

Social and emotional wellbeing of the New Zealand child population

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

New Zealand Health Survey
2012/13, 2014/15 and 2015/16

Linda Pannekoek

Contact details and related publications

Contact details:

Linda_Pannekoek@moh.govt.nz

Questionnaire:

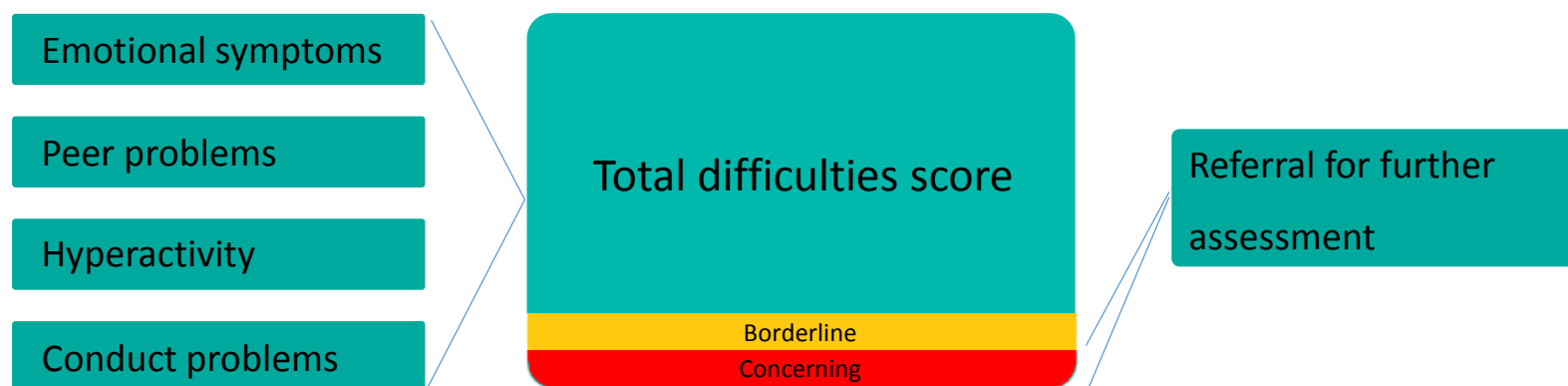
<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/content-guide-2015-16-new-zealand-health-survey>

Report:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/social-emotional-and-behavioural-difficulties-new-zealand-children-new-zealand-health-survey>

SDQ – social & emotional wellbeing (Prof Robert Goodman 1997)

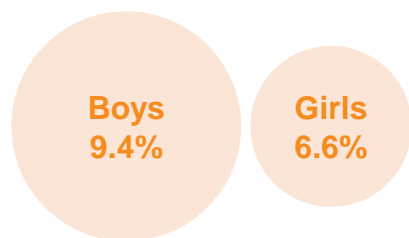
- Screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural problems in children (2-14 years)
- Widely used internationally
- Parents rate their child on 25 statements
- Covers 5 aspects of children’s development: emotions, peer relationships, hyperactivity, conduct and prosocial behaviour.



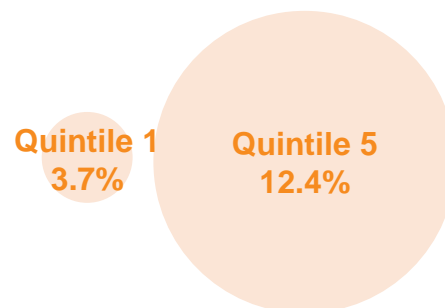
New Zealand Health Survey

- Surveys around 4,600 parents annually about their child (0-14 years)
- Core and module questions
- SDQ in child developmental health and wellbeing module in 2012/13, 2014/15 and 2015/16
- Total SDQ sample included 10,457 children aged **3-14 years**
- Representative of the NZ child population

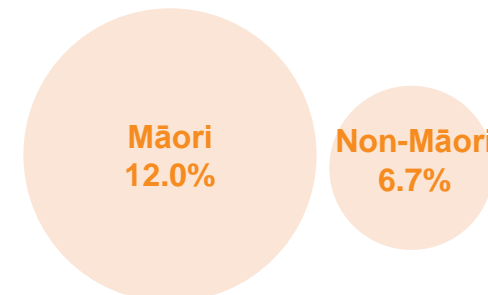
About 8% of children experienced difficulties



Boys 1.5 times more likely to have a total difficulties score of concern

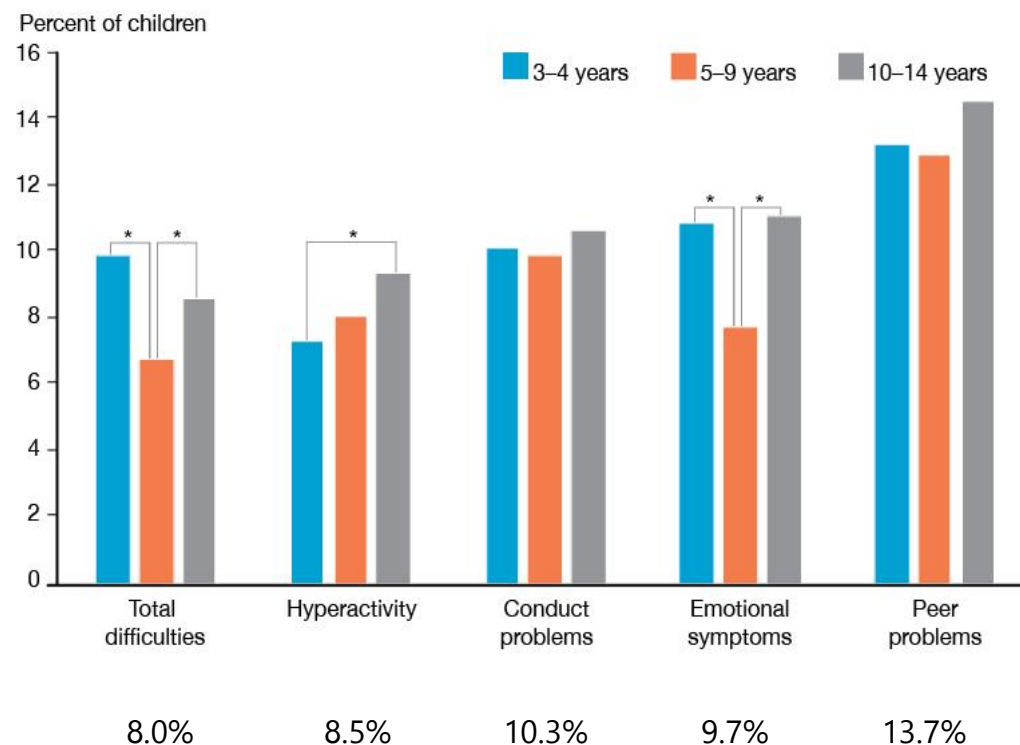


Most deprived 3 times more likely to have a total difficulties score of concern



Māori 1.8 times more likely to have a total difficulties score of concern

Prevalence of difficulties increases with age



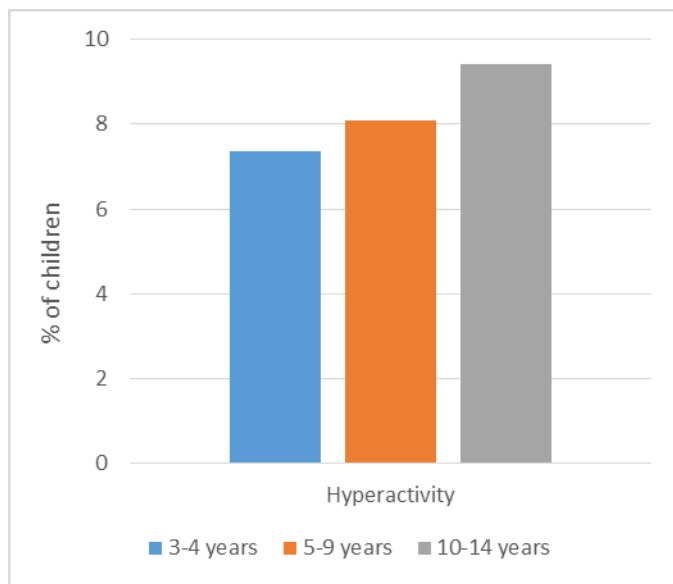
Sex difference in concerning scores

	3–4 years	5–9 years	10–14 years
Emotional symptoms	No statistically significant difference	No statistically significant difference	Girls 1.6 x more likely
Peer problems	Boys 1.6 x more likely	No statistically significant difference	Boys 1.2 x more likely
Hyperactivity	Boys 1.9 x more likely	Boys 2.1 x more likely	Boys 2.2 x more likely
Conduct problems	No statistically significant difference	Boys 1.5 x more likely	Boys 1.3 x more likely
Total difficulties	No statistically significant difference	Boys 1.4 x more likely	Boys 1.6 x more likely

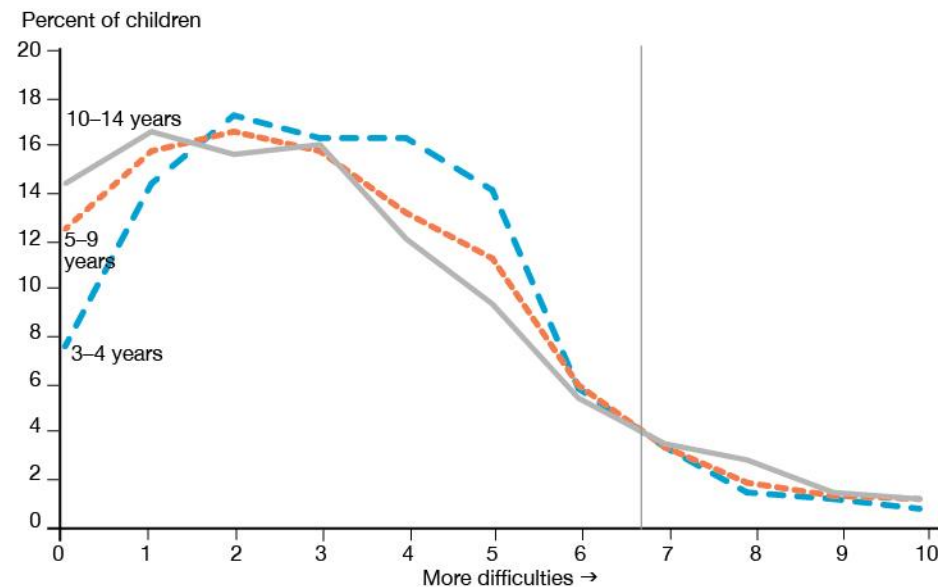
The distribution of scores is important

- Prevalence of 'concerning' scores for hyperactivity goes up with age
- Mean score for hyperactivity subscale highest for 3-4 year olds
- Are those with a mid-range score on a path to more severe difficulties?

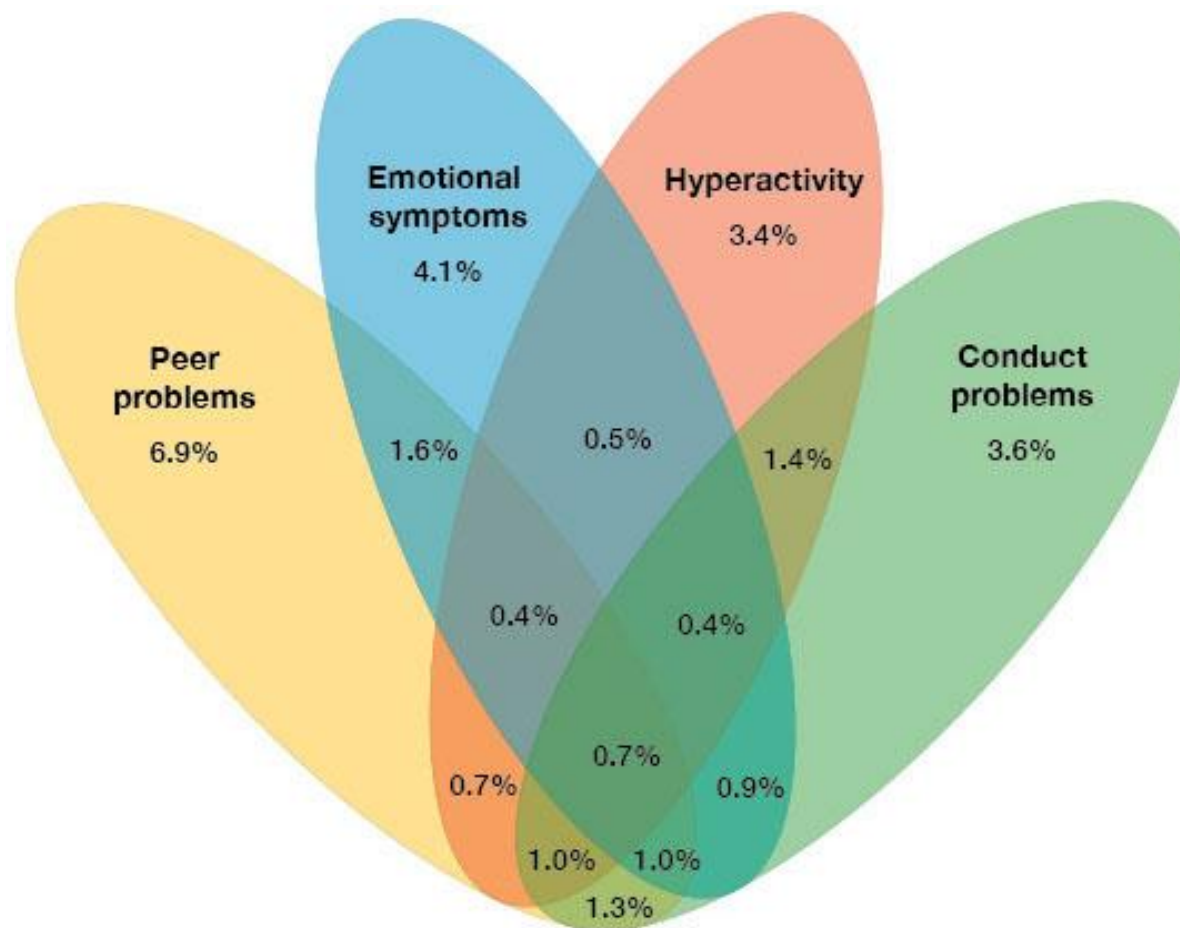
Share of children with 'concerning' hyperactivity score



Distribution of scores on the hyperactivity subscale by age group



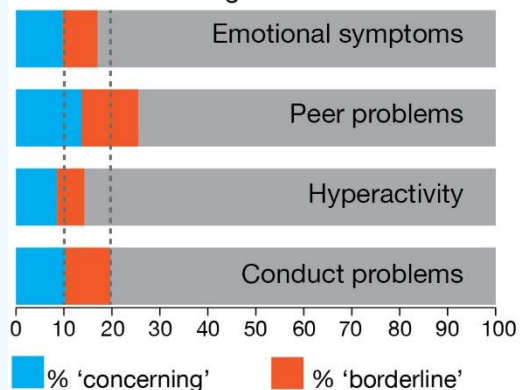
There is a lot of overlap between difficulties



27.9% experienced difficulties in one or more areas

Rates & areas of concern differed by ethnicity

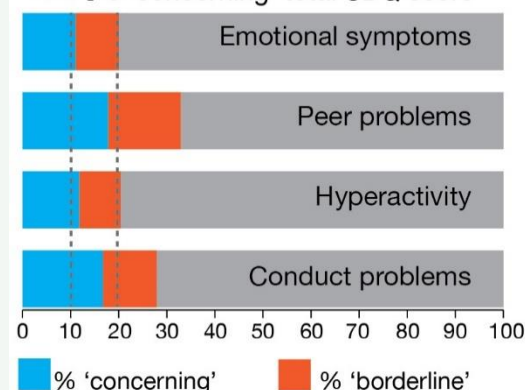
8% of New Zealand children had a 'concerning' total SDQ score



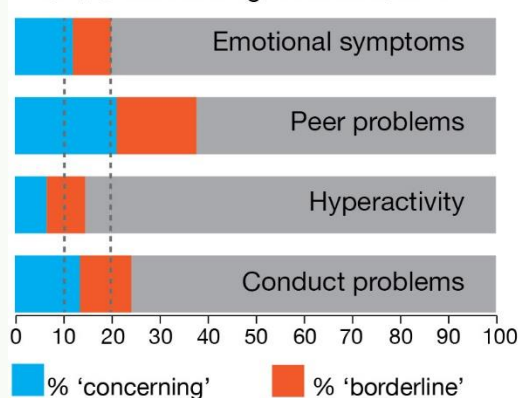
Children aged 3-14

Thresholds to categorise scores as 'concerning' or 'borderline' were defined

12% of Māori children had a 'concerning' total SDQ score

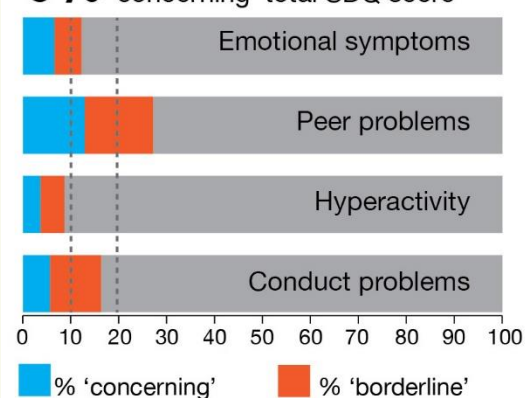


10% of Pacific children had a 'concerning' total SDQ score



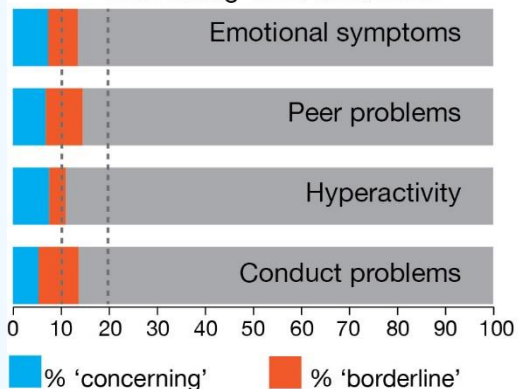
based on a population-based UK survey, such that 10% fell in each group (Goodman, 1997)

5% of Asian children had a 'concerning' total SDQ score

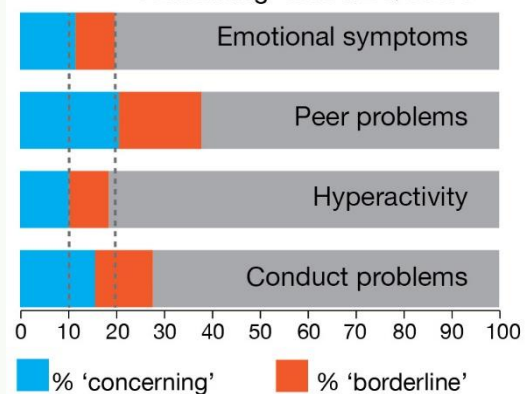


Rates & areas of concern differed by deprivation

4% of children living in areas of low deprivation (quintile 1) had a 'concerning' total SDQ score



12% of children living in areas of high deprivation (quintile 5) had a 'concerning' total SDQ score



Prevalence of 'concerning' scores by deprivation quintile, age 3-14

