

Social policies, family types and child outcomes in selected OECD countries ^[1]

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- Full report in pdf ^[3]

Summary:

Child development and child well-being are major concerns in many OECD countries and are the subject of ongoing work at the OECD. These concerns have led to a search for policies to offset poverty, deprivation, vulnerability, and the risk factors that can trigger a lifelong cycle of disadvantage. It is in this context that we carried out a review of the research literature on child outcomes and of the different social policies that may affect them. The paper is organized in four parts:

- a summary of child outcomes of concern in various OECD countries;
- a discussion of one particular outcome, child poverty, and its negative consequences for children;
- a summary of the research linking different family types with different outcomes; and
- the social policies that may lead to different positive and negative outcomes.

Our main conclusions from this literature review is that knowledge-building is proceeding, in particular, with regard to child poverty and the policies that can reduce or eliminate this problem. Going beyond poverty, early childhood education and care services have positive consequences for children, especially children aged 2 or 3 to compulsory school entry, which can reduce early disadvantage. And one parent family status and parental unemployment seem to have negative consequences for children, but there is less research addressing these associations. Large and important gaps in the research continue to exist, especially with regard to comparative studies of child welfare (child protection; foster care; adoption) and the prevention of child maltreatment, and studies of the situation of children of immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities.

Tags: economics ^[4]

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