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 **Länsförsäkringar**



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

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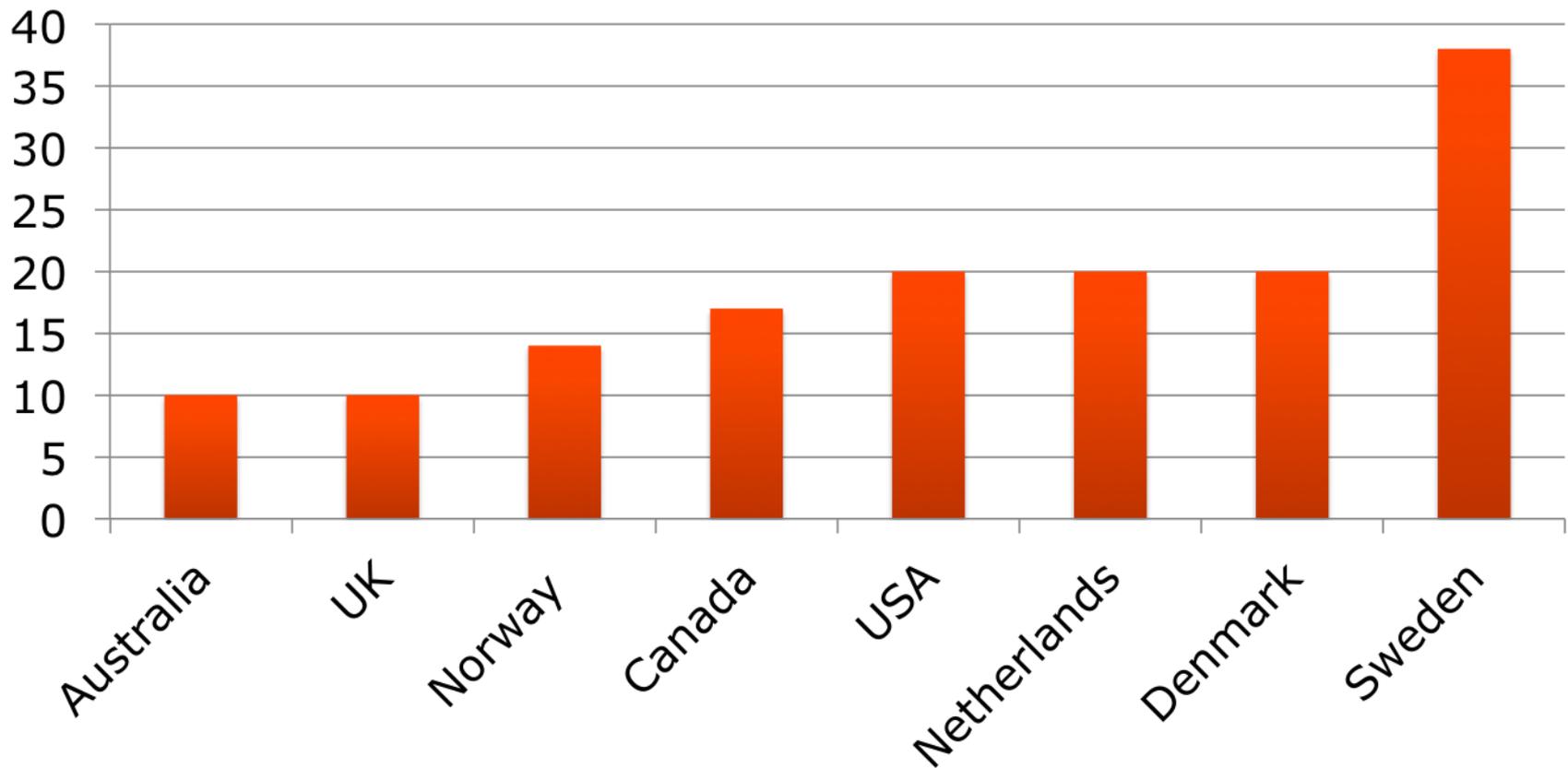
*CHES is a collaboration between Stockholm University and Karolinska Institutet.*

# 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



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## **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.

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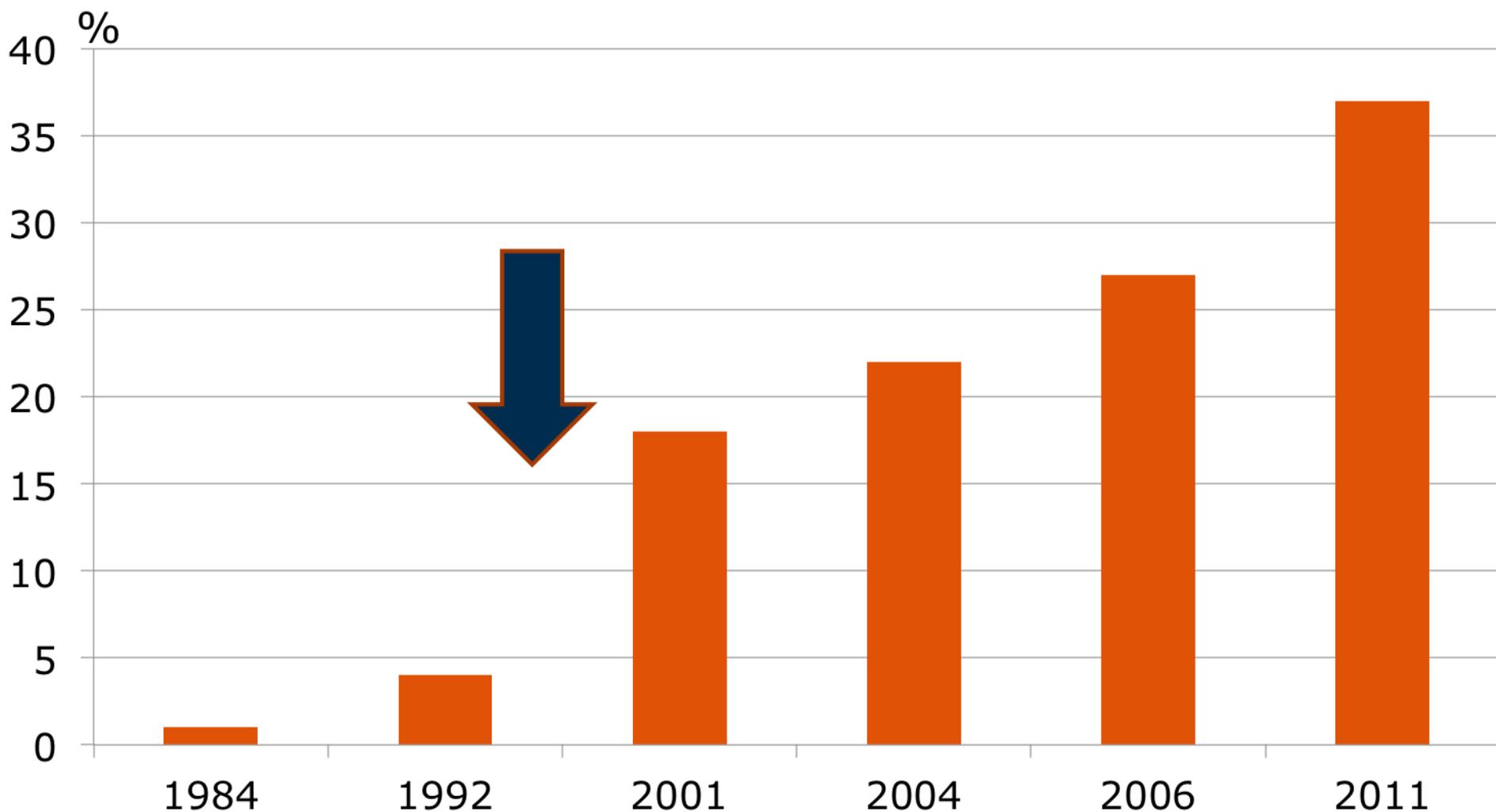
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SCHWEDISCHES WOCHENBETT

# 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





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## Most common in children 6-12 years





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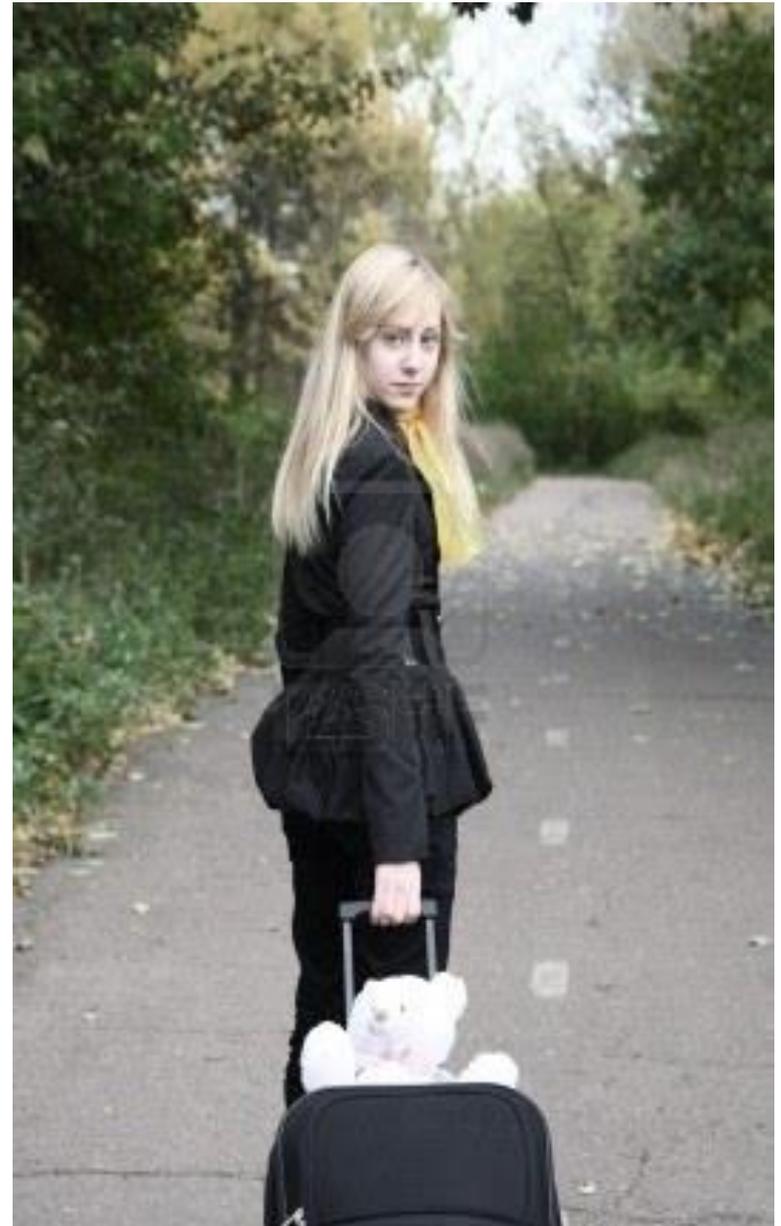
# Parents who move every week





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

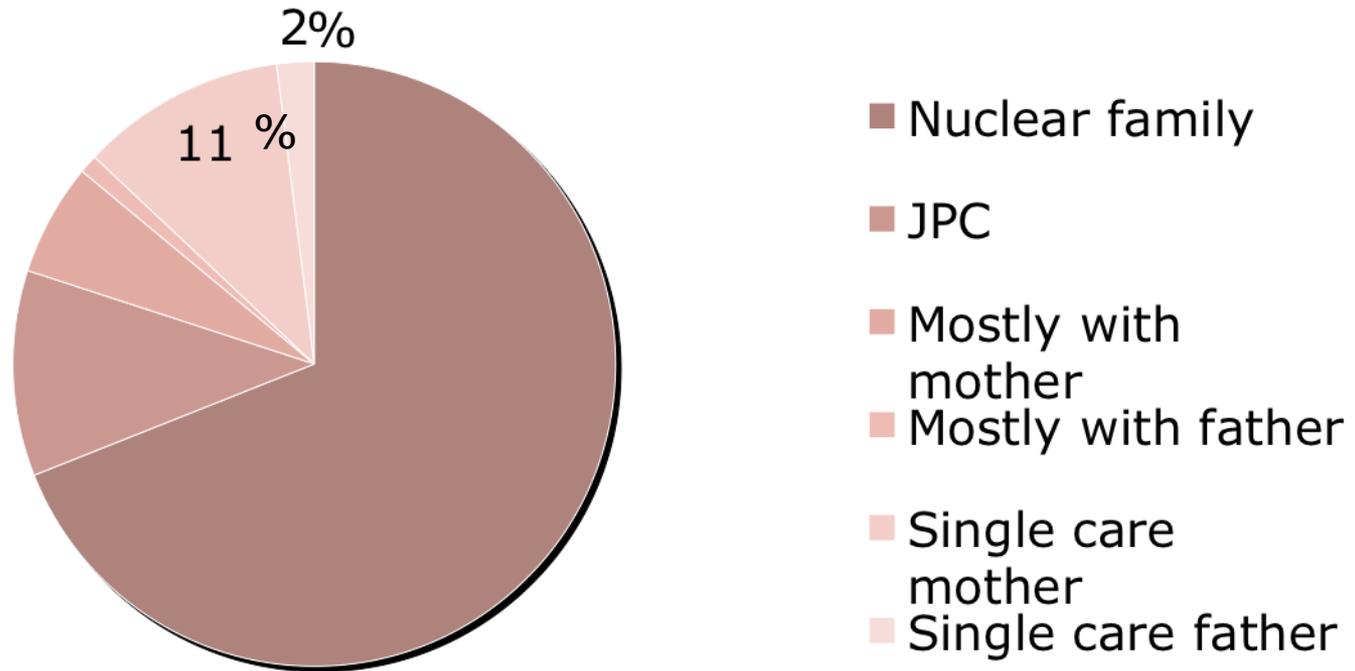


# A total population study on 172 000 12 and 15 year olds

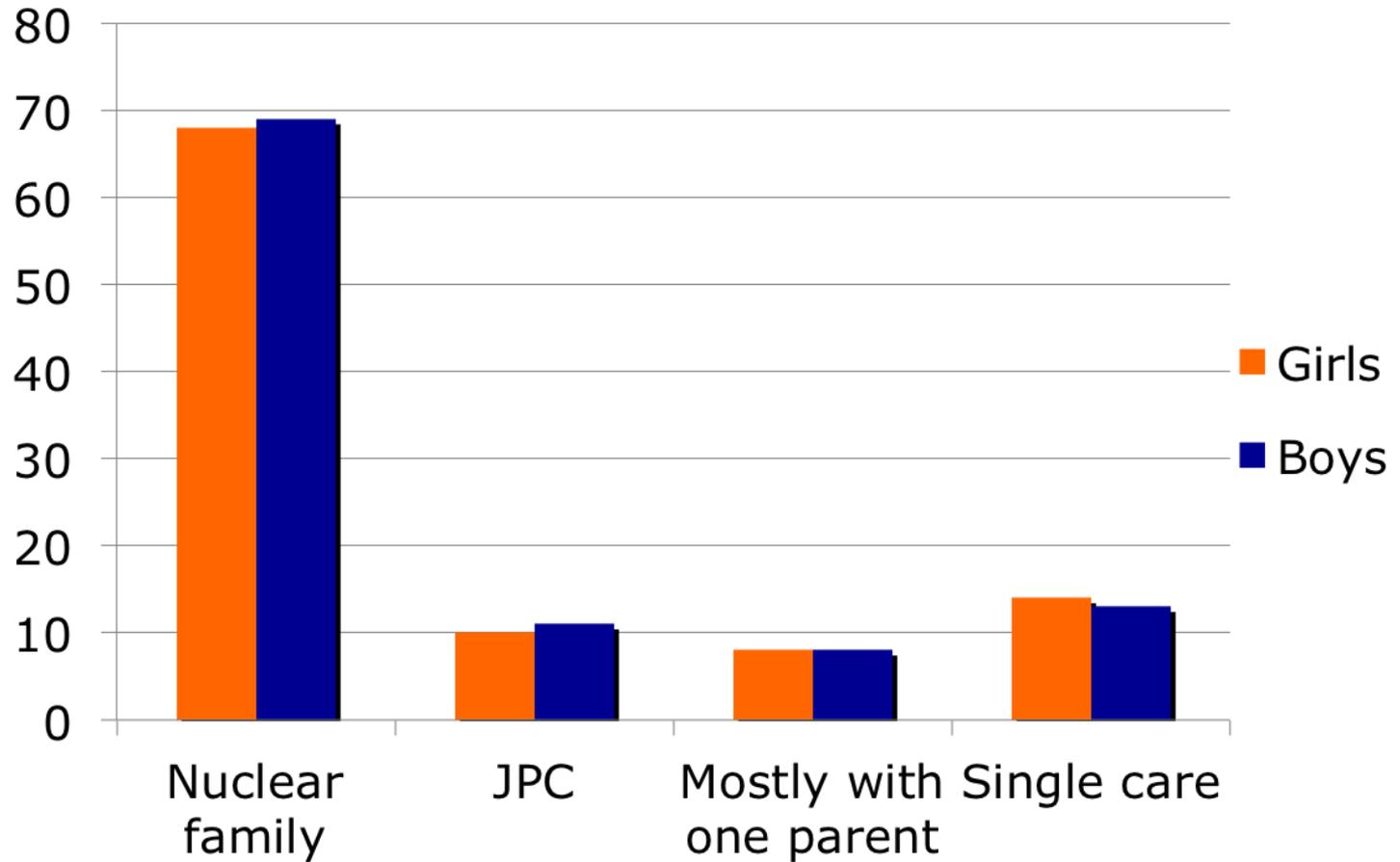


[Bergström M](#), [Modin B](#), [Fransson E](#), [Rajmil L](#), [Berlin M](#), [Gustafsson PA](#), [Hjern A](#). **Living in two homes-a Swedish national survey of wellbeing in 12 and 15 year olds with joint physical custody.** [BMC Public Health](#). 2013 Sep 22;13:868.

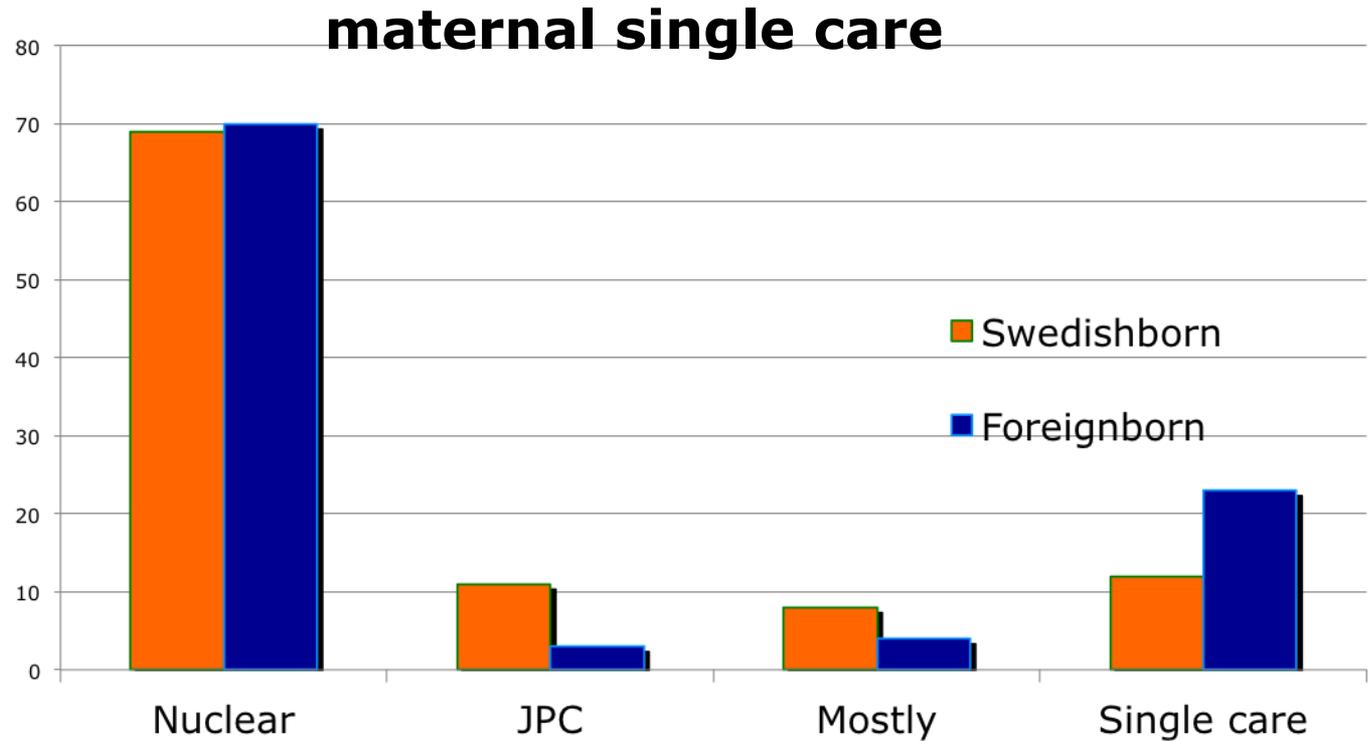
## A majority lives with both parents



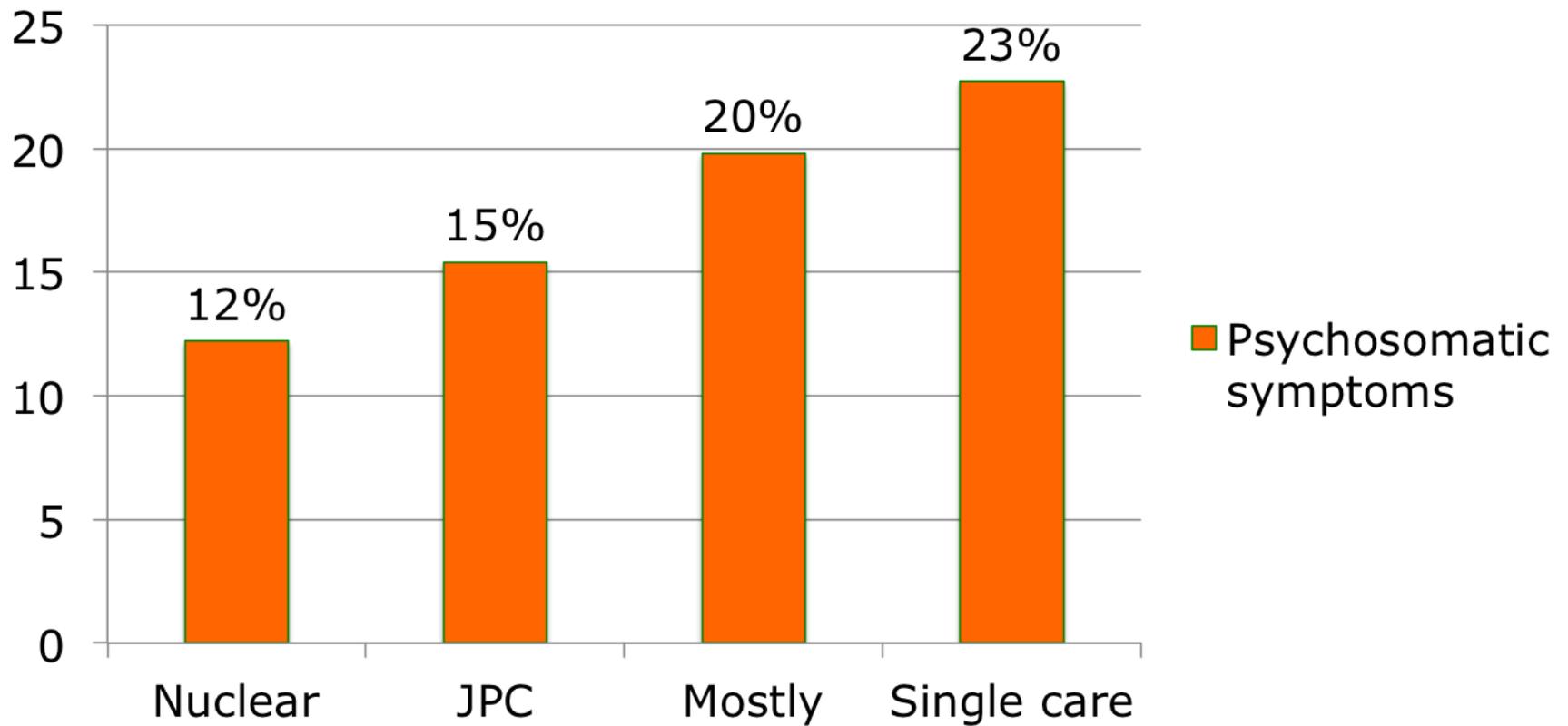
# Few gender differences



# Swedishborn four times more shared parenting and foreignborn twice as often



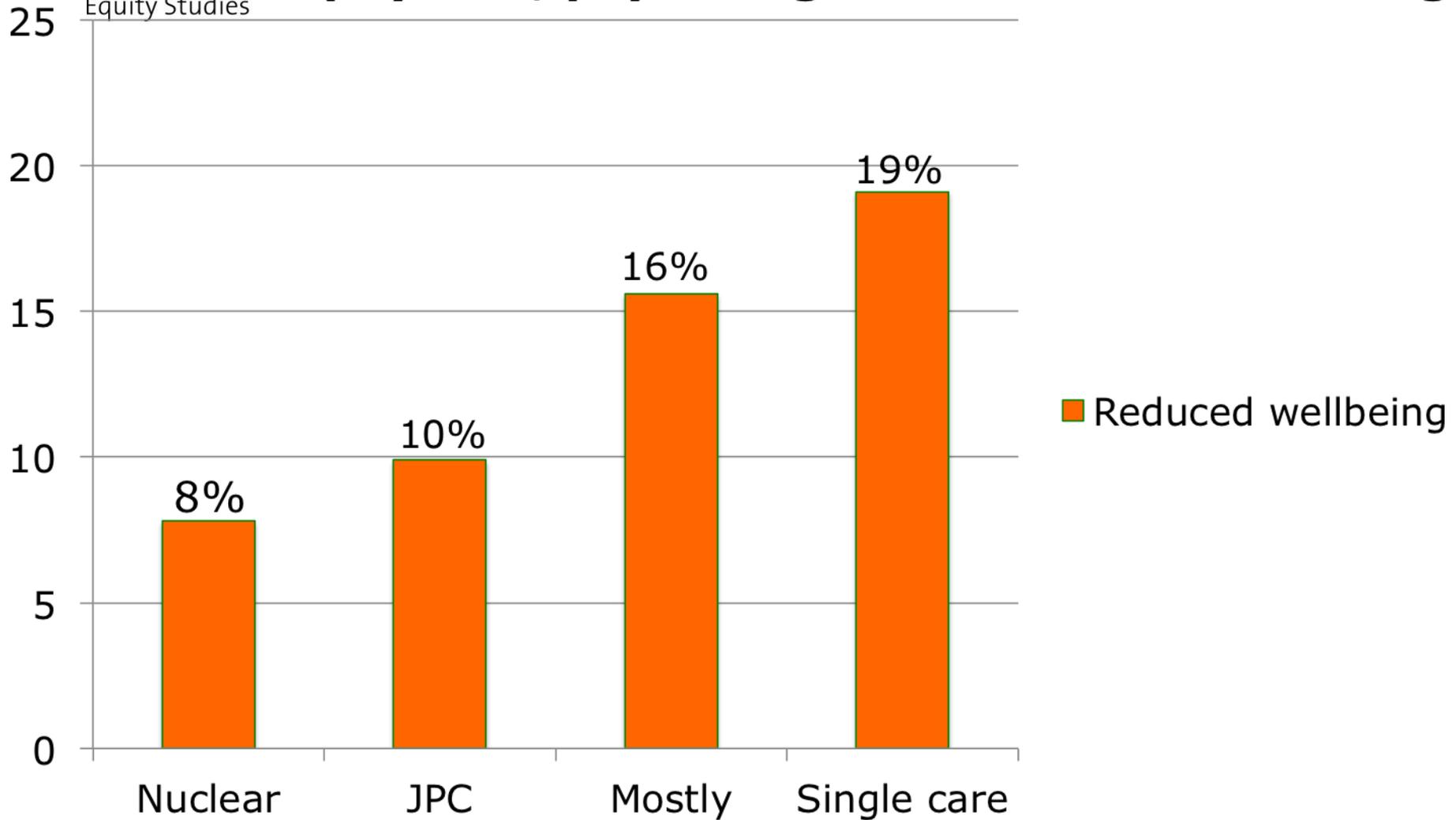
## Psychosomatic symptoms



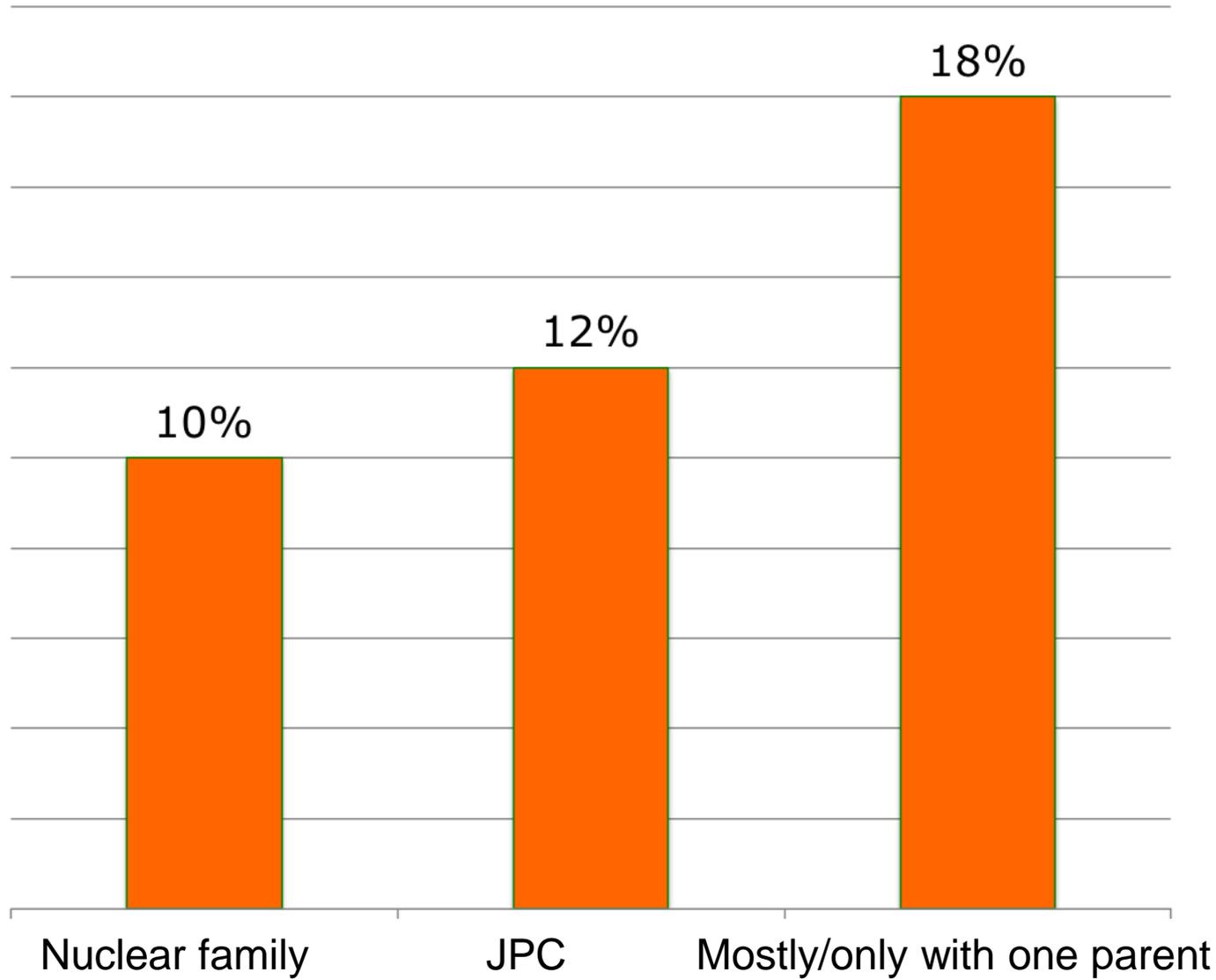


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# Low health related quality of life physical, psychological and social wellbeing



## SDQ-Mental health problems



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

	<b>Ability to make friends</b>	<b>School satisfaction</b>	<b>Truancy</b>
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

	<b>Drunkenness</b>	<b>Drugs</b>	<b>Smoking</b>	<b>Victim of violence</b>	<b>Aggressive behaviour</b>
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



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# 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)

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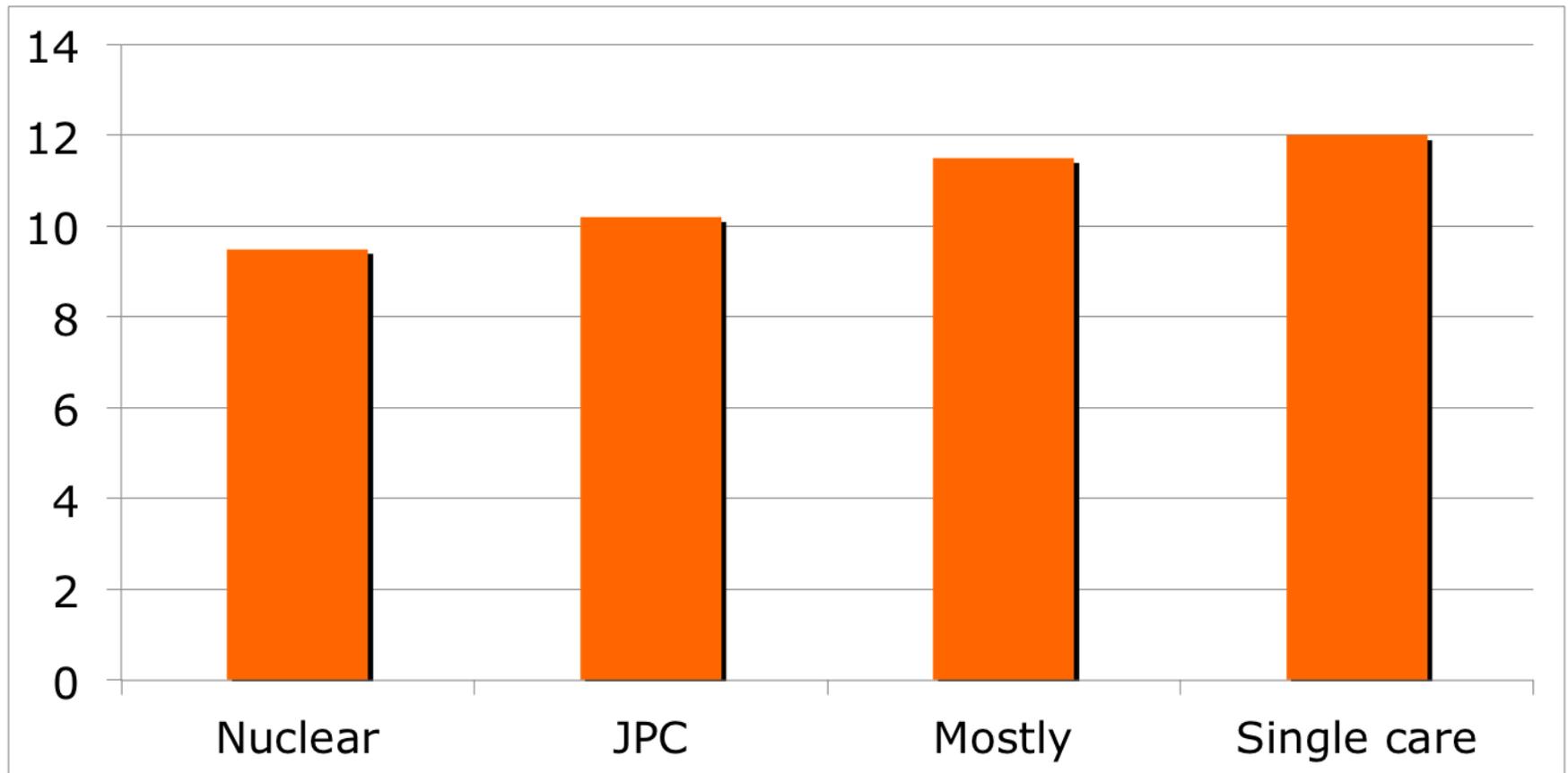


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**Carlsund** found relationship to parents did not differ between nuclear and shared parenting families. Good father-child communication in single-parent families lowered risk for reduced wellbeing.



# 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?

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**Thanks!**

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