

Women and children last? Comparing early-years experiences in Scotland and England

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Overview



- Why look at this issue?
- How did we do the research?
- What did we find?
- Conclusions & limitations
- Who does this matter to?
- Where next?

Why look at this issue? (1)



- Early years and childhood experiences can have profound and long-lasting consequences for individuals' health.
- Negative early years and childhood experiences (EYCE) also proposed as a possible 'midstream' contributory factor to excess poor health and mortality in Scotland (and Glasgow conurbation vs. English cities).

Why look at this issue? (2)



- Full report also provides comparison of Glasgow & the Clyde Valley vs. Greater Manchester & Merseyside
- Today's focus: Scotland vs. England

How did we do the research? (1)



- Compared with England, are early years and childhood experiences different in Scotland *now*?
- Compared with England, were early years and childhood experiences different in Scotland *in the past*? (1950s-1980s)
- A descriptive study at this stage: no attempt to link directly with adult health outcomes or control for all influences together

How did we do the research? (2)



- Review of existing literature & consultation with experts to find out ‘most important’ early years and childhood factors
 - Preview Study, Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Scoping of key data sources, to identify how these aspects might be measured
 - Four British Birth Cohorts (b. 1946, 1958, 1970 and 2000)
 - Basic checks for representativeness
 - Plus administrative sources/other surveys as appropriate

How did we do the research? (3)



Theme	Aspects covered
Social and material circumstances	Maternal education, Age of mother, Low birth weight, Home ownership, Workless households, Benefits dependency, Living in poverty, BME, Lone parent households, Cohabiting households
Dysfunctional households	Parental discord, Domestic abuse, Parental substance misuse, Male imprisonment rates, Looked after children
Maternal and child health	Mother's smoking during pregnancy, Mother's general health, Pre-pregnancy obesity, Maternal mental health, Mother's feelings of powerlessness, Children with a limiting long-term illness
Parenting	Conflict: Parent-child conflict, Disagreement about parenting Learning & development: Reading to child, Breastfeeding, Childcare Harsh discipline: Smacking, shouting Rules: Regular mealtimes, Regular bedtimes Warmth & affection Children with behavioural problems

What did we find? – social & material circumstances (1)



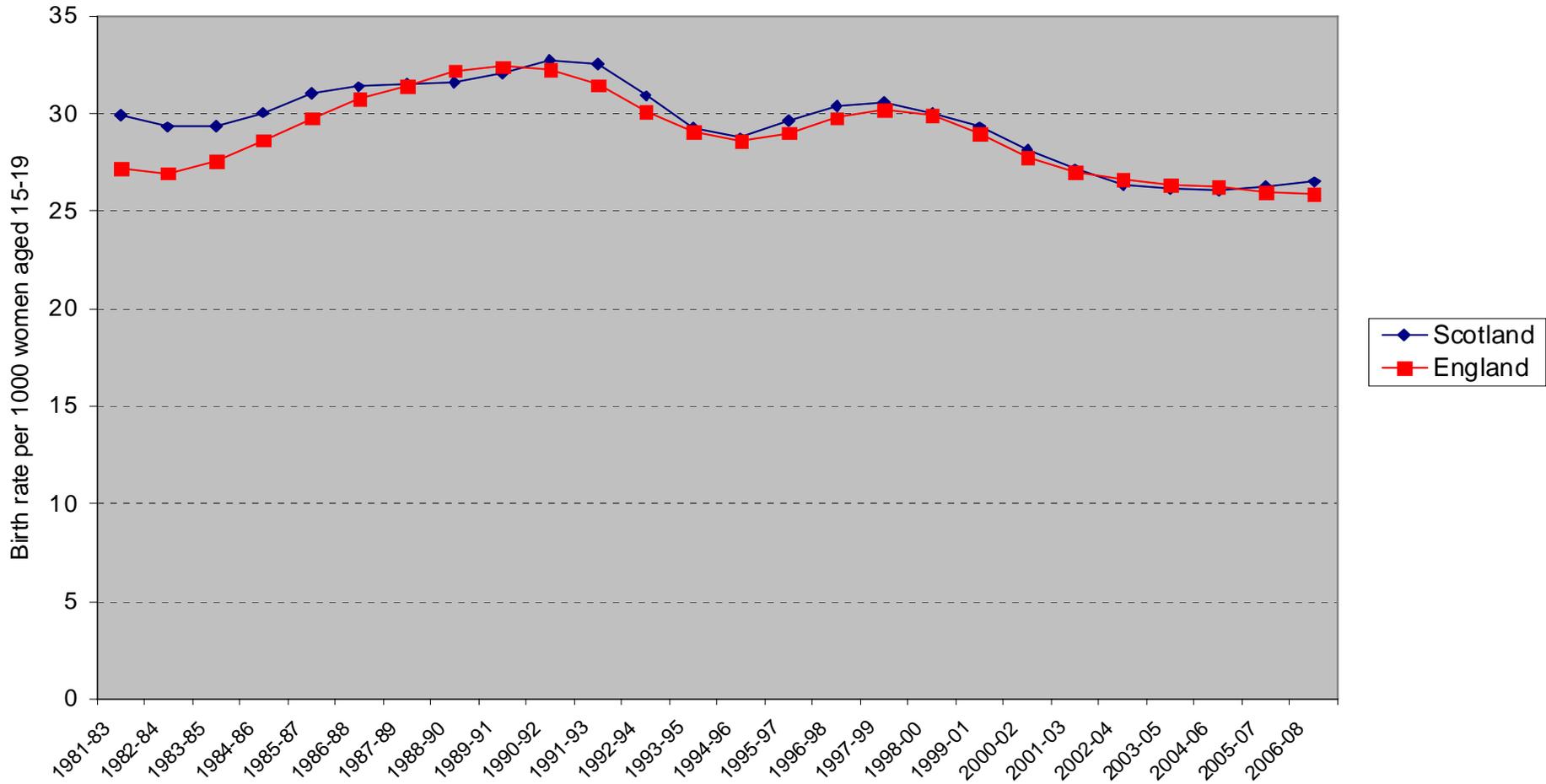
- Little evidence of consistent Scottish social and material disadvantage compared to England *now*
 - Exception of lone parent households, but difference small (23% vs. 20%)
 - England more ‘disadvantaged’ in other respects, though again difference is small

Age of mother



Birth rate per 1000 women aged 15-19, Scotland and England: 1981-83 to 2006-08

Source: ONS; National Records of Scotland

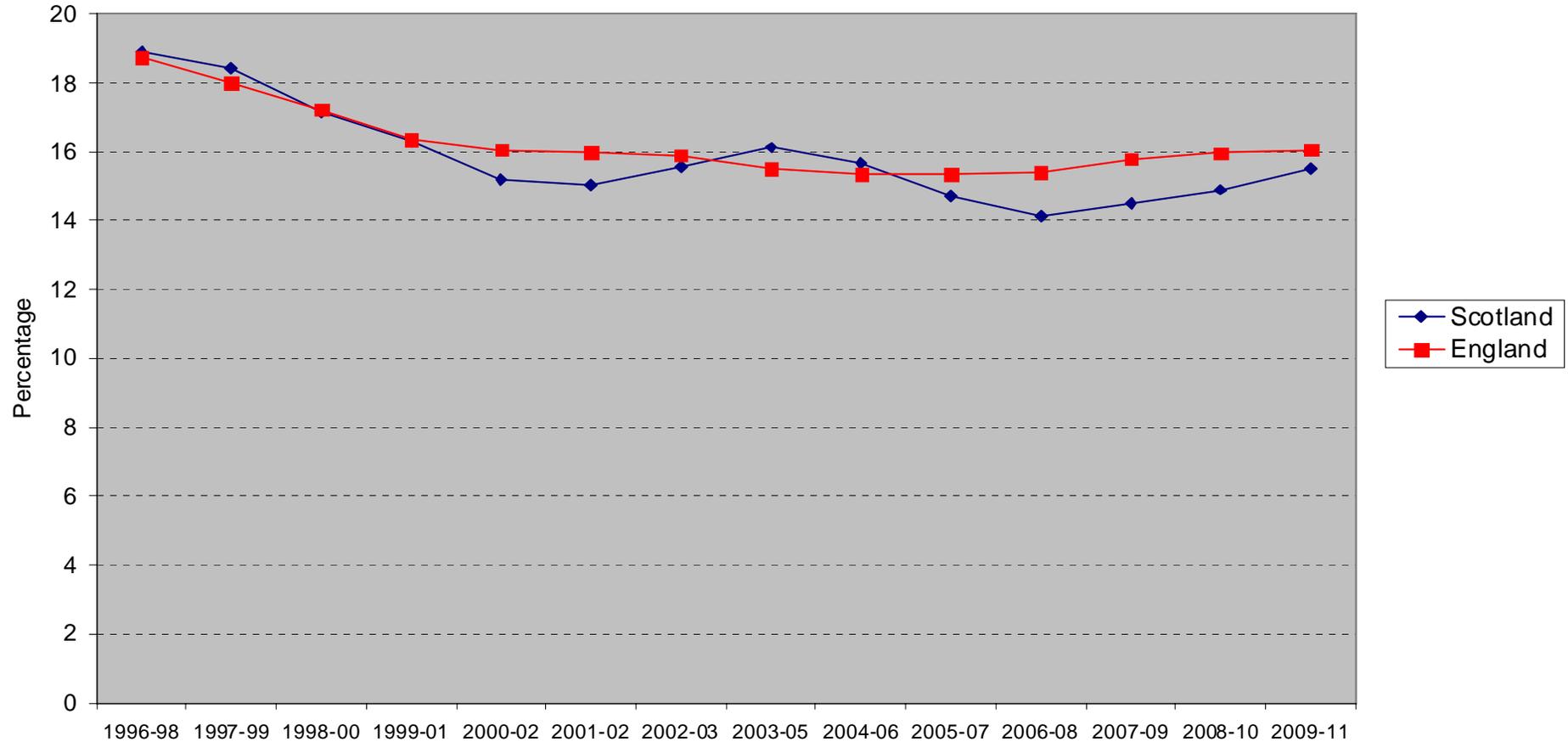


Workless households



Percentage of children under the age of 16 living in workless households, Scotland and England: 1996-98 to 2009-11

Source: Labour Force Survey Household datasets, 1996-2011 (April-June)



What did we find? – social & material circumstances (2)



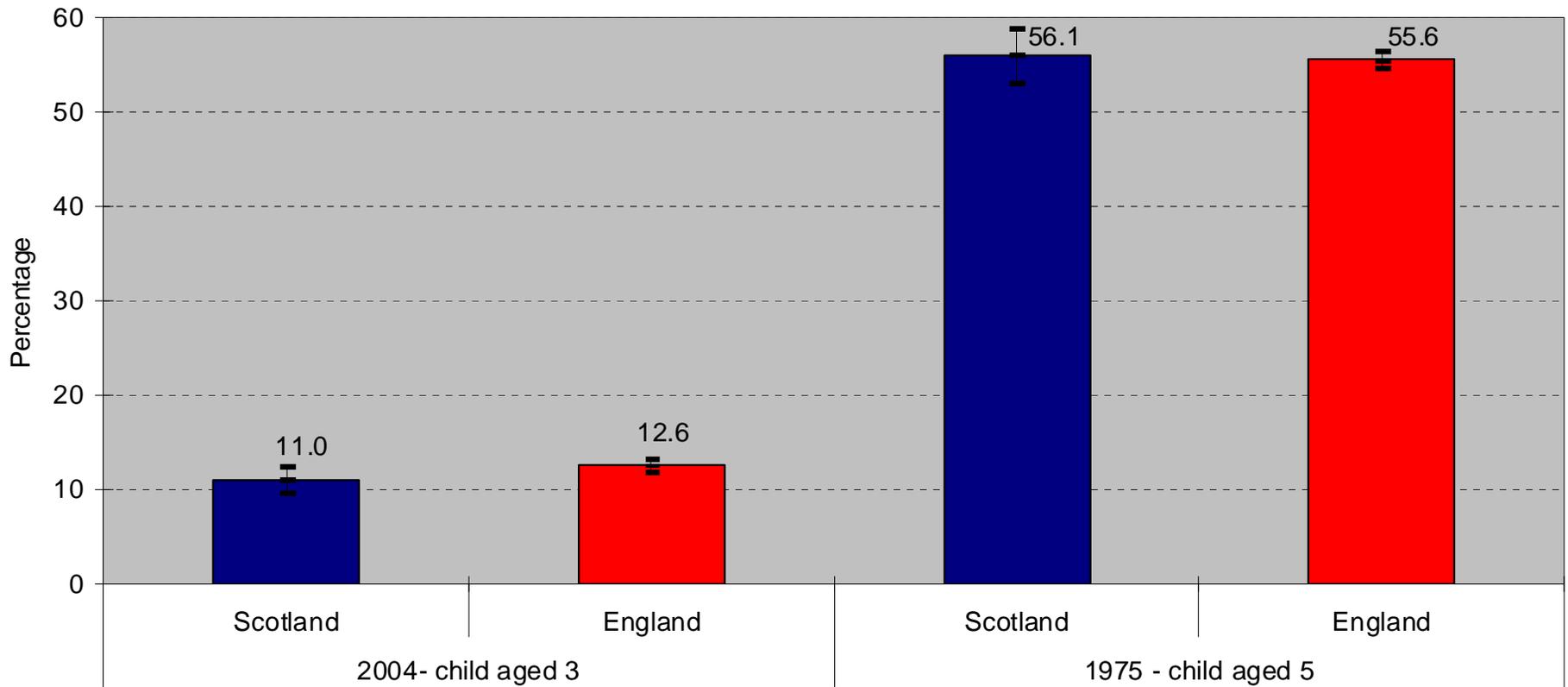
- Historic differences in housing tenure – but meaning unclear
- Some evidence that Scottish children may have been disadvantaged by lower levels of maternal education in 1940s/1950s – no longer by 1970s

Maternal education



Percentage of mothers with no qualifications, 1970s and 2000s: Scotland v England

Source: Millennium Cohort Study; British Birth Cohort Study



What did we find? – dysfunctional households (1)



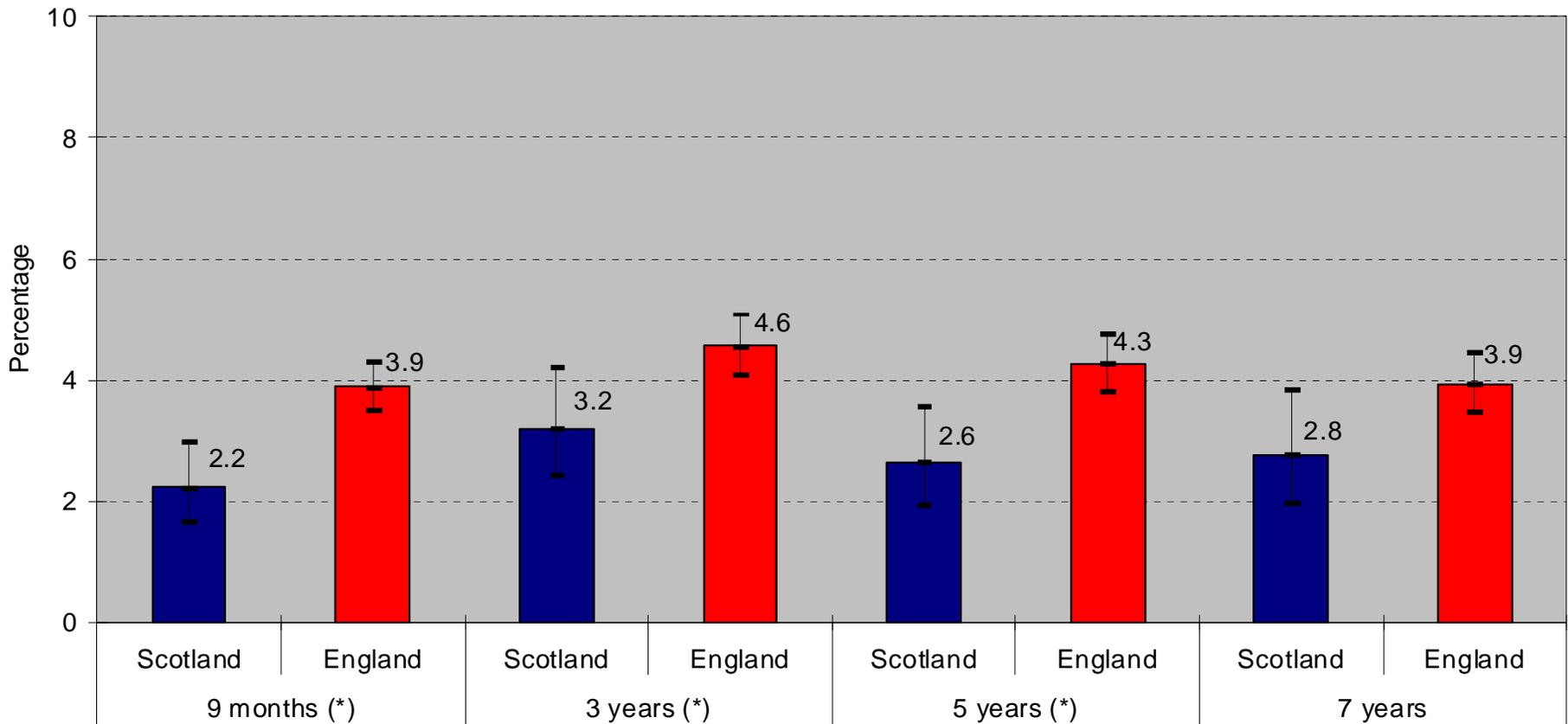
- Contradictory or incomplete findings:
 - Domestic abuse
 - Parental substance misuse (but....)
 - Parental imprisonment

Domestic abuse (1)



**Percentage of mother reporting that partner ever used force,
Scotland and England**

Source: Millennium Cohort Survey

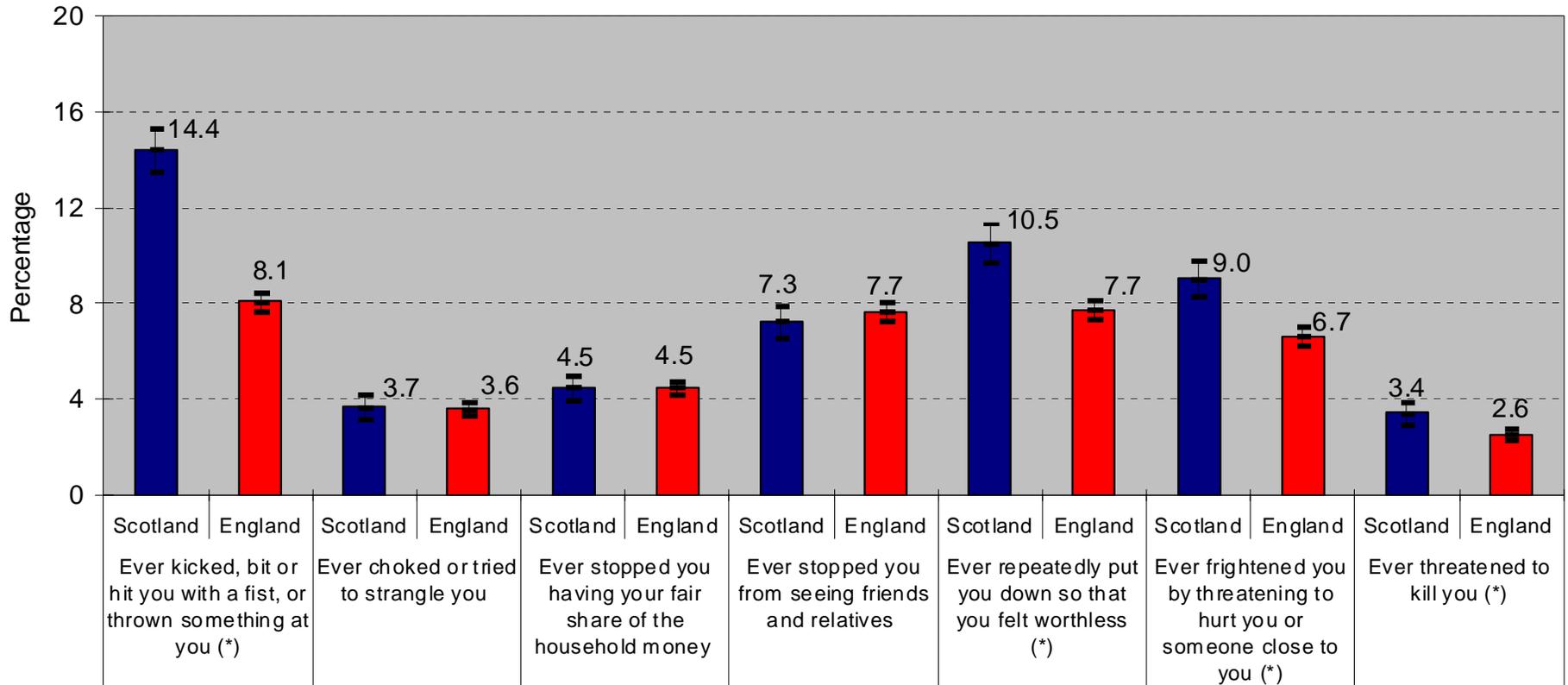


Domestic abuse (2)



Percentage of adults aged 16-59 with at least one child in household reporting aspects of domestic abuse, England and Scotland: 2008-09 & 2009-10

Sources: British Crime Survey; Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

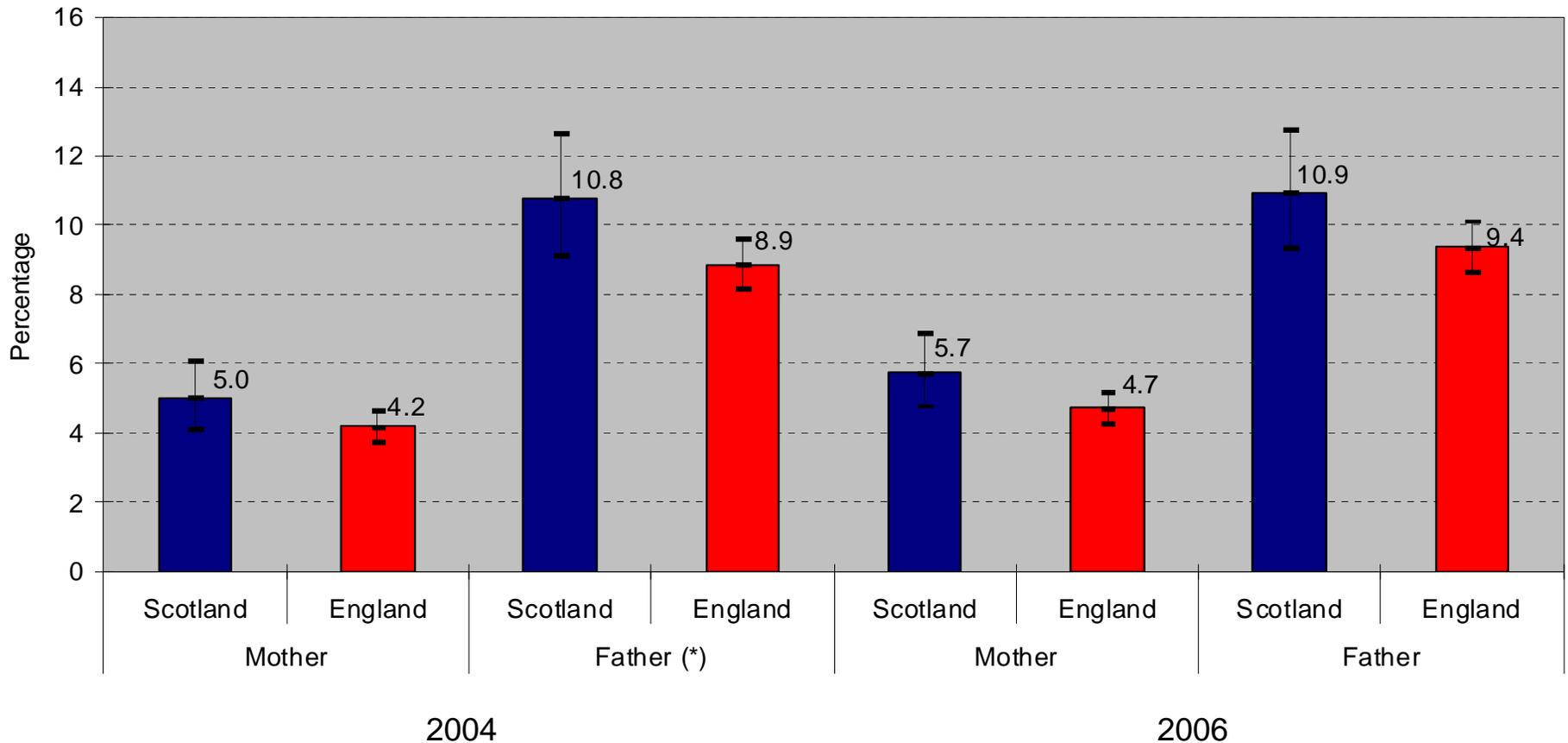


Parental substance misuse



Percentage of parents using recreational drugs in the last year, Scotland and England: 2004 and 2006

Source: Millennium Cohort Study



Parental imprisonment



- Rates of adult male imprisonment higher in Scotland than England & Wales (325 per 1000 vs. 311 per 1000)
- But unclear whether this holds true for parents (lack of comparable data between countries)

What did we find? – dysfunctional households (2)



- ‘Looked after’ children – rates higher in Scotland (11.8 per 1000 vs. 4.9 per 1000)
 - More Scottish LAC living with parents
 - But difficult to interpret because of different admin/legal systems and definitions of ‘looked after’

What did we find? – dysfunctional households (3)



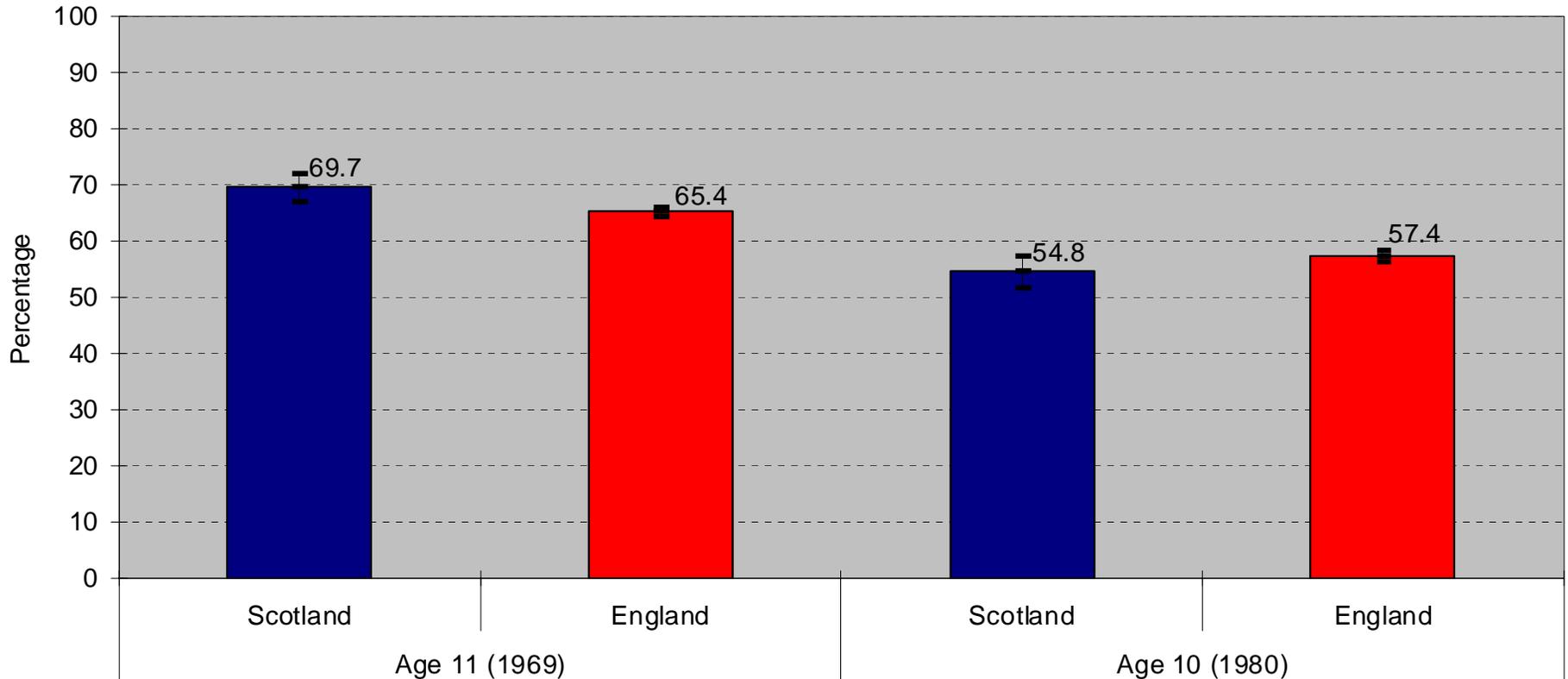
- Little evidence that Scottish fathers less involved in home and family compared to English peers, now or in the past

Involvement of fathers – 1960s/70s



Percentage of mothers reporting father plays a big role, equal to mother, age 11 and 10, Scotland and England: 1969 and 1980

Source: NCDS 1958; British Cohort Survey 1970



What did we find? – child and maternal health (1)



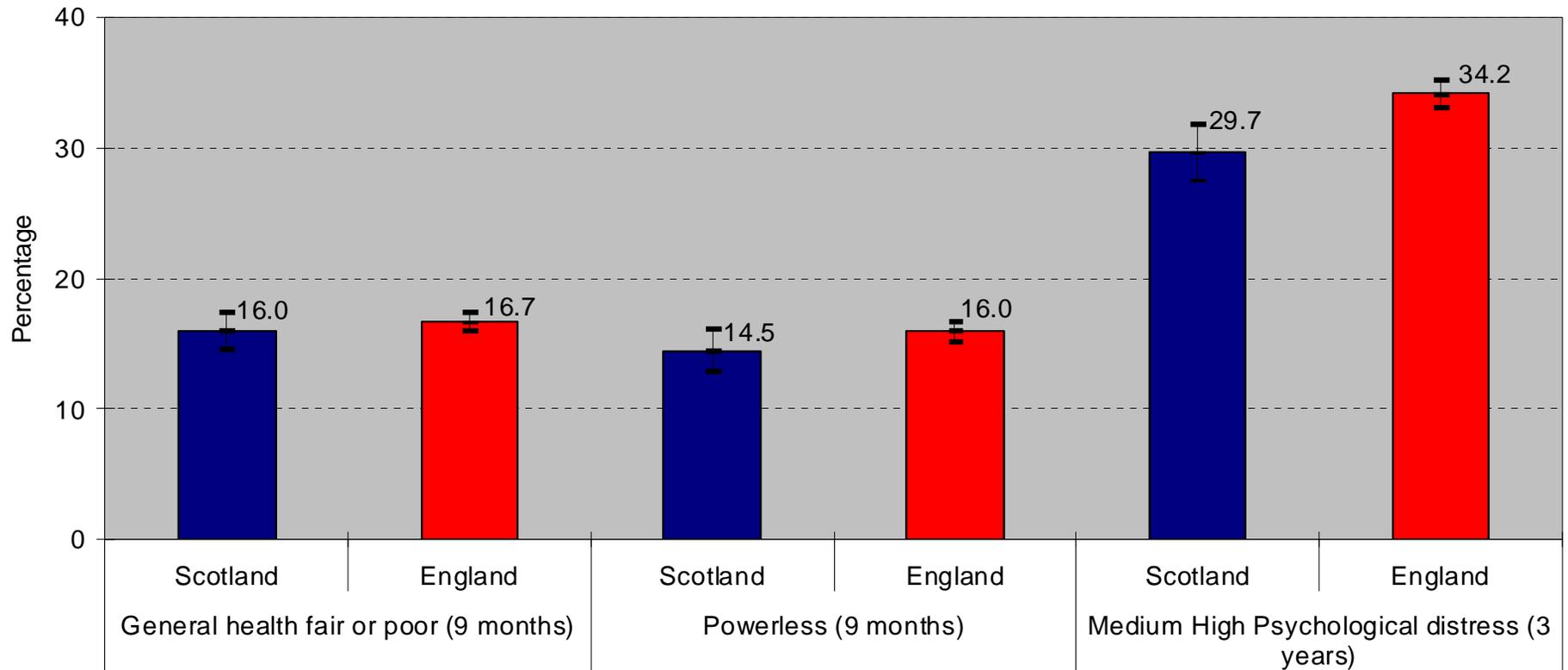
- Few differences found – Scotland & England similar on:
 - Self-rated maternal health
 - Maternal mental health
 - Self-efficacy (powerlessness)
 - Childhood limiting long-term illness
 - Pre-pregnancy maternal obesity (But..)

Maternal general & mental health



Selected measures of maternal general and mental health, 2000s: Scotland and England

Source: Millennium Cohort Study

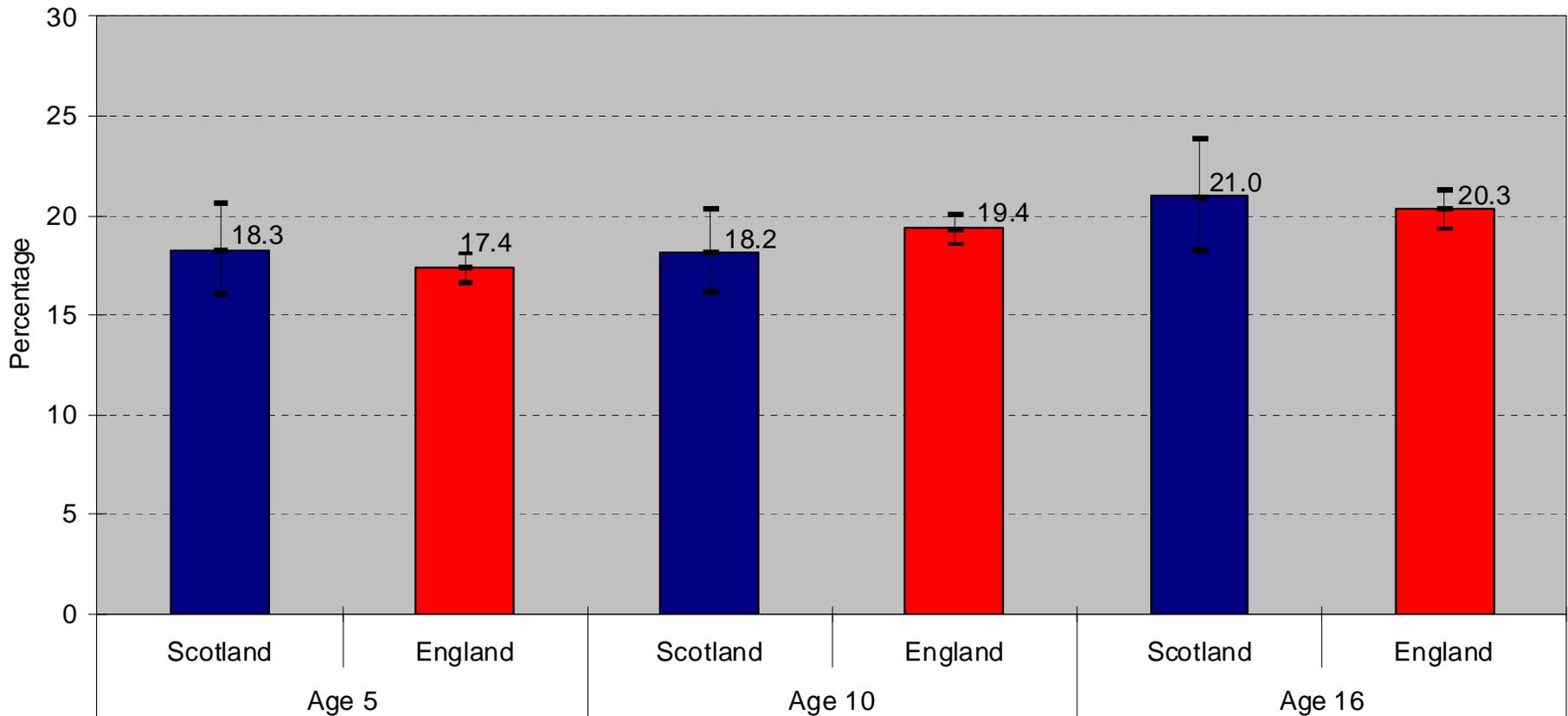


Maternal mental health – BCS1970



Percentage of mothers with moderate-high Malaise, when child 5, 10 and 16:
Scotland and England

Source: British Cohort Survey 1970



What did we find? – child and maternal health (2)



- Consistent with other evidence, smoking during pregnancy higher in Scotland (19.5% vs. 14.5%)

What did we find? – parenting (1)



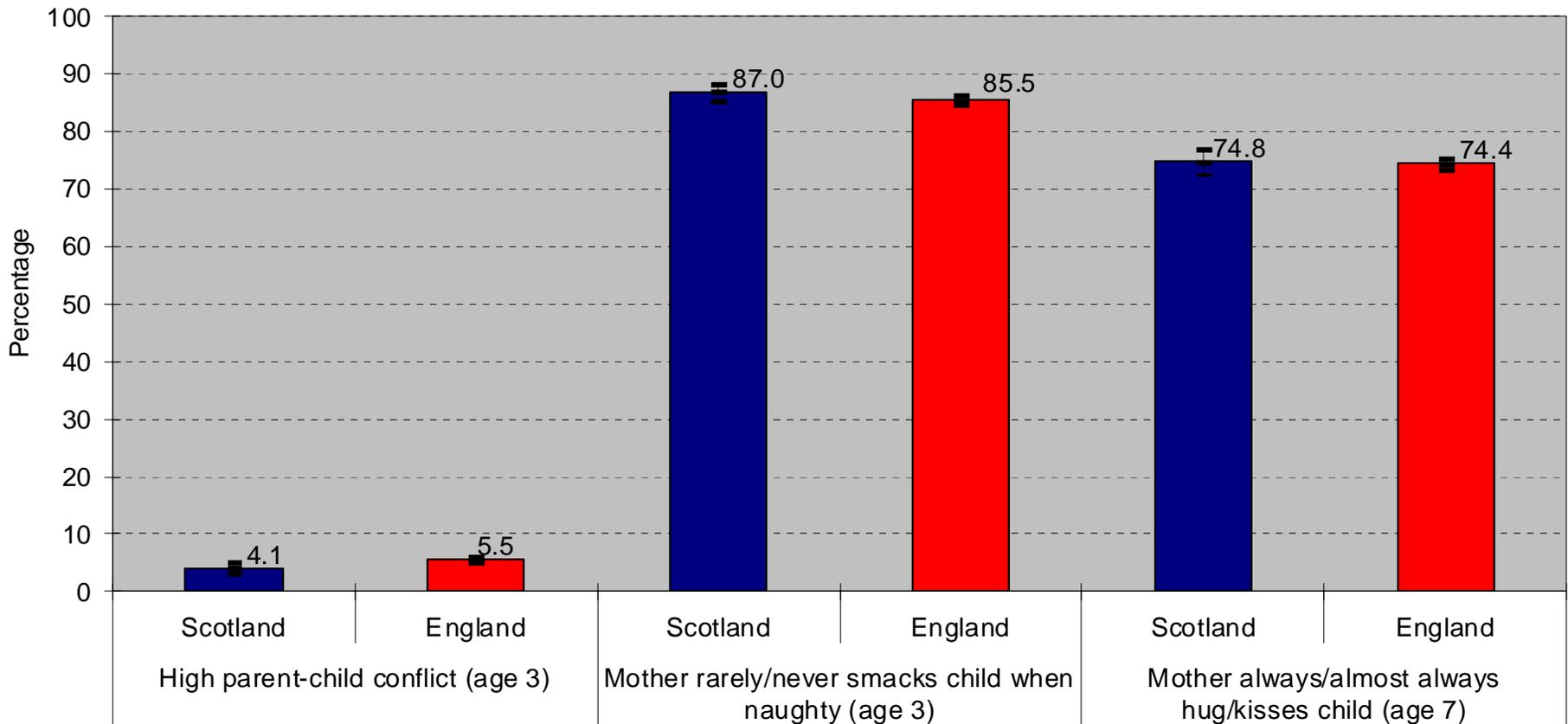
- Few differences observed for most aspects e.g.
 - Parent-child conflict
 - Reading to child
 - Use of smacking to discipline
 - Rules (regular mealtimes & bedtimes)
 - Physical affection
 - Children with behavioural problems

Parenting



Selected measures of parenting, 2000s: Scotland and England

Source: Millennium Cohort Study



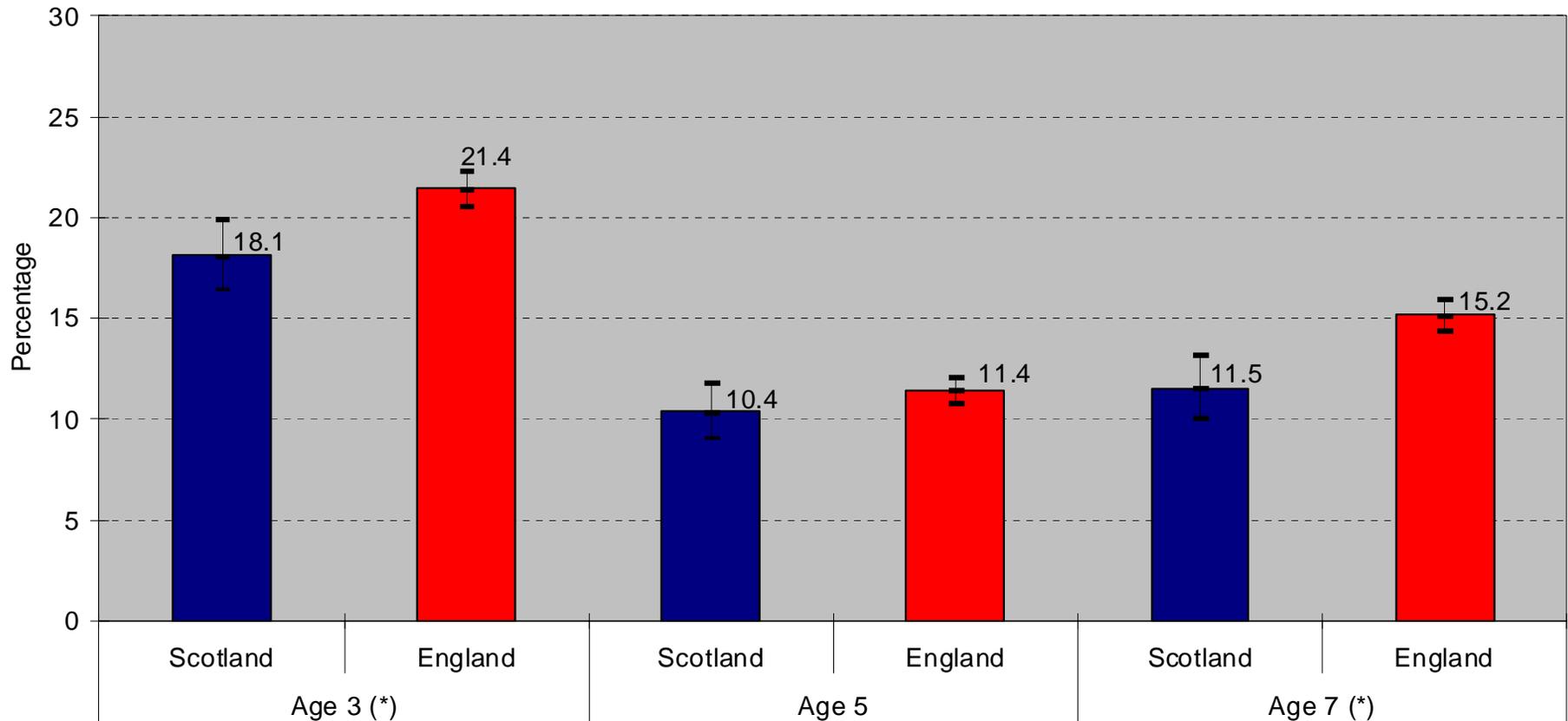
Strengths and Difficulties Scores



Percentage of children born c. 2000 with borderline-serious difficulties score

Scotland and England: age 3, age 5 and age 7

Source: Millenium Cohort Study



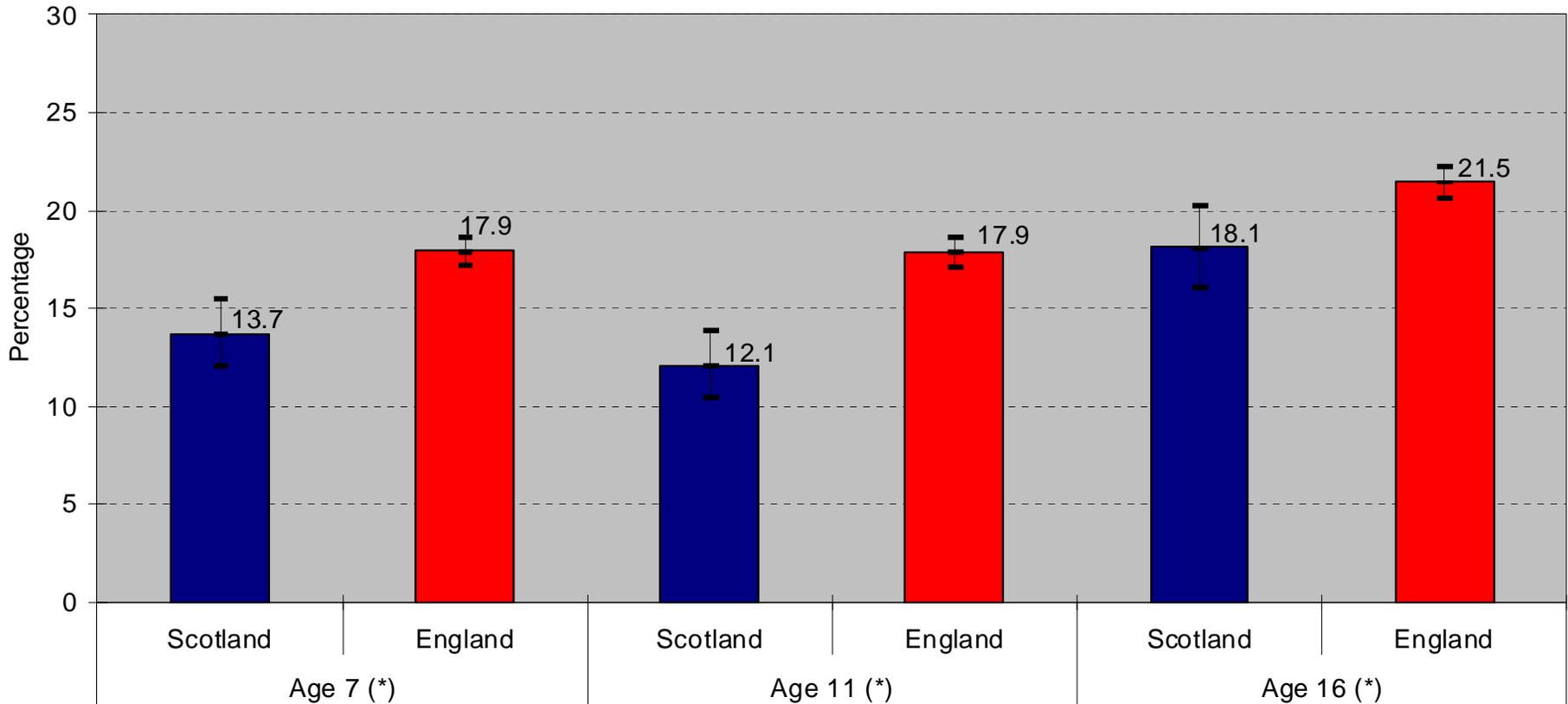
Rutter Scores – NCDS58



Percentage of NCDS 58 cohort with moderate-severe behavioural problems, Rutter scores @ 7, 11 and 16

Scotland and England: 1965, 1969 and 1974

Source: National Child Development Survey 1958



What did we find? – parenting (2)



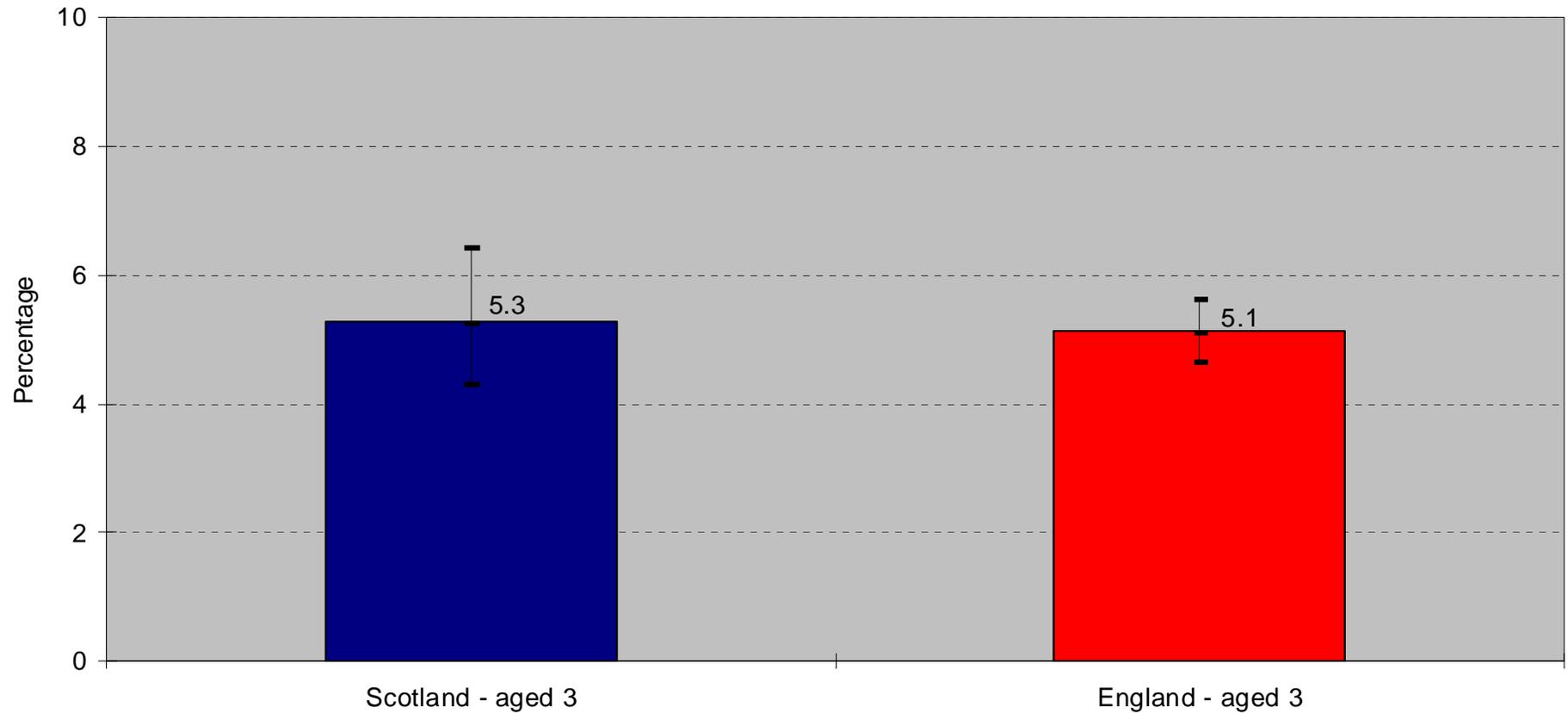
- Breastfeeding rates lower in Scotland (36% vs. 49.2%)
- Parental disagreement about child higher (+1.3%)
- Ambiguous findings in some areas e.g.
 - Parental warmth (MCS no difference but...)
 - Shouting to discipline children

Low warmth scores



Percentage of mothers with low warmth (Pianta scale)

Source: Millennium Cohort Study 2004



Shouting to discipline children



- MCS at ages 3, 7 – no difference between Scotland and England
- MCS age 5 – Scottish figure sig. higher
- *Understanding Society* (2009) found Scottish parents more likely to report ‘very often’ shouting at their children than those in England (25.3% vs. 18.2%)

Conclusions & limitations (1)



- For a wide range of measures, little evidence early years' and childhood experiences 'worse' in Scotland:
 - Social and material circumstances
 - Most aspects of parenting e.g. parent-child conflict, physical affection
 - Aspects of child & maternal health e.g. maternal mental health
- Exceptions: smoking in pregnancy, breastfeeding and parental disagreement

Conclusions & limitations (2)



- Ambiguous findings in some areas e.g.
 - Parental warmth
 - Shouting to discipline children
 - Dysfunctional households

Conclusions & limitations (3)



- Self-completion by parents
 - Social desirability bias
- Focus (largely) on mothers
- Unintentional bias (e.g. lower engagement, reduced knowledge of child's behaviour)
- How representative?
 - MCS Scottish (unweighted) sample marginally more advantaged, caution against saying Scotland 'better'

Who does this matter to?



Practice/policy

- Ongoing need to support families, parents and children, regardless of geography

Research

- Ambiguous findings in some areas e.g.
 - Parental warmth
 - Dysfunctional households
 - An ACE study for Scotland/UK?

Where next?



- Report to be published Autumn 2012.
- Make full use of the cohort studies:
 - Statistical models to quantify relationships between ‘place’ and early years and childhood experiences
 - Link Early Years and Childhood Experiences with adult health outcomes (‘causal’), for different geographies
 - Due to begin in late 2012

Thanks to



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- Everyone else who provided data...
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What did we find? – Scotland vs. England



Theme	Little difference or better	Worse	Contradictory or insufficient evidence
Social and material circumstances	Maternal education Age of mother Low birth weight Lack of home ownership Workless households Benefits dependency Living in poverty BME Cohabiting households	Lone parent households	
Dysfunctional households	Parental discord		Domestic abuse Parental substance misuse (*) Male imprisonment rates Looked after children
Maternal & child health	Mother's general health Maternal mental health Mother's feelings of powerlessness Children with a LTLI	Mother's smoking during pregnancy	Pre-pregnancy obesity
Parenting	Parent-child conflict Reading to child Childcare Use of smacking to discipline Regular mealtimes Regular bedtimes Physical affection Taking child on outings Children with behavioural problems	Disagreement about parenting Breastfeeding	Use of shouting to discipline Parent-child warmth