



Growing Up in Ireland

-the National Longitudinal Study of Children

The Economic and Social Research Institute and Trinity College, Dublin

Seminar on

Lifecycle Approaches to Social Inclusion in Ireland

1st October 2008



Growing Up in Ireland – An Overview

- *Growing Up in Ireland* is the national longitudinal study of children
- Long term Government funded project launched in 2006
- Funded by the Department of Health & Children through the Office for the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in association with the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the Central Statistics Office.
- Study being implemented by consortium of researchers led by Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College Dublin (TCD).



Growing Up in Ireland – An Overview

- *Growing Up in Ireland* is set within National Children's Strategy (2000). Second goal of strategy notes that:
 - Children's lives will be better understood: their lives will benefit from evaluation, research and information on their needs, rights and the effectiveness of services.



Growing Up in Ireland – Objectives

- to study the lives of children in Ireland
- to establish what is typical and normal as well as what is atypical and problematic
- to identify the key factors that most help or hinder children's development
- to establish the effects of early child experiences on later life
- to obtain children's views and opinions on their lives
- Policy focus - to provide evidence for the creation of effective and responsive policies and services for children and families



Growing Up in Ireland – Nature and Scale

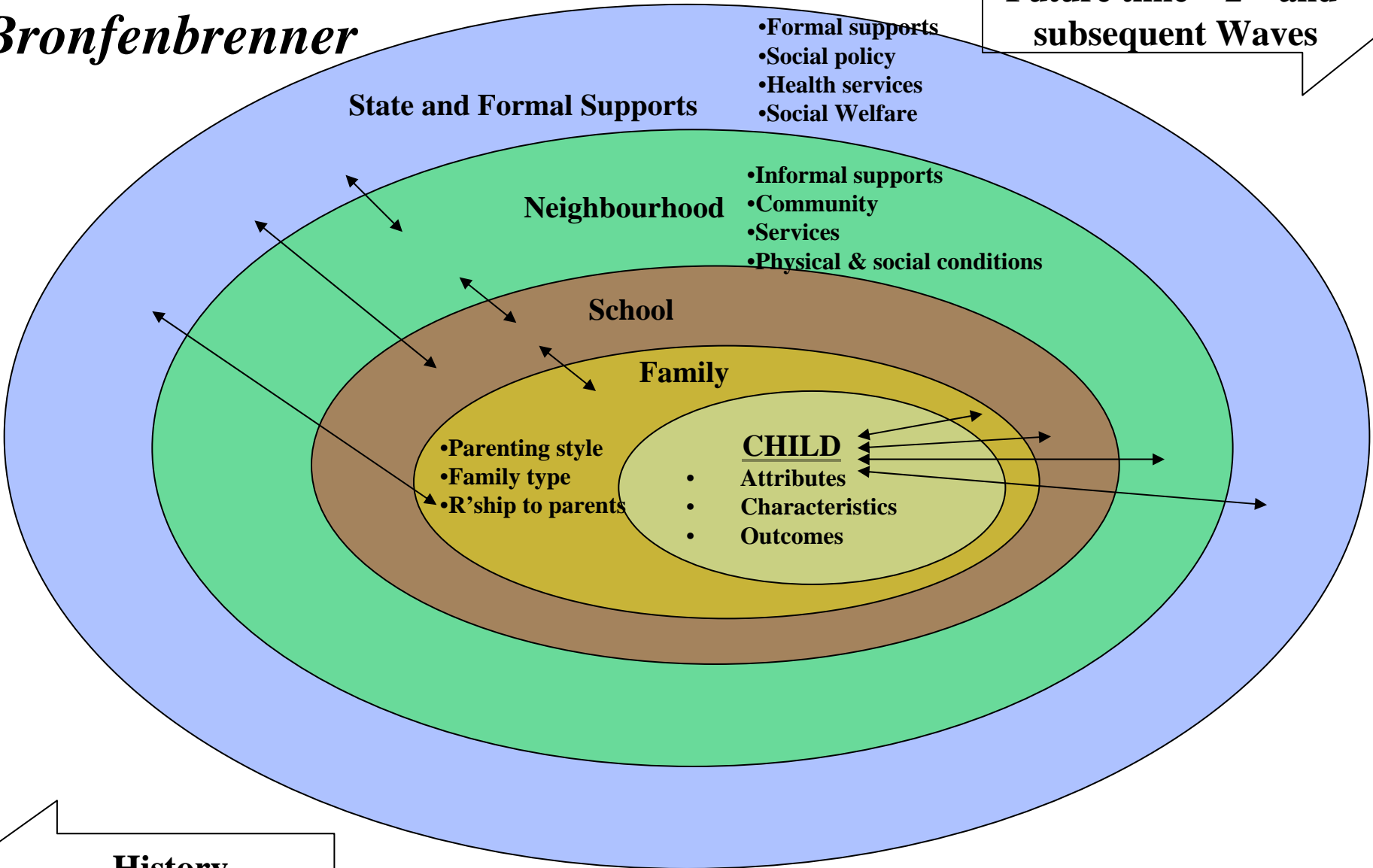
- 8,500 nine-year old children – families, School Principals, teachers, carers & children themselves
- 10,000 nine-month old infants – families/carers
- 120 households for in-depth qualitative assessment for both cohorts



Growing Up in Ireland – children in their context

Bronfenbrenner

Future time – 2nd and subsequent Waves



History



Longitudinal Design

- Longitudinal study design – tracks the progress of the same child and family over time
- The nine-year-old children interviewed at nine and 13 years. Same group of children and families to be interviewed on both occasions.
- The family of the nine-month old cohort will be interviewed at nine-months and three years.



Longitudinal Studies and Time

Longitudinal design focuses on time. Time has several meanings – all possible of being captured by longitudinal approach.

- ❖ Historical context – individual's life events
- ❖ Length of episodes (micro time)
- ❖ Frequency of episodes (mesotime)
- ❖ Changes in attitudes, social mores and expectations (macro time)



The Nine-Month Cohort – Main Questionnaires

- Temperament
- Attachment to parent(s) / guardian(s)
- Child's physical, emotional, cognitive development
- Health from birth
- Habits – crying, sleeping, feeding etc.
- Childcare arrangements Prenatal care and mother's lifestyle during pregnancy
- Birth and delivery
- Family context – parental stress, supports,
- Work-life, quality of parental relationship
- Parental lifestyles
- Neighbourhood and socio-demographic characteristics



The Nine-Month Cohort – Additional Information

- Non-resident parent
- Regular carer
- Self-completion postal basis



The Nine-Year Cohort – An Overview

- School Component:
 - Principal
 - Teacher
 - Academic assessments (Drumcondra tests in English and Maths).
- Home Component Interviews with:
 - Mother (generally primary caregiver)
 - Father/Partner (where relevant)
 - Study Child
 - Measurements – height and weight
 - Single Day Time Use Diary
 - Carer / non-resident parent where relevant



The Nine-Year Cohort - Variable Domains

Main variable domains

1. Child's health and physical development – health, lifestyle, exercise, diet
2. Child's Emotional, Social and Cognitive Functioning
3. Child's education
4. Parenting/Family context – family structure, parenting style, parent's lifestyle
5. Community/Neighbourhood
6. Socio-demographics



Qualitative Studies – both cohorts

- 120 children and their parents selected from the quantitative sample from each cohort of children
- For older children semi-structured interview with Child and parents – parents/guardians only for younger ones.



Growing Up in Ireland – Current Status

- Nine-Month Cohort:
 - Recruitment and rollout of fieldwork with 10,000 nine-month old infants their families and carers
- Nine-Year Cohort:
 - Completion of data collection with 8,500 nine-year-old children, their parents, teachers, Principals and carers