



Family concepts and experiences of children

Family concepts and Children's Worlds

Relationships within the family are important for the development of well-being of children, as well as for their overall satisfaction.

“Children's Worlds” assesses subjective appraisals towards family from a children's point of view.

Initially, it is about describing and assessing the frame conditions of family and ultimately, about “exterior” characteristics of the chosen family type, number of persons living in the same household, number of adults in paid labour, activities in and with the family, and happiness about the persons the child lives with.

Additionally, questions of deprivation and deprivation experiences give important information about material scope of action within the family and for children.

Family concepts and Children's Worlds

Yet, what exactly is considered as a family?

There is no such thing as a standard family or the *one* concept.

A more appropriate question could be, what makes up a family and who would consider it as a family?

So, on the one hand, there seems to be barely another “institution” so crucially dependent on social, historical, cultural and religious conditioned notions.

On the other hand, the elementary care of the exceedingly depending family members is central nearly everywhere. In particular, the perspective of children on family and their experiences are suggesting this.

Both, the importance of differences between the children's comprehension of care and the similarity of expectations of care turn out to be relevant.

What types of care are related to the concept of family?

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Further perspectives

How can **family** be conceptualized based on the framing and findings of the Children's Worlds Study?

1. The systematic connection between Child Well-Being and Family Well-Being
2. Reference to the new socio-philosophical debate is possible: Family is understood as an intergenerational communion of adults and children with a unifying, distinctive concern for each other. The intergenerational community does not need to rely on biological kinship.
3. Continuing with the concept of “doing family” based on experiences and connected norms

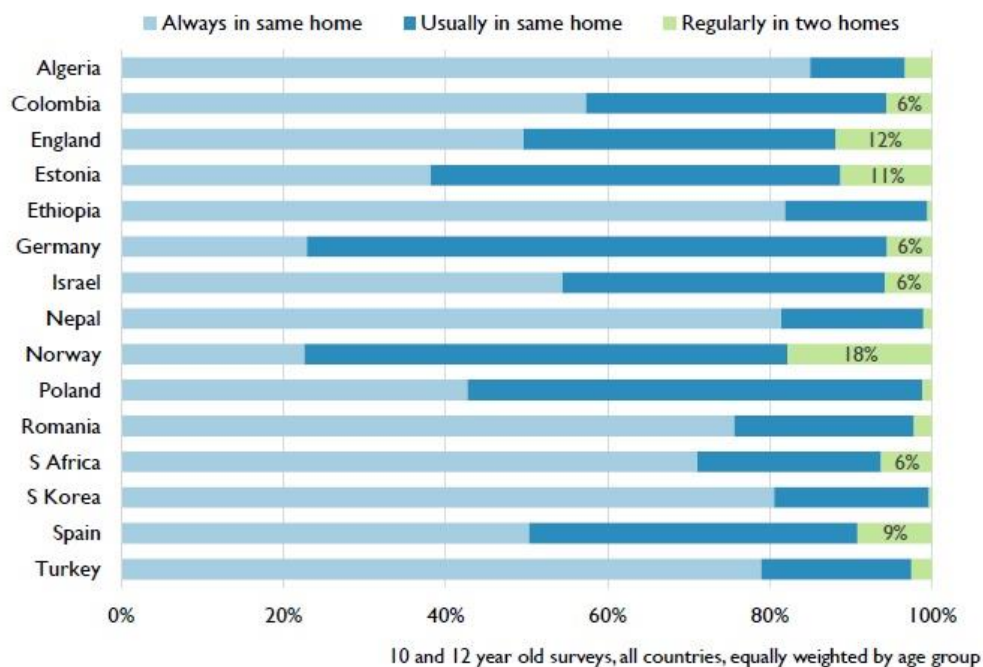
Child well-being and family well-being

Relevant dimensions from children's point of view:

1. **Family spaces** – Where does family happen?
2. **Involvement** – Who is involved in family?
3. **Identity** – What constitutes the role of parents or other family members?
4. **Daily routine** – What do I do in and with my family in everyday life?
5. **Privacy** – What does belong to me only? Which secrets are possible?
6. **Shared possessions** – What belongs to the family? How is it shared?
7. **Balance between employment and care** – Who earns money, who takes care?
8. **Safety and living environment** – How do I experience my living environment?

1. Family Spaces – Where does my family life take place?

Where children slept – by country



Which localities play an important role for family life?

What do these localities mean for the family members?

Additionally:

- How can your home be described?

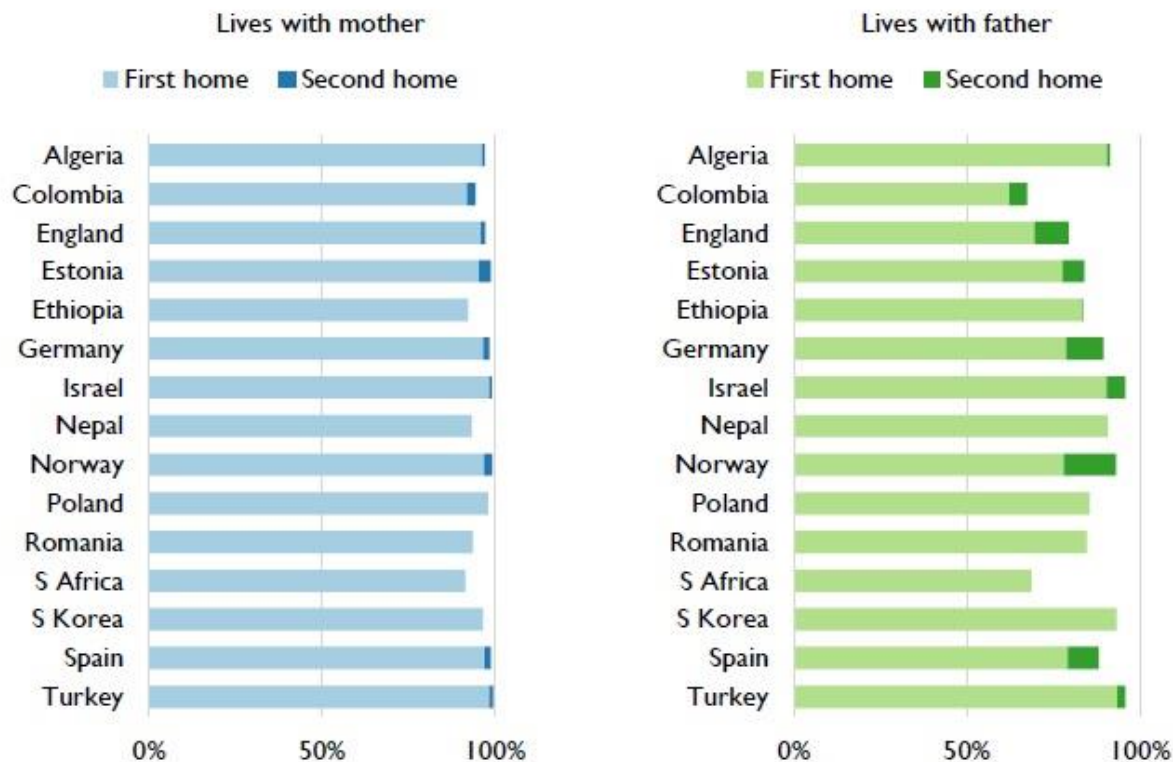
Living with family

Living in foster care

Living in residential care

2. Involvement – Who is part of my family?

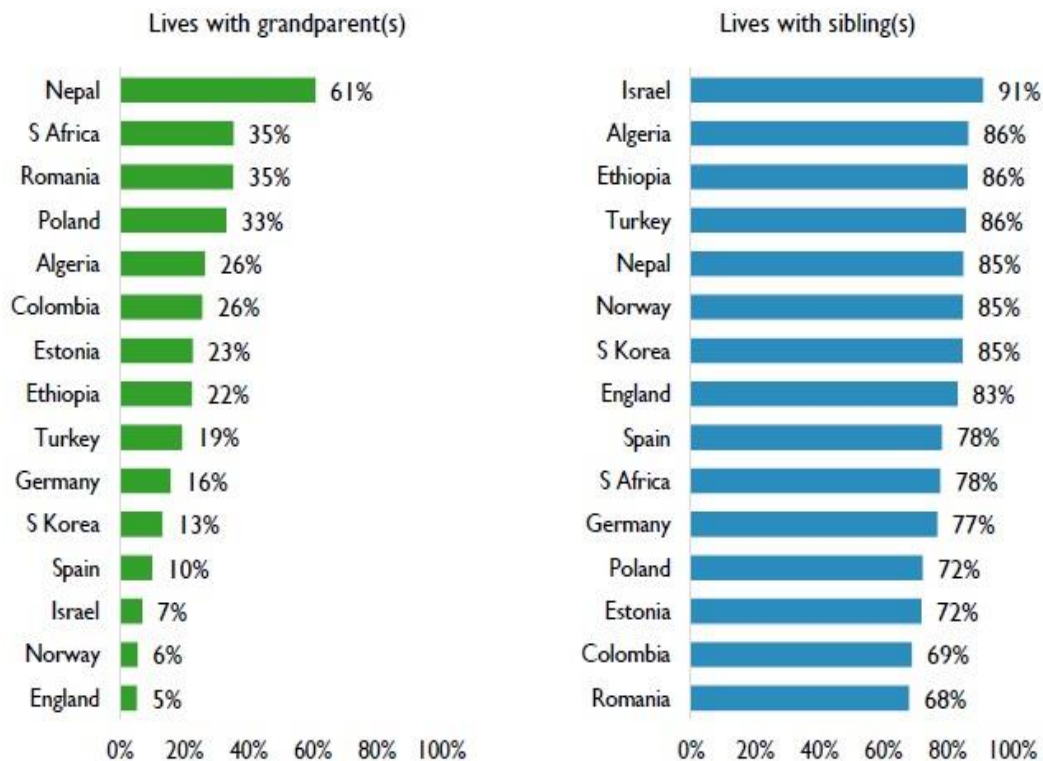
Proportion of children living with their mother and father



10 and 12 year old surveys, all countries, equally weighted by age group

2. Involvement – Who is part of my family?

Proportion of children living with their grandparents and siblings

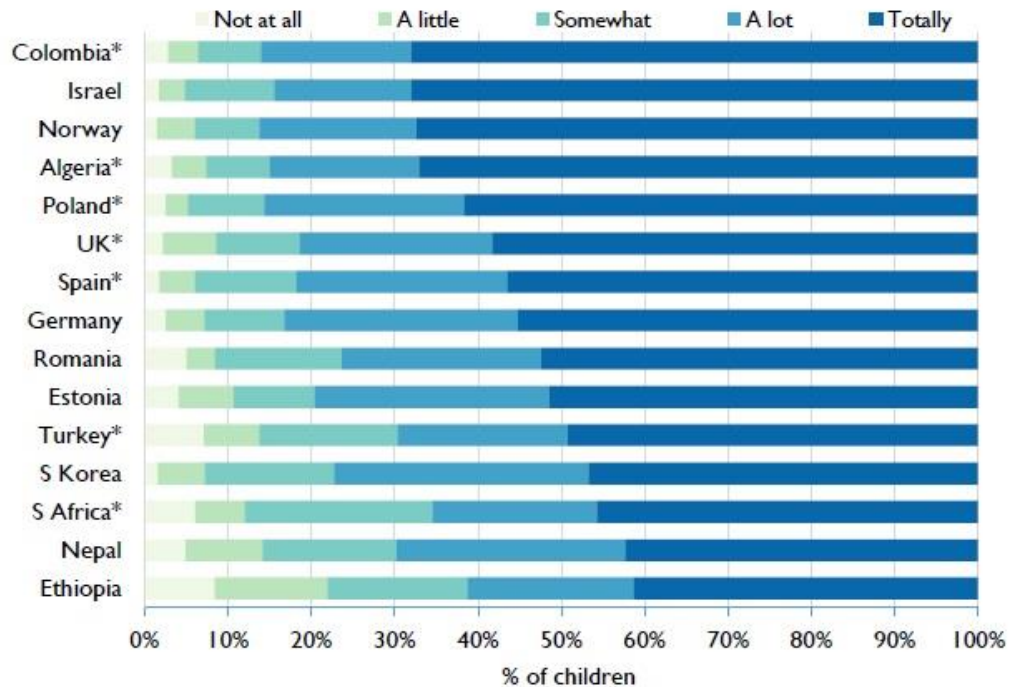


10 and 12 year old surveys, all countries, equally weighted by age group

Who or what else is part of the family, and what does it mean for the concept of „family“?

3. Identity– What constitutes the role of my parents and my role as a child?

My parents listen to me and take what I say into account – by country



10 and 12 year old surveys, all countries, equally weighted by age group

Additionally:

- My parents treat me fairly
- Safety at home

From a child's perspective, what constitutes adults as parents and/or caretakers?

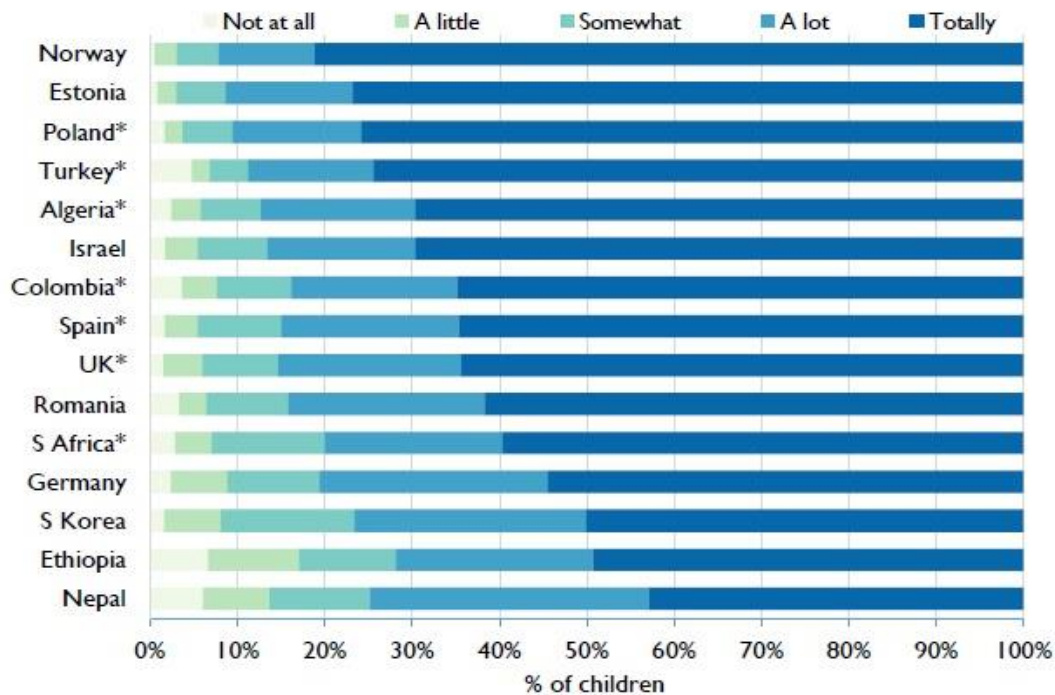
What do we know about children's expectations?

What is a „good enough mother/father/caretaker“ from different perspectives?

What kind of roles does a child have within the family?

4. Daily routine – What am I doing in and with my family?

Having a good time together in the family – by country



10 and 12 year old surveys, all countries, equally weighted by age group

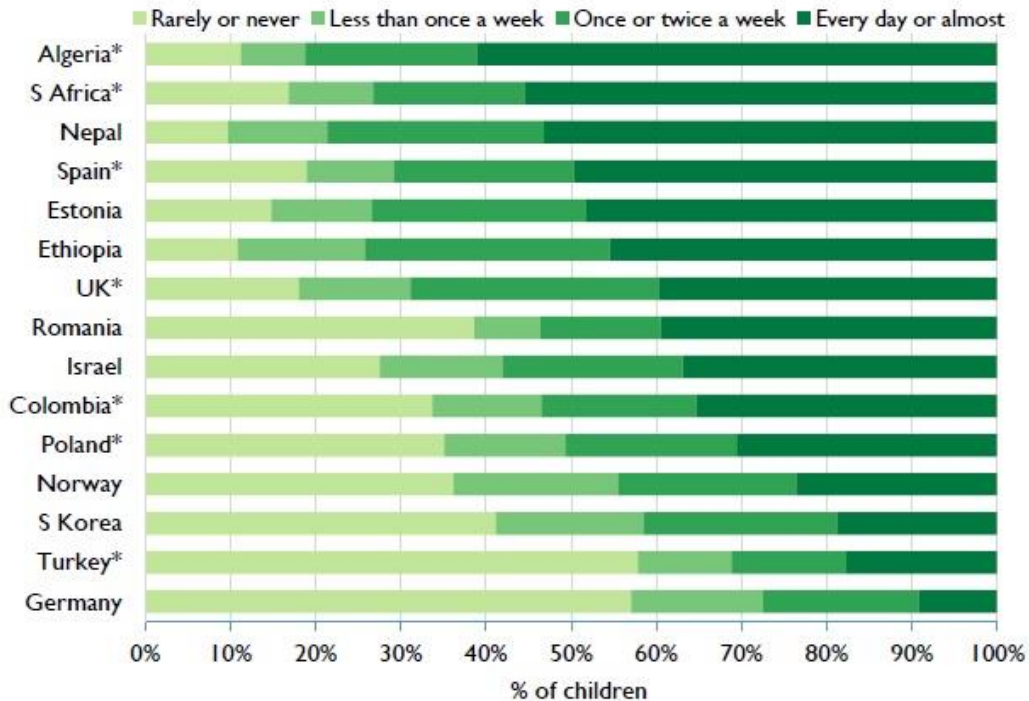
What is the understanding of „having a good time together“ from children’s and adults’ point of view?

Additionally:

- Talking with my family
- Having fun with my family
- Learning together

4. Daily routine – What am I doing in and with my family?

Taking care of family members – by country



10 and 12 year old surveys, all countries, equally weighted by age group and country

What kind of concept of care and expectation to be cared of do the family members have?

Are there differences related to age, generation and gender?

5. Privacy – What belongs only to me?
What kind of secrets are possible?

6. Shared Property – Which belongings does my family have? What are we sharing?

What is important for children to have for their own?

What role do secrets and privacy have?

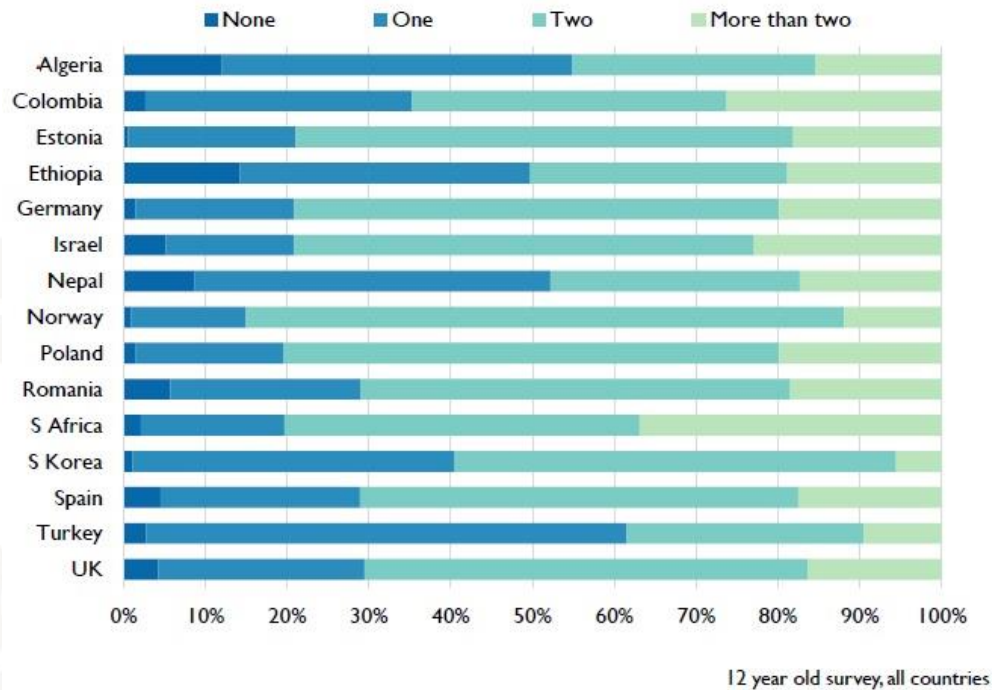
Possessions
Good clothes for school
Computer
Internet
Mobile Phone
My own room
Books to read for fun
A family car for transportation
Stuff to listen to music
Trendy clothes
Money to save
Garden
Holidays once a year
Excursions once a month
Pocket money

From a children's point of view, what do families need?

What do they want to share with family members?

7. Balance of employment and family – Who is earning money?

Number of adults in the child's household with a paid job – by country

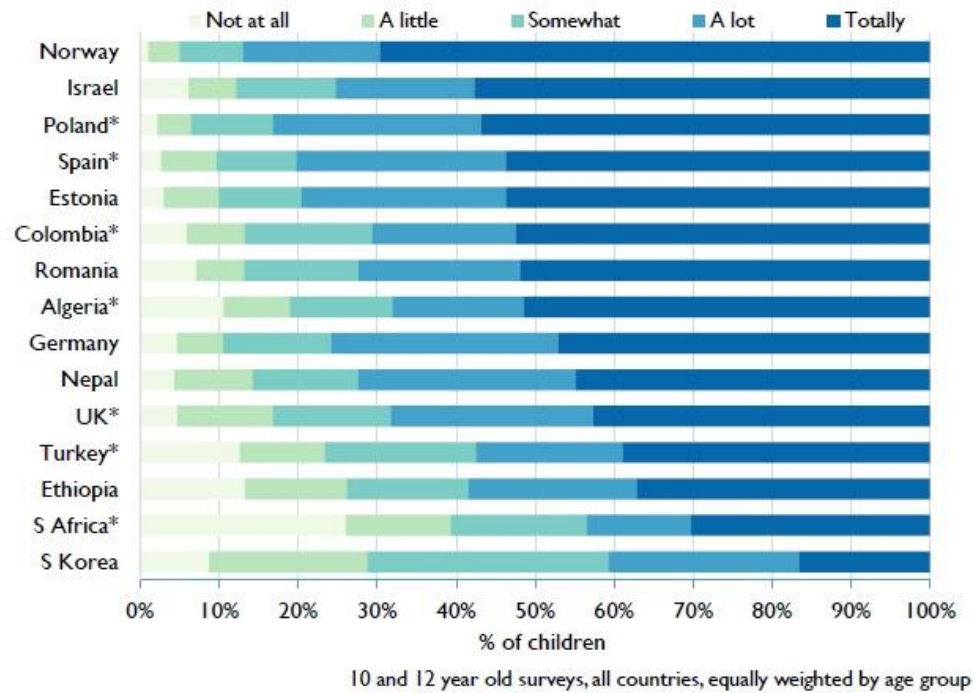


From a children's point of view, does a parent who is employed play a different role within the family than an unemployed parent?

What role does an employed family member (also a child) play within the family life compared to someone who does not have a paid job?

8. Safety and Living Environment – How do I experience our living environment?

Children's feeling of safety in their neighbourhood – by country



How important is the living environment for the family life and well-being?

Additionally:

- Satisfaction with neighbourhood
- Places to have a good time
- Other people living in their neighbourhood

Other relevant dimensions

Time – How much time do we spend with each other and who is spending time with whom?

Conflict – How do we argue in the family?

Network – How important are friendships to my family? Whom do I meet regularly and whom do we meet as a family?

Education (Bildung) – What does education mean for me and my family? Who is influencing the child's school education and why?

Care – Who takes care of whom?

Thank you!

