

Moving home in the early years: what happens to children in UK and US?

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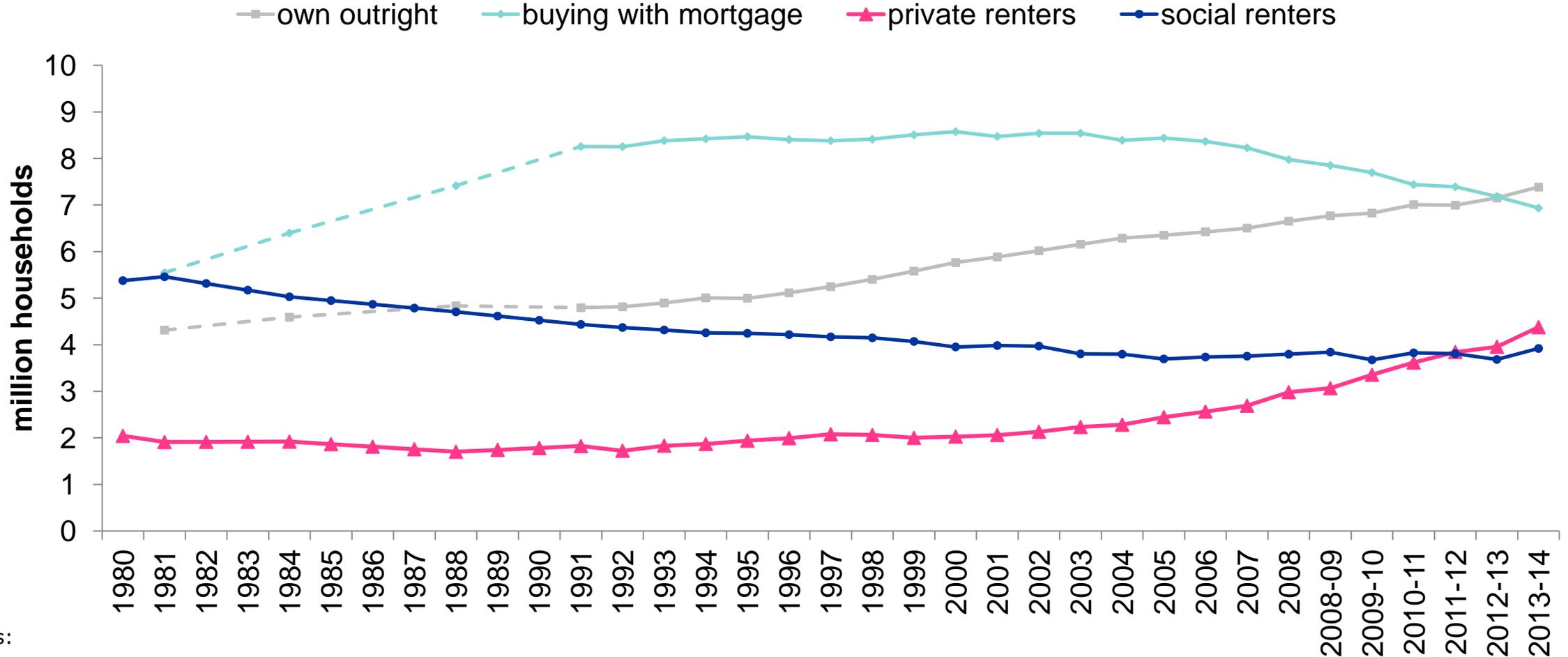
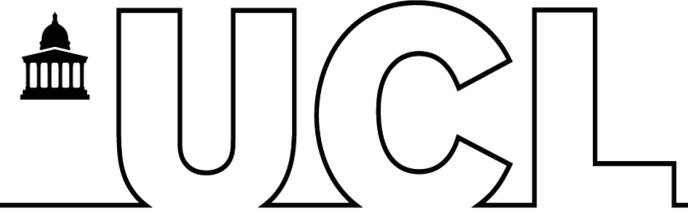


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(Graduate Center, CUNY)



MOTIVATION and POLICY BACKGROUND

Increase in private renting



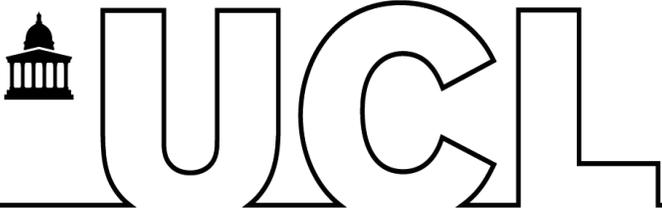
Sources:

1981 to 1991: DOE Labour Force Survey Housing Trailer;

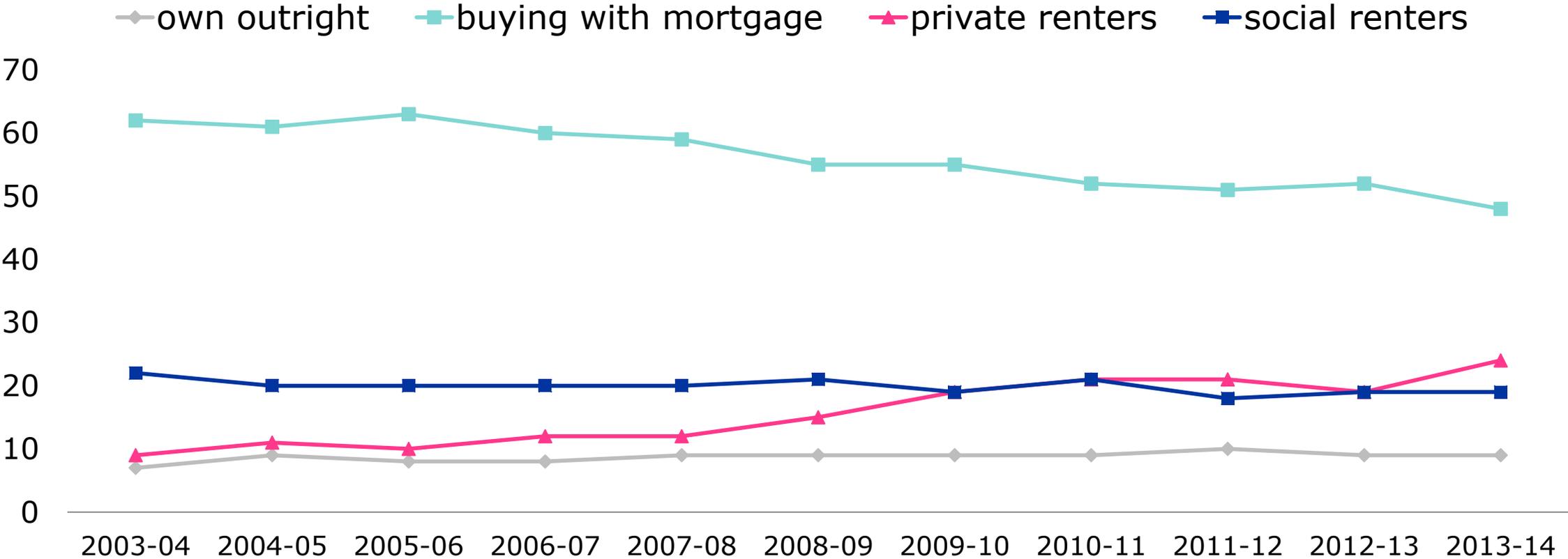
1992 to 2008: ONS Labour Force Survey;

2008-09 onwards: English Housing Survey, full household sample

More pronounced for families with children

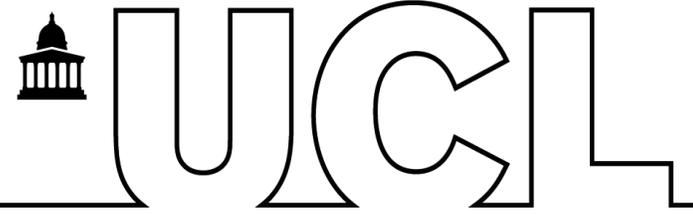


Households with children



Source: English Housing Survey

Reduction in housing subsidies for private renters



- From 2011, 'Local Housing Allowance' (LHA) was set at the 30th percentile of local market rents (so only rents for the cheapest third of homes would be fully funded)
- Weekly LHA capped at £400, regardless of household size or actual rent asked and paid
- Limiting property size for HB payments to 4 bedrooms
- From 2013, LHA caps increased in line with a new, generally less generous measure of inflation (the consumer price index)

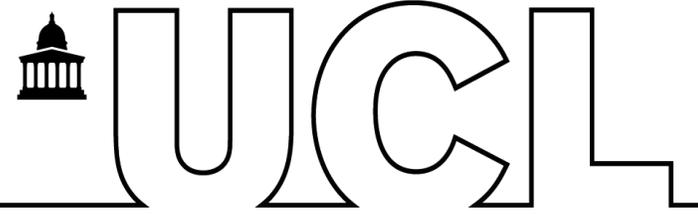
Changes to security of tenure in social housing sector



UCL

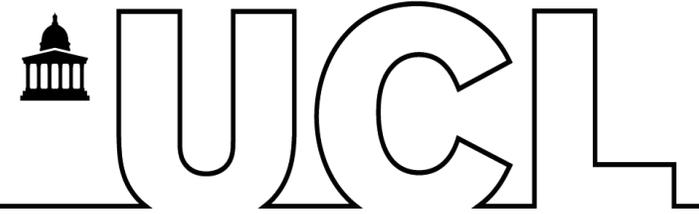
- Localism Act 2011 abolished entitlement to secure tenancies. Five years to be offered as standard (if landlords chose) with extension dependent not only on good behaviour but on evidence of continuing housing need
- LAs to fulfil homelessness duties by helping to arrange private sector tenancies rather than social housing

Social sector size criteria (aka 'bedroom tax')



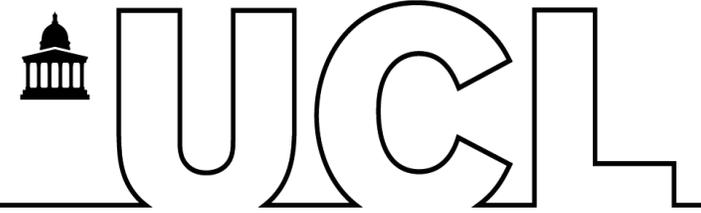
- Reduction in rent eligible for HB for 'spare' bedrooms (14% for one bedroom, 25% for two)

However, moves to date not as great as expected



- 94% of households affected by the bedroom tax had not moved in the first six months. Partly preference, partly because of lack of suitable smaller property (Wilcox 2014)
- In the private sector, also limited evidence of moves (mostly in London) (Beatty et al. 2013)
 - Tenants report moving as a 'last resort'
 - Some not aware, or becoming aware and thinking about how to manage.
 - Cheaper accommodation not usually available
 - Landlords disinclined to evict but likely not to renew and to limit subsidised lettings in future

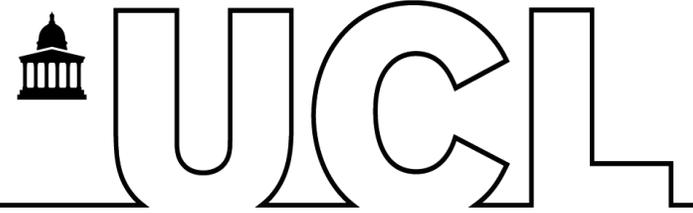
Possible longer term implications



- For middle and lower income home-owners, fewer moves (harder to move up the ladder)
- For newly forming families, long period before stable home ownership [potentially more moves in the early years or a longer period in unsuitable housing]
- Smaller homes for low income families – greater housing inequality
- And more difficult for separated parents, where one may have no space to accommodate visiting children
- Increasing hardship for families seeking to avoid moves (cutting back on other things; arrears and debt), and more evictions

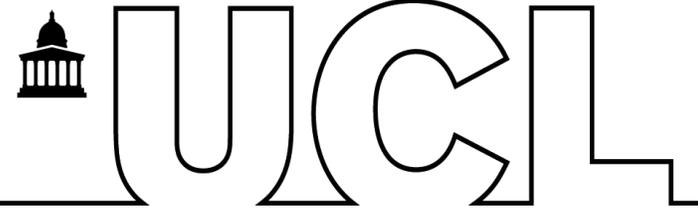
**MOVING HOME
IN THE EARLY YEARS**

Our research



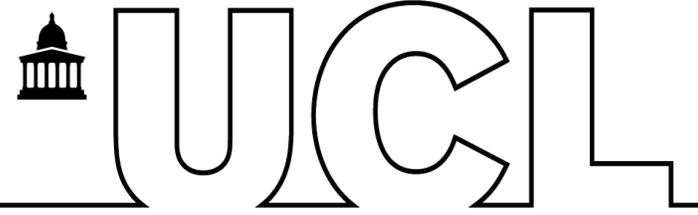
- To examine patterns of moves and child outcomes for children in the UK prior to these changes (early 2000s):
→ Using the Millennium Cohort Study
- To compare these to the US – with a much larger private rented sector and less security.
→ Using the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study
- To draw out policy implications, given the current direction of UK housing policy

Why early years?



- Policy emphasis on the early years and early intervention, but housing largely absent from that agenda
- Young children (0-4) have high rates of moving:
 - in US: 23% moved between 1999-2000
 - in England and Wales: 11% moved between 2000-2001
- But little empirical evidence on moving and pre-school children

Moving home & child wellbeing



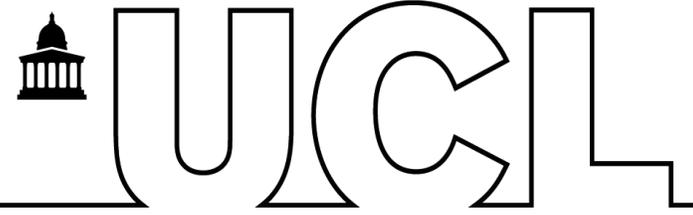
Families move home for many reasons:

- Events, such as new partnerships, divorce or the birth of a child
- Employment events, such as job loss or a new job
- To get a better 'place' – or cheaper

Moving home may have many outcomes:

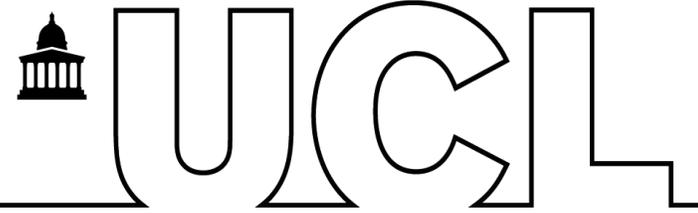
- Moves often presumed an 'adverse life event'
- Multiple moves may be detrimental
- Moves may result in worse housing and area

Some previous findings from the UK



- Moves associated with poor health in mothers of Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) and their infants. Accounted for by family characteristics and the negative circumstances associated with some moves (Tunstall et al 2002)
- Frequent moves in MCS before age 3 associated with lower uptake of immunisations, suggesting difficult to keep in touch with NHS (Pearce et al 2008)
- Many middle class parents in MCS move during their child's pre-school years to be near better schools (Hansen 2014)
- Residential mobility did not appear to affect outcomes among children of the 1958 cohort at ages 4-17 in 1991 (Verropoulou et al 2002)

Today's presentation

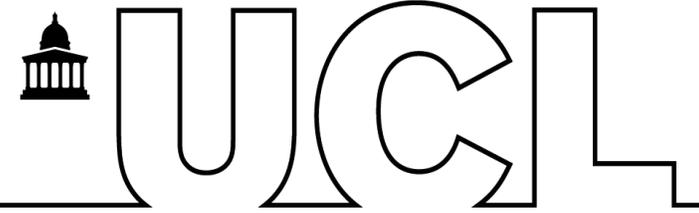


Focuses on children under 5

- Who moves, how far, how often, and for what reasons?
- Do children of frequent movers fare differently to those whose families move less?
- Are any deficits in child development accounted for by the circumstances that trigger moves?
- Are any deficits in child development accounted for by the type of destination?
- What evidence is there of other dimensions of child vulnerability?

DATA

Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) Fragile Families & Child Wellbeing Study (FFS)



MCS

- About 19,000 children born between 2000 and 2001
- Interviews with parent(s) when the child was 9 months, 3, and 5 years (and later)
- Oversample poor & ethnic areas
- We restrict sample to complete observations on outcomes at 5
- Multiple imputation

→ **Analytical sample: 14,373**

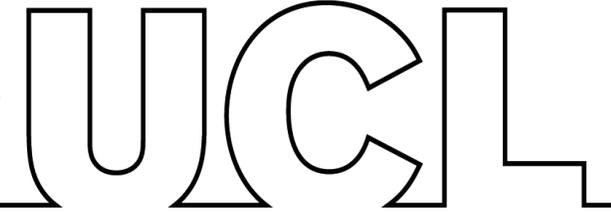


FFS

- About 5,000 children born between 1998 and 2000, 20 large cities
- Interviews with parent(s) at child's birth, and ages 1, 3, and 5 (and later)
- Oversample unmarried mothers
- Restrict sample to complete observations on outcomes at 5
- Multiple imputation

→ **Analytical sample: 2,577**

Surveys augmented with index of area social advantage



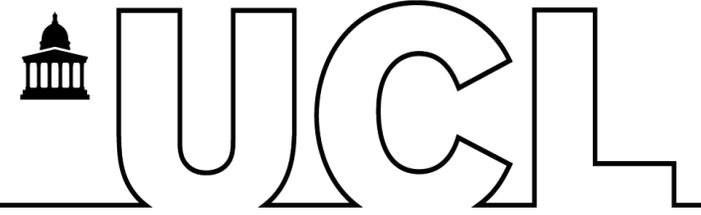
- Based on Statistical Small Areas: LSOA/Datazones/wards in NI
- PCA, factors:
 - % Highest qualification at lev 4 +
 - % in Managerial/Senior Professional occupations
 - % Unemployment (rev coded)
 - % Receiving means tested benefits (rev coded)
 - % Lone parent households (rev coded)
 - % With no qualifications (rev coded)

We created a similar bespoke index for the US

Alpha = .89

**3 levels of area advantage:
Bottom 30% | Middle 40% | Top 30%**

Change in the index of area social advantage

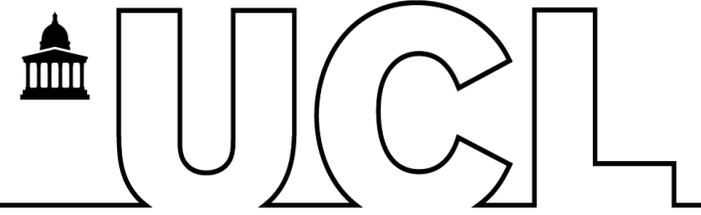


- This index is constant for a given area over the 5 years, but changes if family moves
- Change between age 9 months and age 5 years:
 - 1. Stuck at bottom:** in bottom 30% at baseline and age 5
 - 2. Going down:** at lower level of advantage at age 5
 - 3. Stay middle:** in middle 40% at baseline and age 5
 - 4. Going up:** at higher level of advantage at age 5
 - 5. Stay at top:** in top 30% at baseline and age 5

[Corrects for changes <0.5 SD across categories]

**RESULTS:
Home Moves**

MCS children seldom moved more than once...



**Number of moves:
birth/9mths – 5yrs**



MCS

%

0 moves

60.0

1

27.0

2-3

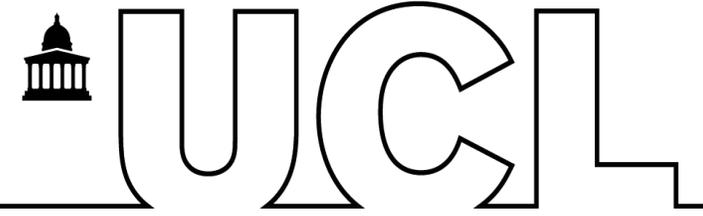
12.9

4 or more

2.4

Percentages are weighted

MCS children seldom moved more than once...

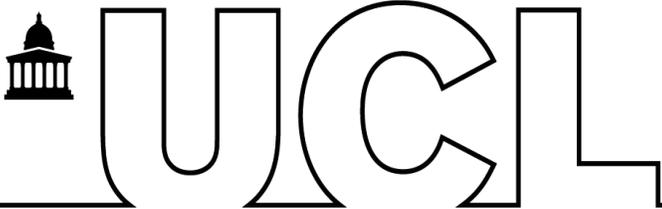


...but in FFS they did!

Number of moves: birth/9mths – 5yrs	 MCS	 FFS
	%	%
0 moves	60.0	32.2
1	27.0	27.8
2-3	12.9	29.3
4 or more	2.4	10.7

Percentages are weighted

Children did not move far...



Movers by distance



MCS

%

Within 2 km

41

Between 2 and 10 km

30

Over 10 km

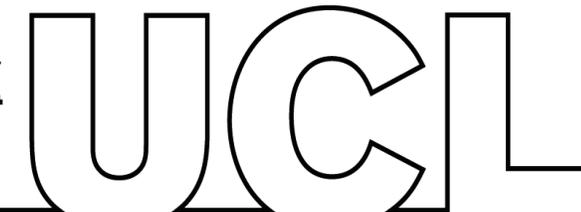
24

Information missing for 5% of families

And a very similar pattern in FFS

Percentages are weighted

...and MCS children moved very young



Moves by age



MCS

%

Between 9 months and 3 years

29.2

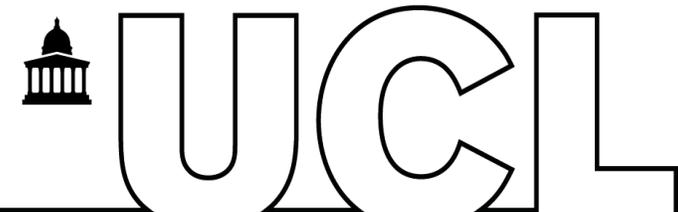
Between 3 and 5 years

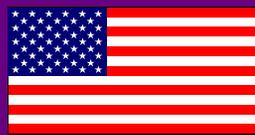
14.4

While in FFS, 40% in each period

Percentages are weighted

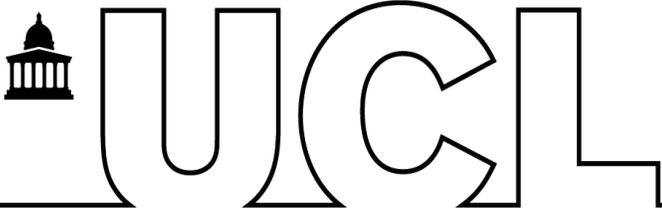
Stark differences in housing tenure



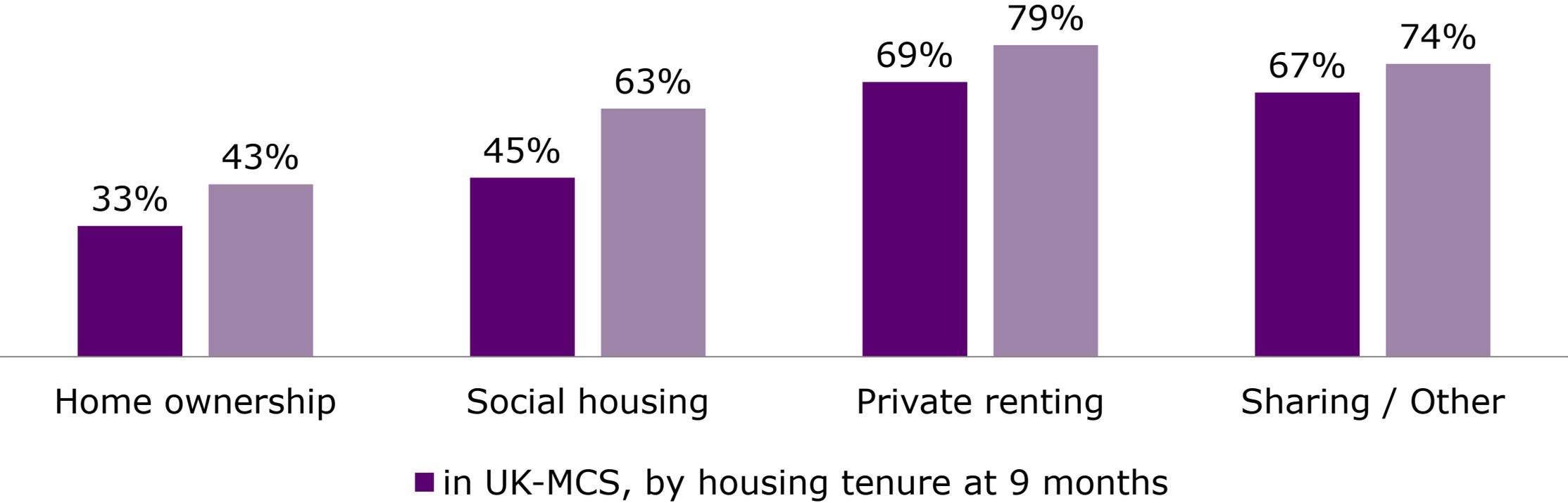
Housing tenure at first survey	 MCS	 FFS
	%	%
Home Ownership	67.7	25.5
Social (Public) Housing	19.8	10.2
Private Renting	7.4	47.3
Sharing / Rent-free / Other	5.1	17.1

Percentages are weighted

Moving most common among private tenants (and sharers)

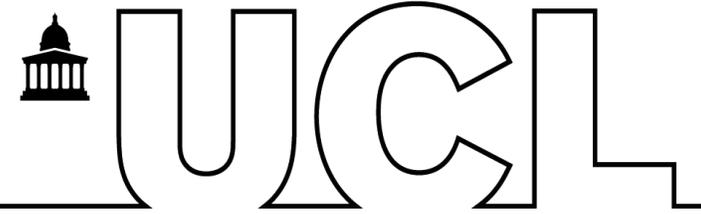


Mobility rate by housing tenure



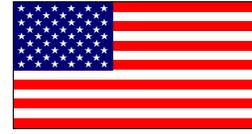
Percentages are weighted

Who moved with a child under 5?



MCS

- Partner change
- Workless/ losing work
- Private renters
- Young mother
- New births
- Depressed mother
- Higher income
- More educated mothers
- Not Black/South Asian

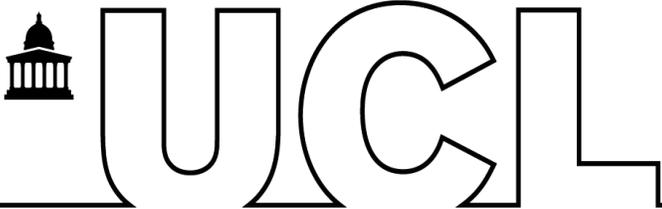


FFS

- Partner change
- Workless/ losing work
- Renters
- Young mother
- New births
- Depressed mother
- Poor health in mother/child
- Lower income
- Less educated mothers
- Not Black/Hispanic

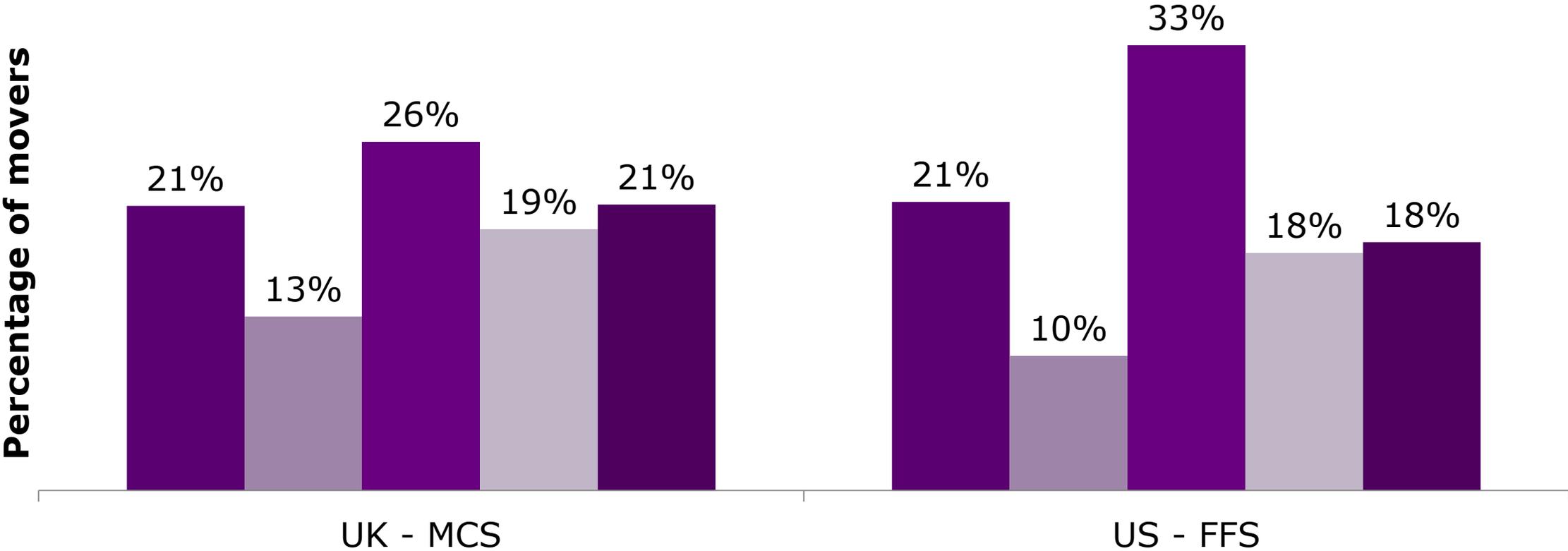
RESULTS:
Outcomes of moves

Do moves result in better or worse areas?



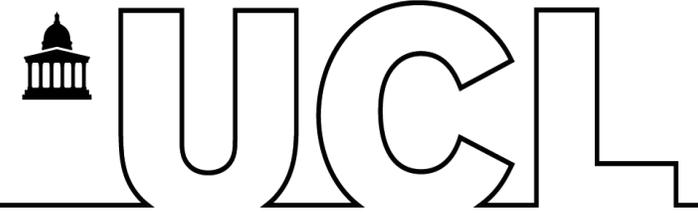
Comparing first and age 5 surveys

■ Stuck bottom 30% ■ Going down ■ Stay middle 40% ■ Going up ■ Stay at top 30%



Percentages are weighted

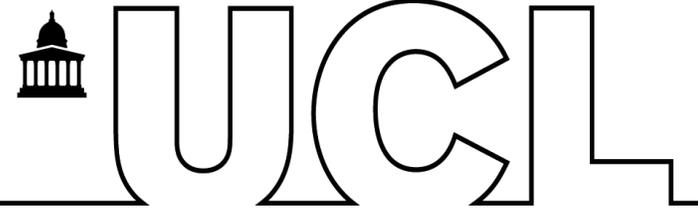
Do moves result in more housing space or better areas?



MCS Movers	Better area than before or top 30%	Similar area as before (but not at top or bottom)	Worse area than before or bottom 30%
Bigger home	Gain or maintain 55.8%		Mixed 17.7%
Same sized home			
Smaller home	Mixed 6.2%		Double Disadvantage 20.2%

RESULTS:
Outcomes for MCS children

Child outcomes at age 5



- **Naming vocabulary:**

From British Ability Scales: Child asked by the interviewer to name objects in a picture book

- **Externalising behaviour:**

Parent report on Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire:

Sum of items from: Conduct problems (5 items); Hyperactivity/Inattention (5 items)

[$\alpha = .79$]

- **Internalising behaviour:**

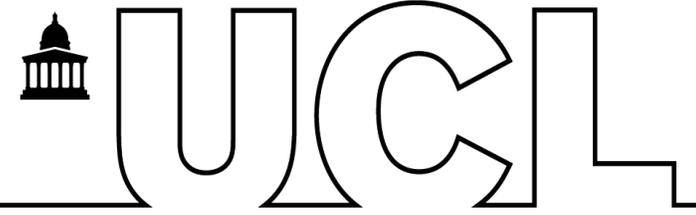
Parent report on Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

Sum of items from: Emotional symptoms (5 items); Peer problems (5 items)

[$\alpha = .66$]

Similar scores analysed in the FFS

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model



Simple model:

1. *Child outcome at age 5 = β (Number of moves) + sex + exact age at 'Age5' survey*

Sequentially more complex models, to see if β can be explained by:

2. Family structure/change
3. Employment status/change
4. Housing tenure at baseline

Fully controlled model:

5. *Child outcome = β (Number of moves) + sex + age + **controls***

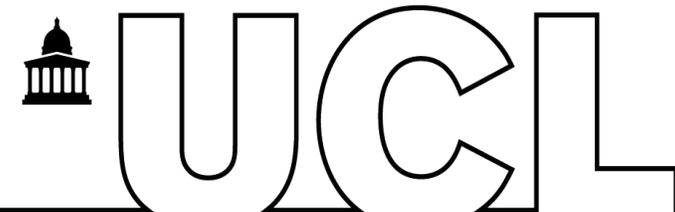
Controls for Context (mostly at baseline):

Household: income at baseline; size at baseline; birth of additional child

Cohort member: first born, low birth weight, health,

Respondent (mother): age, education, ethnicity, country of birth, health, depression

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model



Deficits per move in standard deviations (β)

1. No
controls

Vocabulary
(deficit)

0.043***

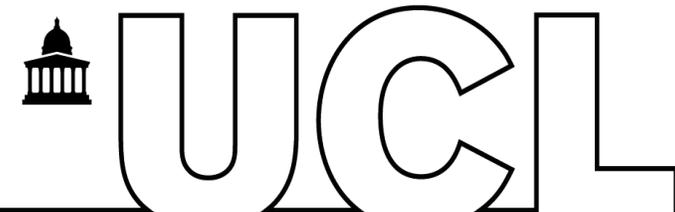
Externalised
Problems

0.059***

Internalised
Problems

0.058***

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model

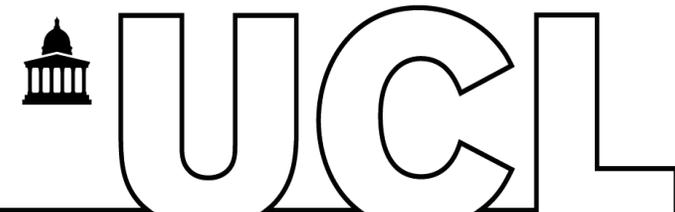


Deficits per move in standard deviations (β)

	1. No controls	2. Plus Partnership change
Vocabulary (deficit)	0.043***	ns
Externalised Problems	0.059***	0.022***
Internalised Problems	0.058***	0.025*

All models control for child sex and age in months

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model

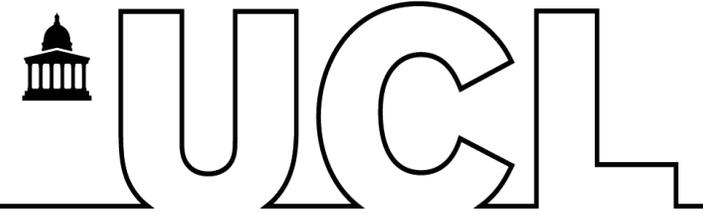


Deficits per move in standard deviations (β)

	1. No controls	2. Plus Partnership change	3. Plus Employment change
Vocabulary (deficit)	0.043***	ns	ns
Externalised Problems	0.059***	0.022***	0.039*
Internalised Problems	0.058***	0.025*	ns

All models control for child sex and age in months

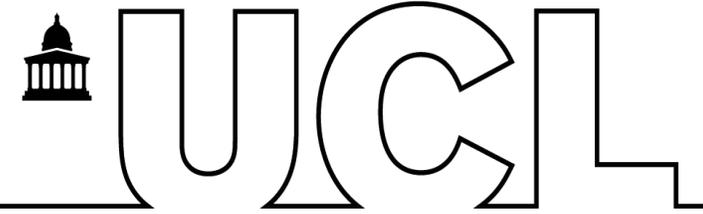
Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model



Deficits per move in standard deviations (β)				
	1. No controls	2. Plus Partnership change	3. Plus Employment change	4. Plus Housing tenure
Vocabulary (deficit)	0.043***	ns	ns	ns
Externalised Problems	0.059***	0.022***	0.039*	0.062*
Internalised Problems	0.058***	0.025*	ns	ns

All models control for child sex and age in months

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model

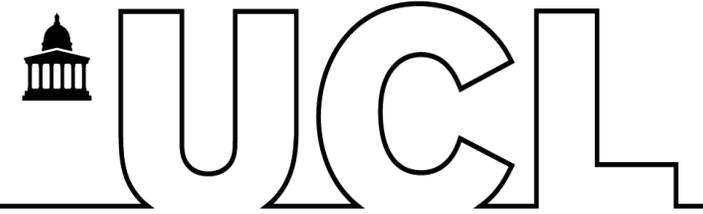


Deficits per move in standard deviations

	1. No controls	2. Plus Partnership change	3. Plus Employment change	4. Plus Housing tenure	5. Plus full set of controls
Vocabulary (deficit)	0.043***	ns	ns	ns	ns
Externalised Problems	0.059***	0.022***	0.039*	0.062*	ns
Internalised Problems	0.058***	0.025*	ns	ns	ns

All models control for child sex and age in months

Child outcomes: Elaborating an explanatory model

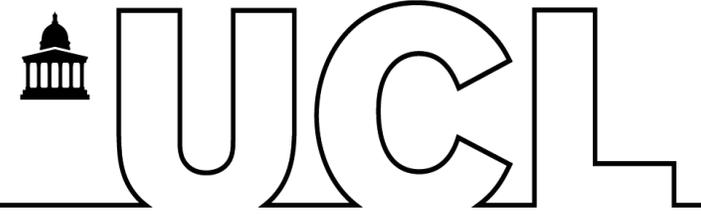


Deficits per move in standard deviations (β)					
	1. No controls	2. Plus Partnership change	3. Plus Employment change	4. Plus Housing tenure	5. Plus full set of controls
Vocabulary (deficit)	0.043***	ns	ns	ns	ns
Externalised Problems	0.059***	0.022***	0.039*	0.062*	ns
Internalised Problems	0.058***	0.025*	ns	ns	ns

Very similar pattern of results in FFS, in USA, on three similar child outcomes

All models control for child sex and age in months

Child outcomes: Exploring type of move



Fully controlled model:

$$5. \text{ Child outcome} = \beta(\text{Number of moves}) + \text{sex} + \text{age} + \text{controls}$$

Contextual controls:

Household: income at baseline; size at baseline; birth of additional child

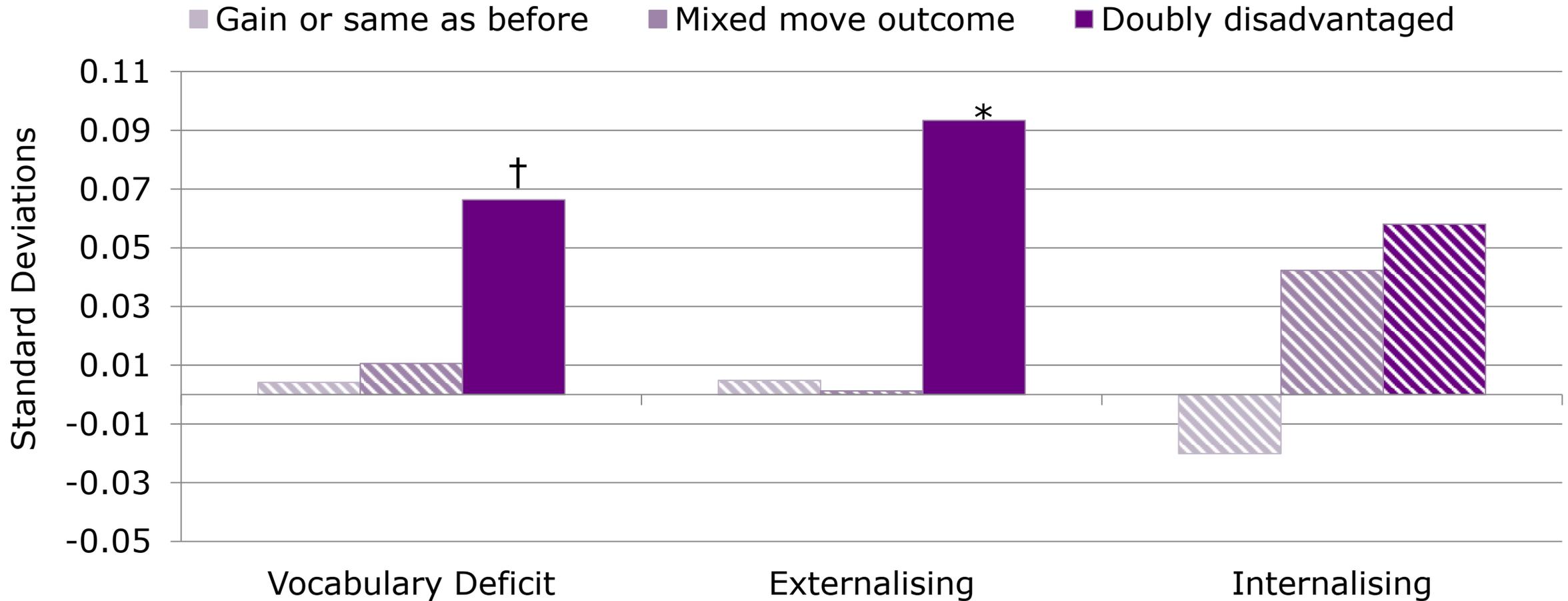
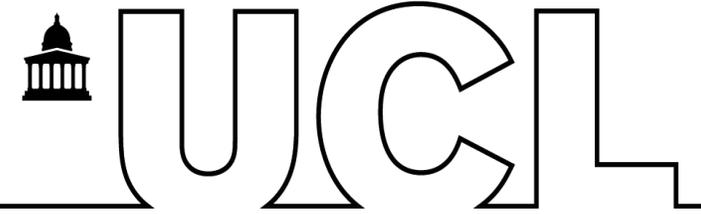
Cohort member: whether first born, whether low birth weight, health, Respondent (mother): age, education, ethnicity, country of birth, health, depression

$$6. \text{ Child outcome} = \beta(\text{Type of move}) + \text{gender} + \text{age} + \text{controls}$$

Type of move:

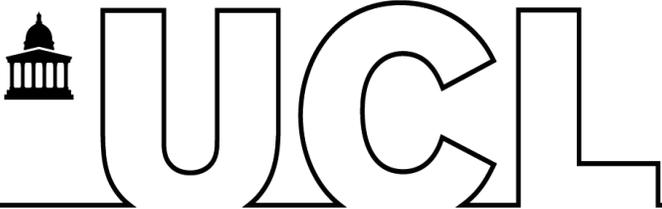
- Stayers (reference category)
- Gain or maintain place/ housing space
- Mixed outcomes
- Doubly disadvantaged – loss on at least one front not compensated by a gain on the other

Child outcomes and move type:

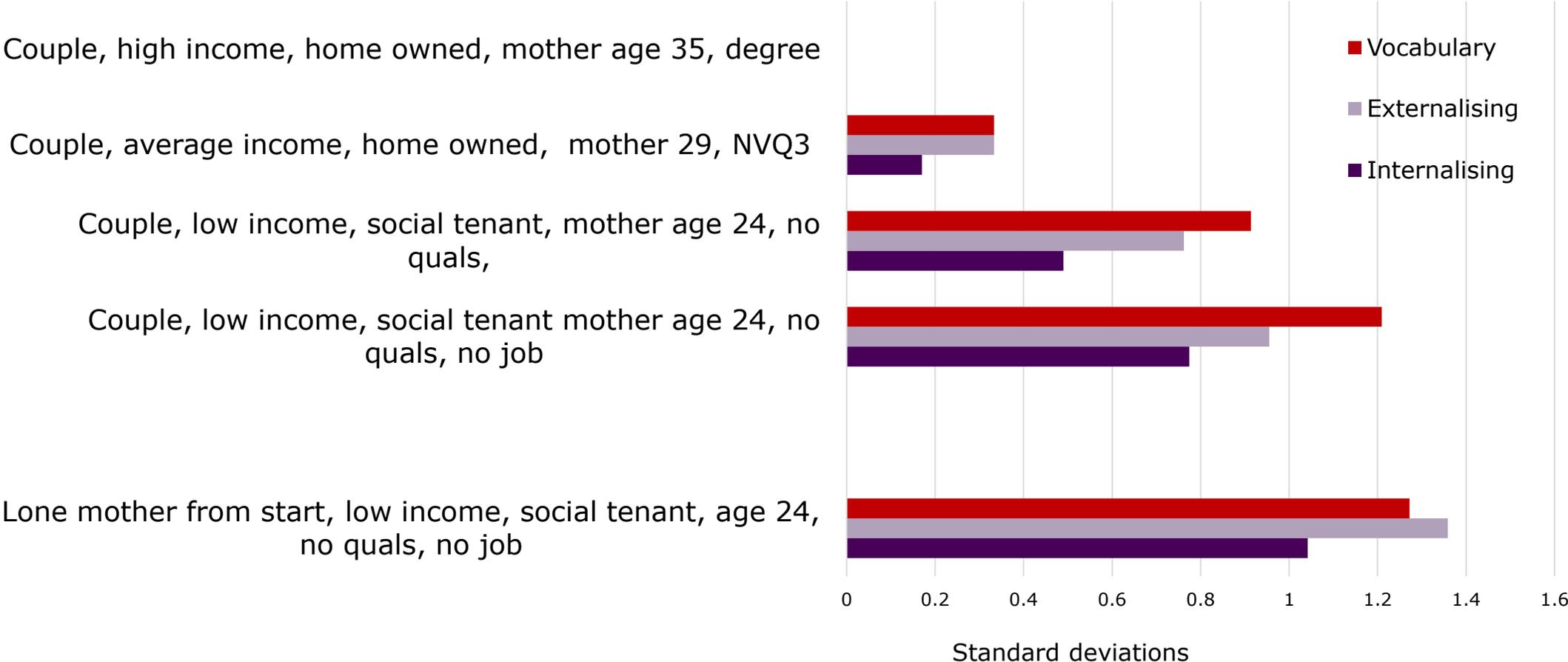


OLS regression. Significance: ▨ not sig; †p < .1, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

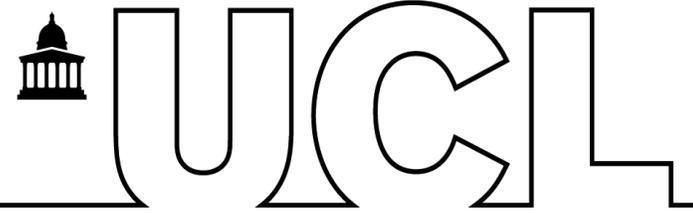
What else is significant in the full model?



Developmental deficits between illustrative rich and lower income families



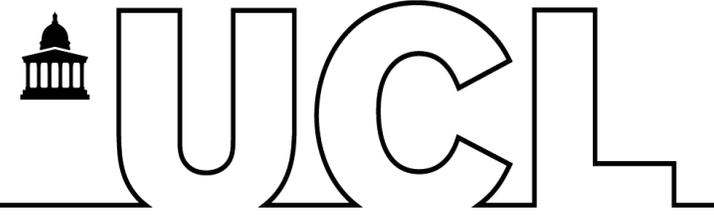
Findings from further investigations



- Very recent moves (less than 6 months) showed higher externalising scores (only) in full model
- Remaining in disadvantaged area, whether moved or not, associated with poor outcomes
- Neighbourhood themselves can change: neighbourhood decline may intensify some of the area setbacks experience by movers
- Moving after school age : minor increase in internalising behaviour among older siblings of the cohort – only borderline significance

CONCLUSIONS

Moving has many contexts



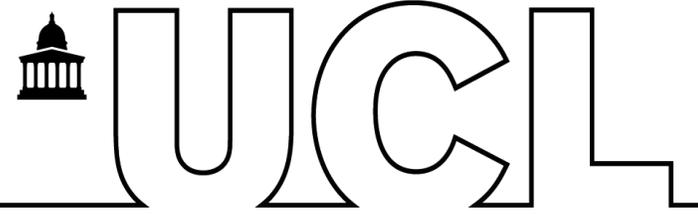
Is there a shift towards the miserable end of this spectrum?



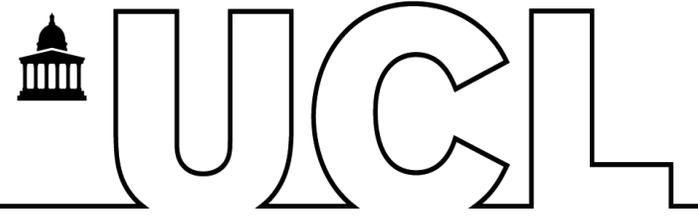
- Moving home was a common life event for children, but it was not necessarily, for 5 year olds in the early 2000s, an 'adverse' one in either US or UK
- But in some circumstances – family break-up, job loss, unstable tenancies, moves to smaller homes or worse neighbourhoods – outcomes for children can be adverse
- Many of these circumstances are more prevalent in the US and are likely to be more common in the UK now than they were a decade ago

-
- Living in disadvantaged areas is associated with worse outcomes, for both movers and stayers, even after large set of controls.
 - We confirm important social disadvantages associated with gaps in child development whether or not the family moved

Policy implications



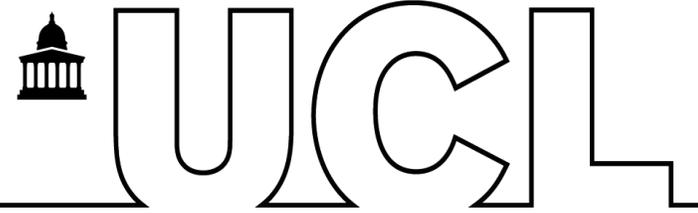
- Policies should enable families to move to meet their changing needs, alert to the dangers of either immobility as well as mobility forced by unaffordability
- Early years' investment for low income families should extend to suitable housing – not just 'child care'
- The management of services for young children (and surveys of them) needs to make provision for their mobility



Thank you

We look forward to the comments of the panel and
the audience

Moving: gains and losses



- Better resourced families most likely to gain or maintain
- Growing families are less likely to maintain on one or both fronts
- Partnership changes such as separation and/or arrival of new partner are associated with doubly disadvantageous moves
- Private renters particularly likely to move to a worse area even if they gain space – a mixed outcome
- Social housing rules protect tenants from moving to smaller homes