

Typical social-emotional development in children 7 to 10



Dr. Tracy Vaillancourt
Canada Research Chair in Children's Mental Health and Violence Prevention
University of Ottawa

Developmental Bias

- “ Cognitive Development including intelligence and language development
- “ Physical Development

- “ But emotions are inextricably linked to physical well-being and cognition.
 - . Cognition is socially mediated (Piaget, Vygotsky)

Social-Emotional Development

“ What do 7 to 10 year-olds need to know to be emotionally and socially healthy?

Emotional Self-Regulation

“ Strategies used to adjust intensity or duration of emotional state (Berk & Roberts, 2009)



Limited ability to self-regulate



Increased capacity to self-regulate

- ” cover eyes or ears
- ” talk to through fear
- ” change their goals



By 10, most children have a sophisticated repertoire of techniques for regulating their emotions (Kliewer et al., 1996)

By 10 years of age

- “ Emotions are managed using 2 general strategies
 - . Problem-centered coping
 - . Emotion-centered coping
- “ Able to do this because greater cognitive ability and wider range of social experiences to draw on

When emotional self-regulation develops in the right manner...

- “ Children develop emotional self-efficacy
 - . Feeling of being in control of emotional experiences (Saarni, 2000)



Emotional Display Rules

- “ When, where are how to express emotions
 - . Children learn about how to express negative emotions by interacting with parents, teachers and peers

Emotional Display Rules

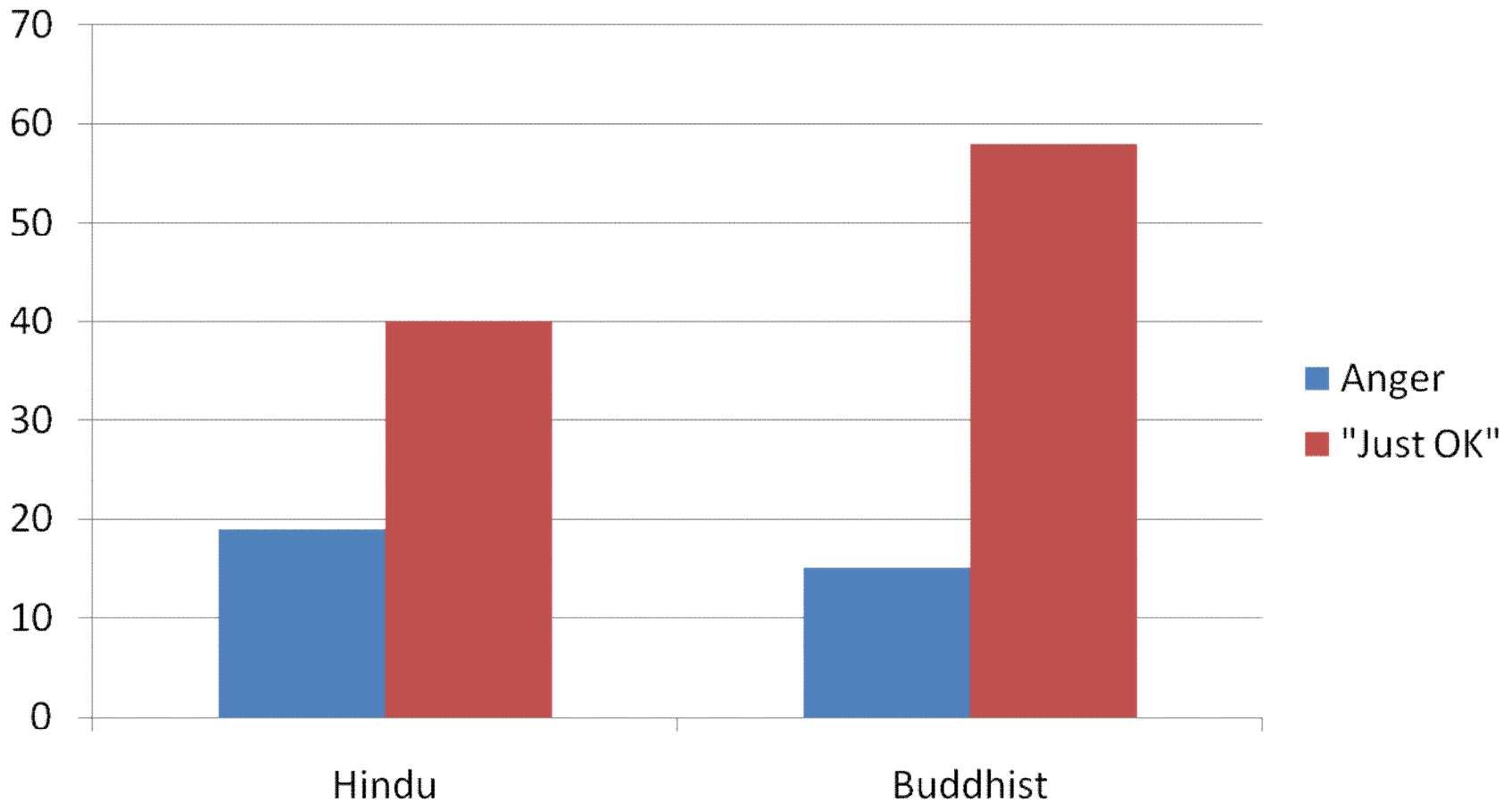
- “ Central is the ability to inhibit the display of unpleasant emotions
- “ School-age children prefer verbal strategies to crying, sulking or fighting (Shipman et al., 2003)
- “ More difficult for boys than girls who learn at a young age how “nice girls behave”

Emotional Display Rules

” Cultural differences

- . E.g., Japanese and South Asians adults place greater importance on masking emotions than American adults (Roland, 1988)

Feelings in response to emotionally charged situations



Adapted from Cole & Tamang, 1998



Social Referencing

“ Relying on the emotional reaction of others to appraise something unfamiliar

Emotional Understanding

- “ In early years very crude and based on egocentric view point
 - . Emphasize external factors when interpreting emotions of others

Emotional Understanding

- “ Middle-childhood— recognize emotions and are able to interpret why a person may be feeling the way they are
 - “ Emphasize internal factors when interpreting emotions of others
- “ Can also appreciate that someone can have mixed feeling about something
 - . Which helps them realize that the expressed emotion may not be the internalized emotion (Saarni, 1997)

Development of Empathy

- “ Requires an understanding that you are distinct from others
- “ In middle-childhood empathy increases in large part because children are able to
 - . assess a wide range of emotions
 - . consider multiple emotional cues
 - . perspective take

Social Development





Self-Concept

- “ Set of attributes, abilities, attitudes and values that defines a person belief about who he/she is
- “ Early childhood
 - . focus is on observable characteristics
- “ Middle childhood
 - . focus shifts away from observable characteristics and behaviour to competencies
 - . why?
 - “ social comparisons

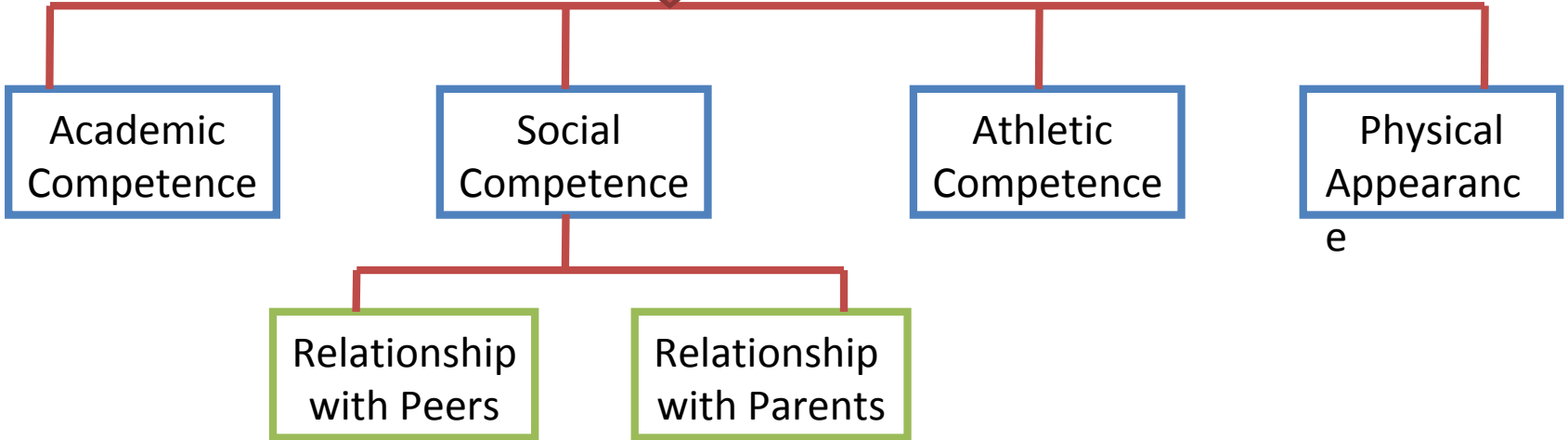
Development of Self-Concept

Age	Milestones
3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Forms a self-concept consisting of observable characteristics and typical emotions and attitudes.
6-10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Emphasizes personality traits and both positive and negative attributes in self-concept.▪ Makes social comparisons among multiple individuals.
11 years and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Unifies separate traits such as “smart” and “talented” into more abstract descriptors such as “intelligent” into self-concept.▪ Combines traits making up self-concept into an organized system.

Adapted from Berk & Roberts, 2009, pg. 455.



General Self-Esteem

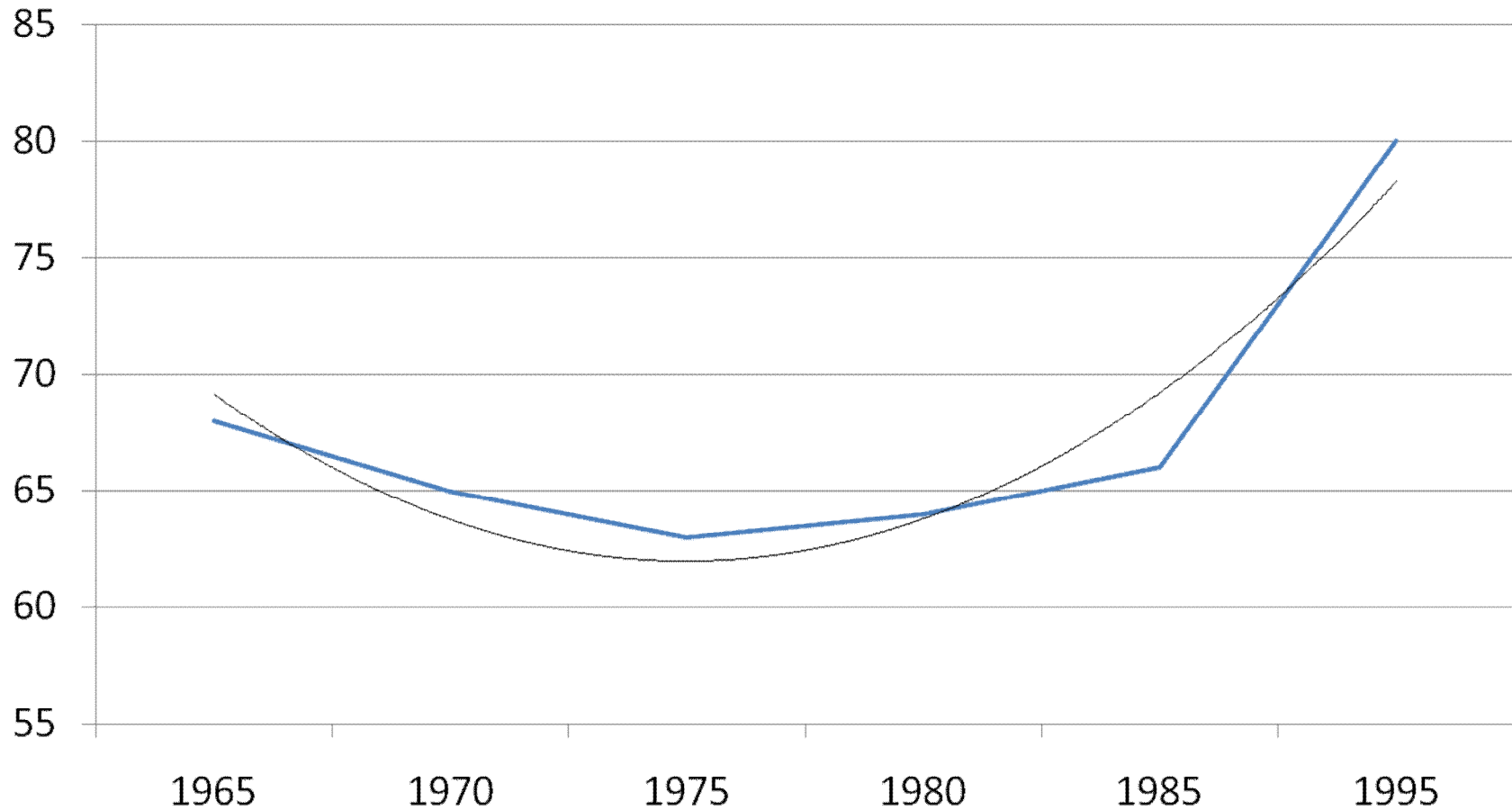


Self-Esteem

Age	Milestones
3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Self-esteem is typically high and consists of several separate self-evaluations.
6-10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Self-esteem becomes hierarchically organized: separate self-evaluations (academic, social, and physical/athletic competence, physical appearance) are integrated into overall sense of self-esteem.▪ Self-esteem declines as children's make social comparisons then rises.
11 years and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ New dimensions of self-esteem are added (close friendship, romantic appeal, job competence).▪ Self-esteem continues to rise.▪ Achievement-related attributions reflect full differentiation of ability and effort.

Adapted from Berk & Roberts, 2009, pg. 463.

Cohort effect of SE (junior HS)



Twenge & Campbell, 2001

Perspective Taking

“ Capacity to imagine what others are thinking and feeling (Berk & Roberts, 2009)

Selman's Stages of Perspective Taking

Stage	Age	Description
Level 0: Undifferentiated	3-6	Children recognize that self and others can have different thoughts and feelings but they frequently confuse the two.
Level 1: Social-informational	4-9	Children understand that different perspectives may result because people have access to different information.
Level 2: Self-reflective	7-12	Children can “step into another person’s shoes” and view their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviour from the other person’s perspective. They also recognize that the other can do the same.
Level 3: Third-party	10-15	Children can step outside a two-person situation and imagine how the self and other are viewed from the point of view of a third, impartial party.
Level 4: Societal	14- adult	Individuals understand that third-party perspective taking can be influenced by one or more systems of larger societal values.

Source: Berk & Roberts, 2009, pp. 474.

★ Theory of Mind (ToM)

- “ Understanding the mental states of others (awareness of false-beliefs)
 - . Poor until around age 4 and rapidly improves by age 7
 - . Deficit in children with autism—“mindblindness’ (see Baron-Cohen, 1995)



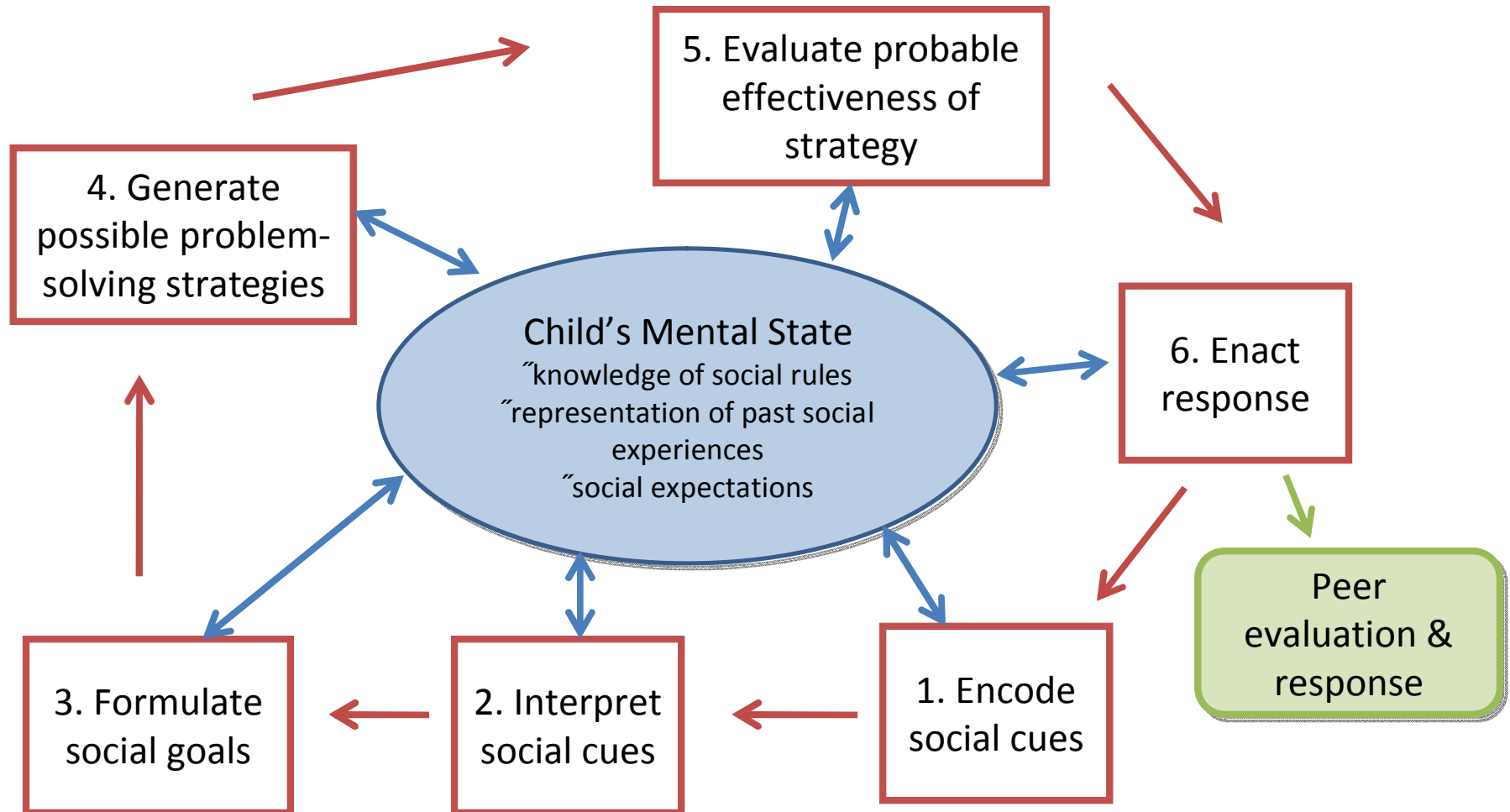
Factors that contribute to ToM

- “ Language
- “ Cognitive ability
- “ Security of attachment
- “ Make-believe play
- “ Social interaction
 - . Siblings
 - . Playing with older children

Social Problem Solving

“ Resolving conflict in ways that are acceptable to others and beneficial to self

Social Information-Processing Model



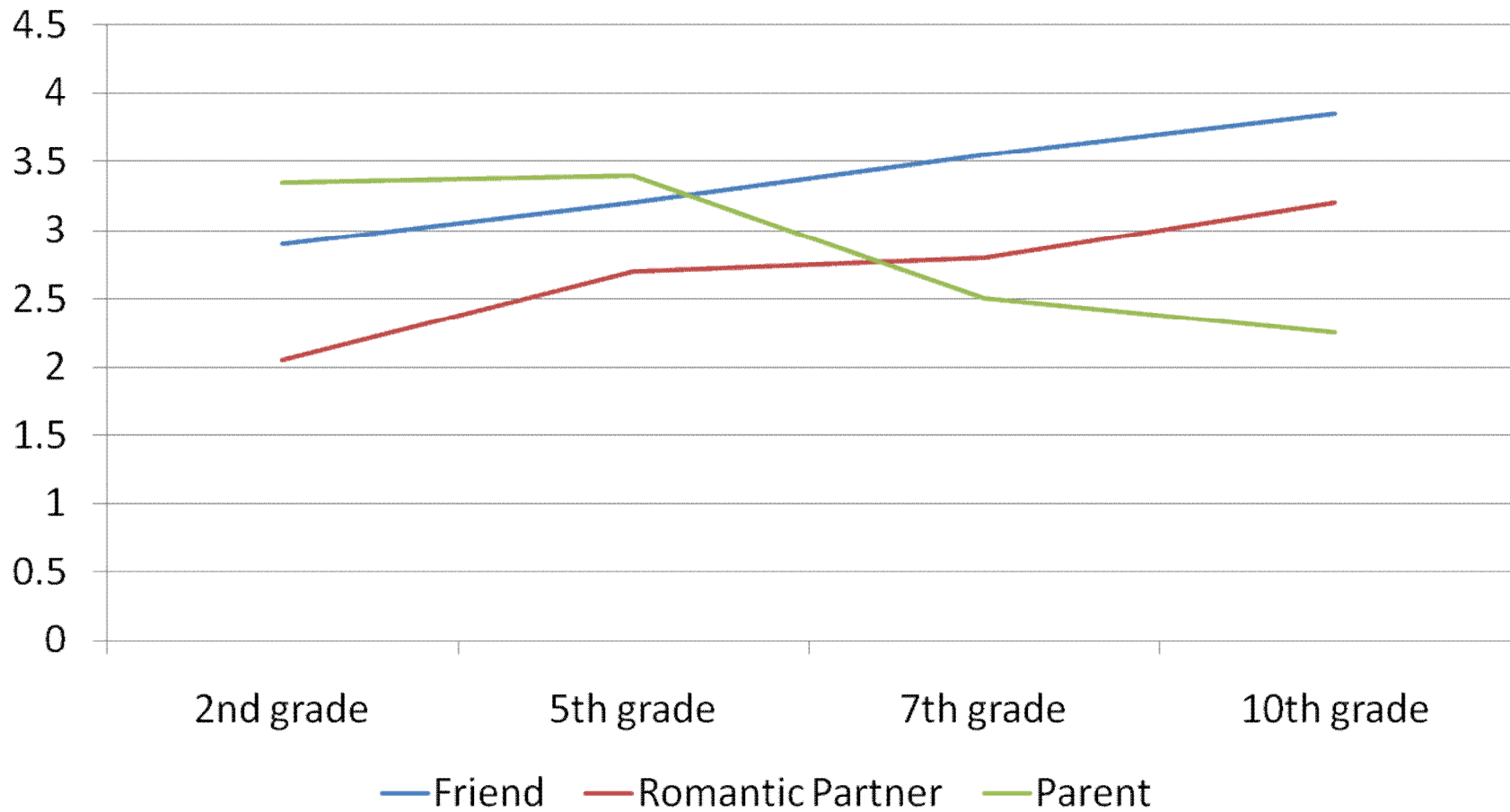
Source: Berk & Roberts, 2009, pp. 476; adapted from Crick & Dodge, 1994.



Peer Relations

- “ Friendships
- “ Peer acceptance
- “ Dating
- “ Peer pressure and conformity

Self-Disclosure



Buhrmester, 1996

Peers

- “ During average week during school year
 - . 1/3rd of waking hours talking with peers and 8% of this time talking with adults
 - . report most happy when talking with peers

Autonomy

“ As children age they turn away from parents and move toward peers.

Psychological Review
1995, Vol. 102, No. 3, 458–489

Copyright 1995 by the American Psychological Association, Inc.
0033-295X/95/\$3.00

Where Is the Child's Environment? A Group Socialization Theory of Development

Judith Rich Harris
Middletown, New Jersey

Do parents have any important long-term effects on the development of their child's personality? This article examines the evidence and concludes that the answer is no. A new theory of development is proposed: that socialization is context-specific and that outside-the-home socialization takes place in the peer groups of childhood and adolescence. Intra- and intergroup processes, not dyadic relationships, are responsible for the transmission of culture and for environmental modification of children's personality characteristics. The universality of children's groups explains why development is not derailed by the wide variations in parental behavior found within and between societies.

Interpersonal Needs

Age	Interpersonal Need
Infancy	▪ Need for contact with people
Early Childhood	▪ Need for tenderness from attachment figure
Middle Childhood	▪ Need for peer playmates and acceptance into peer group
Preadolescence	▪ Need for intimacy and consensual validation
Early Adolescence	▪ Need for intimacy with opposite-sex peer
Late Adolescence	▪ Need for integration into adult society

Peer Relations Milestones

Age	Friendship
Birth-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mutual relationships with familiar peers emerge.
2 ½ - 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Friendship is viewed concretely, in terms of play and sharing toys.
7-11 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Friendship is based on mutual trust and assistance.▪ Interaction between friends becomes more prosocial.▪ Number of close friends declines.▪ Friends increasingly resemble one another in personality, popularity, academic achievement, and prosocial behaviour.
12-18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Friendship is based on intimacy, mutual understanding, and loyalty.▪ Friends tend to be alike in identity status, educational aspirations, political beliefs, and deviant behaviour.▪ Young people choose some friends who differ from themselves.▪ Number of close friends declines further.

Source: adapted from Berk & Roberts, 2009, pp. 626.

How are we fairing in terms of supporting children's social emotional development?

UNICEF Report Card 7

- “ The true measure of a nation’s standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born.
- Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries



The chart below presents the findings of this *Report Card* in summary form. Countries are listed in order of their average rank for the six dimensions of child well-being that have been assessed.¹ A light blue background indicates a place in the top third of the table; mid-blue denotes the middle third and dark blue the bottom third.

		Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5	Dimension 6
Dimensions of child well-being	Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Educational well-being	Family and peer relationships	Behaviours and risks	Subjective well-being
Netherlands	4.2	10	2	6	3	3	1
Sweden	5.0	1	1	5	15	1	7
Denmark	7.2	4	4	8	9	6	12
Finland	7.5	3	3	4	17	7	11
Spain	8.0	12	6	15	8	5	2
Switzerland	8.3	5	9	14	4	12	6
Norway	8.7	2	8	11	10	13	8
Italy	10.0	14	5	20	1	10	10
Ireland	10.2	19	19	7	7	4	5
Belgium	10.7	7	16	1	5	19	16
Germany	11.2	13	11	10	13	11	9
Canada	11.8	6	13	2	18	17	15
Greece	11.8	15	18	16	11	8	3
Poland	12.3	21	15	3	14	2	19
Czech Republic	12.5	11	10	9	19	9	17
France	13.0	9	7	18	12	14	18
Portugal	13.7	16	14	21	2	15	14
Austria	13.8	8	20	19	16	16	4
Hungary	14.5	20	17	13	6	18	13
United States	18.0	17	21	12	20	20	–
United Kingdom	18.2	18	12	17	21	21	20

12th

OECD countries with insufficient data to be included in the overview: Australia, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, the Slovak Republic, South Korea, Turkey.

Figure 3.0 The educational well-being of children, an OECD overview

The league table below attempts to show each country's performance in 'children's educational well-being' in relation to the average for the OECD countries under review. Scores given are averages of the scores for the three components selected to represent children's educational well-being (see box below).

The league table is scaled to show each country's distance above or below the OECD average of 100.

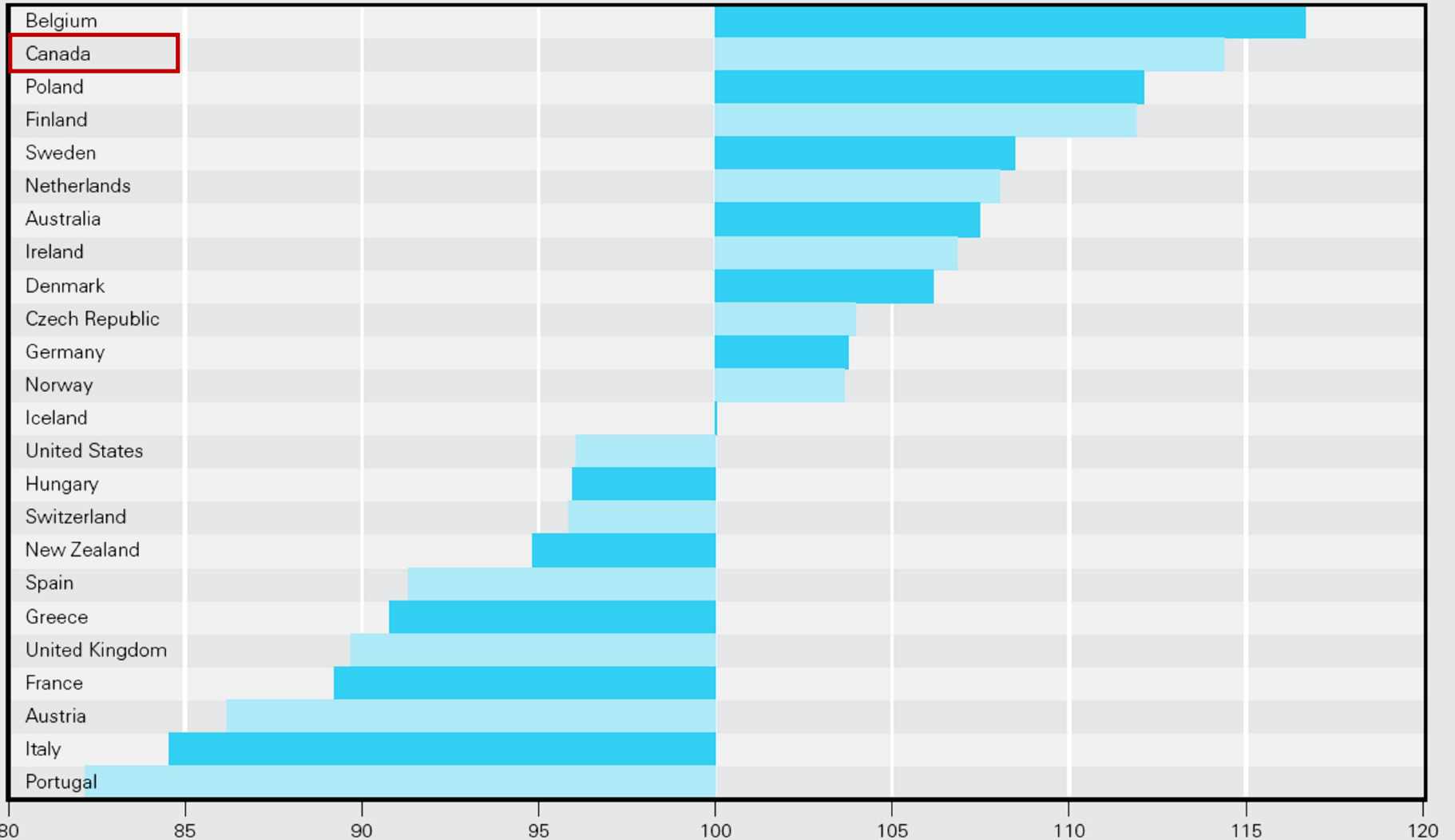
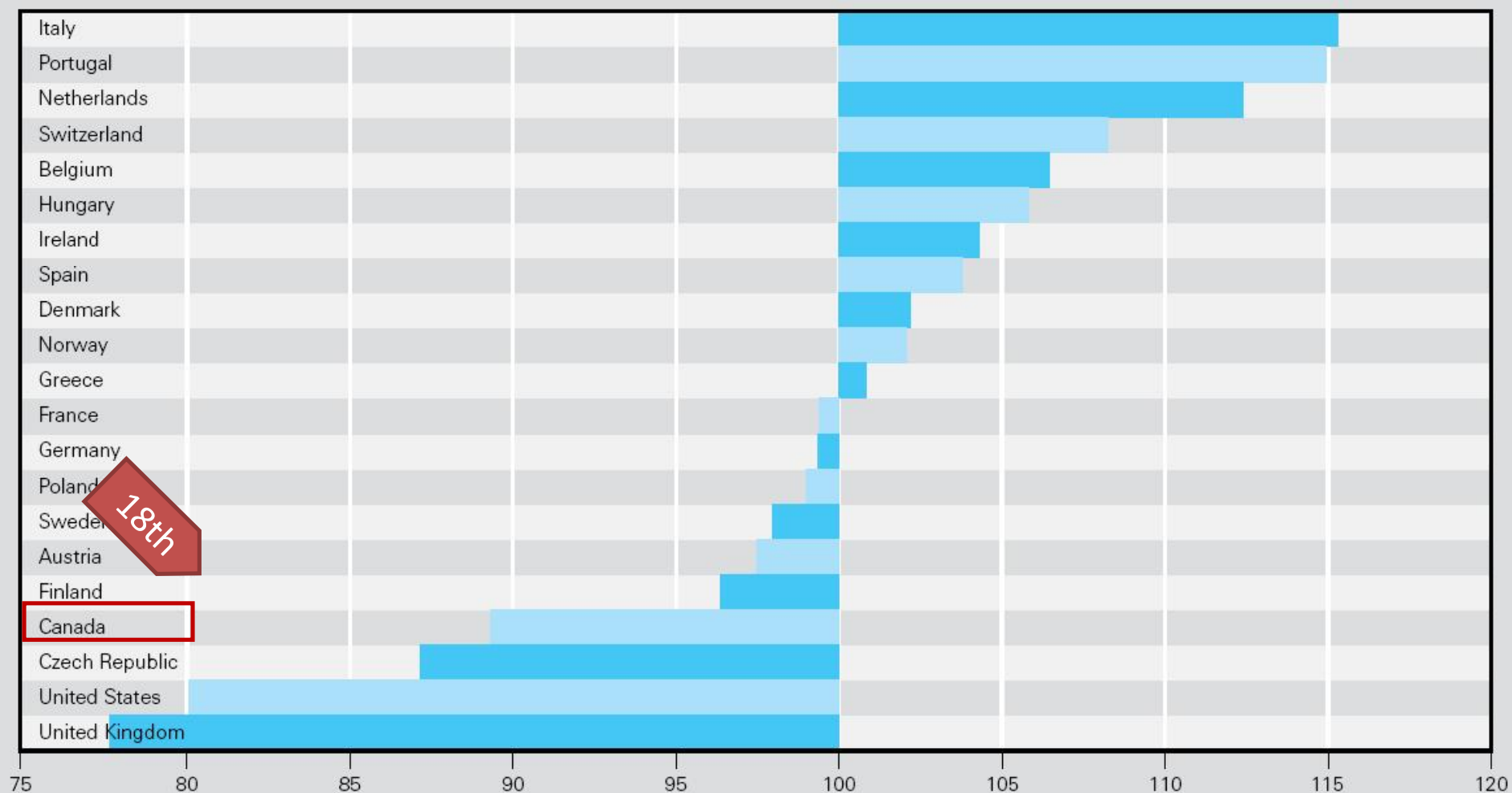


Figure 4.0 Young people's family and peer relationships, an OECD overview

The quality of children's relationships is as difficult to measure as it is critical to well-being. Nonetheless it was considered too important a factor to be omitted altogether and an attempt has therefore been made to measure the quality of 'family and peer relationships' using data on family structures, plus children's own answers to survey questions. The table below shows each country's approximate standing in relation to the average recorded for the OECD as a whole.

The table is scaled to show each country's distance above or below the OECD average of 100.



Assessing young people's relationships

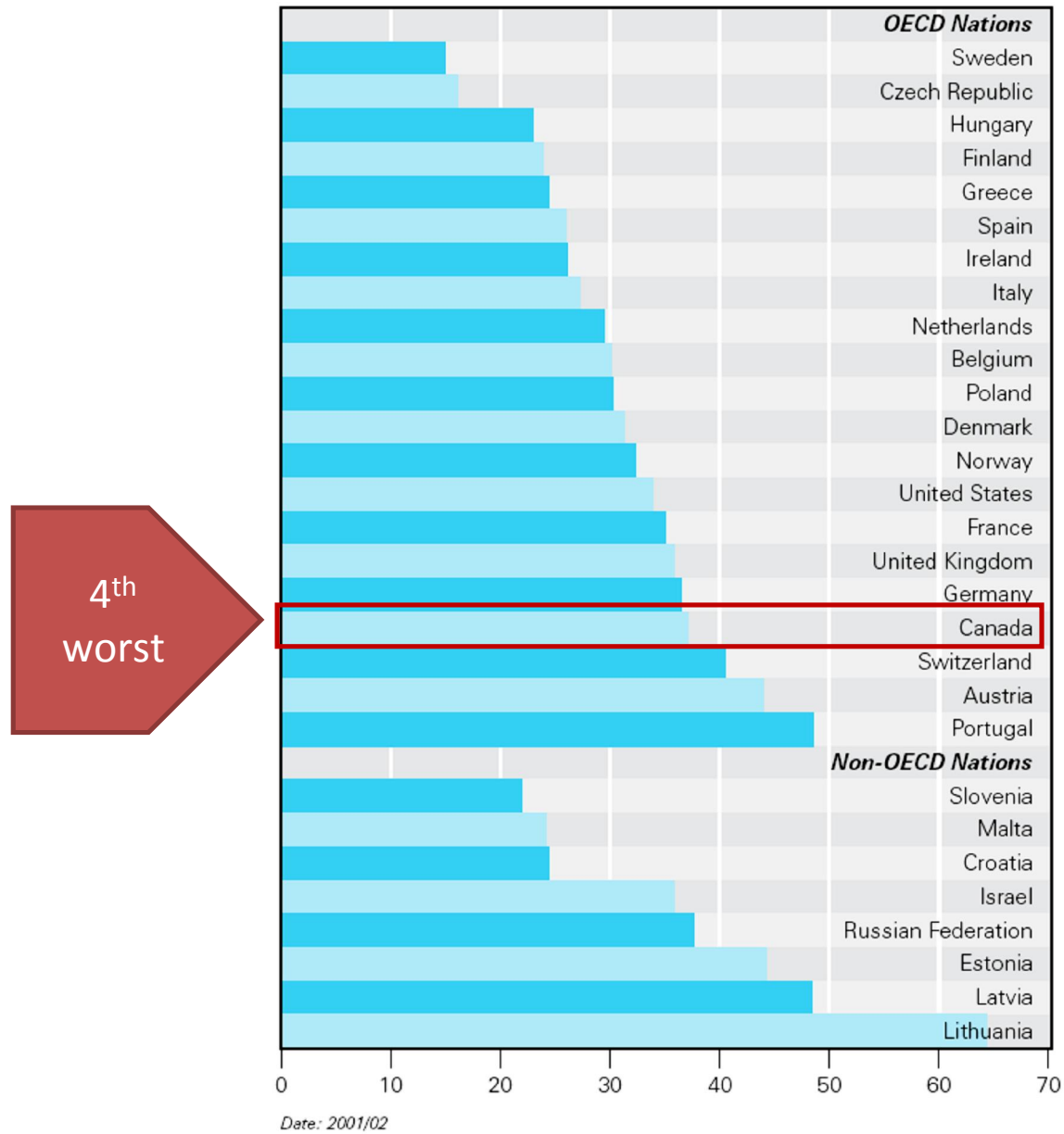
The box on the right shows how the index of 'children's relationships' has been constructed. The indicators used reflect the limited availability of internationally comparable data.

For each indicator, countries have been given a score which reveals how far that country stands above or below the average for the OECD countries under review. Where more than one indicator has been used, scores have been averaged. In the same way, the three component scores have been averaged to arrive at each country's overall rating for this 'Relationships' dimension of children's well-being (see box on page 5).

Relationships

COMPONENTS	INDICATORS
family structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– percentage of children living in single-parent families– percentage of children living in stepfamilies
family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– percentage of children who report eating the main meal of the day with parents more than once a week– percentage of children who report that parents spend time 'just talking' to them
peer relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– percentage of 11, 13 and 15 year-olds who report finding their peers 'kind and helpful'

Figure 5.3b Percentage of young people age 11, 13 and 15 who report being bullied in the previous 2 months



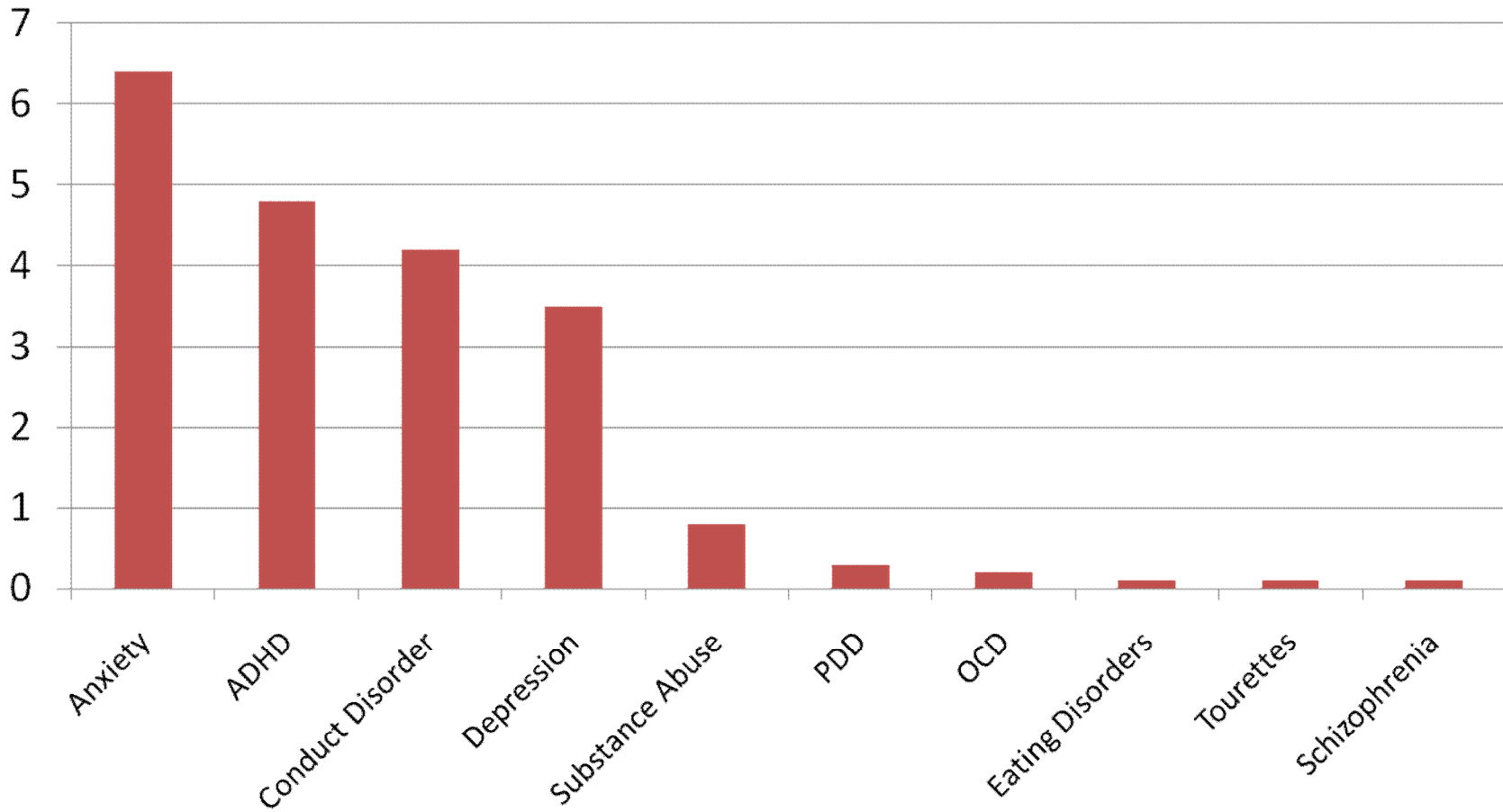
“ We need to prioritize social-emotional development.

The Priority of Human Relationships

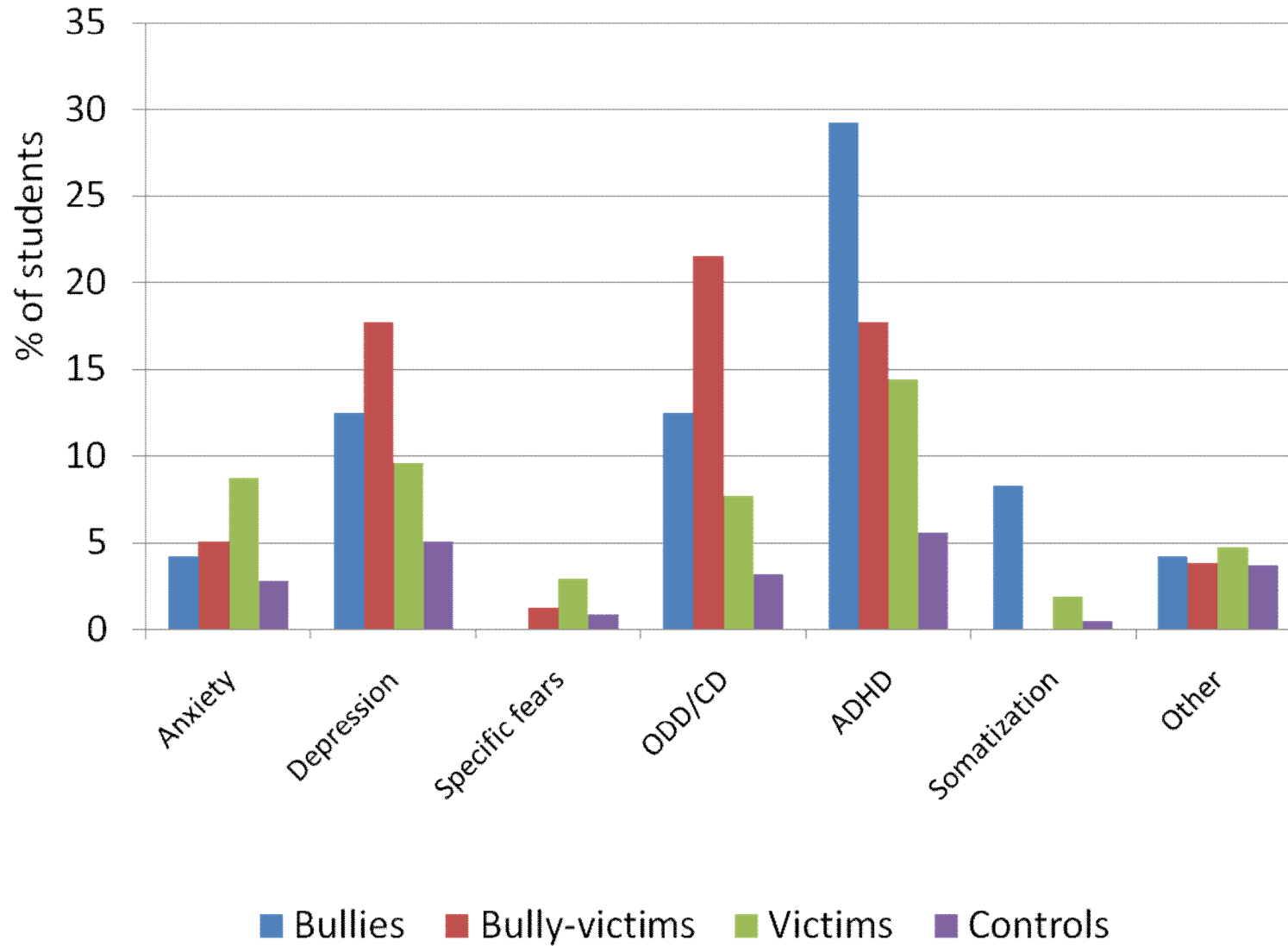
- “ Belonging is a basic human need
- “ We have a fundamental, biologically-based human drive to form emotional bonds and attachments with others
 - . attachment theory



Prevalence: Diagnosed Mental Disorder



Bullying and Psychiatric Diagnosis



Kumpulainen, K., Rasanen, E., & Puura, K. (2001)

- “ The link between problematic peer experiences to psychopathology is not that surprising
- . + social affiliation is firmly rooted in our evolutionary past
 - . any form of social exclusion, ostracism or rejection tends to be perceived as stressful (MacDonald & Leary, 2005; Williams, 2007)
 - “ pain experienced by social rejection is akin to the experiences of physical pain—both are mediated by a similar physiological system
 - . Eisenberger, Liberman & Williams, 2003

Thanks.

