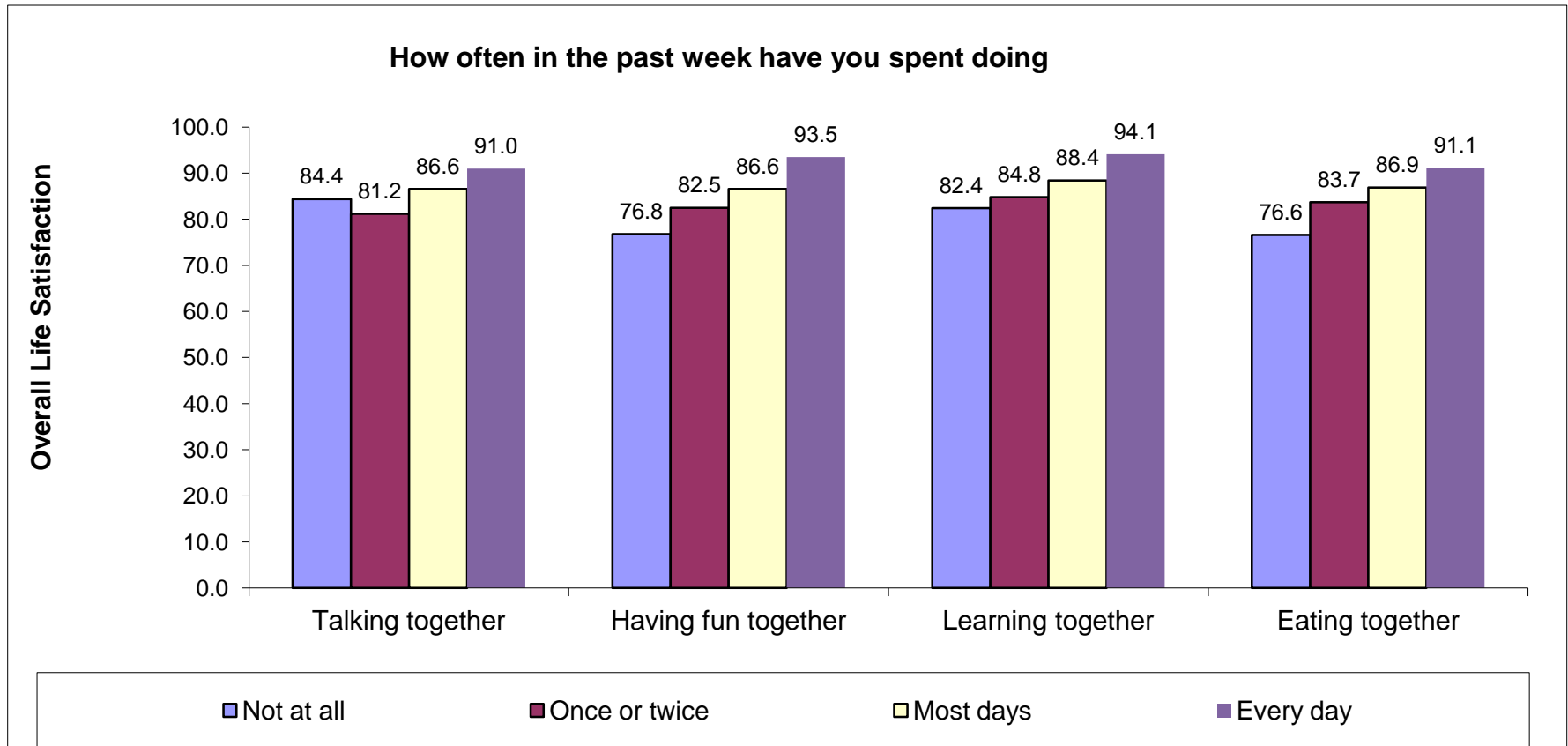
Family relationships

Percentage

How happy you feel with ...	Missing	Don't know	Very unhappy	Unhappy	Neither unhappy nor happy	happy	Very happy
The house where you live	3.2	2.6	1.4	1.0	8.5	21.9	61.3
The people who live with you	3.6	6.1	6.5	3.1	14.8	26.4	39.5
All other people in your family	5.7	6.0	16.3	6.2	12.6	13.2	40.0
The amount of time you spend with your family	4.1	5.4	2.0	2.4	10.0	19.6	56.5



Associations between family relationships and Overall Life Satisfaction



OLS Mean score

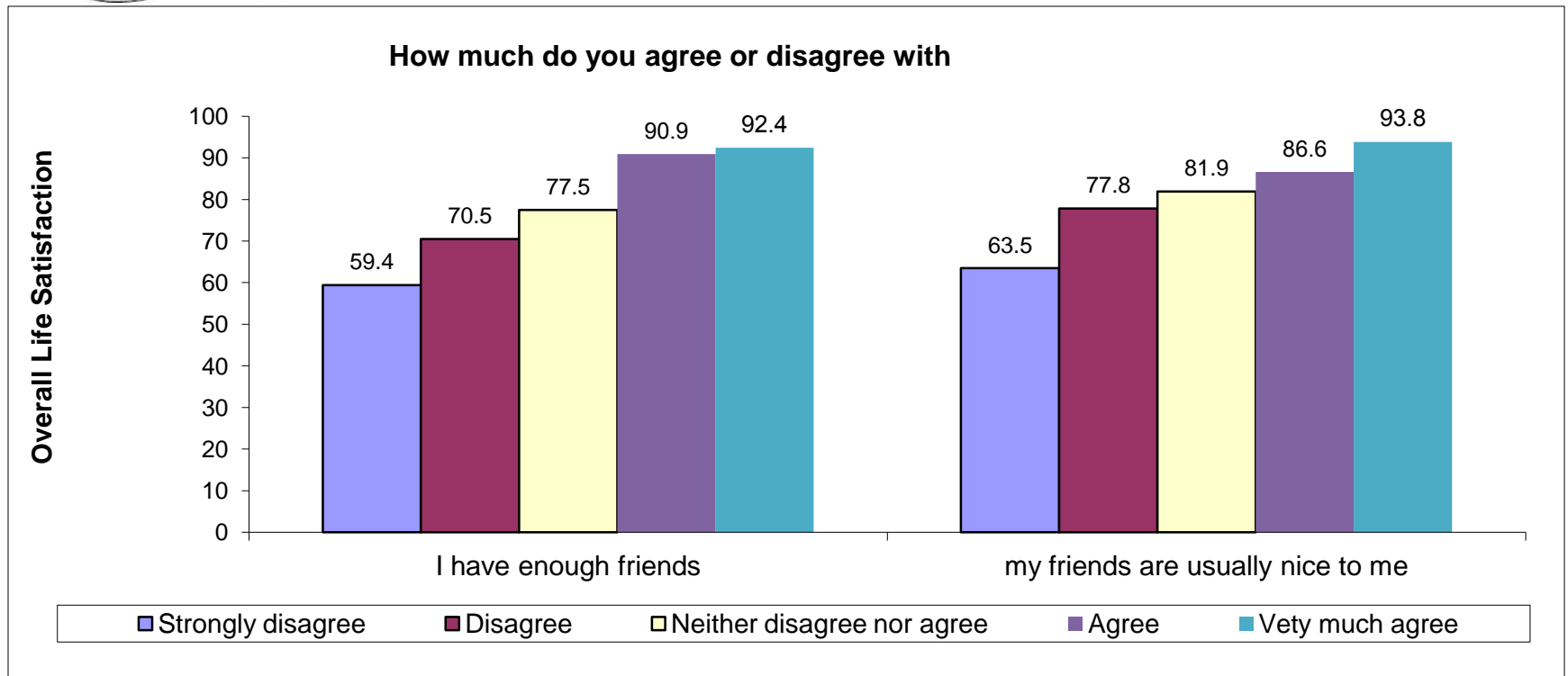


Associations between family relationships and Overall Life Satisfaction

How happy you feel with ...	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sig
The amount of time you spend with your family	0.271	0.0001
The house where you live	0.259	0.0001
The people who live with you	0.184	0.0001
All other people in your family	0.108	0.0079



Associations between Friends relationships and Overall Life Satisfaction

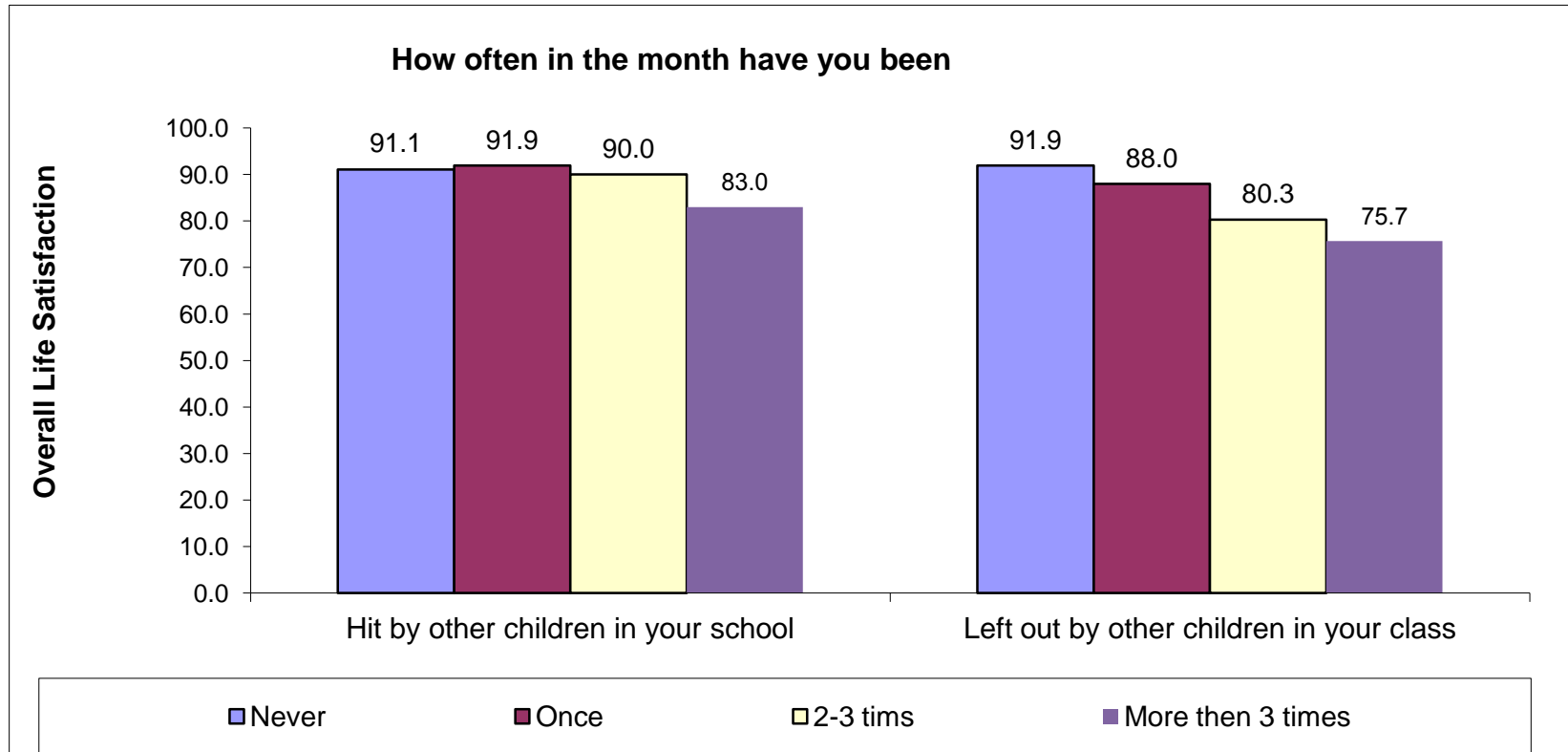


OLS Mean score

How much do you agree or disagree with	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sig
I have enough friends	0.336	0.0001
my friends are usually nice to me	0.291	0.0001



Associations between peer relationships and Overall Life Satisfaction



OLS Mean score

How often in the last month have you been	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sig
Left out by other children in your class	-0.234	0.0001
Hit by other children in your school	-0.135	0.0006



Conclusions

- Relationships with family, friends and peers are important to children's subjective well-being.
- These findings support previous studies showing the positive associations between children's interpersonal relationships and their perceived quality of life or life satisfaction.



Additional thoughts

- Inclusion of older age might reveal a larger variation in overall well-being and specific life domains;
- As in other studies, we expect to find a significant down age related trend in mean happiness / satisfaction scores;
- We also expect to find a stronger association between happiness/satisfaction with life as a whole and specific life domains.



THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING!