

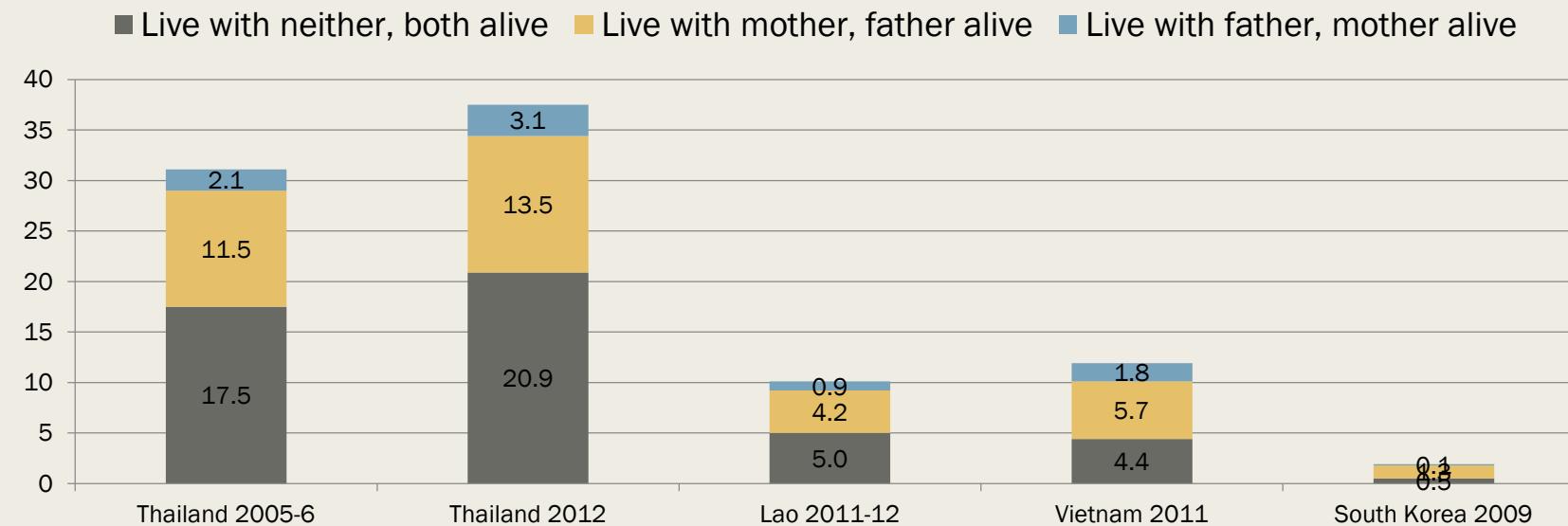


Effects of Parental Migration on Children's Well-Being: Findings from a Study of Vulnerable Children

Kerry Richter, Dusita Phuengsamran and Aree Jampaklay



A large proportion of Thai children live separately from their parents



Source: MICS Surveys. All children age 0-17, national samples



Objectives of the paper

- Examine whether parents' migration affects children's emotional well-being using a sample of vulnerable children aged 8-18
- Examine whether the timing of parents' migration has an additional or independent impact
- Examine whether the effects of father's or mother's migration is different
- Examine whether the effects of migration are different than the effects of parental separation/divorce



Data: Sample of vulnerable children

- Five provinces, 2013. Baseline for CHIDLIFE program services for Children Affected by AIDS and other Vulnerable Children
- Objective was to measure children's well-being in order to measure whether the CHIDLIFE program had an effect on well-being
- Households in the CHIDLIFE program area were screened for whether there were children who were eligible for the project in the household. (4,000+ households)
- A sample of eligible households were selected for the survey with one target child per household randomly selected
- Knowledgeable adults in the household, child's main caretaker, and children age 8+ were interviewed



Sub-sample of children age 8-15

	Age 8-15 (n=429)
Not Thai citizens	3.5
Thai but do not have ID	3.3
Disabled	6.1
Chronically ill	12.1
Have a legal issue	0.7
Mother, father or both has died	20.7
Mother, father or both has migrated	59.4
Mother or father chronically ill	26.8
Primary caretaker (non-parent) chronically ill	39.2
Below poverty line of that province	26.8



Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

- ❖ Standard tool for assessing children age 3 to 16 years; used globally
- ❖ 25 questions which probe strengths and difficulties in five dimensions:
 - (1) “conduct” problems (disobedience);
 - (2) emotional symptoms;
 - (3) hyperactivity/inattention;
 - (4) peer relationship problems
 - (5) prosocial behavior
- ❖ Responses from child’s caretaker
- ❖ Scores re-coded into “normal” “at risk” and “problematic”

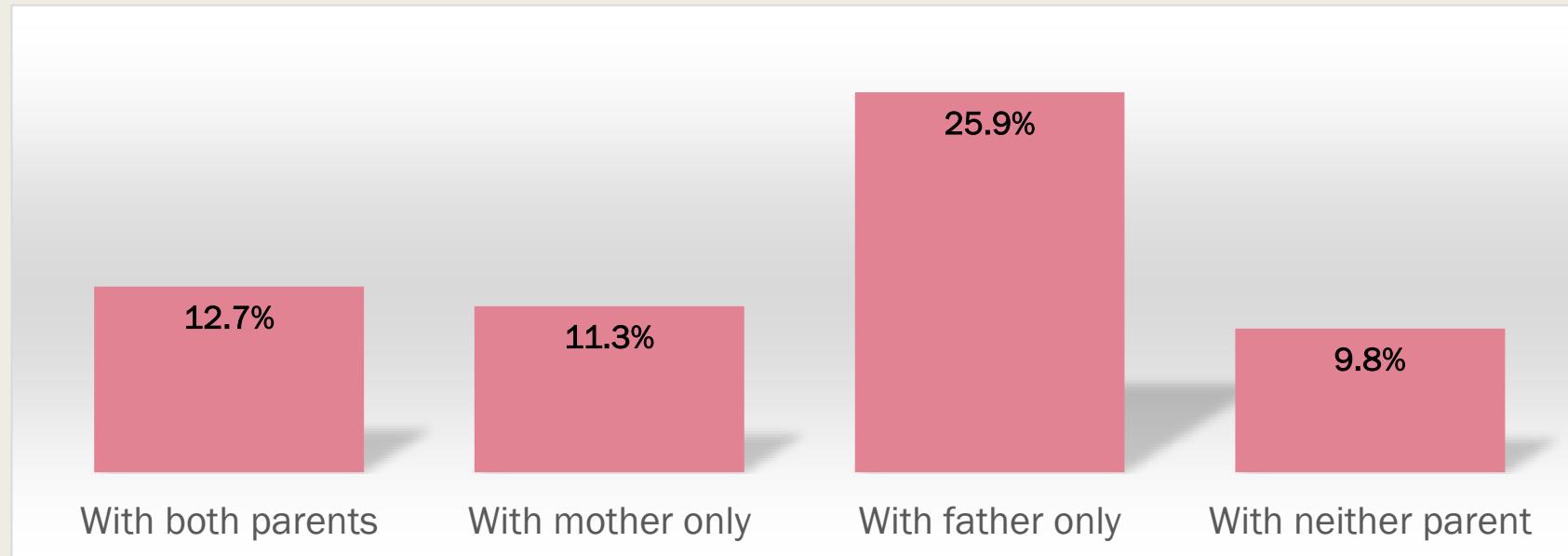


Percentage scoring “problematic” on SDQ by sex and age group (n=429)



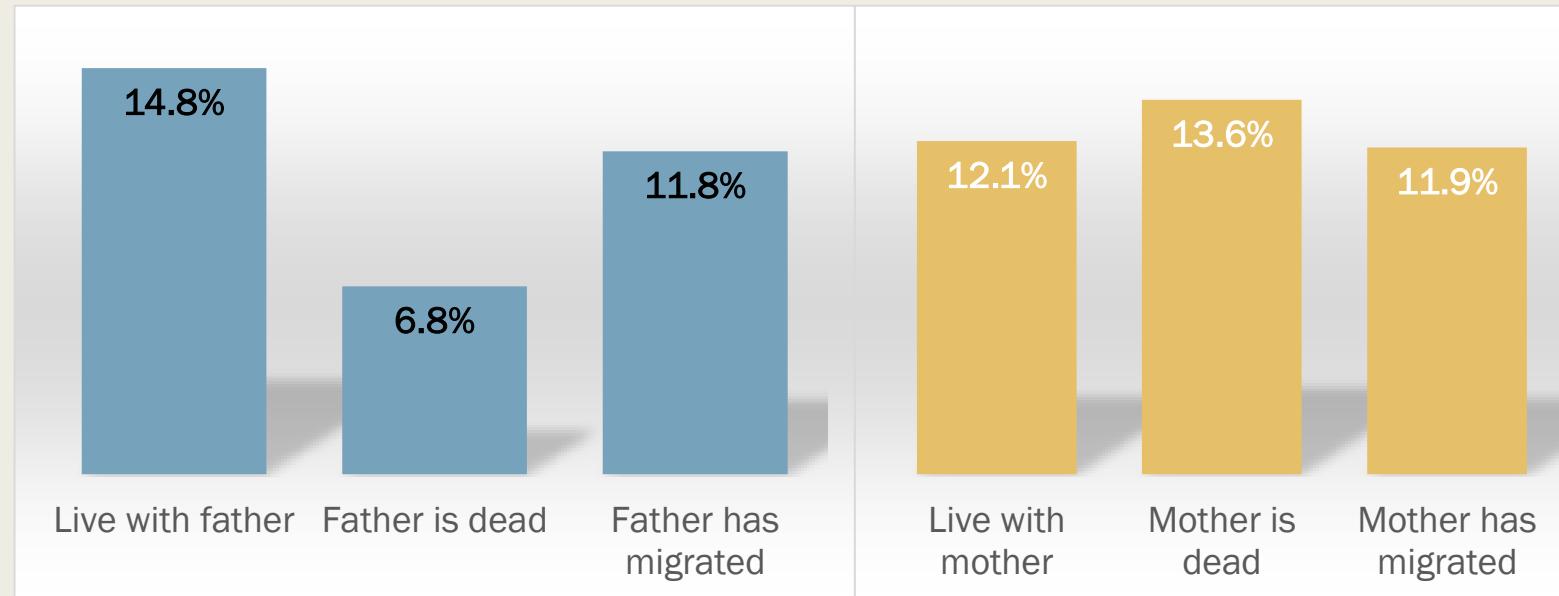


Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by whether child lives with parents (N=429)



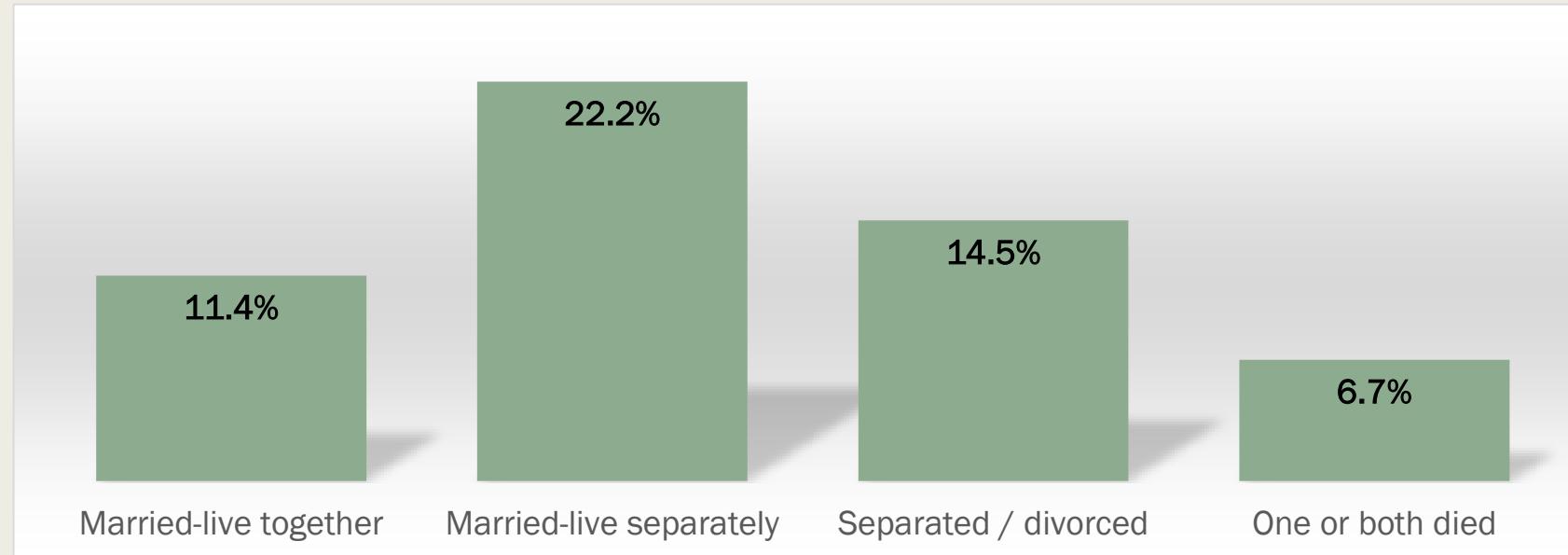


Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by father's and mother's status (N=429)



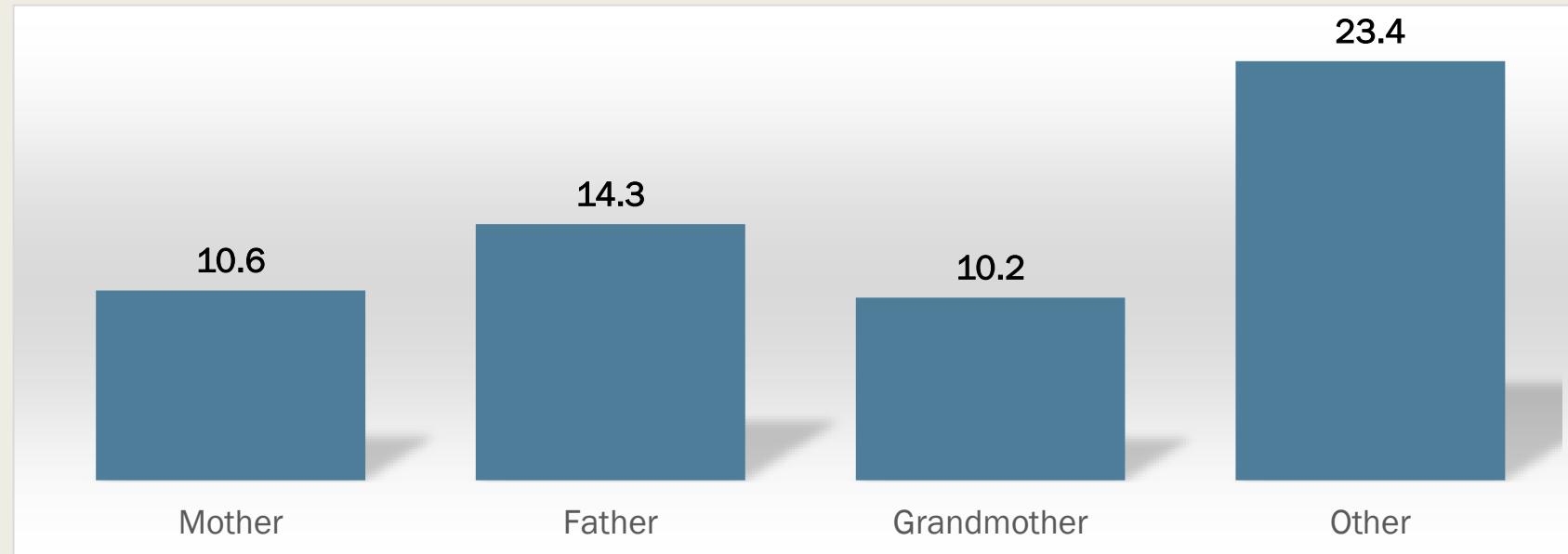


Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by parents' marital status (N=429)



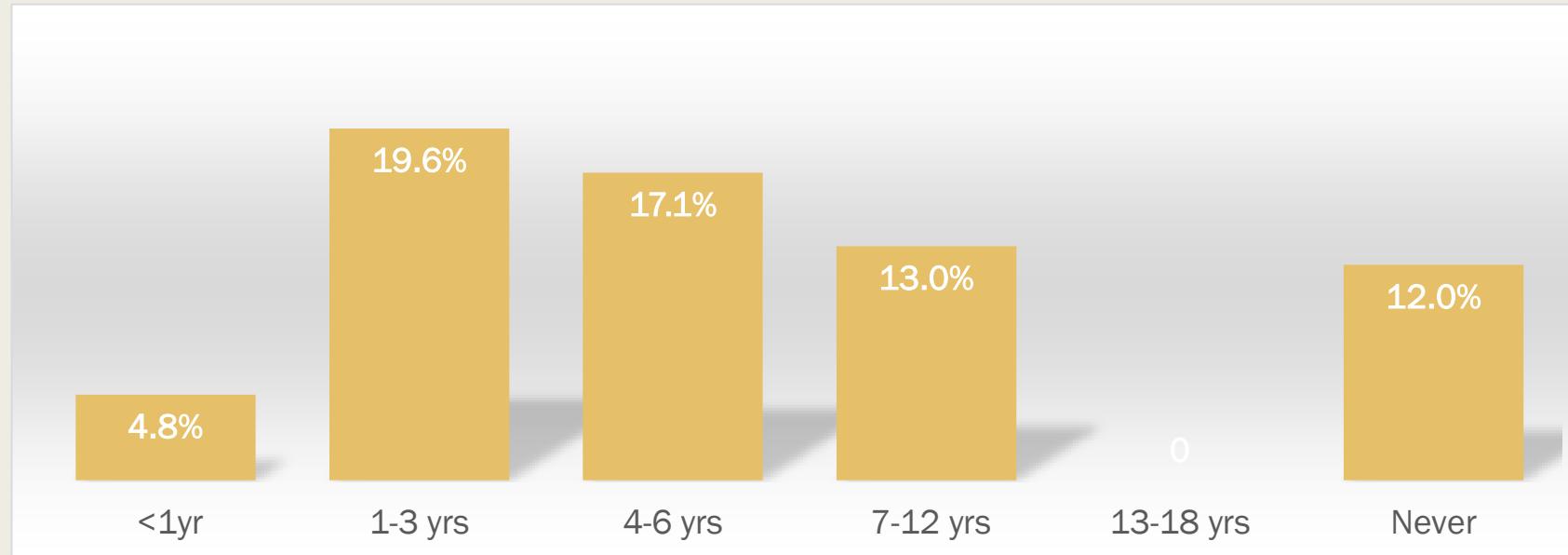


Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by relationship to main caretaker (N=429)



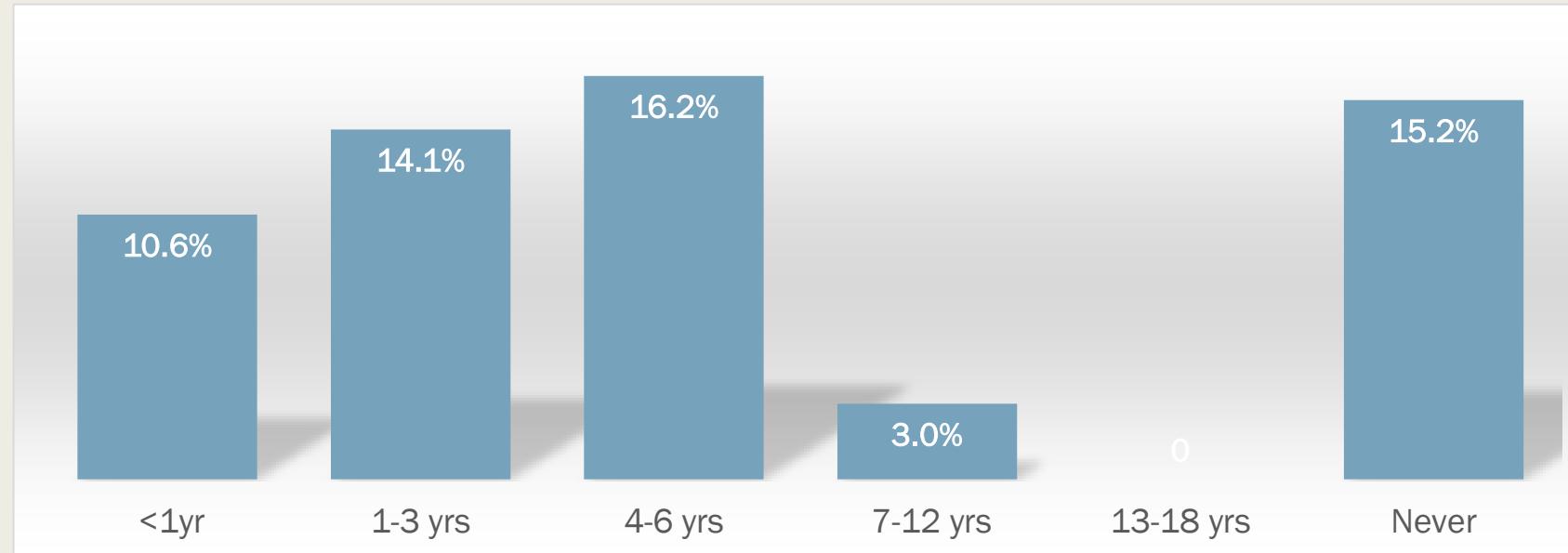


Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by age of separation from mother





Percentage scoring "problematic" on SDQ by age of separation from father





Logistic regression: Control variables (N=429)

		Odds ratio	Sig.
Age	(Age 8-11)	1.00	
	Age1215	0.43	**
Sex	(Female)	1.00	
	Male	2.11	*
Household	is below poverty line	1.25	n.s.
Child is disabled		3.87	*
Child is chronically ill		3.57	**
Constant		0.10	

* p<.05 ** p<.01



Add measures of children's living with parents to model: none significant

- Current living arrangement (both; mom; dad; neither)
- Parent's current marital status
- Age at separation from mother
- Age at separation from father
- Reason for separation from mother (died; migrated; marital separation; other)
- Reason for separation from father (died; migrated; marital separation; other)
- Current main caregiver



Some categories of these variables provide contrasts that are significant (added to model)

Nonrelative caregiver	2.33	**
-----------------------	------	----

(Never separated from mom)	1.00	*
Separated <1 year old	0.36	
Separated age 1 or more	1.60	

(Never separated from dad)	1.00	*
Separated age 0-6	0.63	
Separated age 7+	0.04	



Potential reasons for non-significant results

- All children in sample have other vulnerabilities that may have a greater impact
- These may be communities where being raised by grandparents is the norm
- Children have complex life histories; qualitative evidence may add insight



Conclusions

- Greater attention should be paid to this issue for children of different age groups
- Complex research designs are needed for full understanding
- Further analysis of this data will include children's self-administered module on their environment, physical and verbal abuse