

Health and Well-being of a Sample of Canadian Children with Severe/Profound/Multiple Disabilities

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Background

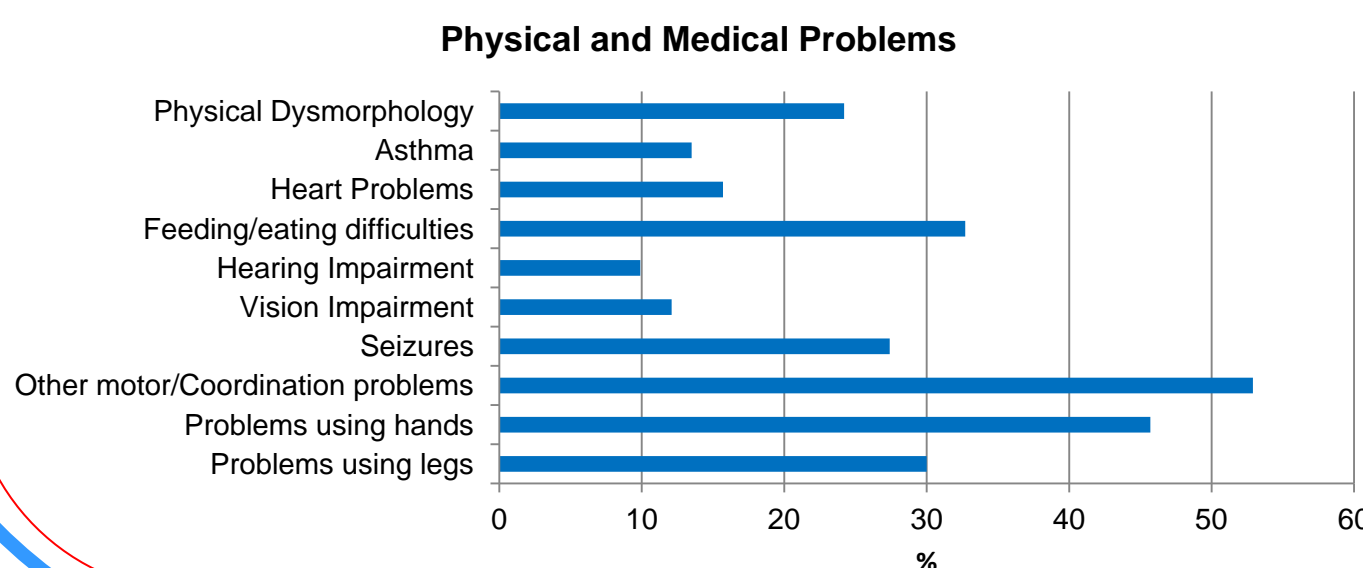
- Little current research exists about children with **Severe/Profound/Multiple Disabilities** in Canada
- The population is often excluded from research because of level of functioning, co-morbidities, and measurement issues
- Prevalence of Developmental Disability (DD) in Canada about 1.2% (Statistics Canada, 2001)
 - 37% have **2 or 3 types of disability** (e.g., physical disabilities, deaf, blind, medical syndromes, etc.)
 - 43% have **severe disabilities** (vs. mild/moderate)
- Children with severe DD are at greater risk for **health problems** (Decouffé & Autry, 2002)
- Children with severe DD are at greater risk for developing co-morbid **mental health problems** (e.g., McCarthy, 2007) and **problem behaviour** (Atkinson et al., 1994)
- **Older** children and adolescents with DD show increased psychopathology (Chadwick et al., 2005)
- Children with **Autism**, in particular, often show higher levels of problem behaviour (e.g., Blacher & Baker, 2007)

Purpose

- To describe the health, well-being and social inclusion of a sample of Canadian children with Severe/Profound/Multiple DD
- To compare by **age** and **diagnosis**

Method

- Great Outcomes for Kids Impacted by Severe Developmental Disabilities (**GO4KIDDS**) is a Canadian team project exploring the health, well-being, and social inclusion of school aged children with Severe DD and that of their parents
- Poster uses data from the Basic survey; online survey with measures of adaptive and maladaptive behaviour, quality of life, physical health, and social/recreational participation
- Participants**
 - Subset (N=223, 58%) of the most severe of 382 Basic survey participants with severe DD (e.g., requiring greater support, lower levels of language and adaptive behaviour)
 - 135 boys (61%) 86 girls (39%), aged 1-21 years (M=11.3, SD=4.0)

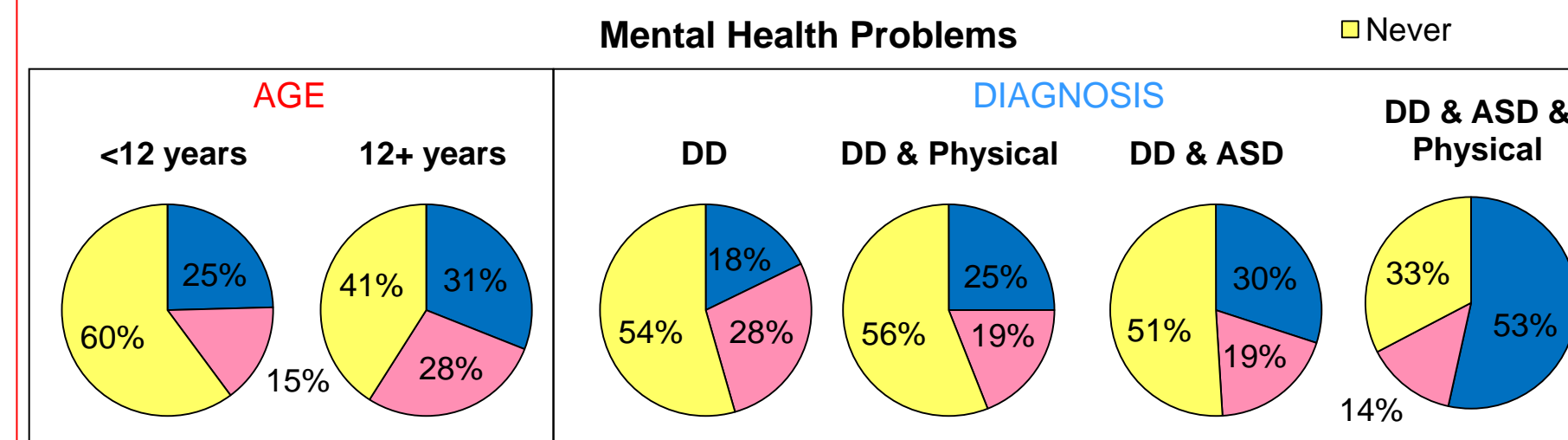
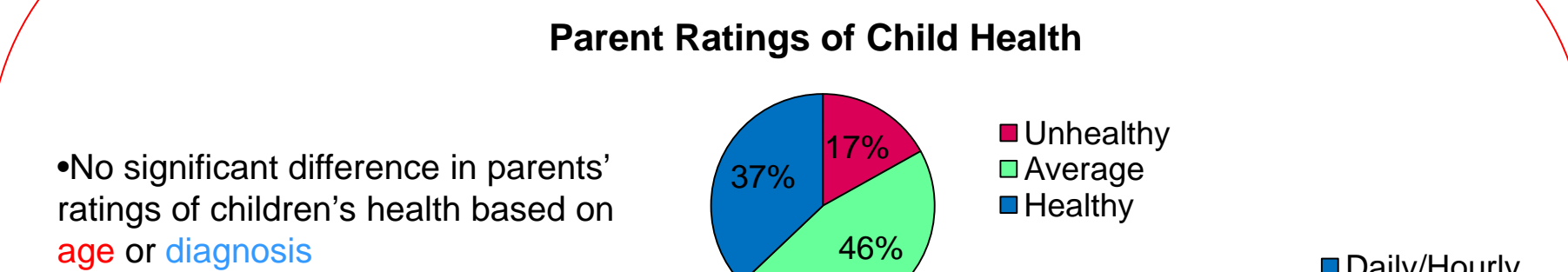


Method (cont'd)

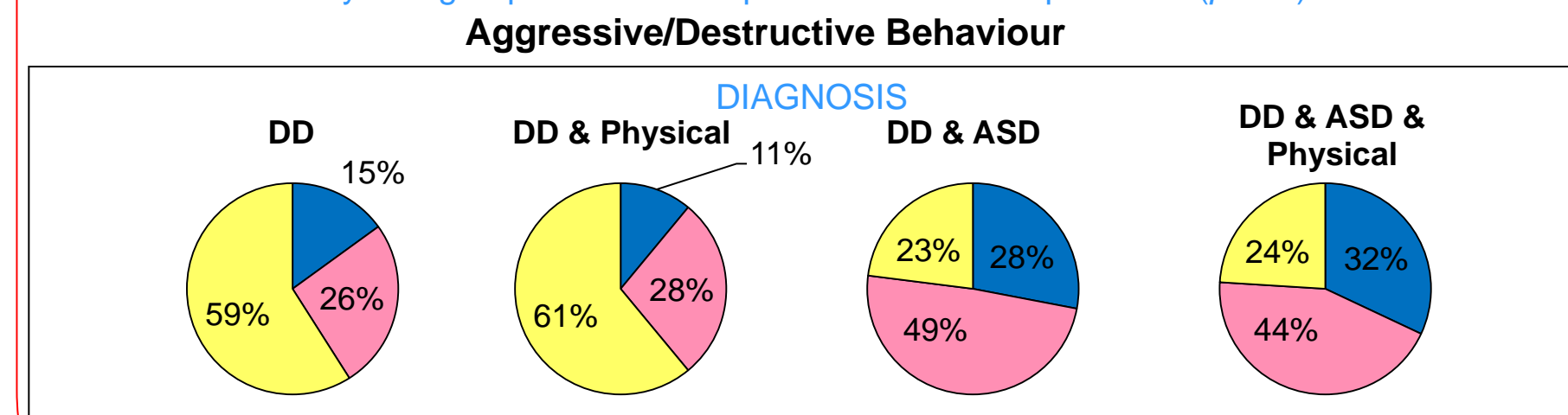
- Participants divided into **2 age groups** (<12 and 12+) and **4 diagnostic categories**:
 - 1) Severe DD
 - 2) Severe DD with Physical Disability (e.g., Cerebral Palsy, Deaf, Blind, etc.)
 - 3) Severe DD with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
 - 4) Severe DD with ASD and Physical Disability

N = 223	DD	DD & Physical	DD & ASD	DD & ASD & Physical
Younger (<12)	37	51	25	12
Older (12+)	29	38	18	13
Total	66	89	43	25

Results: Health

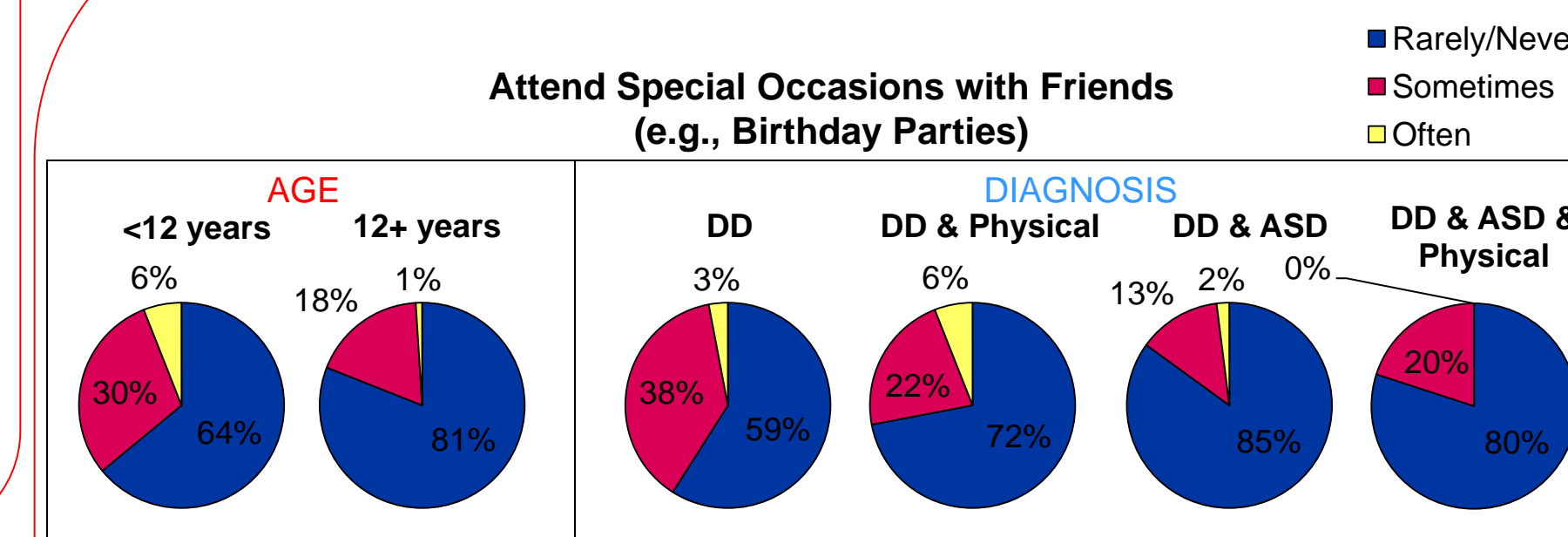


- **Older group has more frequent mental health problems (p=.02)**
- **DD & ASD & Physical group has more frequent mental health problems (p=.05)**

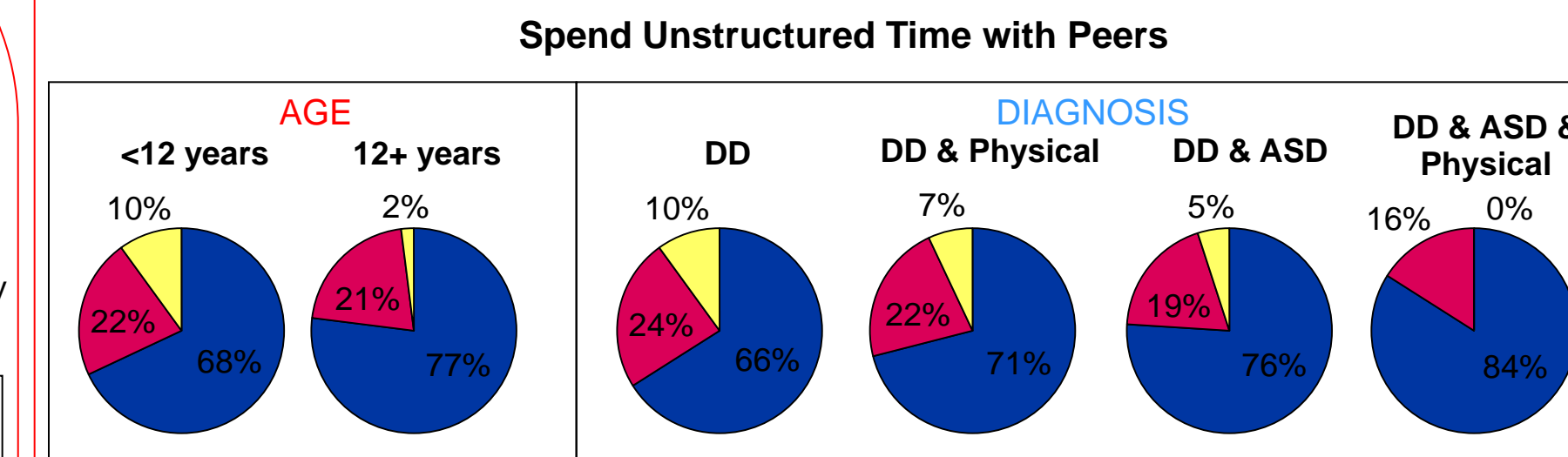


- **No significant difference in aggressive/destructive behaviour based on age**
- **ASD groups display more frequent aggressive/destructive behaviour (p<.001)**

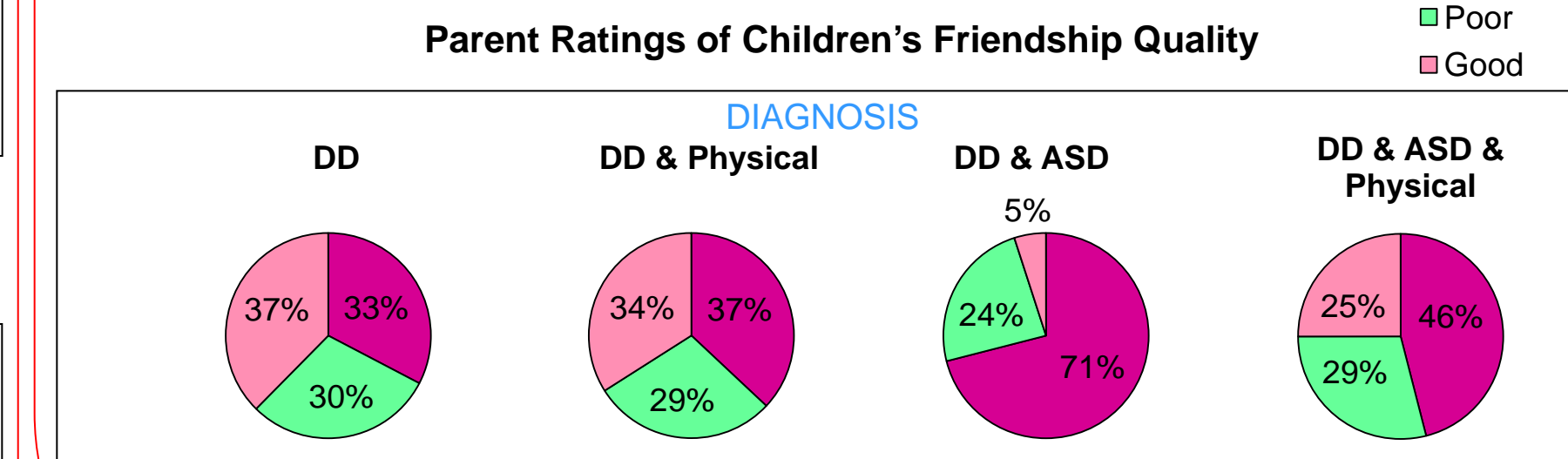
Results: Social Inclusion



- **Older children attend special occasions less often than younger children (p=.004)**
- **Children with ASD attend special occasions less often (p=.002)**

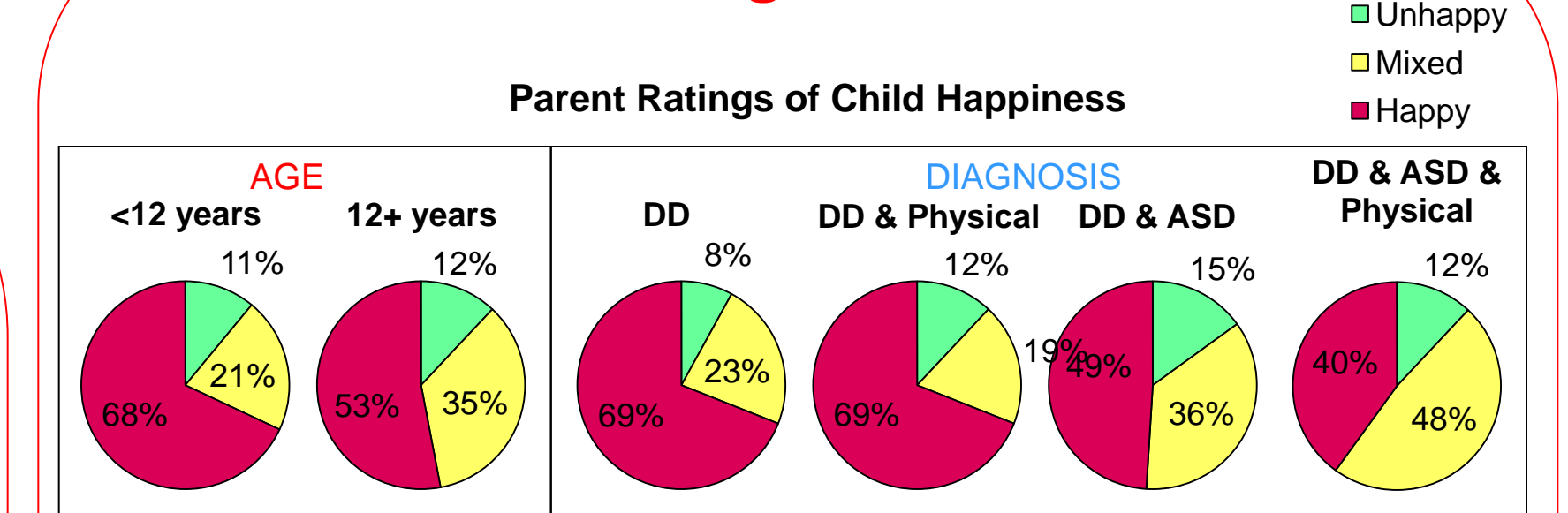


- **Older children spend unstructured time with peers less often than younger children (p=.02)**
- **DD & ASD & Physical group spend unstructured time with peers less often (p=.02)**



- **No significant difference in parents' ratings of friendship quality based on age**
- **ASD groups rated as having poorer friendship quality by parents (p<.001)**

Results: Well-being



- **Older children rated as less happy by parents than younger children (p=.01)**
- **ASD groups rated as less happy by parents (p=.02)**

Parent Ratings of Children Achieving their Potential



Discussion

- In general, the health, well-being and social inclusion of these groups is somewhat mixed
- Children rated as generally healthy by parents
- Mental health and behaviour problems are significant problems in sample
 - Especially in the **ASD groups**
- The social inclusion of all groups is very poor
 - Especially in the **older** and **ASD** groups
- Children generally rated as fairly happy
- Only one third seen as achieving their potential
- Clinical Implications**
 - Interventions needed for mental health and behaviour problems
 - Especially for **older children** and **children with ASD**
 - More research is needed to examine how to promote social inclusion so more children will be able to achieve their full potential
- Limitations**
 - Data collected from an online survey with volunteer participants
 - Groups may not be equal in terms of IQ and adaptive levels
 - No standardized measures were completed on the children
 - Measures (1 or 2 items)
 - Ordered categorical data was used in analyses
 - No normative data

Acknowledgments:

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