



ISSOP Annual Conference  
**Measurement of health:  
 A Child Public Health perspective**  
 Session I. Considering Child Rights in measuring  
 NHV, Gothenburg  
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## Quality of Upbringing and Experience of Emotional Abuse in Iceland



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### The Long-Term Health Consequences of Child Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, and Neglect: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

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- ... child physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect were found to approximately double the likelihood of adverse mental health outcomes ... (2012: 21)
- Consistent dose–response relationships with repeated, frequent, or severe abuse have been reported for mental disorders and physical abuse ... emotional abuse and neglect ... (2012: 22)
- ... multiple types of maltreatment may carry more severe consequences ... (2012: 22)

## Objective

Examine the experience of Icelandic adults of emotional abuse in childhood, and its impact on felt quality of upbringing

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Uppeldi og  
refsingar

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Refsingar í barnæsku og  
viðhorf til þeirra 2010

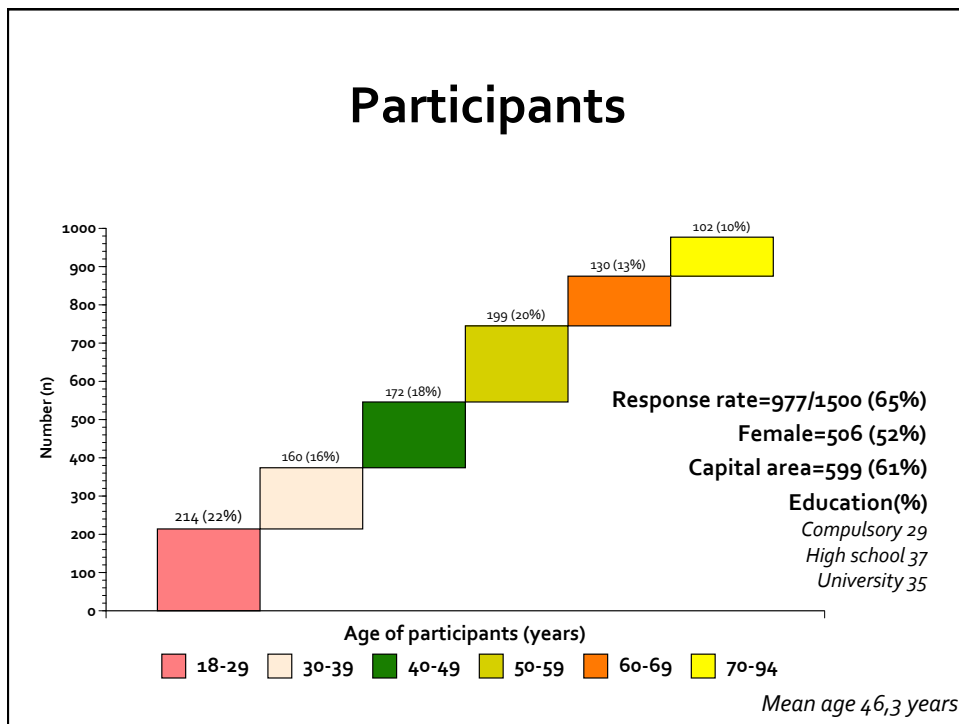
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Report

Upbringing and  
disciplinary measures

Discipline in childhood and  
attitudes in 2010

**The Social Research Institute, UI**  
**Telephone interviews 19 Oct - 10 Nov 2010**



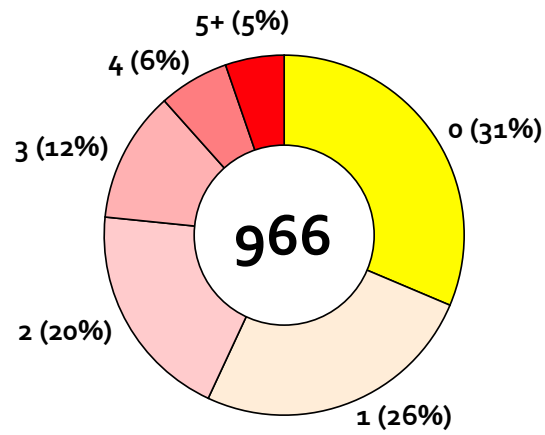
**1. In your opinion, was your upbringing good, reasonable or bad?**

**2. Do you remember when you were growing up if your parents or other responsible care-takers did made you feel ...**

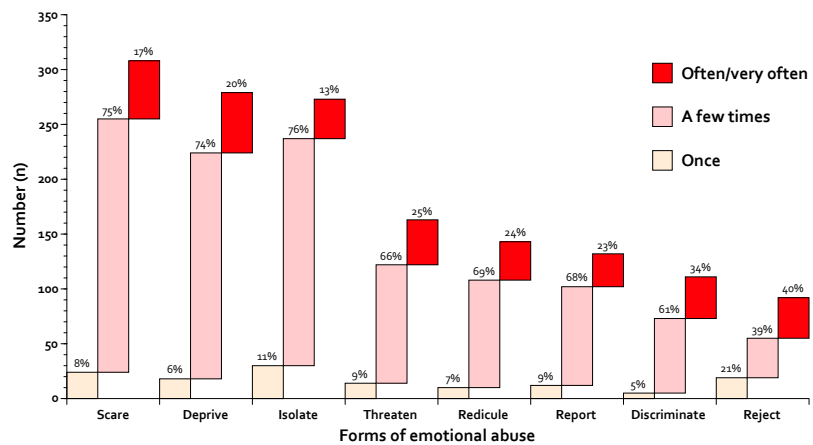
- Rediculed
- Threatened
- Rejected
- Put in isolation
- Scared
- Discriminated against
- Deprived of something
- Exposed by reporting

*Never, Once, A few times, Often, Very often*

## Number of forms of emotional abuse



## Frequency of each form of emotional abuse



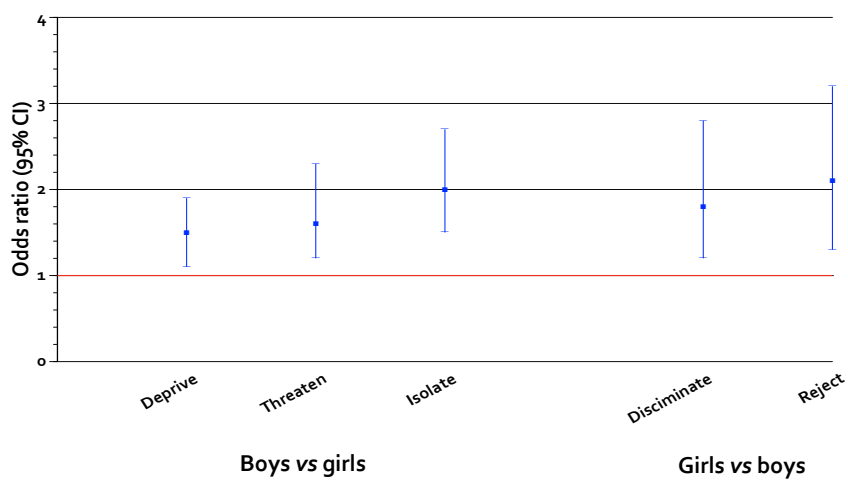
N=870-961

## Age and emotional abuse

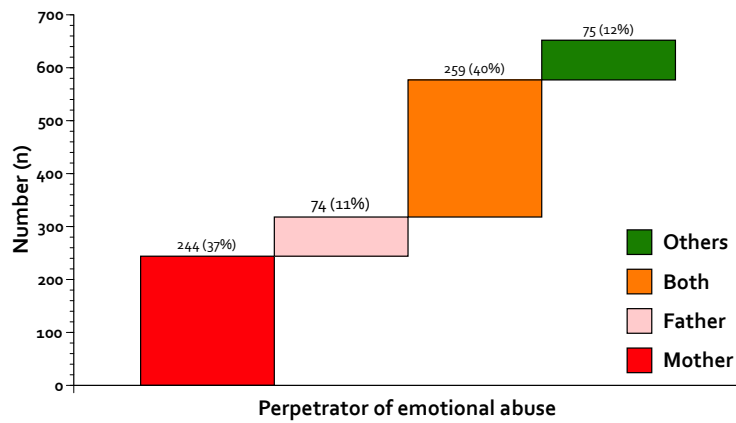
- Mean age 46,3 years
  - Exposed 42,7 years
  - Not exposed 53,9 years
  - $p=0.0001$
- <30 years vs  $\geq$  30 years
  - OR 2,9 (95% CI 1,9-4,3)

## Males vs females

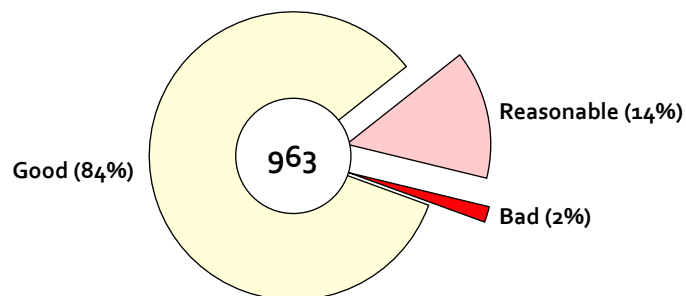
OR 1,5 (95% CI 1,2-2,0)



### 3. Was it your mother, father or another care-taker who applied these upbringing measures?



### 1. In your opinion, was your upbringing good, reasonable or bad?

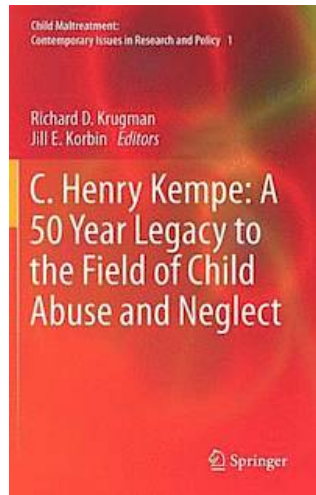


*Emotional abuse vs quality of upbringing (reasonable/bad vs good)*  
 OR 3,7 (95% 2,2-6,0)

## Conclusions

- **Younger people report more emotional abuse**
  - Contemporary accepted forms of punishment?
  - Recall bias or changed conceptualization?
- **Reporting of forms is gender sensitive**
- **Mothers more active abusers than fathers**
  - Reflects relative absence of fathers in child care

- **Higher frequency and more forms of emotional abuse result in worse estimation of upbringing**
  - Single events of emotional and physical abuse do not influence assessment of quality of upbringing, however such rare events are memorable (Gunnlaugsson and Einarsdóttir, 2010; 2013)



## **Garbarino, J. (2013). The Emotionally Battered Child (Chapter 8)**

- Historical overview
- “Child protection must be about the child’s right to live in a world free from rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, ignoring, and corrupting” (Gaborino, 2013: 61).