

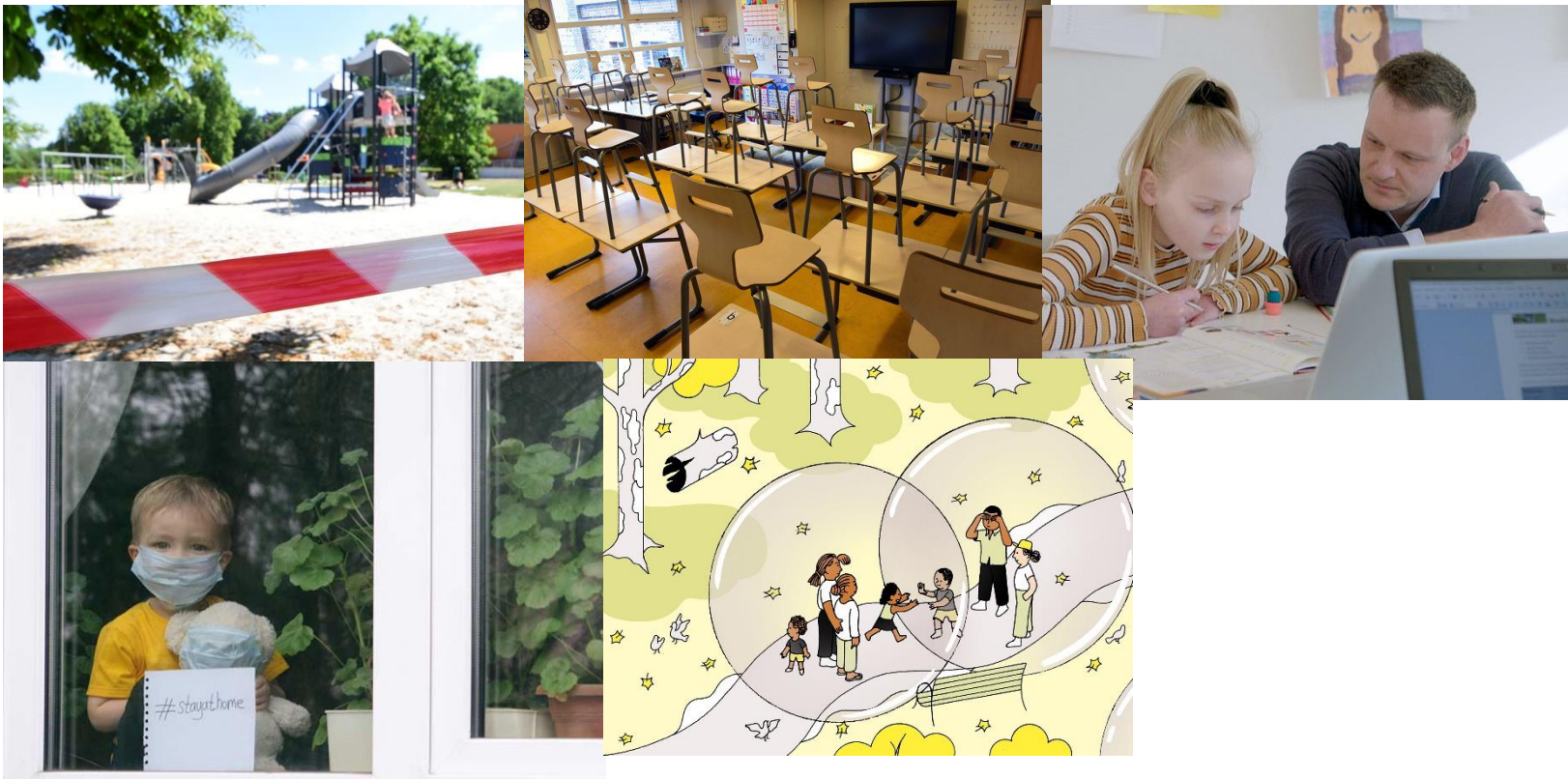


The Gendered Impact of Social Support on Children's Well-Being Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Background

Measures to contain the corona pandemic abruptly changed children's daily lives





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First research question

What is the impact of the corona pandemic on children's life satisfaction?

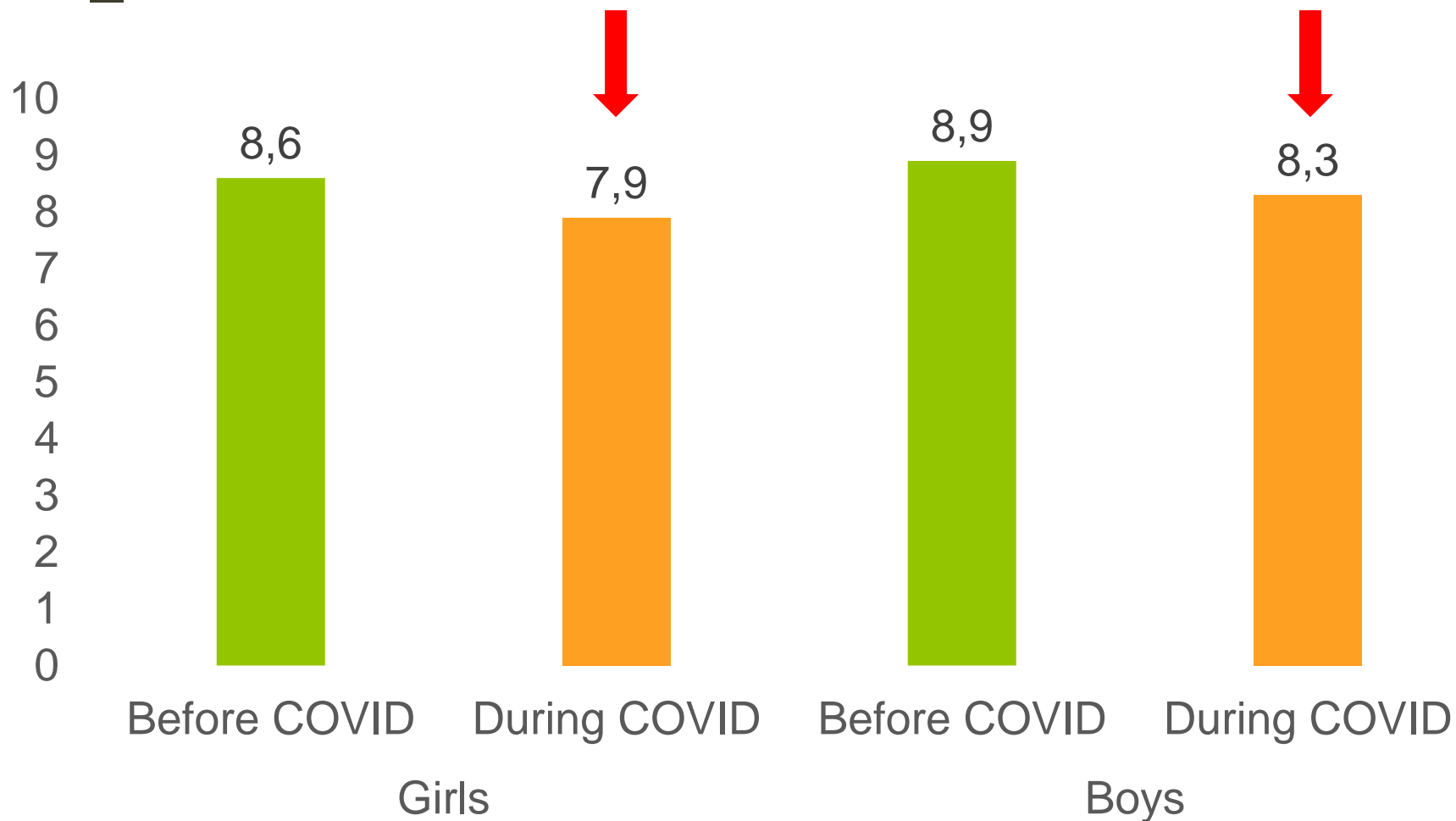
Data

- International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB)
- In this study, children attending classes in Flanders between 9 and 12 years old
- Collected before (2018; n = 3322) and during the coronavirus pandemic (May-June 2021; n = 2449)

How was life satisfaction measured?

- To what extent do you agree with each of these sentences about your life in general? (from 0 to 10)
 - I enjoy my life
 - My life is going well
 - I have a good life
 - The things that happen in my life are great
 - I am happy with my life
- Average score on these 5 items = general life satisfaction
- Measured identically before and after the corona pandemic

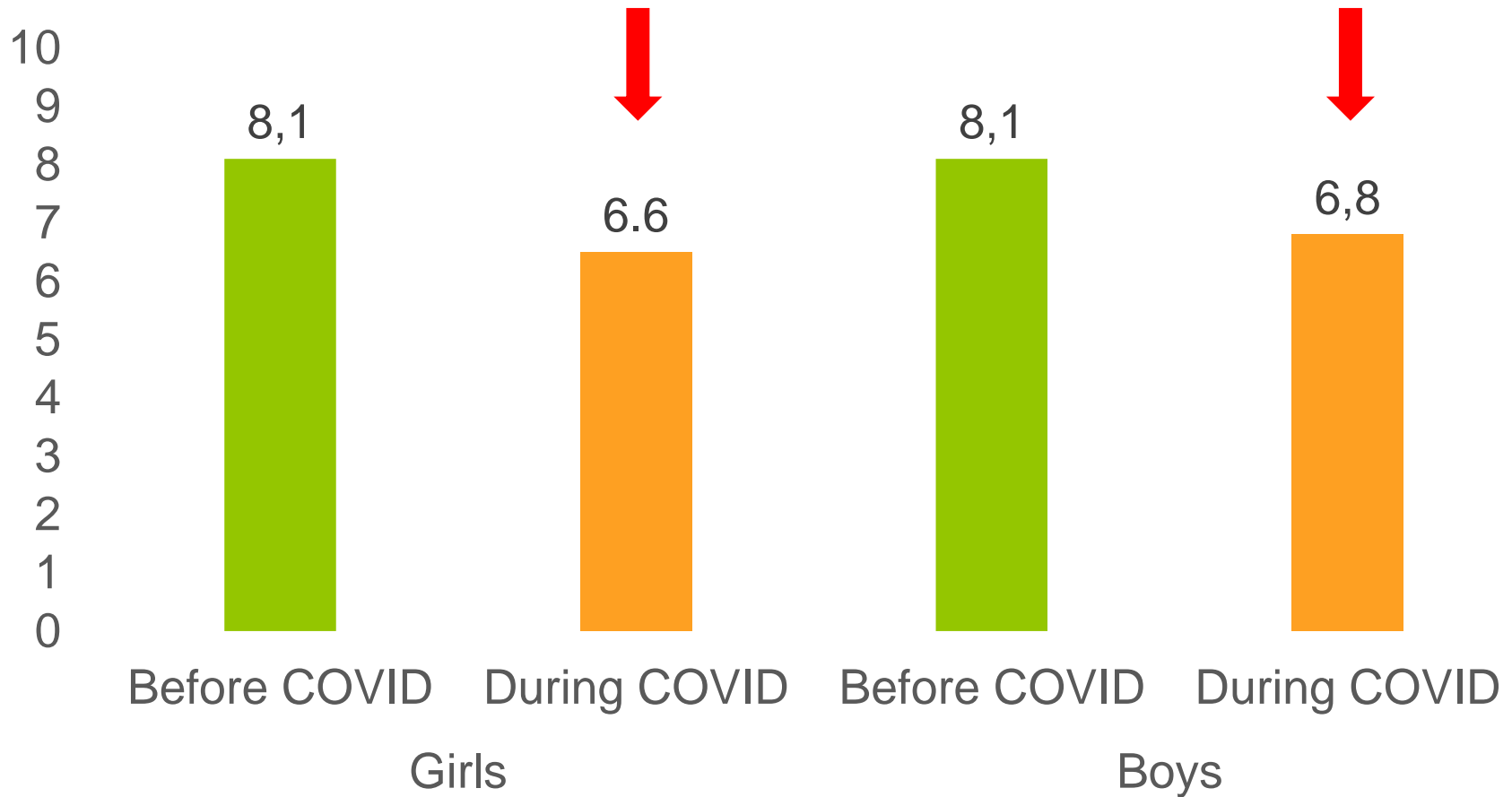
Comparison ISCWeB 2018 and 2021



Alternative way of measuring

- Retrospective assessment of life satisfaction:
 - If you think back to what your life was like before the corona crisis, how happy were you with your life in general?
- Assessment of life satisfaction during the corona crisis:
 - If you think about how your life is now, during the corona crisis, how happy are you with your life in general?

Retrospective assessment and assessment during COVID-19 pandemic comparison



What about the role of social support?

- Social support is important to deal with stressful situations
- Corona pandemic = stressful situation

Second research question

What is the impact of the corona pandemic on the importance of social support for children's life satisfaction?

How was social support measured?

Perceived social support: Perception that social support is available when one needs it.

Do you agree with the following sentences (from 0 to 4, disagree to completely agree):

- *If I have a problem, people in my family will help me = social support family*
- *If I have a problem at school, my teachers will help me = social support teachers*
- *If I have a problem, a friend will help me = social support friends*

Results importance of support nuclear family

	Boys	Girls
Intercept	5.885 (0.311)***	4.804 (0.327)***
Main effects		
Period (Ref. = pre-covid)	-1.931 (0.339)***	-1.662 (0.353)***
Support from nuclear family	0.364 (0.075)***	0.500 (0.080)***
Support from teachers	0.273 (0.041)***	0.263 (0.046)***
Support from friends	0.318 (0.042)***	0.432 (0.045)***
Interaction effects		
Period x support nuclear family	0.374 (0.093)***	0.287 (0.097)**

Results importance of support from teachers

	Boys	Girls
Intercept	5.476 (0.296)***	4.044 ^b (0.309)***
Main effects		
Period (Ref. = pre-covid)	-1.229 (0.284)***	-0.488 (0.304)
Support from nuclear family	0.593 (0.050)***	0.681 (0.051)***
Support from teachers	0.143 (0.071)*	0.296 (0.073)***
Support from friends	0.331 (0.042)***	0.434 (0.045)***
Interaction effects		
Period x support teachers	0.190 (0.084)*	-0.049 (0.088)

Results importance support from friends

	Boys	Girls
Intercept	5.517 (0.282)***	4.459 (0.296)***
Main effects		
Period (Ref. = pre-covid)	-1.354 (0.271)***	-1.147 (0.291)***
Support from nuclear family	0.578 (0.050)***	0.680 (0.051)***
Support from teachers	0.274 (0.041)***	0.260 (0.046)***
Support from friends	0.198 (0.062)**	0.344 (0.067)***
Interaction effects		
Period x support friends	0.230 (0.080)**	0.151 (0.084)

Summary of findings

- Well-being decreased during corona pandemic
 - Importance of social support for well-being increased during corona pandemic
- But depending on the origin of that social support and the gender of children

Lessons for future health crises

- Need for attention to the well-being of children
- Focus on a support network around children to minimize the impact of well-being

[Source]

Dhoore, J., Spruyt, B., & Siongers, J. (2024). Locked Down: The Gendered Impact of Social Support on Children's Well-Being Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Child Indicators Research*, 17(1), 367-394. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-023-10076-4>