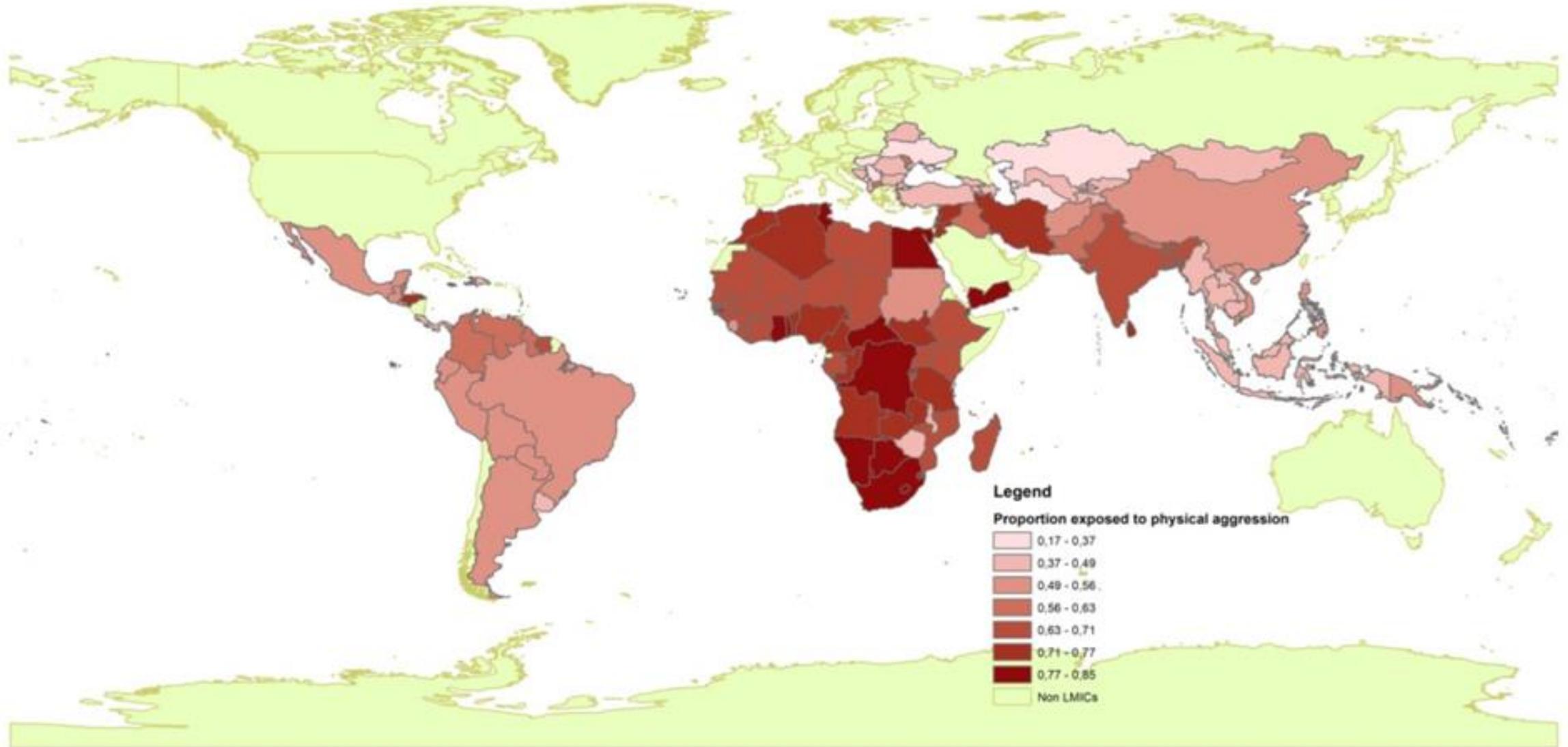


FACTSHEET

THE CHILDHOOD ORIGINS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND EXTREMISM

Sven Fuchs

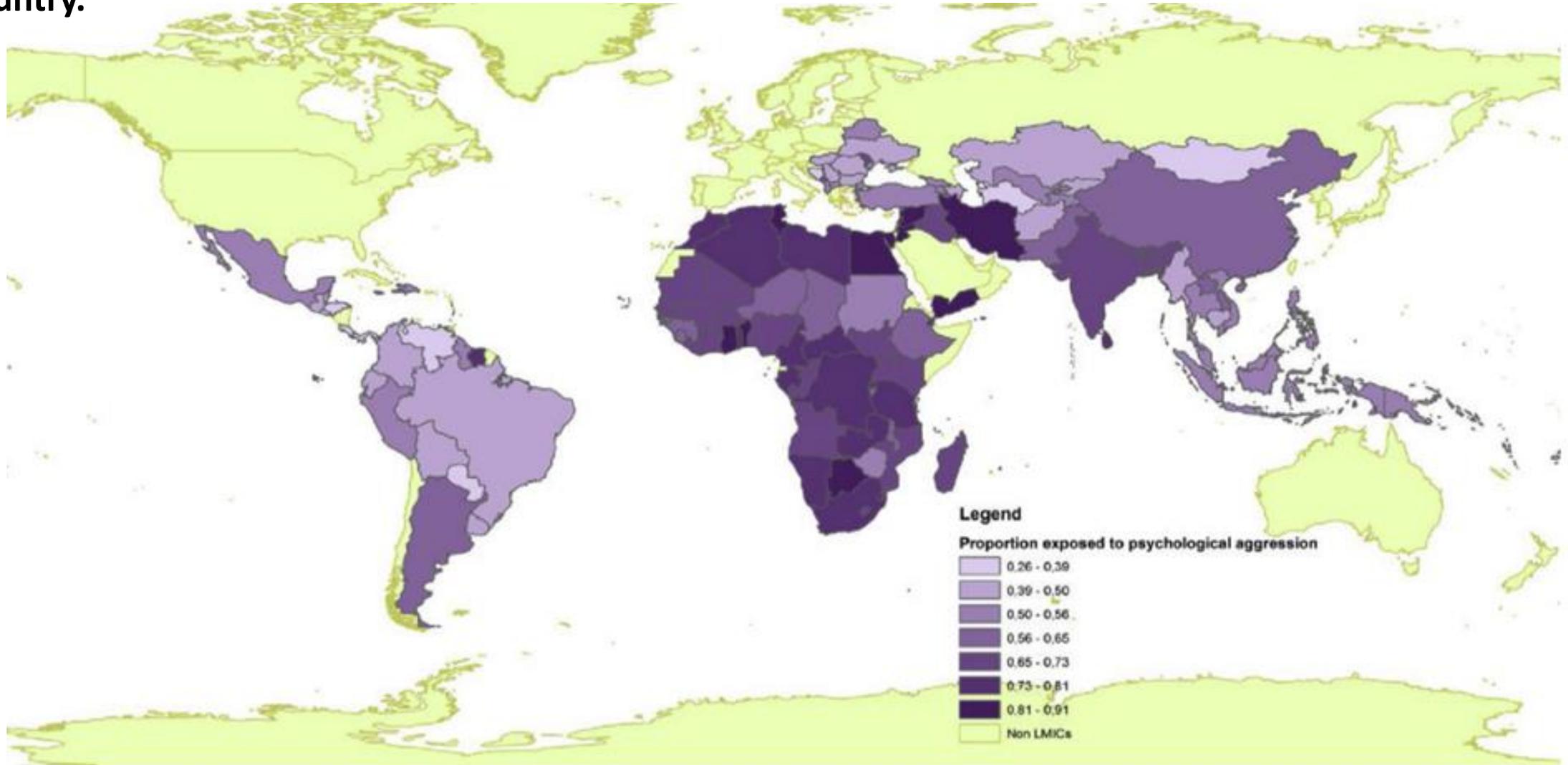
Violent discipline: Estimated proportion of 2- to 4-y-olds exposed to physical aggression in LMICs, by country.



Data are from **UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)** program, collected between 2010 and 2016 for **107,063 children**. Violent disciplinary practice by mother/primary caregiver in the month preceding the MICS interview

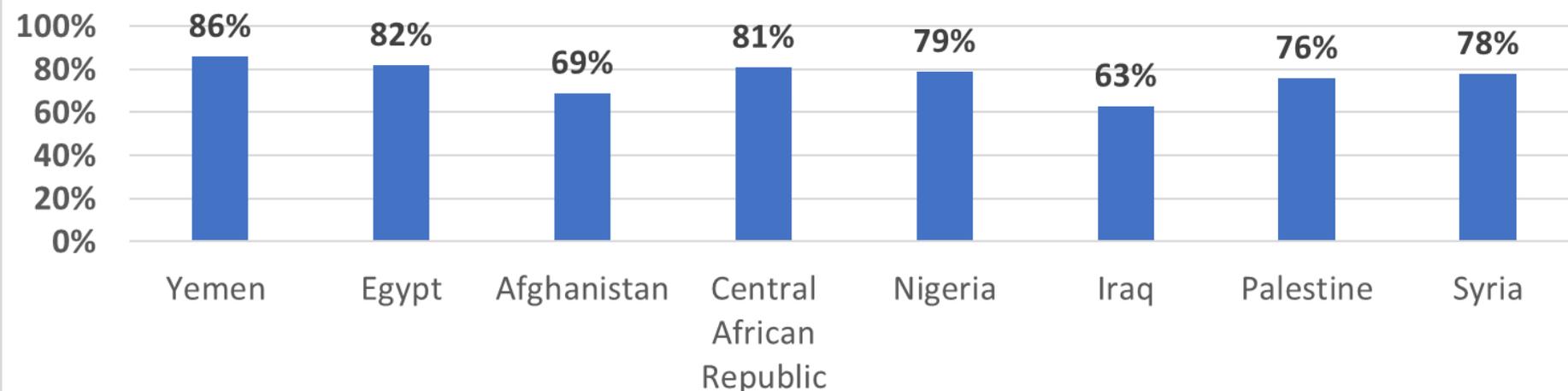
Source: Cuartas et al. (2019), *Child Abuse and Neglect*, Volume 92, p. 102.

Violent discipline: Estimated proportion of 2- to- 4-y-olds exposed to psychological aggression in LMICs, by country.



Source: Cuartas et al. (2019), *Child Abuse and Neglect*, Volume 92, p. 102.

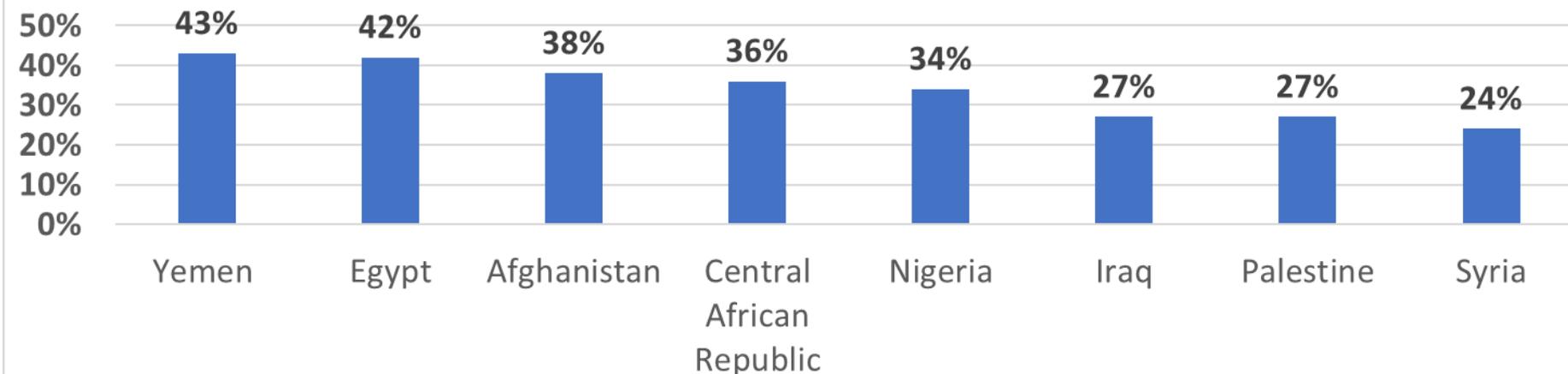
**% of children aged 2 to 14 who experienced physical punishment
(within 4 weeks)**



**Physical punishment by mother/
primary caregiver:**

“shook him/her”, “spanked, hit, slapped on bottom with bare hand”, “hit with belt, hairbrush, stick, or other hard object”, “hit/slapped on hand, arm of leg”, “hit/slapped on the face, head or ears” and/or “beat up, hit over and over as hard as one could”

**% of children aged 2 to 14 who experienced SEVERE physical punishment
(within 4 weeks)**



Severe physical punishment:

“hit/slapped on the face, head or ears” and/or “beat up, hit over and over as hard as one could”

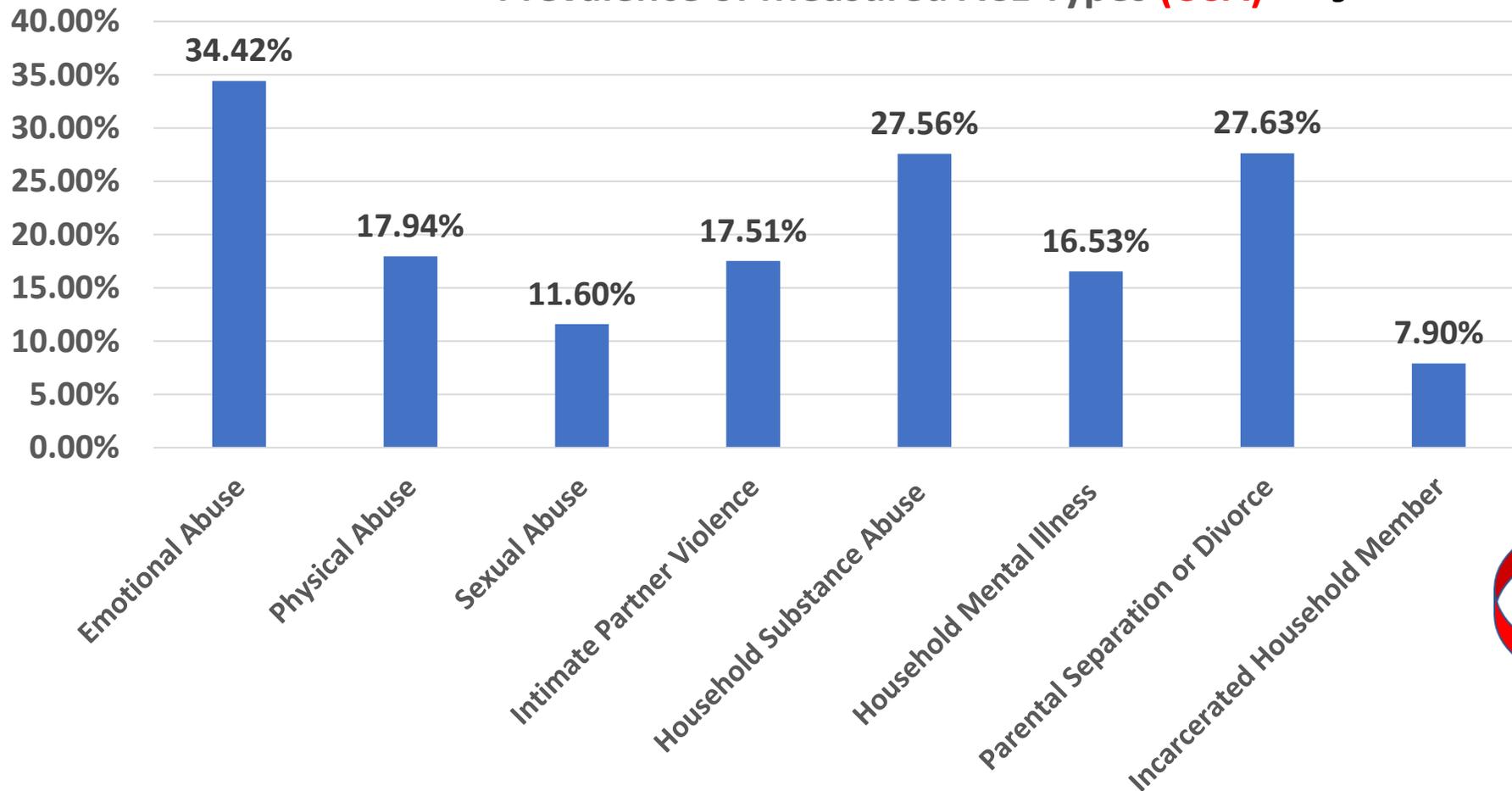
Please note! Not included:

“hit with belt, hairbrush, stick, or other hard object” ?!

diagram: Sven Fuchs

Merrick et al. (2018). Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences From the 2011-2014 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System in 23 States. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 172(11), p. 1040ff.

Prevalence of Measured ACE Types (USA) Diagram: Sven Fuchs



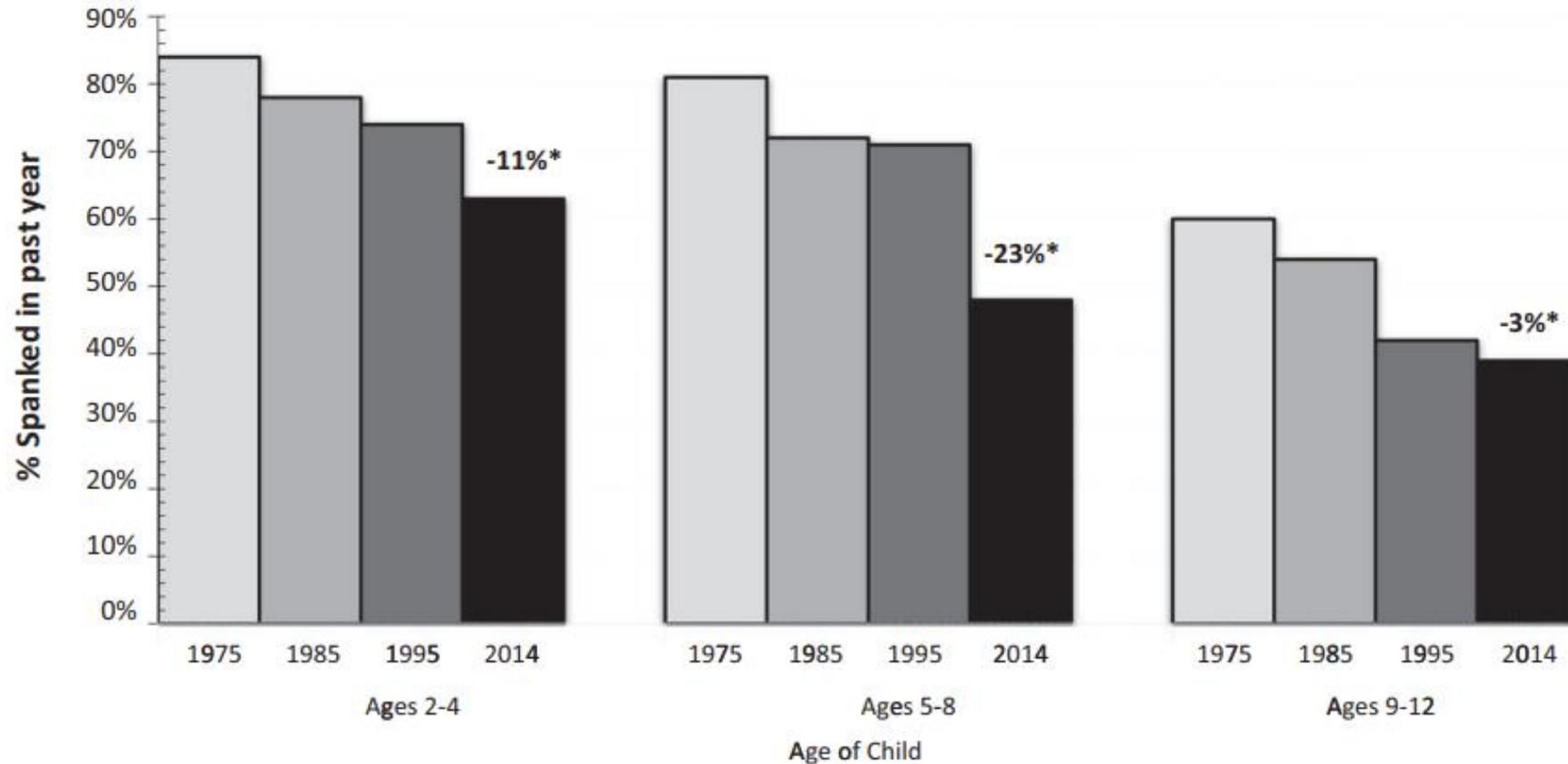
- 38.45% = 0 ACEs
- 23.53% = 1 ACE
- 13.38% = 2 ACEs
- 8.83% = 3 ACEs
- 15.81% = 4 or more ACEs



Approximately every 6th US-American belongs to the high-risk group with regard to health problems!

214,157 respondents, all adult age groups were generally represented, the largest and most diverse collection of ACE data from the BRFSS to date in the USA

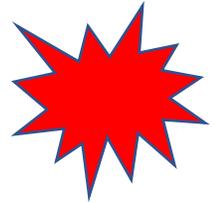
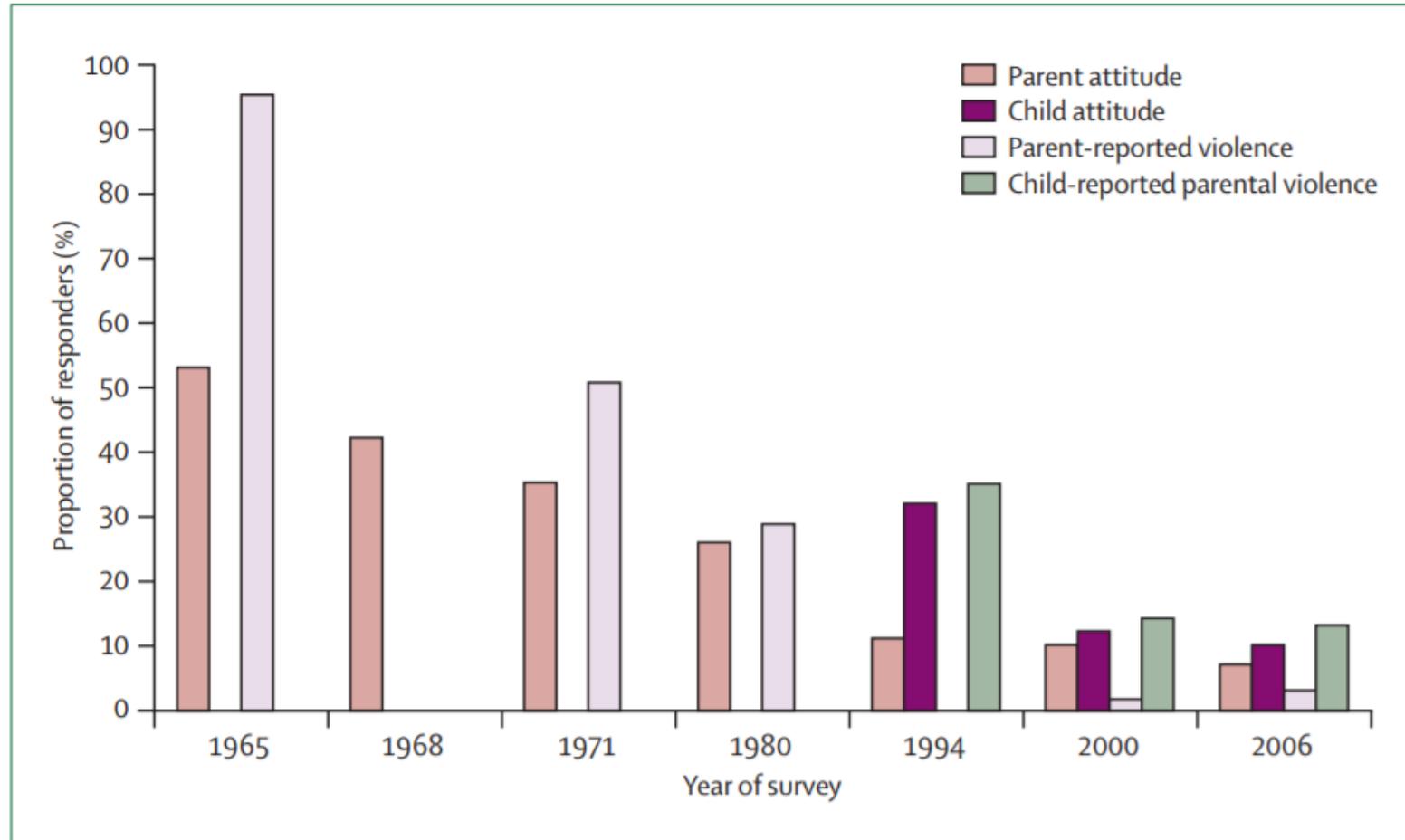
Trends in past year spanking from 4 national surveys by age of child (USA)



*% change 1995-2014

Source: Finkelhor et al. (2019). Corporal Punishment: Current Rates from a National Survey. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28(7), p. 1995.

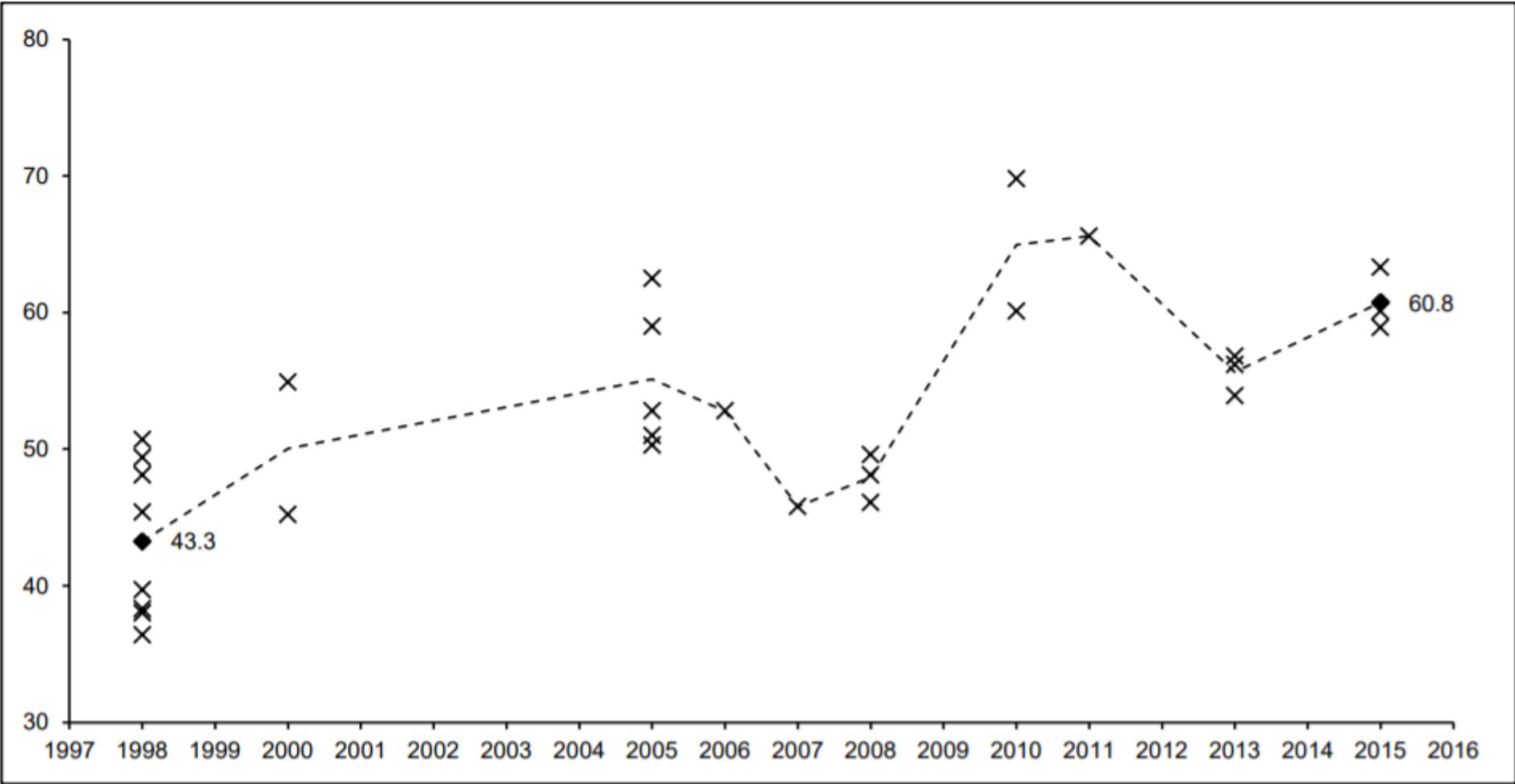
Time trends in parental physical violence towards children (in Sweden)



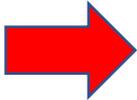
No other country has shown such a rapid decline in the rate of violence!

Source: Gilbert, R., Widom, C. S., Browne, K., Fergusson, D., Webb, E. & Janson, S. (2009). Burden and consequences of child maltreatment in high-income countries. *The Lancet*, 373(9657), p. 72.

Germany: Proportion of youth who did not experience parental physical violence in childhood (in %)
(Pfeiffer et al. 2018, p. 38)



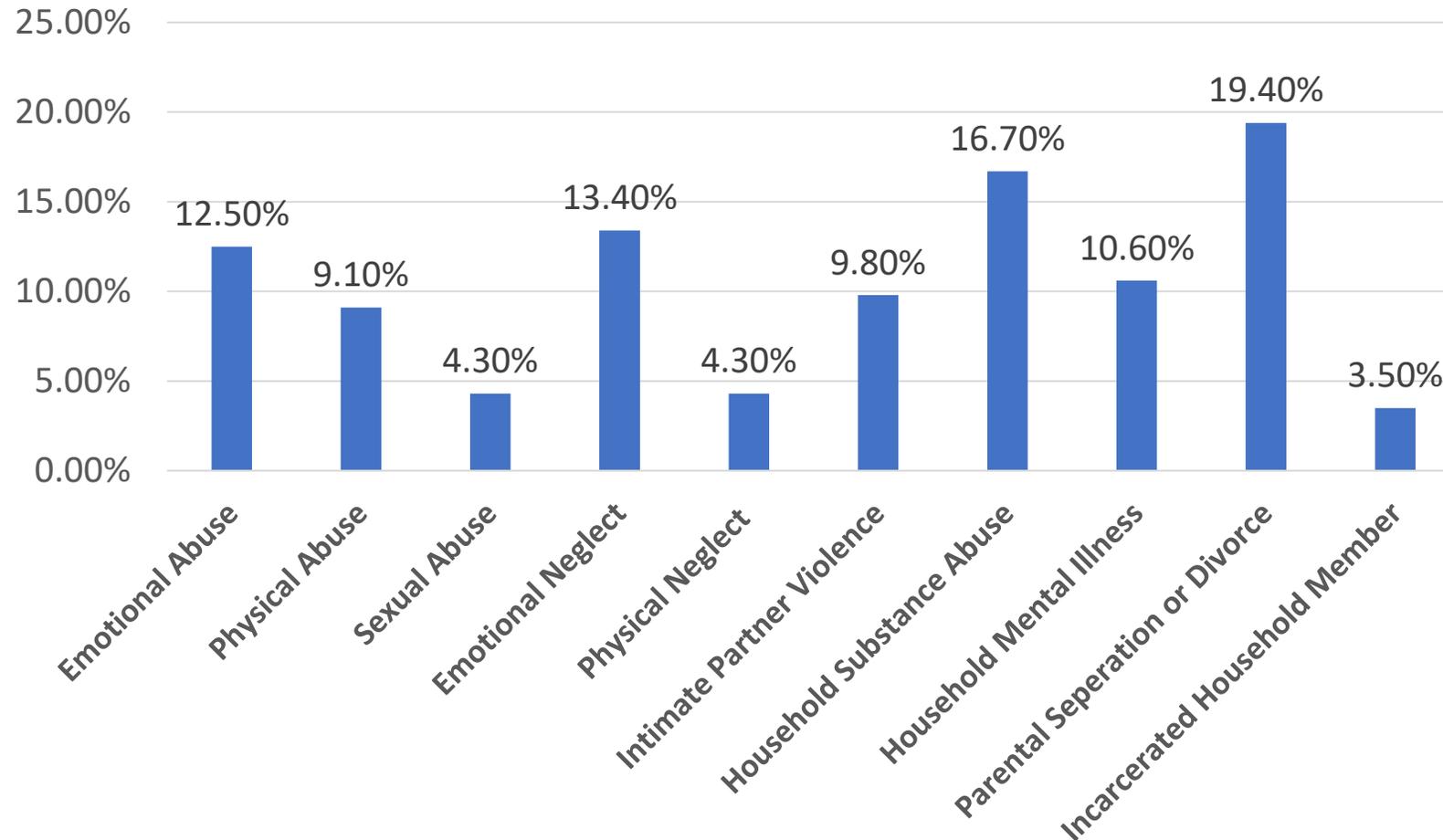
note:
year of surveys



Note: Birth cohort comparisons also showed a steady decrease in **severe** parental physical violence: from the birth cohorts in 1990 “only” 4% experienced severe violence (Pfeiffer et al. 2018, p. 37).

Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Germany

(2,531 respondents; diagram: Sven Fuchs)

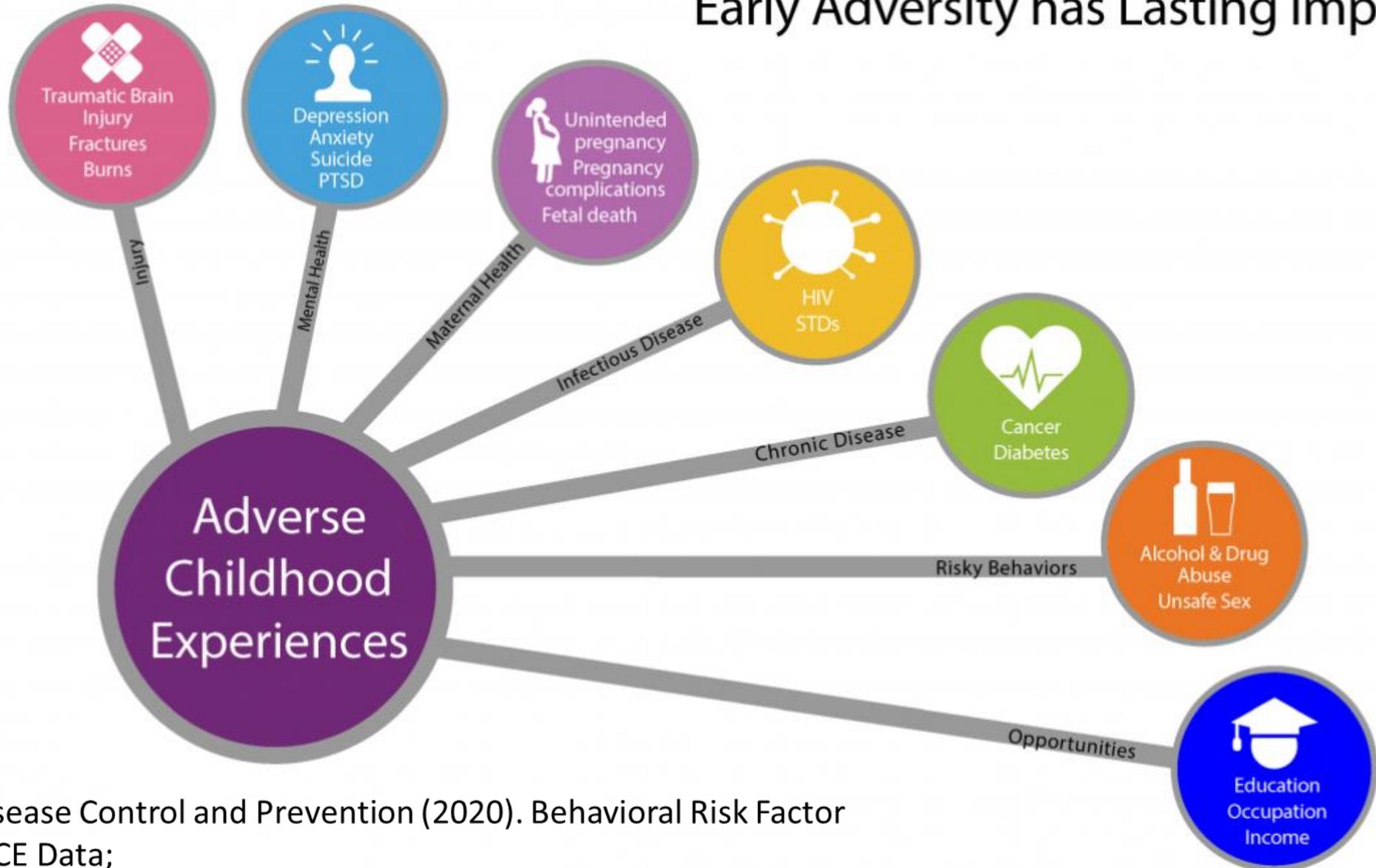


- 56.3% = 0 ACEs
- 20.7% = 1 ACE
- 8.6% = 2 ACEs
- 5.4% = 3 ACEs
- 8.9% = 4 or more ACEs

Approximately every 11th German belongs to the high-risk group with regard to health problems!

Source: Witt, A., Sachser, C., Plener, P. L., Brähler, E. & Fegert, J. M. (2019). The Prevalence and Consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences in the German Population. *Dtsch Arztebl Int* 2019; 116: p. 637f.

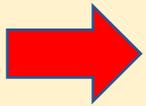
Early Adversity has Lasting Impacts



source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System ACE Data;
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/ace-brfss.html>

Associations relate not only to health problems, but also to violent behavior (against oneself and other people) or victim experiences!

Individuals with at least four ACEs were at increased risk of all health outcomes (e.g. depression, problematic alcohol/drug use, low life satisfaction, anxiety) compared with individuals with no ACEs.



Analysis of *adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)* has found that adults who were exposed to four or more ACEs were 7 to 8 times more likely to be involved in interpersonal violence (violence victimization or perpetration), and 30 times more likely to attempt suicide than adults with no ACE exposure!

Review and meta-analysis (n = 253,719; 37 international studies, most of them from the U.S.):

Hughes, K., Bellis, M.A., Hardcastle, K.A., Sethi, D., Butchart, A., Mikton, C., Jones, L. & Dunne, M. P. (2017). The effect of multiple adverse childhood experiences on health: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Public Health*, 2017; 2, e356–66.



Estimated annual costs associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- **581 billion US-\$ in Europe**
- **748 billion US-\$ in north America**

Source:

Bellis, M. A., Hughes, K., Ford, K., Rodriguez, G. R., Sethi, D. & Passmore, J. (2019). Life course health consequences and associated annual costs of adverse childhood experiences across Europe and North America: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Public Health*. 4, e524.

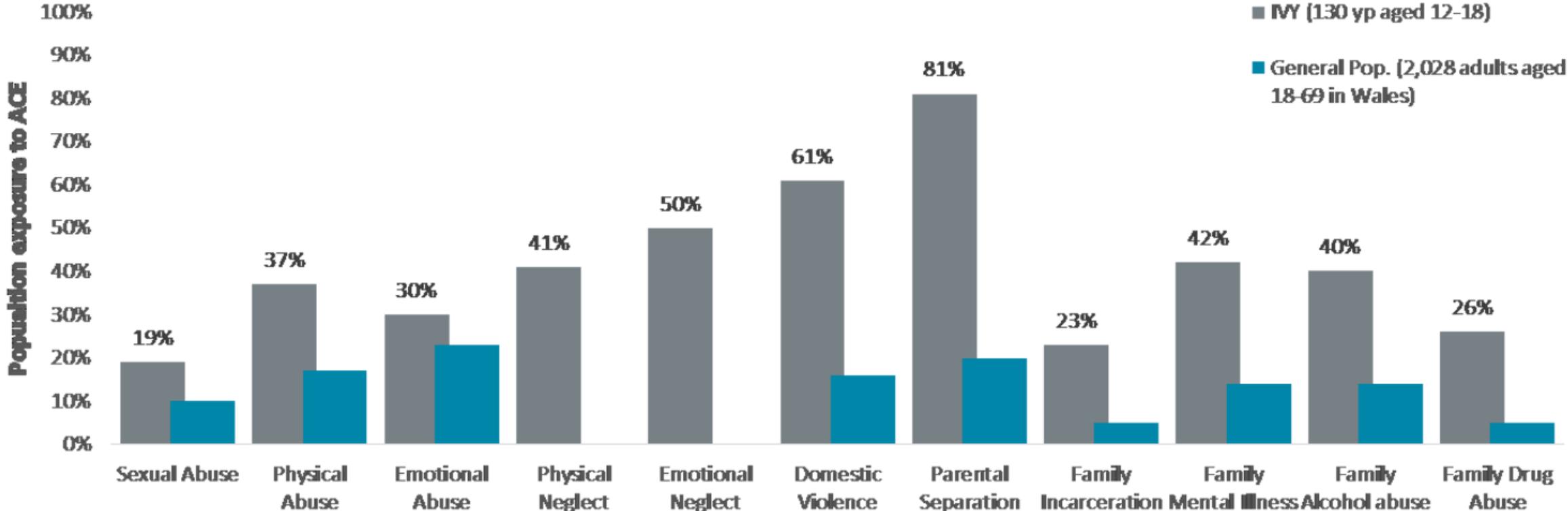
Adverse Childhood Experiences, Health Crisis and Early Death

Childhood adversity - encompassing child abuse, neglect and violence, among other hazards - was associated with **over 430,000 deaths in the U.S. in 2019.**

Source: Grummitt, L. R., Kreski, N. T., Kim, S. G., Platt, J., Keyes, K. M. & McLaughlin, K. A. (2021). Association of Childhood Adversity With Morbidity and Mortality in US Adults: A Systematic Review. *JAMA Pediatr.* published online October 04, 2021.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2784732>

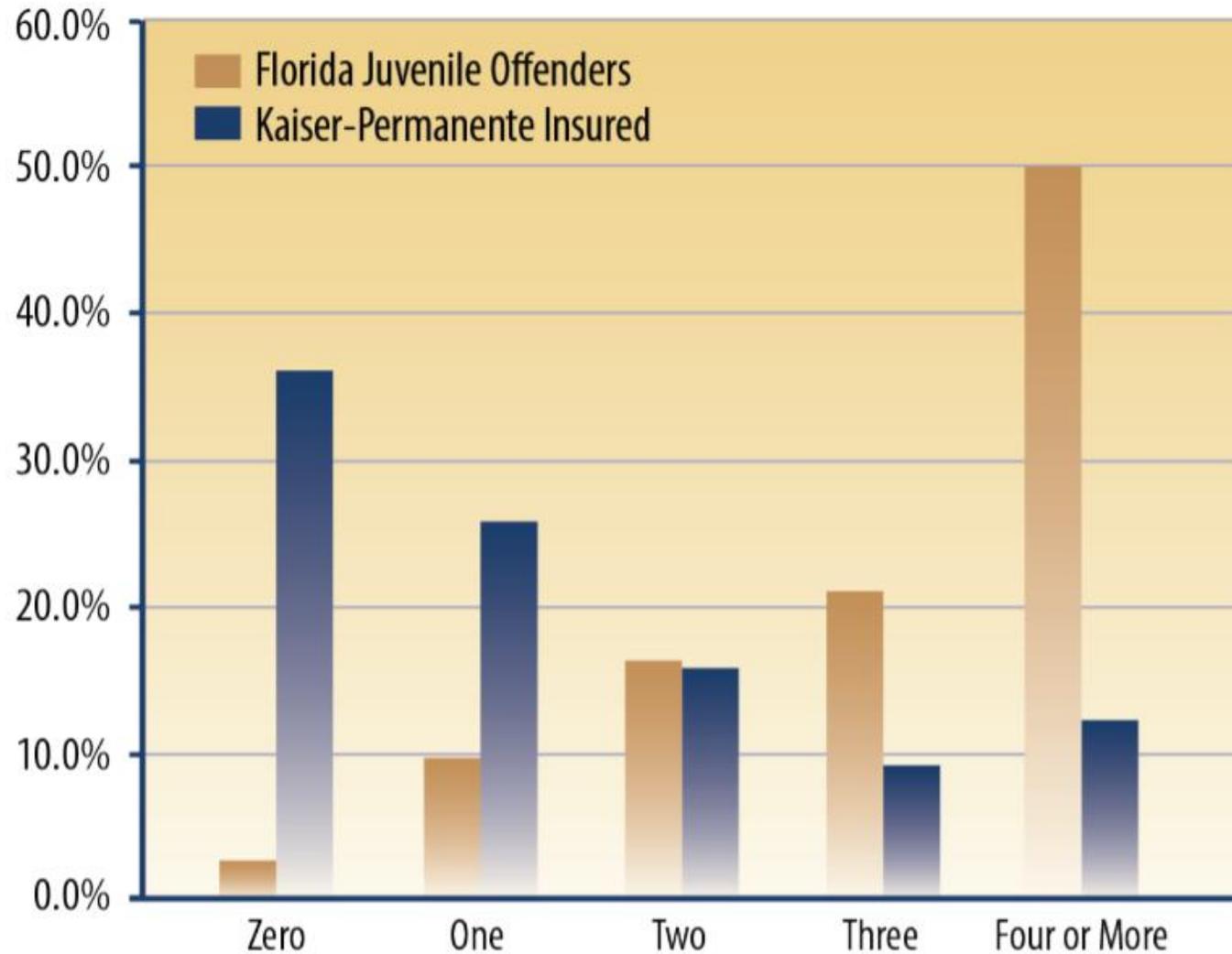
Comparison of ACE scores between a young high-risk group (e.g. violent behavior and/or extremism) from the “Interventions for Vulnerable Youth (IVY) Project” (Scotland) and the general population in Wales



Individual Adverse Childhood Experience Exposure: IVY compared to the Bellis et al. (2015).

Source: Vaswani, N. (2018). Adverse Childhood Experiences in children at high risk of harm to others. A gendered perspective. Children's and Young People's Centre for Justice, Glasgow, p. 11.

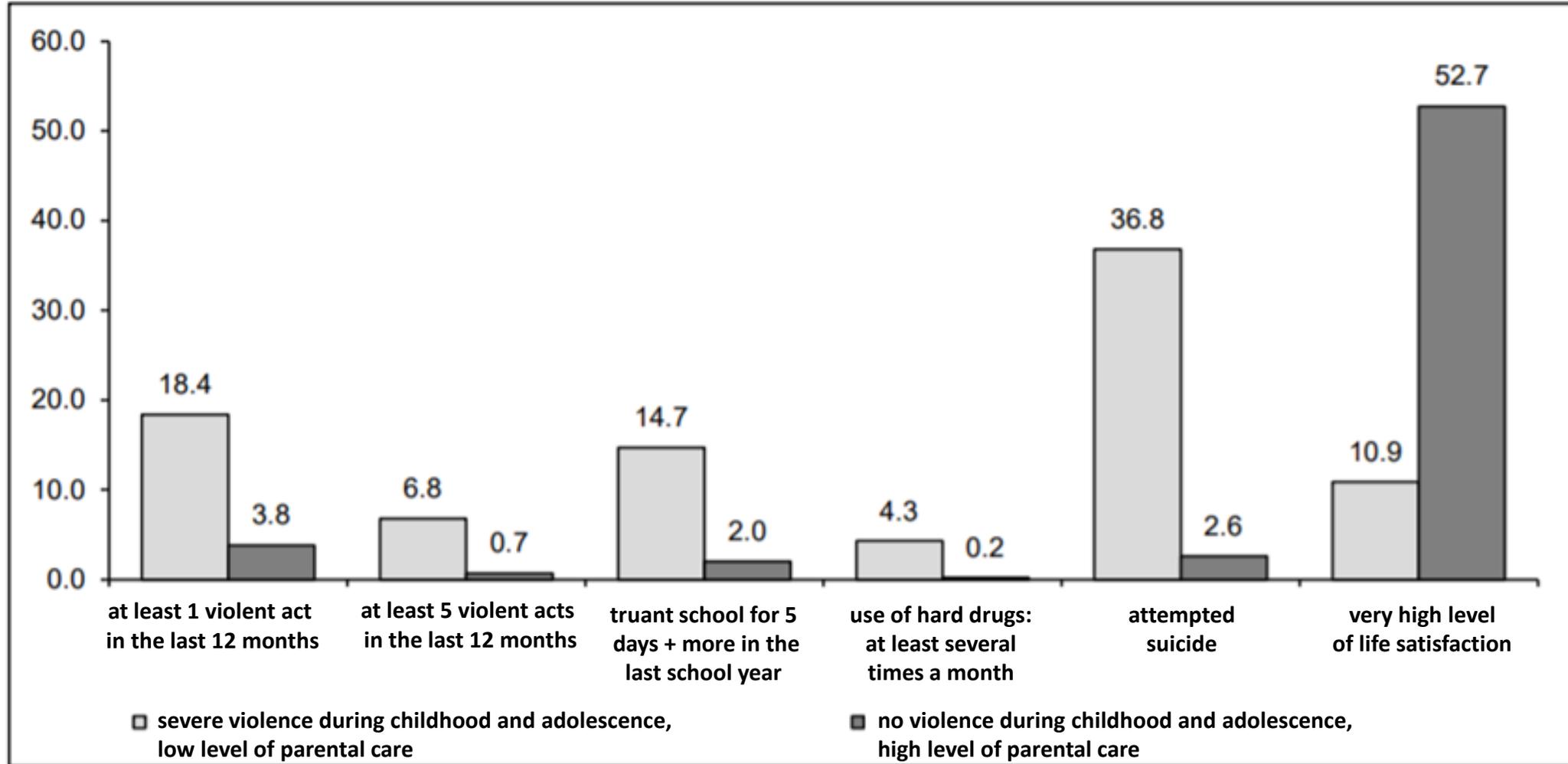
Comparison of Adverse Childhood Experiences Scores Between Juvenile Offenders (respondents: 64,329) and Kaiser-Permanente Study (insured adults; respondents: 17,337)



Source: Baglivio, M. T. et al. (2014). The Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) in the Lives of Juvenile Offenders. *Journal of Juvenile Justice*, 3(2), p. 21.

Parental upbringing and possible consequences (in %)

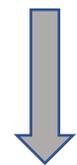
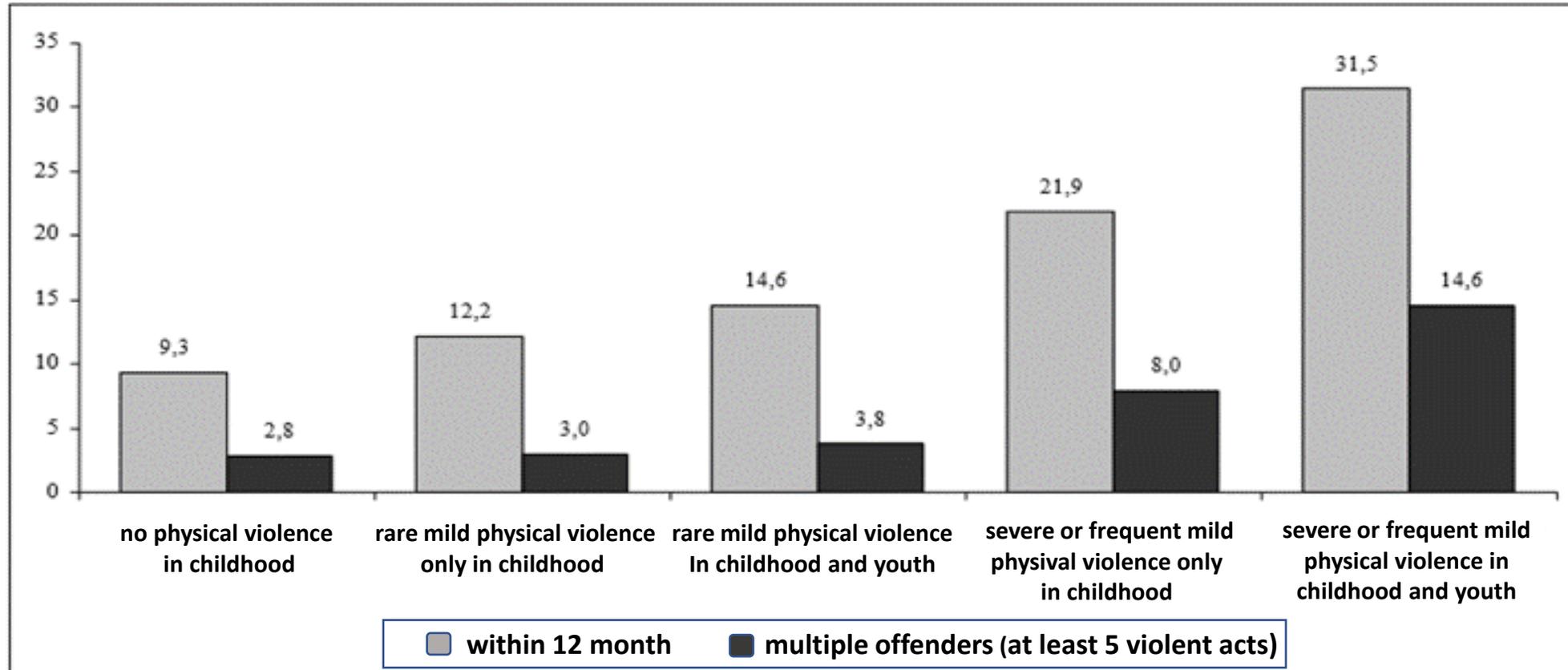
(Pfeiffer et al. 2018, p. 40; translation by Sven Fuchs)



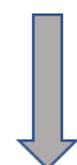
Data from KFN (Criminological Research Institute Niedersachsen) student surveys from 2013 (respondents: 9,512) and 2015 (respondents: 10,638)

Perpetrator of violence after experiencing parental violence in childhood and adolescence (in %)

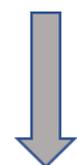
*representative student survey in Germany 2007/2008;
respondents: 44,610 (Baier et al. 2009, p. 80; translation by Sven Fuchs)*



5.8 %



18.9 %



25.4 %

Suicide attempt:
(Baier et al. 2013, p. 135;
same data basis)



Global economic costs (including prevention) of violence (including suicide):

- **estimated \$ 14.4 trillion in 2019**
- **10.5 % of the global gross domestic product (GDP)**

Source:

Institute for Economics & Peace. Economic Value of Peace (2021). Measuring the global economic impact of violence and conflict. Sydney.

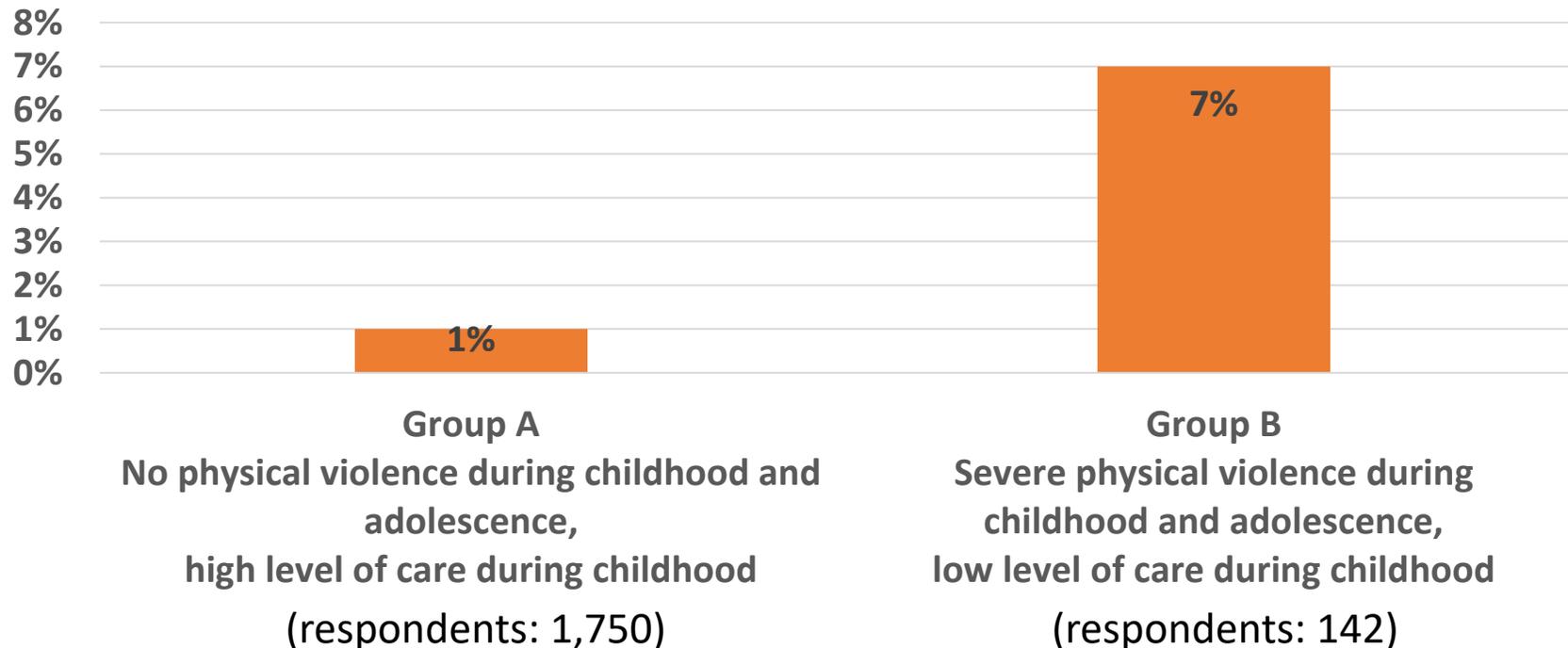
<https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/EVP-2021-web-1.pdf>

Right-Wing Extremist Attitudes

student survey 2013, respondents: 9,512

source: Pfeiffer (2015, p. 17)

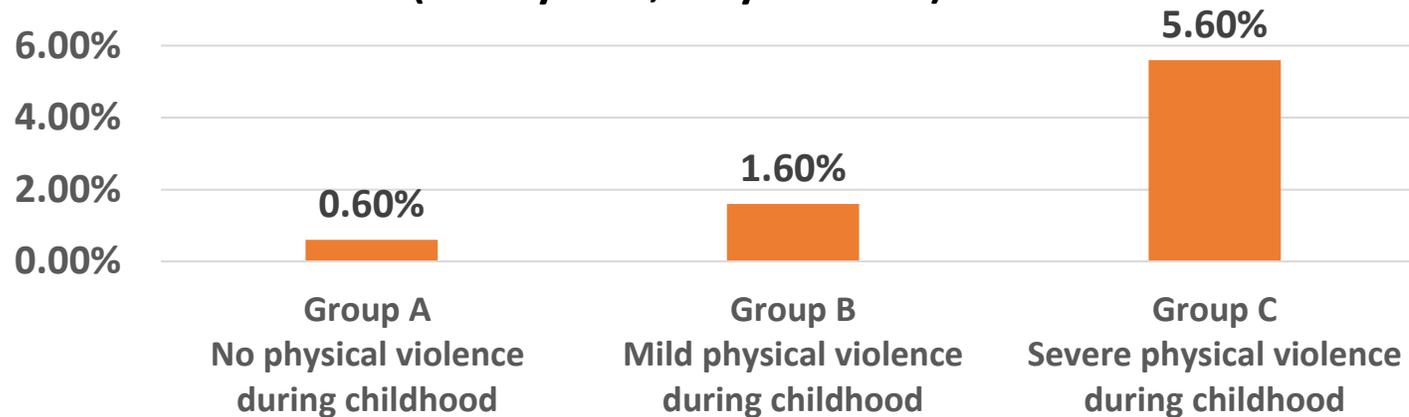
diagram: Sven Fuchs



(only German respondents in the diagram!)

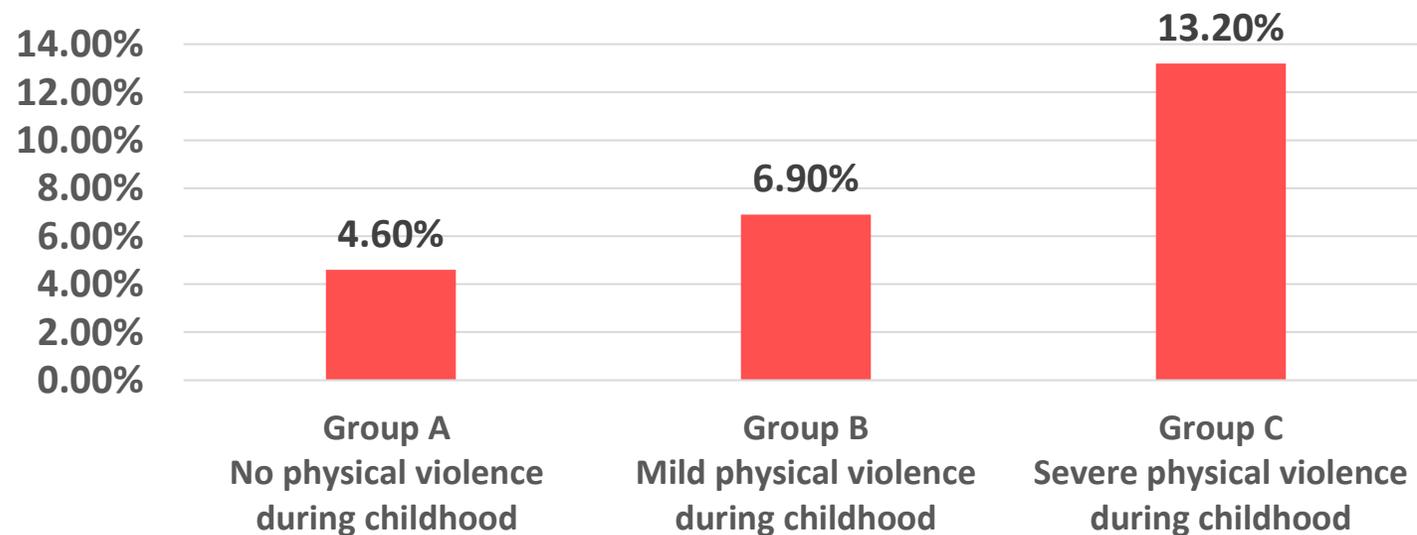
Right-Wing Extremist Attitudes (male youth, only German)

student survey Berlin;
respondents: 3,085



Source: Baier & Pfeiffer (2011, p. 163,172)
diagram: Sven Fuchs

(Rather) Left-Wing Extremist Attitudes (male youth)



**Adverse Childhood Experiences of former members of the “Red Army Fraction” (RAF)
(a left-wing terrorist association in Germany from the 1970s)**

Childhood Analysis of 17 RAF terrorists



<p>Ulrike Meinhof (Ditfurth 2015; Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>childhood during the war, orphaned (father died when U. M. was 5, mother died when she was 14), difficult argument in the parents' house after the mother's affair (afterwards suicidal tendency of the mother), repeatedly given away by the mother to children's home/relatives (U. M. came for the first time to a home for about half a year when she was 6 years old, during the Nazi-time), neglect by foster mother.</p>
<p>Andreas Baader (Fuchs 2019; Hauser 2007; Wieland 2006)</p>	<p>father died in the war; childhood during the war; A. B. was given away to grandmother, returned to the mother from the age of 6; alienation between mother and son; as a child he was alone a lot; 2 years at boarding school from the age of about 11; attempts to escape were repeatedly made, but mother demanded academic success.</p>
<p>Horst Mahler (Fuchs 2019; Jander 2006)</p>	<p>childhood during the war; authoritarian upbringing; father was a Nazi; father committed suicide when Horst was 13 and also wanted to kill the children which failed.</p>
<p>Inge Viett (Fuchs 2019; Viett 1996)</p>	<p>extreme neglect; emotional & physical abuse; rape; bullying; children's home; foster parents.</p>
<p>Stefan Wisniewski (Hengst & Schwabe 2007; Krall 2007a)</p>	<p>father died when S. W. was an infant; fears of former Nazis in the place of residence since his father was in a concentration camp; care home (emotional violence experienced) with repeated attempts to escape from the home + repeated repatriation by the police.</p>
<p>Peter-Jürgen Boock (Fuchs 2019; Wunschik 1997; ZEIT-MAGAZIN NR. 48/2020)</p>	<p>2 years separation from parents + life with grandmother; bad relationship with father; father often drank alcohol and then often became "rough"; as a teenager at the request of the parents sent to a closed youth home (multiple experiences of severe violence by educators); raped by an adult at the age of 12; bullying in school; 2 suicide attempts in youth.</p>
<p>Wolfgang & Henning Beer (Wunschik 1997)</p>	<p>parents separated; single mother who was alcohol-dependent and was hospitalised several times.</p>

<p>„Christof Wackernagel“? * (Billig 1984)</p>	<p>father suffered from chronic exhaustion; father passes away when Christof was 7 years old; mother had little time for C. W.; difficult relationship with the stepfather.</p>
<p>Lutz Taufer (Fuchs 2019; Taufer 2017)</p>	<p>hatred and hostility towards the family due to former Nazi associations; death of the brother due to illness; no emotional “warmth” at home; suffered severe physical violence from the father.</p>
<p>Astrid Proll (Edschmid 2014; Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>strong gaps in childhood memories; serious, probably violent conflicts between parents; memories of strong fears; parents’ separation; short stays in the children's home while mother was on a cure; strict boarding school during youth where it was described to be “inhumane”.</p>
<p>Wolfgang Grams (Veiel 2005)</p>	<p>father was with the <i>Waffen-SS</i>; father rarely at home; no closeness to son; both parents used corporal punishment; as a teenager, Wolfgang occasionally ran away from home.</p>
<p>Margrit Schiller (Schiller 2007)</p>	<p>father was strict, very controlling and often threatening; strong feelings of loneliness; both parents used corporal punishment (mother also in severe forms); M. S. felt sexually pursued by her father.</p>
<p>Holger Meins (Conradt 2001)</p>	<p>childhood during war, mentally ill mother (it is not clear whether Holger's mother was mentally ill in his childhood or only later, according to the source).</p>

* anonymized in source, very likely due to extraordinary key data Wackernagel.

Susanne Albrecht (Wunschik 1997)	strict upbringing style; high parental expectations and pressure to perform; occasionally she was beaten; sent to a strict boarding school in her youth, suicide of her (boy)friend during this time.
Silke Maier-Witt (Wunschik 1997)	mother died when Silke was 6 years old; separation from father (life with grandparents, then with an aunt); treatment for psychological problems; back at the age of 9 with the father; difficult relationship with the new stepmother.
Birgit Hogefeld (Richter 2001)	after the war, father had been withdrawn in deep resignation; mother and grandmother acted against the father, but also against B. H.; ambitious maternal expectations; mother used corporal punishment.

16 individual cases regarding left-wing terrorists (especially the RAF and “Bewegung 2. Juni”) were closely and anonymously investigated (discussions with terrorists, lawyers, family members etc.)

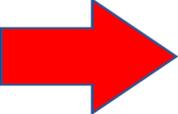
Jäger, H. & Böllinger, L. (1981). Studien zur Sozialisation von Terroristen. In: Jäger, H., Schmidtchen, G. & Süllwold, L. (Hrsg.). *Lebenslaufanalysen (Analysen zum Terrorismus 2)*. Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen. p. 117-231.

Social status: upper or middle middle class

“The climate and upbringing style in families is often, if not quite uniformly, described as authoritarian, based on performance, wages and punishment. In the family constellation, the father is usually the dominant negative or conflict figure” (p. 145; Translation by Sven Fuchs).
Only one participant describes the relationship with both parents as good.

Social status: lower class or lower middle class

“Characteristics of the childhood are the incomplete family and the lack of a real family situation: growing up without a father, for example as a result of illegitimacy or without a mother, massive loss of allowance, rejection, abuse, deportation to homes and frequent changes of environment and caregivers” (p. 145f, Translation by Sven Fuchs).

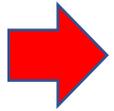


In 31 studies it could be shown that the childhood backgrounds of right-wing extremists / violent far right offenders were in general destructive (unless otherwise indicated, the studies come from Germany!)

- **Aigner (2013):** 3 former far-right Skinheads (male)
- **Bannenberg & Rössner (2000):** 17 young right-wing or right-wing thinking violent offenders
- **Bielicki (1993):** 1 male right-wing extremist (in psychoanalytic therapy)
- **Bjørgo (2005):** 16 juvenile members in neo-Nazi groups; 4 former juvenile members in neo-Nazi groups (Norway)
- **Böttger (1998):** 10 young right-wing extremists (9 male, 1 female)
- **Ezekiel (1996):** 9 members in a neo-Nazi group in Detroit, USA
- **Frindte & Neumann (2002):** 91 convicted right-wing violent offenders
- **Funke (2001):** 3 male right-wing extremists
- **Heitmeyer & Müller (1995):** 45 convicted, right-wing (or probably right-wing) violent adolescents
- **Hopf et al. (1995):** 6 male adolescents classified as clearly right-wing extremists (out of 25 young men surveyed)
- **Kahl-Popp (1994):** 1 juvenile right-wing extremist in psychoanalytic therapy
- **Köttig (2004):** 32 female right-wing extremists
- **Krall (2007b):** 3 juvenile right-wing extremists (2 male, 1 female), who live in residential placement
- **Leuzinger-Bohleber, M. (2016):** 1 case study (male) of right-wing radicalization from psychoanalytic practice

- **Lützinger (2010)**: 39 male extremists (24 right, 9 left and 6 Islamist)
- **Mäder et al. (2007)**: 26 Swiss right-wing adolescents (6 female, 20 male)
- **Marneros et al. (2003)**: 61 male accused right-wing violent offenders
- **Michel & Schiebel (1989)**: 3 male juvenile right-wing extremists
- **Nölke (1998)**: 2 male juvenile right-wing adolescents
- **Schmidt (1996)**: 1 juvenile violent right-wing extremist with severe personality disorder who was treated with psychotherapy
- **Scrivens et al. (2019)**: 10 former right-wing extremists (8 male, 2 female) from Canada
- **Sigl (2013)**: 3 female former right-wing extremists
- **Sigl (2018)**: 7 former right-wing extremists (5 male, 2 female)
- **Simi et al. (2016)**: 44 (38 male, 6 female) former members of right-wing extremist groups in the United States
- **Speckhard & Ellenberg (2021)**: 32 (2 female) current or former members of far right and white supremacist groups (most from the U.S., 3 from Canada, 3 Germans, 1 British and 1 New Zealander)
- **Streeck-Fischer (1992)**: about 5 far-right skinheads (psychoanalytic work)
- **Streeck-Fischer (1999)**: 1 male far-right skinhead (from inpatient psychiatric treatment)
- **Sutterlüty (2003)**: 3 male, violent right-wing extremists

- **Wahl et al. (2003):** 115 convicted, right-wing violent offenders (male)
- **Windisch et al. (2020):** 91 (70 male, 21 female) former U.S. extremists/racists (from the groupings *Ku Klux Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, racist skinheads*)
- **Wirth (1989):** 6 far-right skinheads (psychoanalytic work, only one case is shown as a prime example)



Note: I have discussed most of these studies in detail. If you are interested please follow this link to my online-blog:

<https://kriegsursachen.blogspot.com/2020/09/kindheitsursprunge-von.html>

Then, on the right side of the blog (*blog bar*) is in the 5th position "TRANSLATE". There you can select "English"!

Case study: Lützinger, S. (2012). The Other Side of the Story. A qualitative study of the biographies of extremists and terrorists. Bundeskriminalamt (Polizei + Forschung).

(The original in German: Lützinger, S. (2010). Die Sicht der Anderen. Eine qualitative Studie zu Biographien von Extremisten und Terroristen. Bundeskriminalamt (Polizei + Forschung Bd. 40).)

39 Extremists (24 right-wing, 9 left-wing and 6 Islamist)

- *“Not a single interviewee came from an intact family” (Lützinger 2012, p. 27).*
- *“Most biographies showed that violence and oppression played a major role even when the interviewees were still children. **About half of the interviewees reported domestic violence at home**, and some had had to face serious clashes and maltreatment. The most severe cases were reported by the right wing oriented interviewees” (Lützinger 2012, p. 29).*
- *“In summary, we can state that all biographies studied describe persons who were severely hampered in their development and who, lacking a functioning family ensuring a healthy and successful psychosocial development, made extremely risky social contacts. The respective extremist-terrorist milieu and/or what the group had to offer were perceived as a welcome substitute for the functionally and structurally unstable home” (Lützinger 2012, p. 61).*

Case study: Simi et al. (2016). Narratives of Childhood Adversity and Adolescent Misconduct as Precursors to Violent Extremism: A Life-Course Criminological Approach. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 53(4), p. 545, 548.

44 former members of right-wing extremist groups in the United States

Adverse Childhood Experiences:

- 43 % experienced physical abuse
- 23 % experienced sexual abuse in childhood adolescence
- 41 % experienced neglect
- 27 % experienced parental incarceration
- 36 % experienced parental abandonment
- 64 % witnessed severe violence (in family and / or neighborhood)
- 59 % experienced substance abuse in the household
- 48 % experienced mental illness in the household

Mental Health Issues / High Risk Behaviors:

- 57 % reported attempting suicide and/or seriously considering suicide
- 41 % reported experiencing mental health problems
- 73 % reported having problems with alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- 59 % reported truancy
- 55 % reported academic failure

Case study: Windisch et al. (2020). Measuring the Extent and Nature of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) among Former White Supremacists. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 8.

91 (21 female) former members of organized hate groups in the United States (*Ku Klux Klan, Christian Identity, Neo-Nazi, racist skinheads*)

Adverse Childhood Experiences:

- 48 % experienced physical abuse
- 46 % experienced emotional abuse
- 46 % experienced emotional neglect
- 15 % experienced physical neglect
- 23 % experienced sexual abuse

- 32 % experienced caregiver incarceration
- 68 % experienced caregiver loss
- 66 % experienced caregiver substance abuse
- 47 % witnessed domestic abuse
- 47 % experienced caregiver mental illness

Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund (NSU)

(„National Socialist Underground (NSU)“, German neo-Nazi terrorist group, responsible for the murders of nine immigrants and of a policewoman, bombings and bank robberies)

Beate Zschäpe (right-wing terrorist):

- mother hadn't noticed the child-to-be
- first 6 months with grandma; in the crib from 12 weeks
- multiple breaks and separations of caregivers
- absent father
- mother was an alcoholic
- neglect by mother

Uwe Böhnhardt (right-wing terrorist):

- crib + after-school care center in the GDR education system
- when Uwe was 11, his older brother (his main contact in the family) was left dead on the family doorstep by strangers
- parents sought help with upbringing, at the parents' request, temporary accommodation in a children's home
- as a 15-year-old suffered + witnessed sexual abuse in prison

Uwe Böhnhardt (right-wing terrorist):

- no information about his childhood!

Ralf Wohlleben (NSU-Supporter):

- parents were strict
- ran away from home
- stayed in the youth home
- reunited with his parents again

Sources: Friedrichsen (2013); Fuchs (2019); Quent (2019); Ramelsberger (2015))



Fotos (Wikipedia): Zschäpe, Böhnhardt, Mundlos



Wohlleben

Assassination attempt on Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker (October 17, 2015)

Right-wing extremist: Frank S.

- was badly abused by his parents as a child
- burns were inflicted on him
- neglected by parents
- separation of parents and stay at home later accommodation with a foster family

Source: Focus-Online (28.10.2015)

Murder of Kassel government president Walter Lübcke (June 02, 2019)

(For the first time since the end of the Second World War, a politician was murdered by a right-wing extremist in Germany)

Right-wing extremist: Stephan Ernst

- father was an alcoholic
- the father beat him and the mother
- after the beating, Stephan often had to sit still on a chair for 3 or 4 hours
- for fear of his father, Stephan slept in bed with a knife
- the mother worked a lot, so that Stephan was alone a lot

Source: Jüttner (2020); Stettin et al. (2019)

“I haven’t really had any negative experiences in my childhood in any way. I had way too much freedom though if anything. I used to visit my father annually until I was 16. So guess I came from a typical Norwegian middle class family. We never had any economical troubles.” (Anders Behring Breivik, far-right terrorist and Perpetrator of the 2011 attacks in Norway which killed 77 people)



**A typical Norwegian
middle class family?**

Source: („Online-Manifest“) Breivik (2011). 2083: A European Declaration of Independence

The Breivik case: A lesson for violence / extremism research!

- **3 week In-patient admission as a 4-year-old (together with his mother) in a psychiatric facility (SSBU)**
- If this psychiatric assessment had not existed, we would probably not know anything about his childhood today (he and his mother remained silent about it or glossed over it). We would assume that he grew up "quite normally", only the separation from the father was a burden!

Childhood reality of Anders Breivik:

- **mother originally wanted to abort the fetus**
- **parents separated early**
- **mother was overwhelmed early and asked the authorities for help. As a two-year-old Anders was then on weekends temporarily housed**
- **mother neglected and hit her son and subjected him to emotional abuse**
- **mother "sexualized" her son**
- **mother told her son that she wished he was dead**
- **mother was probably suffering from a borderline personality disorder**
- **4 year old Anders didn't know what to do with toys in a playroom, he lacked imagination and empathy when playing with other children and he couldn't express his feelings**
- **the SSBU team was extremely concerned after the assessment and asked for separation of mother and son to be separated**
- **father then tried to get custody but failed**

Source: Borchgrevink, A. (2013). A Norwegian Tragedy. Anders Behring Breivik and the Massacre on Utøya. Polity, Cambridge / Malden.

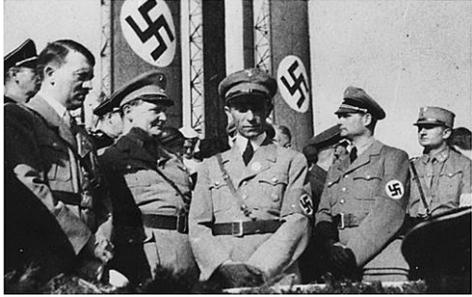
“I had a regular childhood, without any great issues. (...) I am just a regular white man, from a regular family.” (Cunningham & Boseley 2019)

Brenton Tarrant (right-wing extremist / mass murderer)

Childhood Reality of Brenton Tarrant:

- **separation of parents**
- **mother testified that Brenton was traumatized as a child by separation, loss of their family home in a fire and grandfather's death**
- **at the age of 6 or 7, Brenton spent a lot of time playing computer games (uncontrolled access)**
- **the mother's new partner was violent against her and her children, children came to their biological father after intervention**
- **from the age of 12, Brenton put on weight and became a target for classmates (bullying)**
- **when Brenton was about 16/17 years old, his father was diagnosed with cancer; the father needed palliative care and became very depressed**
- **father's suicide when Brenton was around 20 years old**
- **Brenton suffered from social anxiety from childhood**
- **as a teenager, Brenton felt autistic / sociopathic, he didn't care about other people (including his family)**

Source: Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019 (2020), Part 4, 2. The individual's upbringing in Australia. <https://christchurchattack.royalcommission.nz/the-report/>



Summary: childhood and youth of 25 Nazi leaders / Nazi perpetrators

Adolf Hitler	see table about dictators
Joseph Goebbels (Fuchs 2019)	J. G. recorded in writing a meeting with Hitler: Both had dug up old memories in the conversation. Hitler's parents bore an astonishing resemblance to his own. Goebbels' father was also a "tyrant in the home" Goebbels noted; at the age of 4 he fell ill with an inflammation of the bone marrow and his right leg remained disabled; the condition was accompanied by excruciating pain and frequent hospital stays, often lasting weeks; his youth, Goebbels later said, had been rather joyless from then on; peers excluded him and he became a loner; mother reacted with overprotection and admiration.
Heinrich Himmler (Fuchs 2019)	at the age of 2 he was critically ill, after that he remained in poor health and was his mother's "problem child"; father was a pathological pedant who controlled and determined everything; father demanded absolute obedience; strict upbringing; indication of corporal punishment.
Rudolf Heß (Fuchs 2019)	father is described as being a stalwart nationalist; father demanded absolute obedience; strict upbringing; Heß reports that his father spread "pale terror among his brood".
Hermann Göring (Fuchs 2019)	6 weeks after his birth, his mother traveled back to the Caribbean with her husband and children and left Hermann with a friend for 3 years. Göring's earliest childhood memory was how, upon her return to bring him back to her, he punched his mother in the face with his fists. A total of 9 children in the family (probably little time for the children); mother's ongoing affair strained the family atmosphere; ailing, old father was not a role model; from the age of 11 Hermann was sent to a boarding school, one year later to a strict military institution.

<p>Martin Bormann (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>his parents were not in a marriage of love; when M. B. was 3 years old, his father died, then severe crisis of the family; his mother married her brother-in-law in her distress (her sister had died); the new family with a total of 9 children never really grew together; M. B. rejected his stepfather.</p>
<p>Albert Speer (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>he grew up in wealth but loneliness and in a very emotionally cold environment; he felt rejected by his parents; his brothers tormented him; the only ray of hope was a hired tutor, as A. S. said.</p>
<p>Karl Dönitz (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>his mother died when he was 4; strict performance expectations from his father; by his own account, he was brought up "one-sidedly Prussian", which suggests much strictness and demands for obedience.</p>
<p>Joachim von Ribbentrop (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>fears of a strict father; physical abuse by his father; frequent changes of residence because his father was in the military; his mother had a long illness and could not be there for the children; she died when Joachim was 8 years old.</p>
<p>Hans Frank (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>almost died of diphtheria at the age of 5; when he was 12, his childhood friend died and he fell into deep mourning; when he was about 16, his brother Karl died; crisis of the parental marriage from the age of 8, wild affairs by his mother, frequent maternal absence, sometimes Hans stayed with relatives; when he was around 16, his mother left the family; poor relationship with his father; his childhood was "quite unhappy", Frank said later.</p>
<p>Alfred Jodl (Jodl 1976; Scheurig 1999)</p>	<p>strict upbringing at home; after the age of 13 he was in a military school that demanded absolute obedience; witnessed violence by teachers; sexual abuse by clergy.</p>

<p>Rudolf Höß (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>as a child he was a loner without friends and without emotional ties to his family; raised by his father according to strict military principles; both parents demanded absolute obedience; hardly any exchange and closeness in the family; poor relationships with his siblings; father died when Rudolf was about 14, this loss did not affect him, as he said; at the age of 15 he joined the military and soon after he was sent to the front; mother died when Rudolf was 16 or 17.</p>
<p>Josef Mengele (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>his father was chronically absent; his very dominant mother was also frequently absent; hired staff took care of Josef; emotional coldness in the family and upbringing; frequent arguments between the parents; strict expectations and demands for obedience; his father was quite fond of alcohol; near-death experience after an accident when Josef was 3 years old; physical punishment by his mother and father.</p>
<p>Adolf Eichmann</p>	<p>see slide (case study)</p>
<p>Alfred Filbert (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>his father was a professional soldier; Alfred therefore spent the first six years of his life in a Darmstadt garrison and was very much influenced by the military; father was often absent; with regard to his upbringing, Filbert himself said that he only knew "command and order"; his mother was very strict and also violent.</p>
<p>Amon Göth (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>parents had hardly any time for the child; an aunt who "idolized" the child took care of Amon; high parental expectations and pressure to perform; after the 5th grade, his parents sent him to a very strict boarding school for about one year (as a kind of punitive measure); no direct evidence of violence and humiliation suffered by Amon in the boarding school, but general evidence of catastrophic conditions (incl. severe violence) in the local institution.</p>

<p>Reinhard Heydrich (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>both parents had hardly any time for the children, who were cared for by a nanny; especially his father had a very distant relationship with his children; very strict, controlling mother, who often used corporal punishment.</p>
<p>Ernst Kaltenbrunner (Black 1991)</p>	<p>corporal punishment by father, as 9-year-old for about 5 years sent away to a student boarding home with a strict host mother.</p>
<p>Wilhelm Keitel (Keitel 1998)</p>	<p>his mother died when he was 6 years old; during 9 years in a student boarding home, his host mother seems to have been strict, at 17 moved in with his grandmother; difficult relationship with his strict father.</p>
<p>Odilo Globocnik (Sachslehner 2014)</p>	<p>at the age of 11, he spent 3 years at a strict military boarding school; father died when Odilo was 15 years old, his mother could hardly feed her children afterwards.</p>
<p>Werner Best (Herbert 1996)</p>	<p>brought up in the strict atmosphere of German civil service; father died when Werner was 11; mother collapsed after the death of her husband and had to be (emotionally) supported by her children.</p>
<p>Robert Ley (Smelser 1989; Wald 2004)</p>	<p>11 children, 3 of them died in infancy or in childbirth; father had money worries and set fire to the family farm, he was then sent to prison for 4 years; Robert was 6 years old at the time; family broke apart in succession; older siblings moved away; children often had to comfort mother.</p>

<p>Alfred Rosenberg (Piper 2015)</p>	<p>his mother died when he was an infant; his father died when he was about 11 years old, 2 aunts became foster mothers.</p>
<p>Julius Streicher (Fuchs 2019)</p>	<p>not a planned child and mother showed concern with regard to the expectant child; birth complications; out of 9 children in the family 2 died; in the village Julius was an outsider and was teased because his father was the village teacher; father was strict and demanded obedience; in his family, Julius sometimes felt alienated and was a nuisance to his brothers and sisters; 2 of his brothers once tried to kill him: they forced him to jump around on a frozen puddle of dung until he broke in, a neighbor who heard his screams saved him.</p>
<p>Heinrich Müller Seeger (2000); Bornschein (2004)</p>	<p>sister died shortly after the birth (in the source it is unclear whether this was before or after Heinrich's birth); strict military upbringing in the family home, which was influenced by the imperial civil service (father was a gendarmerie and administrative officer); education in obedience and duty; as a 17-year-old volunteer for the First World War and military training, from around 18 years of age front experiences.</p>

Additional note:

- I did not find any evidence of a non-violent upbringing in the childhood of any of the above-mentioned Nazi perpetrators.
- The childhood of the Nazi perpetrators was in general dominated by a strict and authoritarian upbringing.
- What is also noticeable are multiple burdens in childhood.

„But it must have been something that must have persuaded my blessed father **to raise me particularly strictly**, despite the loving affection and joy in me, in my earliest youth, **a severity that my siblings never had to such an extent had felt.** (...) **Starting in nursery, for me, obedience was something irrefutable**, something that could not be "eliminated from the world." When I later (...) came to the troop, it was no more difficult for me to obey than to obey in the nursery (...). I recognized **my father as an absolute authority, as did my mother**, who unfortunately died early; I recognized my teachers and professional superiors as an authority and later also my military and professional superiors “

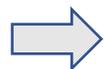
(Eichmann, Adolf (1960). Meine Memoiren. Ministry of Justice, Israel, p. 1f; <https://www.justice.gov.il/DataGov/Adolf-Eichmann-Records/t44.pdf> ;

Translation and emphasis: Sven Fuchs)



- Eichmann's father was "*a strict patriarch (...) who asked for obedience*" (p. 31, Translation by Sven Fuchs).
- Eichmann's mother died in 1916, Adolf was about 10 years old at the time
- the stepmother was also strict and very careful about order

Source: Cesarani, D. (2012). *Adolf Eichmann: Bürokrat und Massenmörder*



Adolf Eichmann during his trial in Jerusalem in May 1961 (Foto: Wikipedia)



Hitler



Stalin



Mao



Franco



Mussolini



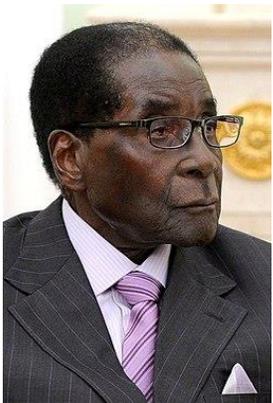
Castro



Pinochet

Not a single one had an unencumbered childhood!

Analysis of the childhood of 14 Dictators of the 20th Century



Mugabe

main Source: Fuchs (2019)
in addition to Hitler: Sandgruber (2021)
for Suharto: Elson (2001)
for Mugabe: Holland (2009)

Fotos: Wikipedia



Suharto



Hussein

Dictators of the 20th century	physical violence	emotional violence	particular burdens in childhood and youth
Adolf Hitler (Germany)	yes, frequent + harsh	yes	born in the shadow of 2 dead children whom the family had previously lost at intervals; once almost beaten to death by the father; witness domestic violence; weak and helpless mother spoiled her son; his infant brother Otto died when Adolf was 3; his younger brother Edmund died when Adolf was 10; his father died when he was 13; his mother died when he was 18.
Josef Stalin (Russia)	yes, frequent + harsh	yes	near-death experience; alcoholic father; parents' separation; mother almost killed by the father; 5 years of religious education whilst experiencing various burdens
Mao Zedong (China)	yes, frequent, probably harsh	yes	child labor; forced child marriage at the age of 14; death of his wife 2 or 3 years later; bullying by peers at school
Benito Mussolini (Italy)	yes, frequent + harsh	probably	child labor; strict boarding school; outsider role
Francisco Franco (Spain)	yes, frequency unclear	yes	bullying by peers; father cheating on + drinking; death of sister; separation of parents; F. F. had to comfort mother
Nicolae Ceaușescu (Romania)	yes, frequent	yes	alcoholic father; neglect; massive parental control
Saddam Hussein (Iraq)	yes, frequent + harsh	yes	absent father; separation from the family; neglect; raised in poor conditions; bullying by peers

Dictators of the 20th century	physical violence	emotional violence	particular burdens in childhood and youth
Fidel Castro (Cuba)	?	yes	strict, authoritarian father; from the age of 5 or 6 he came to changing foster parents; he was marginalized; strict boarding school; violence by teacher
Manuel Noriega (Panama)	?	?	absent, alcoholic father; in infancy, his single mother fell ill and died when M. N. was 4 or 5 years old; raised in poor conditions; pampering foster mother
Augusto Pinochet (Chile)	yes, harsh + probably frequent	yes	experienced bullying at military academy during his youth
Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia)	?	?	alcoholic father; from 15 children in the family 8 died early; violence by a pastor; child labour
Jean-Bédél Bokassa (Central African Republic)	?	?	when he was 6 years old, his father was executed (by a nail in the head); his mother then committed suicide, the family left 12 children

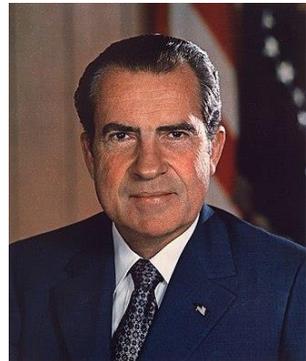
Dictators of the 20th century	physical violence	emotional violence	particular burdens in childhood and youth
Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe)	yes, frequency unclear	?	he had to thank his mother for being beaten; experienced the death of 2 of his older brothers; separation of his parents; depression of his mother; exclusion from other children
Suharto (Indonesia)	?	?	separation of the parents (in infancy from S.); mentally battered mother left the infant, the family panicked and searched for the mother for days; the infant first came to the great aunt; in childhood multiple changes of caregivers / family; tug-of-war between parents



Kennedy



Johnson



Nixon



Reagan



Bush Senior

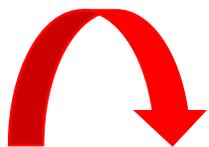


Bush Junior



Clinton

Together for about 45 years in government since 1961, these men were US presidents:
Every single one was physically abused as a child!



Donald Trump's childhood :



- pedantic, hard, strict + chronically absent father
- father demanded obedience and loyalty
- strict, hard and also absent mother
- mother delegated punishment to the father
- father punished his children by house arrest or *"wrongdoers were also paddled with a wooden spoon"* (Blair 2000, p. 228)
- witnessed frequent fatherly humiliation against his brother Fred Jr. (who became alcoholic + died early)
- at the age of 13, Donald was sent to a strict military boarding school as punishment; there the students were systematically humiliated and drilled
- the drill sergeant struck often. D. Trump: *"You had to learn to survive"* (Kranish & Fisher 2016, p. 22) + *"Back then you were still beaten black and blue.(...) He beat us up mercilessly "* (D'Antonio 2016, p. 84; Translation: Sven Fuchs)

sources for Trump: Blair (2000); D'Antonio (2016); Fuchs & Petschauer (2020); Kranish, & Fisher (2016); Trump (2020) / **sources for others:** deMause (1984); deMause (1998); deMause (2005); Farrell (2017); Frank (2007); Fuchs (2019); Maraniss (1998)

- **Of course, not every abused, humiliated and burdened child later becomes a violent offender, mass murderer or extremist!**
- **However: Adverse childhood experiences form the foundation for massive destructiveness in adulthood! That can be expressed in different ways (externalizing or internalizing problems).**
- **Lundesgaard & Krogh (2018, p. 193) *“set out to investigate how psychological factors, stemming from traumatic experiences in early childhood, act as precursors on a complex developmental path towards violent extremism. As we see it, violent extremism can be added to a long list of negative outcomes, on a developmental trajectory affected by cumulative traumatic childhood experiences.”***

How can long-term political violence be reduced in the future?

- 1. Violence, neglect and humiliation against children must be reduced worldwide and, at best, should be eliminated in the long term.**
- 2. For children and adults who had to experience painful childhood experiences, psychosocial and psychotherapeutic aids need to be offered and expanded.**



Criminologist Christian Pfeiffer (2019, p. 34f.) pointed out the possible connection between an enormous expansion of psychotherapeutic services in Germany since the 1980s and a sharp drop in suicide and serious acts of violence.

**In other words: psychologically active specialists are also workers for inner and outer peace!
You deserve respect, recognition and support.**

“The more children here and around the world are neglected, beaten, humiliated and slide into hopelessness and hatred, the higher the destructive potential in our own country and worldwide. Against this background, child protection has become a question of survival. Worldwide child protection is the ideal way to prevent not only mental suffering, but also crime, militarism and terrorism. It ensures democracy and peaceful cultural and economic exchange. It takes all of our creativity and determination to make this happen. If we all wanted this in a unique act of solidarity, we would also have the knowledge and the means.”

(former director of the Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf and expert in psychotraumatology, Peter Riedesser (2002, p. 32; translated by Sven Fuchs))

Attachment: Please also consider the risk factor gender!

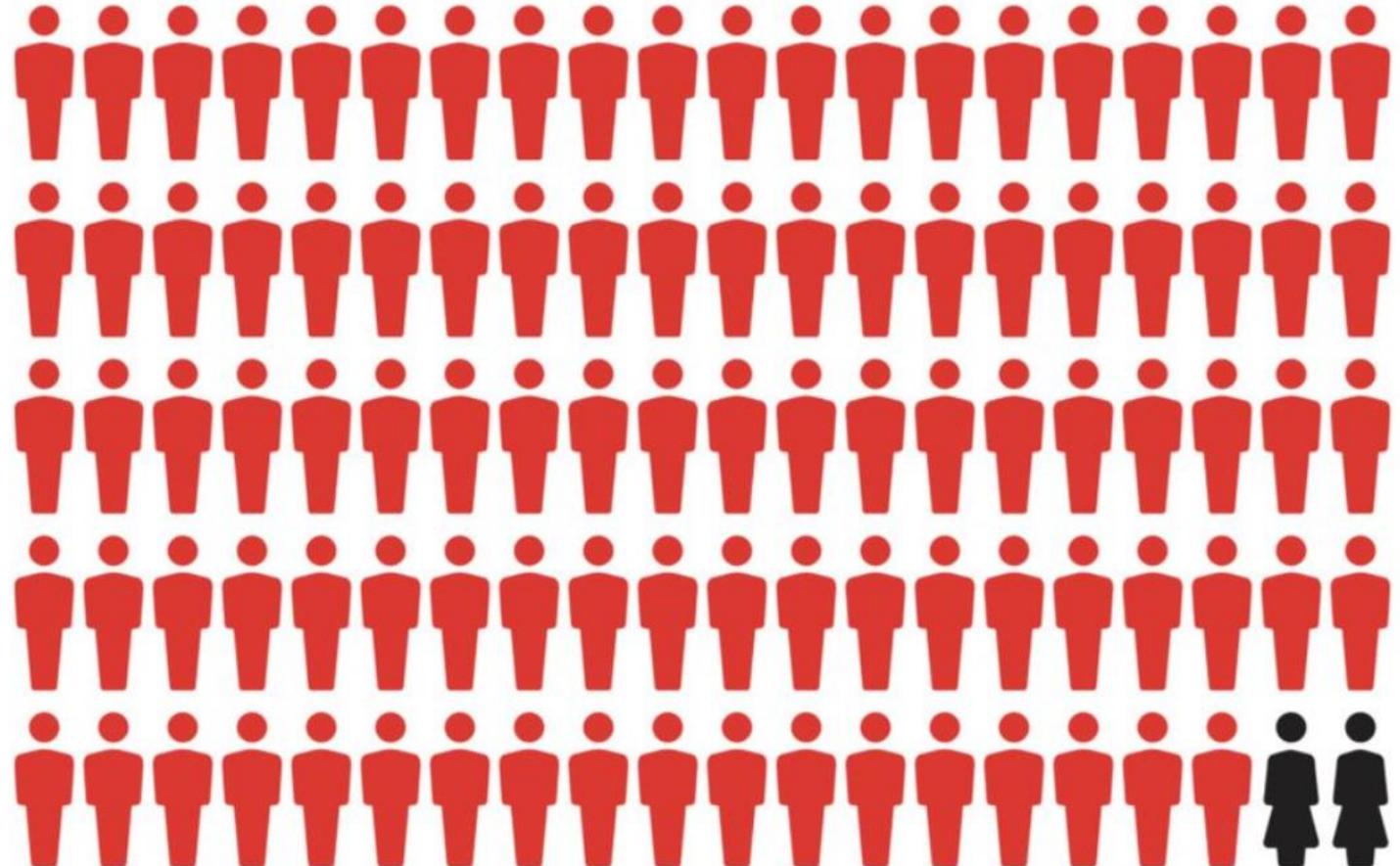
Ideologically motivated crimes in the United States

Data are based on publicly available court documents, newspaper accounts, and published sources on 1,496 individuals drawn generally from three ideological groups: far left, far right, and radical Islamic.

90% of the sample were male!

Source: Jasko et al. (2017)

Based on the cases from 1966-2021, 98% of perpetrators of mass shootings in the U.S. identify as male:



<https://twitter.com/theviolencepro/status/1441183094267023364>

Data from The Violence Project's Mass Shooter Database

<https://www.theviolenceproject.org/mass-shooter-database/>

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