



Centre for Health
Equity Studies



Mental health and wellbeing in children in shared parenting and other living arrangements

Malin Bergström
clinical psychologist, PhD



Stockholms
universitet



Karolinska
Institutet

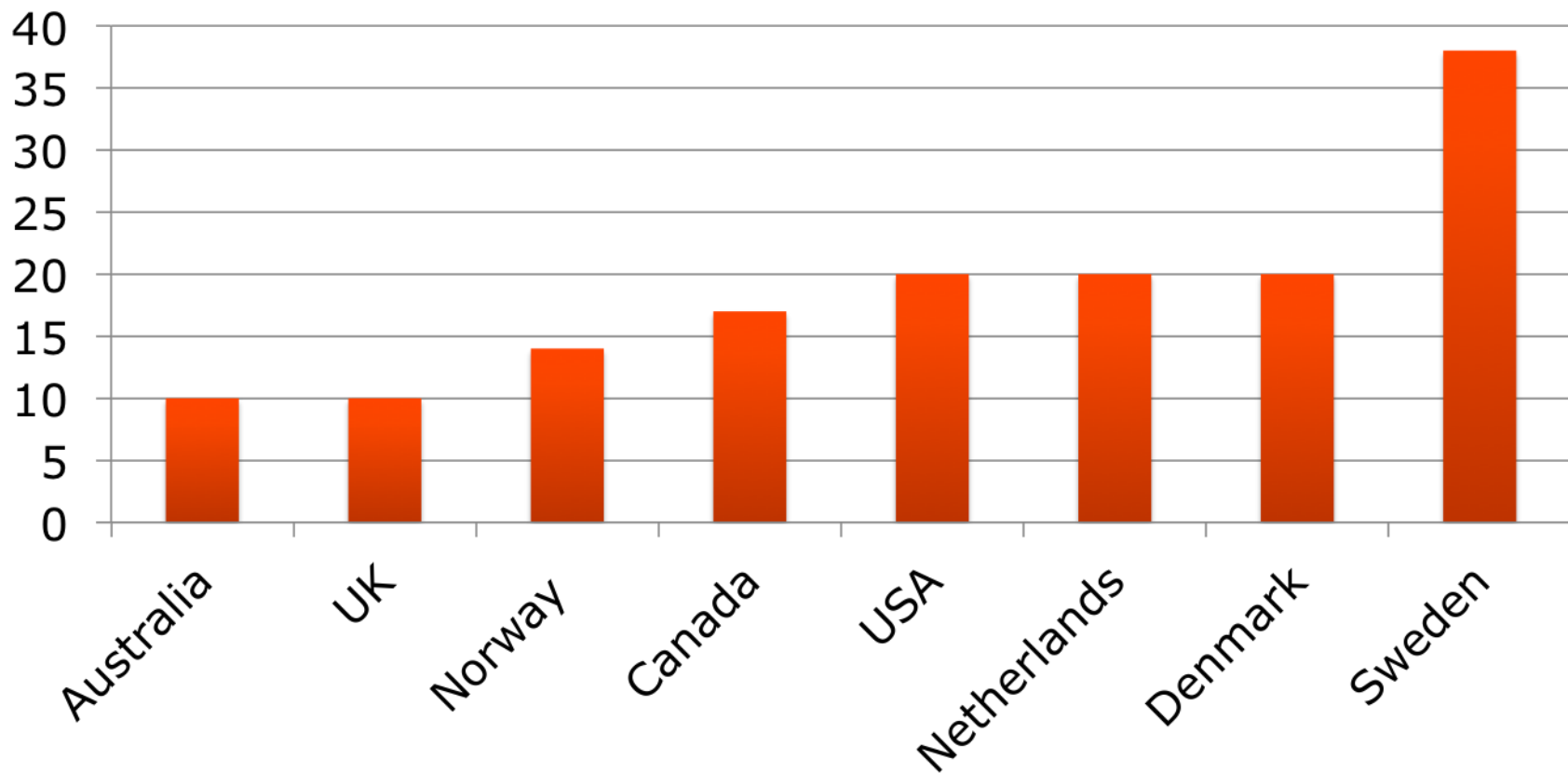
CHES is a collaboration between Stockholm University and Karolinska Institutet.

Aim of the Elvis-project

To study well-being, mental health and social situation in children with shared parenting and parents' experiences of the practice for infants and toddlers.



Proportions of children with separated parents in shared care





Centre for Health
Equity Studies



Definition shared parenting and joint physical custody (JPC)

Children live alternatively and approximately equally much in each parent's home after a separation.

In studies shared parenting may be defined as 30% with one parent.



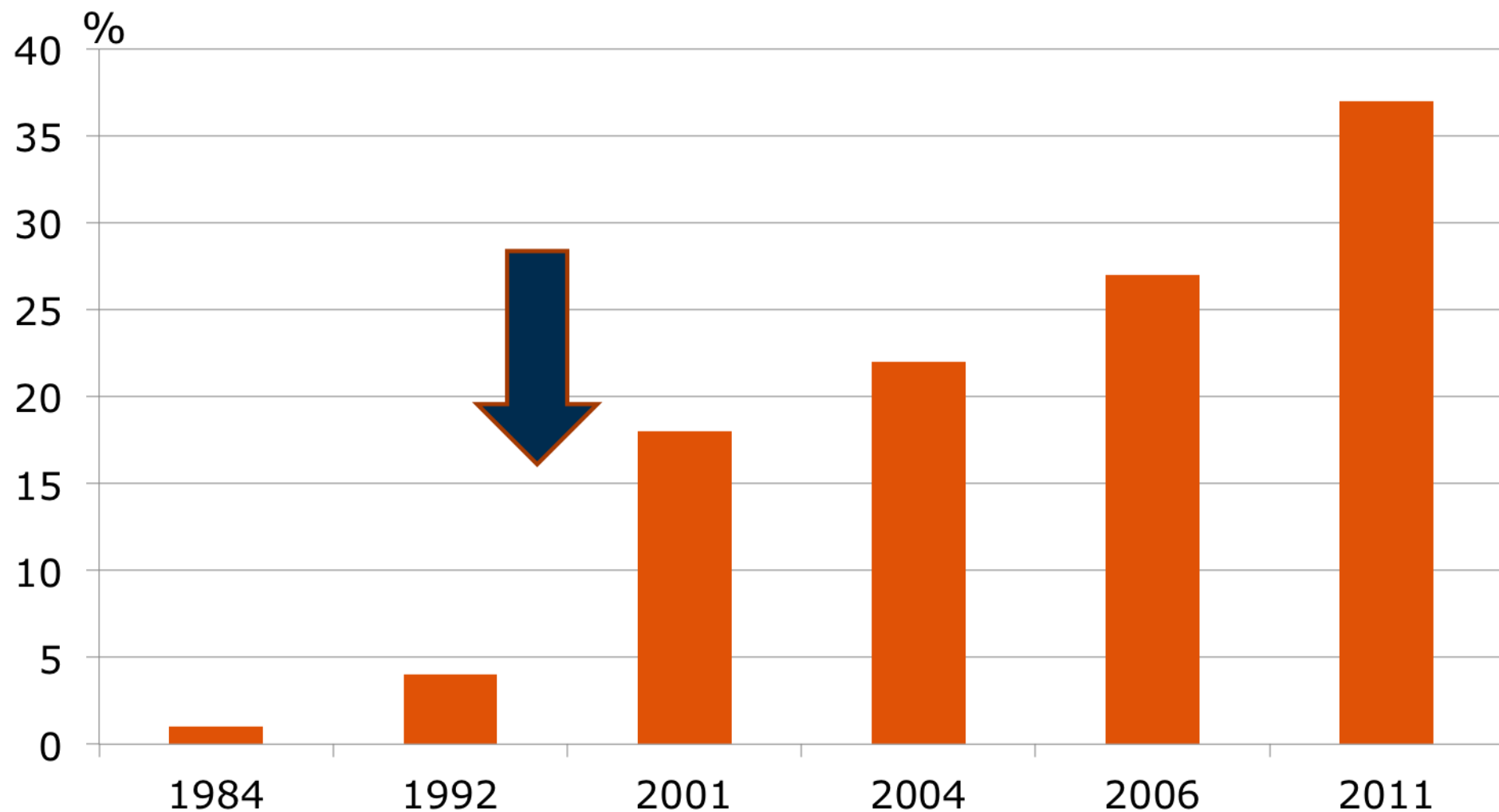
Centre for Health
Equity Studies





SCHWEDISCHES WOCHENBETT

Proportion of Swedish children in shared parenting (50/50) after parent's separation 1984-2011



More moving kids in the future?

More common among younger and recently separated parents





Centre for Health
Equity Studies

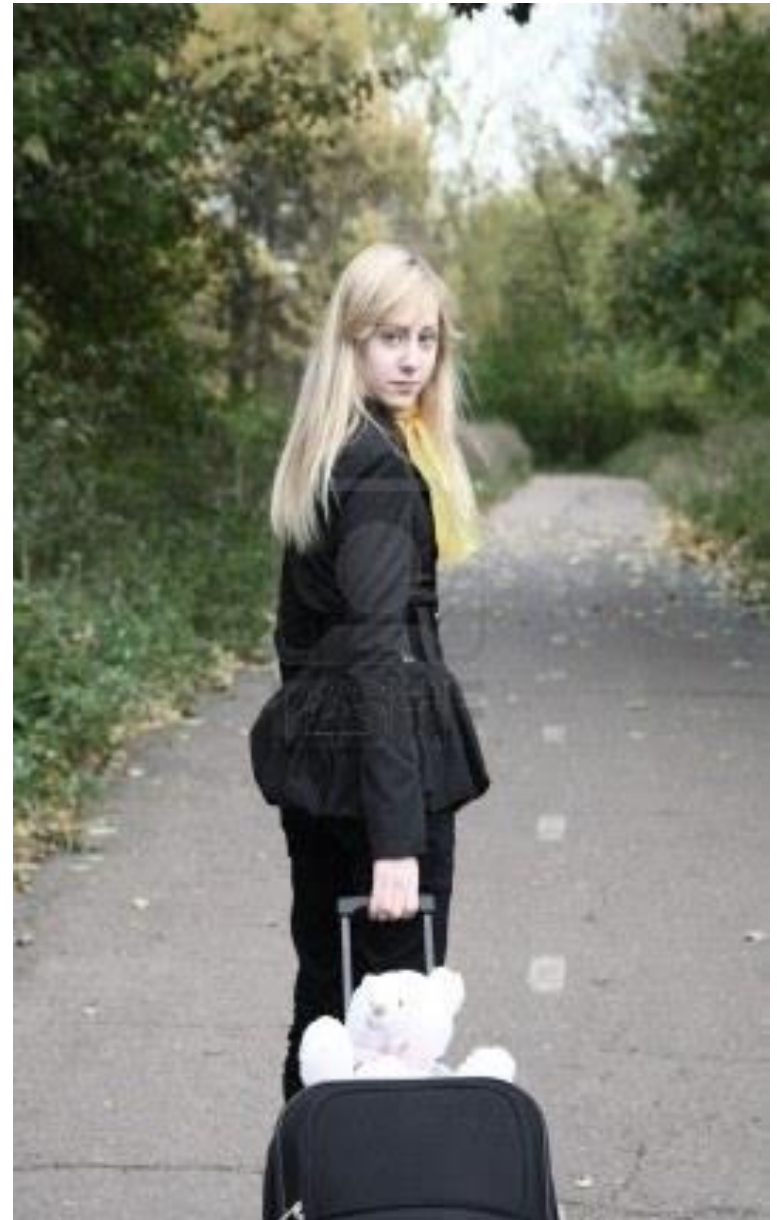
Most common in children 6-12 years



Parents who move every week



Swedish studies on adolescents in shared parenting- mental health, wellbeing, risk behaviours and contact with parents

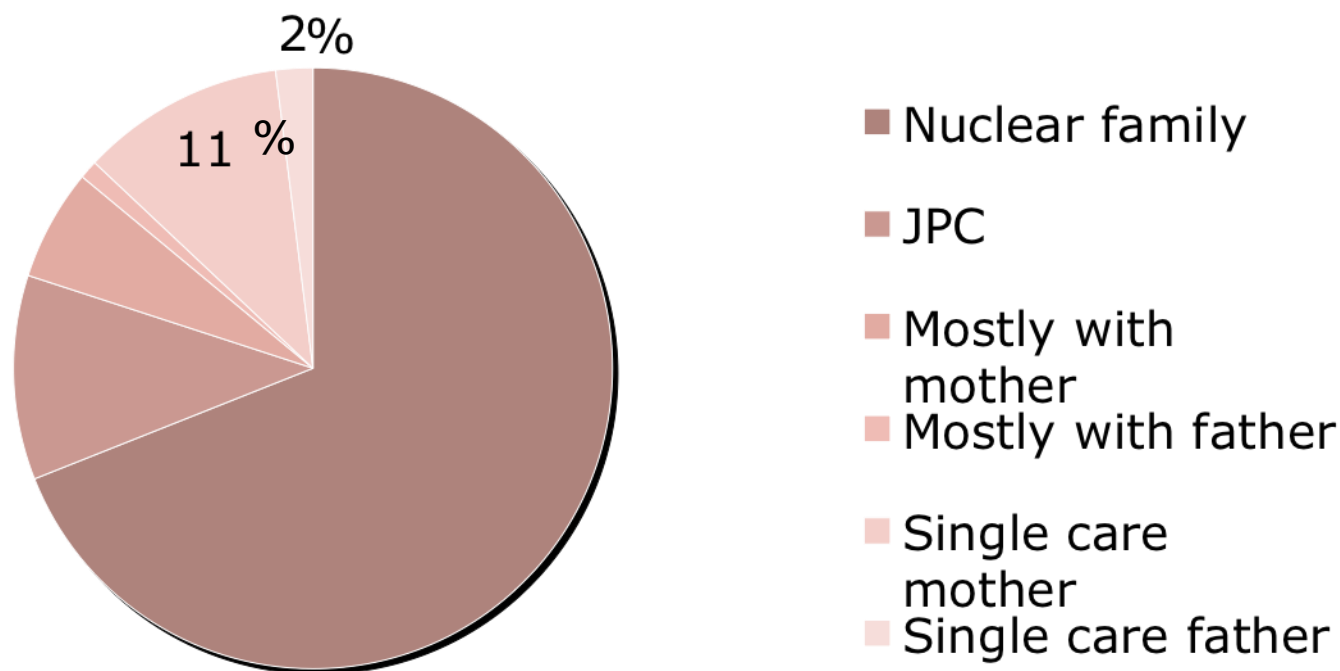


A total population study on 172 000 12 and 15 year olds

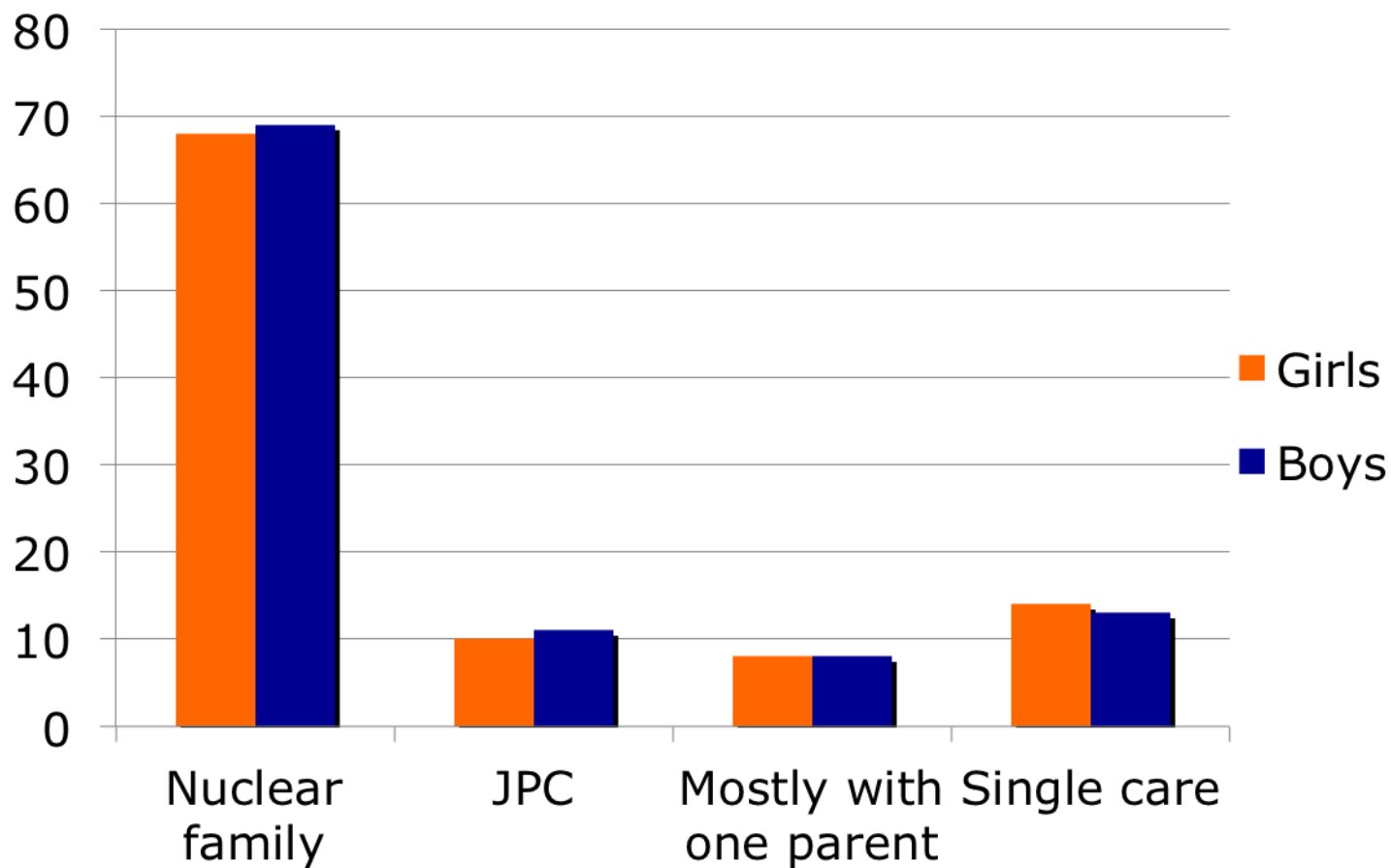


Bergström M, Modin B, Fransson E, Rajmil L, Berlin M, Gustafsson PA, Hjern A. **Living in two homes-a Swedish national survey of wellbeing in 12 and 15 year olds with joint physical custody.** BMC Public Health. 2013 Sep 22;13:868.

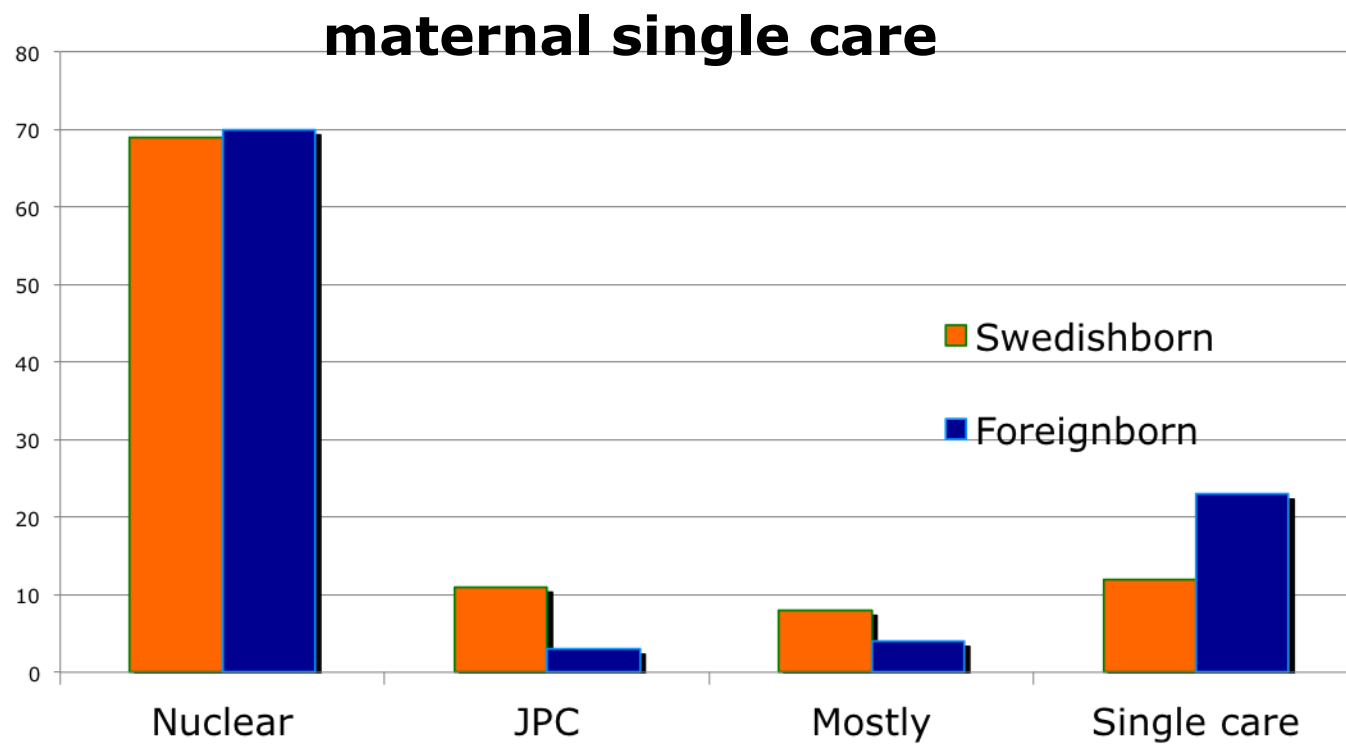
A majority lives with both parents



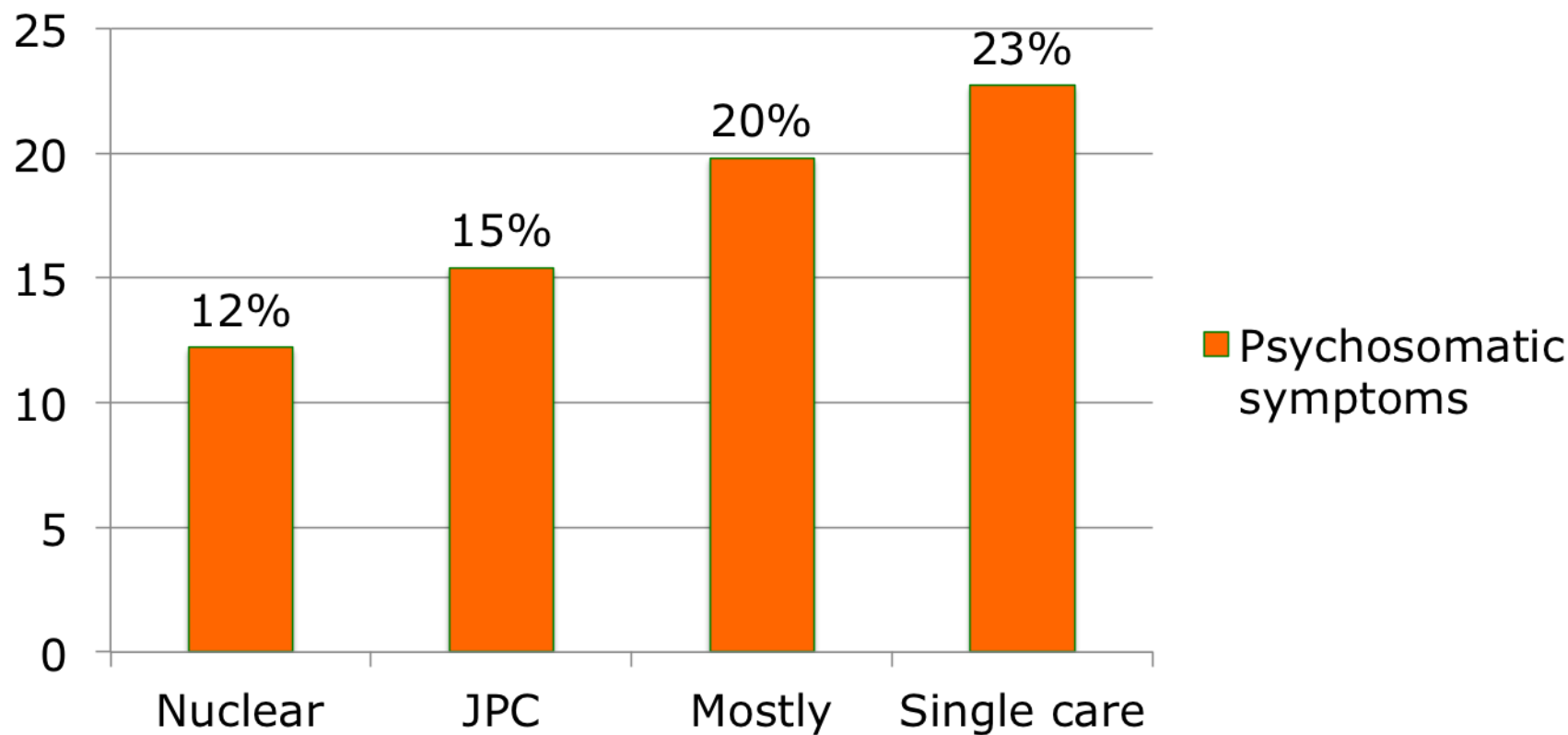
Few gender differences



Swedishborn four times more shared parenting and foreignborn twice as often



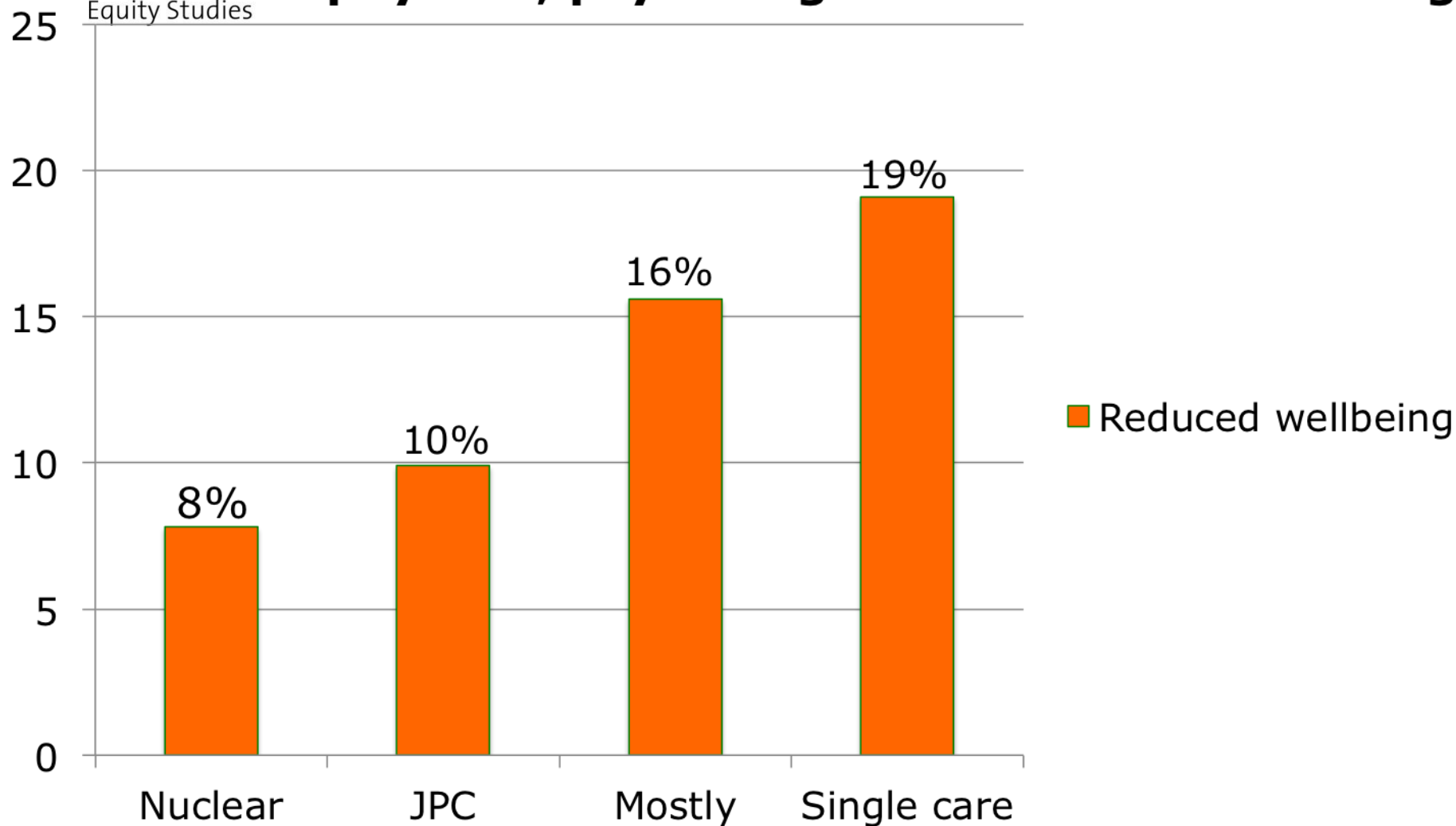
Psychosomatic symptoms



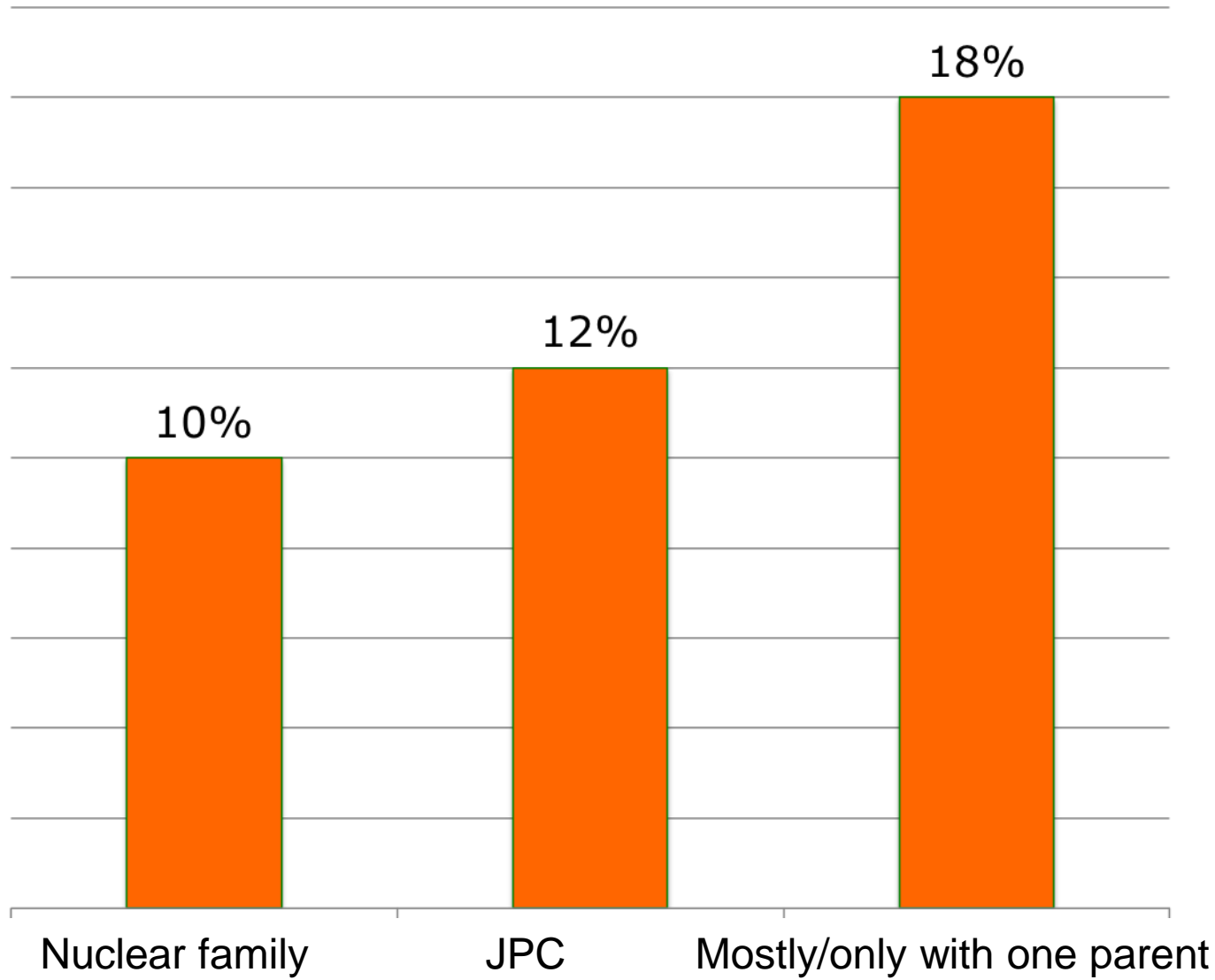


Centre for Health
Equity Studies

Low health related quality of life physical, psychological and social wellbeing



SDQ-Mental health problems



Jablonska Lindberg 2007. Social situation in 12 582 15 year olds in different family structures in percentages (%)

| | Ability to make friends | School satisfaction | Truancy |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Two parents | 50 | 77 | 13 |
| Single mother | 50 | 70 | 22 |
| Single father | 53 | 70 | 28 |
| Shared care | 56 | 73 | 19 |

Jablonska Lindberg 2007. Adjusted odds ratios for risk behaviour, victimisation and aggressive behaviour in n=12 582 15 year olds in different family structures

| | Drunken ness | Drugs | Smoking | Victim of violence | Aggressive behaviour |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Two parents | Ref | Ref | Ref | Ref | Ref |
| Single mother | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| Single father | 1.7 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.6 |
| Shared care | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 1.2 |

Carlsund 2013 in a representative sample of n=3699 15 year olds

| Family structure | Smoking | Drunkenness | Sex < age 15 | Conduct problems |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Two parent | Ref | Ref | Ref | Ref |
| Single care | 1.8 (1.4-2.3) | 1.8 (1.5-2.2) | 1.9 (1.5-2.3) | 1.3 (1.0-1.7) |
| Shared custody | 1.6 (1.1-2.3) | 1.5 (1.2-2.0) | 1.2 (0.9-1.6) | 1.0 (0.7-1.5) |

Carlsund 2013 national sample of 11 294 children 11-15 year olds

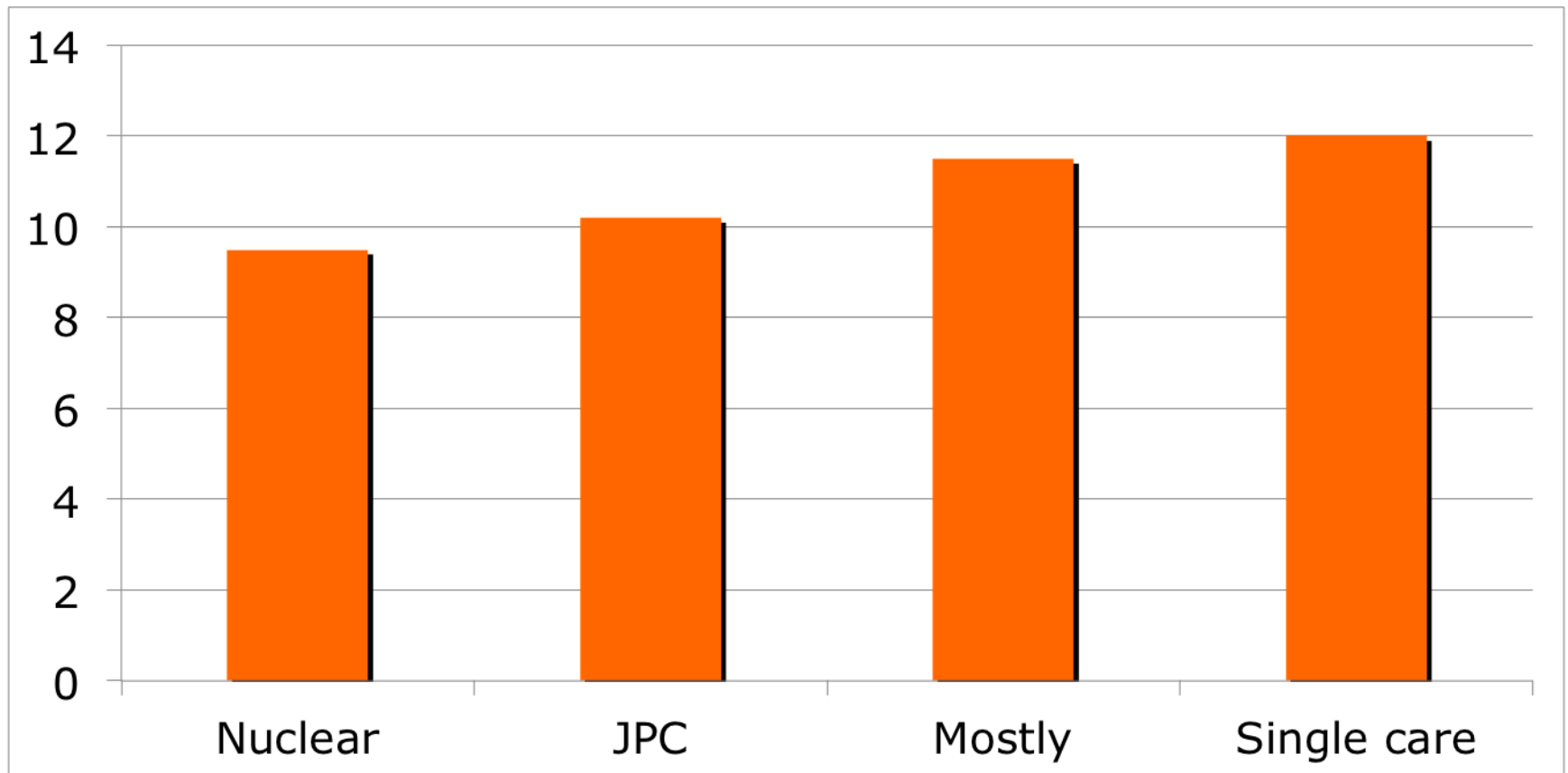
| Family structure | Health complaints | Low wellbeing |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Two parents | Ref | Ref |
| Single care | 1.4 (1.2-1.6) | 1.7 (1.4-2.1) |
| Shared parenting | 1.2 (1.0-1.5) | 1.7 (1.4-2.1) |

/

Carlsund found relationship to parents did not differ between nuclear and shared parenting families. Good father-child communication in single-parent families lowered risk for reduced wellbeing.



Dissatisfaction with relationships to parents in our national sample



Låftman, Bergström et al 2014 Support from parents and psychosomatic symptoms

N= 8,840 15 year olds

Turning to both parents about problems is most common in intact families, followed by those in joint physical custody.

Adolescents in non-traditional family types report more psychosomatic problems than in intact families, but the difference is smaller for those in joint physical custody than for those living with a single parent.

The slightly poorer health of adolescents in joint physical custody than those in intact families is not explained by their lower use of parents as a source of emotional support.

Lower wellbeing in 12 year olds with JPC than 15 year olds was found in our national sample. Does age make a difference?



Bergström M, Modin B, Fransson E, Rajmil L, Berlin M, Gustafsson PA, Hjern A. Living in two homes- a Swedish national survey of wellbeing in 12 and 15 year olds with joint physical custody.

BMC Public Health. 2013 Sep 22;13:868

Summary of Swedish studies of JPC

- In regard to mental health, wellbeing and contact with parents JPC seems favourable compared with single care.
- Increased risk of risk behaviours such as alcohol use?
- How does JPC suite infants, toddlers and young school children?



Centre for Health
Equity Studies

Thanks!

malin.bergstrom@ki.se

www.chess.su.se/elvis



Stockholms
universitet



Karolinska
Institutet

CHES is a collaboration between Stockholm University and Karolinska Institutet.