



Early Childhood Inequalities

Institute for Fiscal Studies

23rd June 2022

Carey Oppenheim
Nuffield Foundation

The Changing Face of Early Childhood

- Exploring the striking changes in young children's lives and their implications for policy and research.
- **Goals:**
 - Distil research across 90+ Nuffield Foundation funded studies and others
 - Cross-cutting and holistic approach
 - Engagement
 - Make recommendations
 - Inform debate
 - Refresh our thinking and options

The Changing Face of Early Childhood

Six evidence reviews:

- Changing families
- Children at risk
- Poverty
- Education and care
- Health
- Parenting

Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Doree O'Connell
Jordan Peck

1 How are the lives of families with young children changing? The changing face of early childhood in the UK



Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Jordan Peck
Doree O'Connell

2 Protecting young children at risk of abuse and neglect The changing face of early childhood in the UK



Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Doree O'Connell
Christy Walker Wilson

3 Changing patterns of poverty in early childhood The changing face of early childhood in the UK



Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Nathan Ainslie
Doree O'Connell

4 The role of early childhood education and care in shaping life chances The changing face of early childhood in the UK



Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Robert Bouchier
Dr Christopher Greenway
Jordan Peck
Dr Matthew Stone

Series editor
Doree O'Connell

5 Are young children healthier than they were two decades ago? The changing face of early childhood in the UK



Nuffield Foundation

Authors
Nathan Ainslie
Eleanor Ireland
Doree O'Connell
Jordan Peck

Series editor
Doree O'Connell

6 Time for parents The changing face of early childhood in the UK

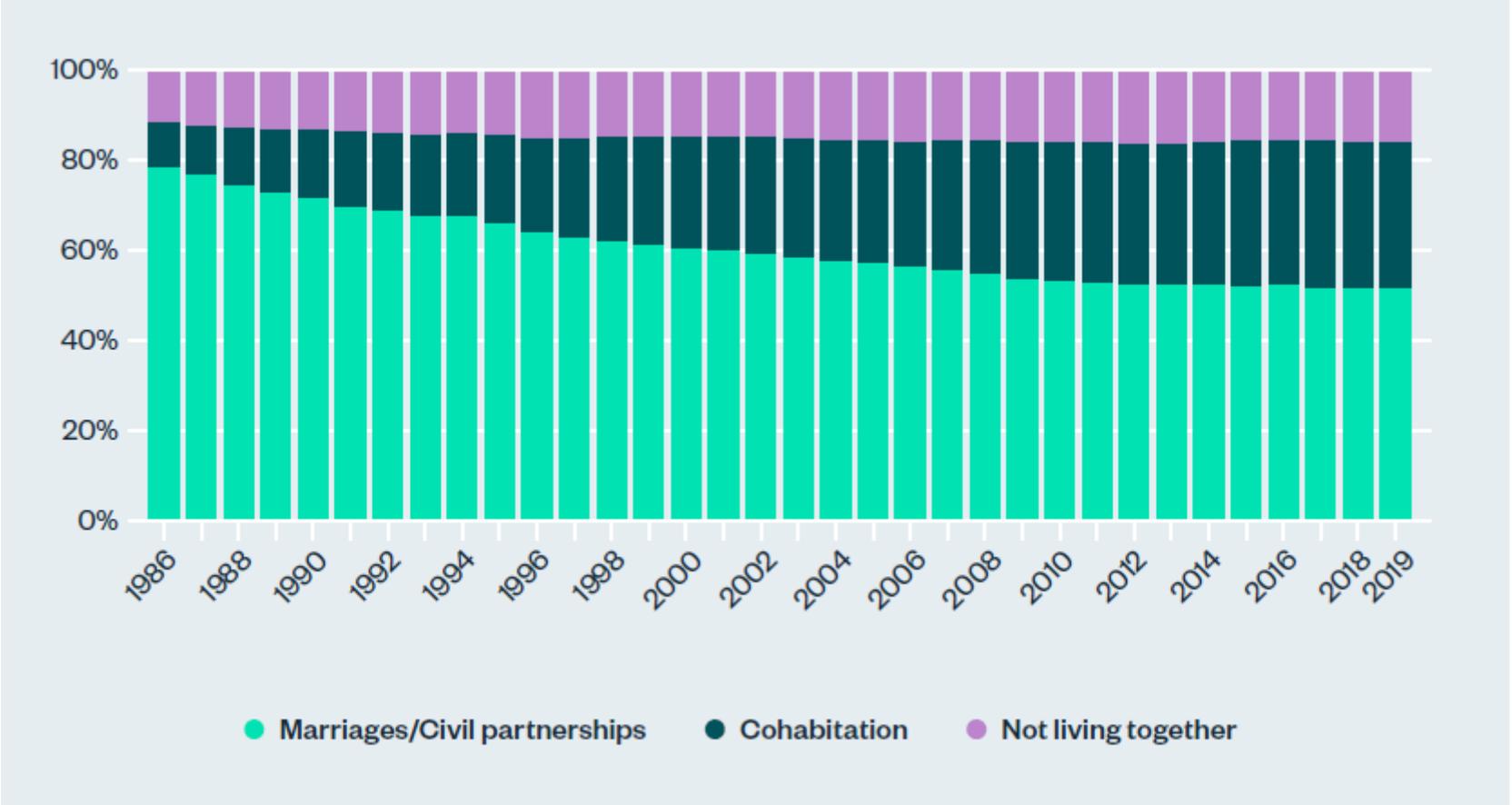


Striking changes in the lives of young children and their families over the last two decades

- Changing family forms and parenting experience
- Combining work and care has become the norm for mothers with young children
- Formal education and childcare – a near universal experience
- Rising poverty, inequalities and vulnerability

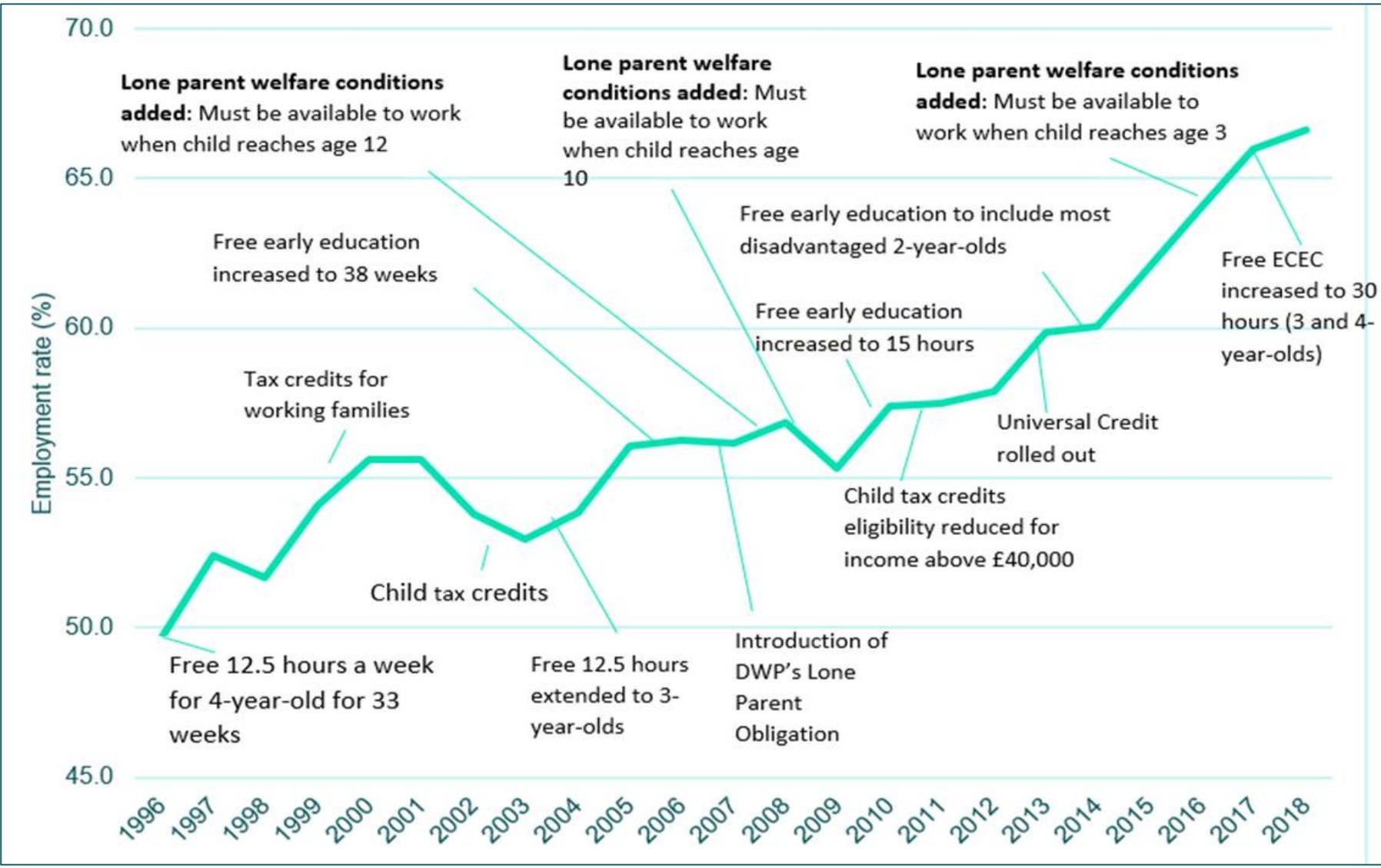
Changing family forms: increased cohabitation, blended families, same sex relationships

Percentage of live births by registration type 1986-2019.
Source: Kiernan et al. 2022



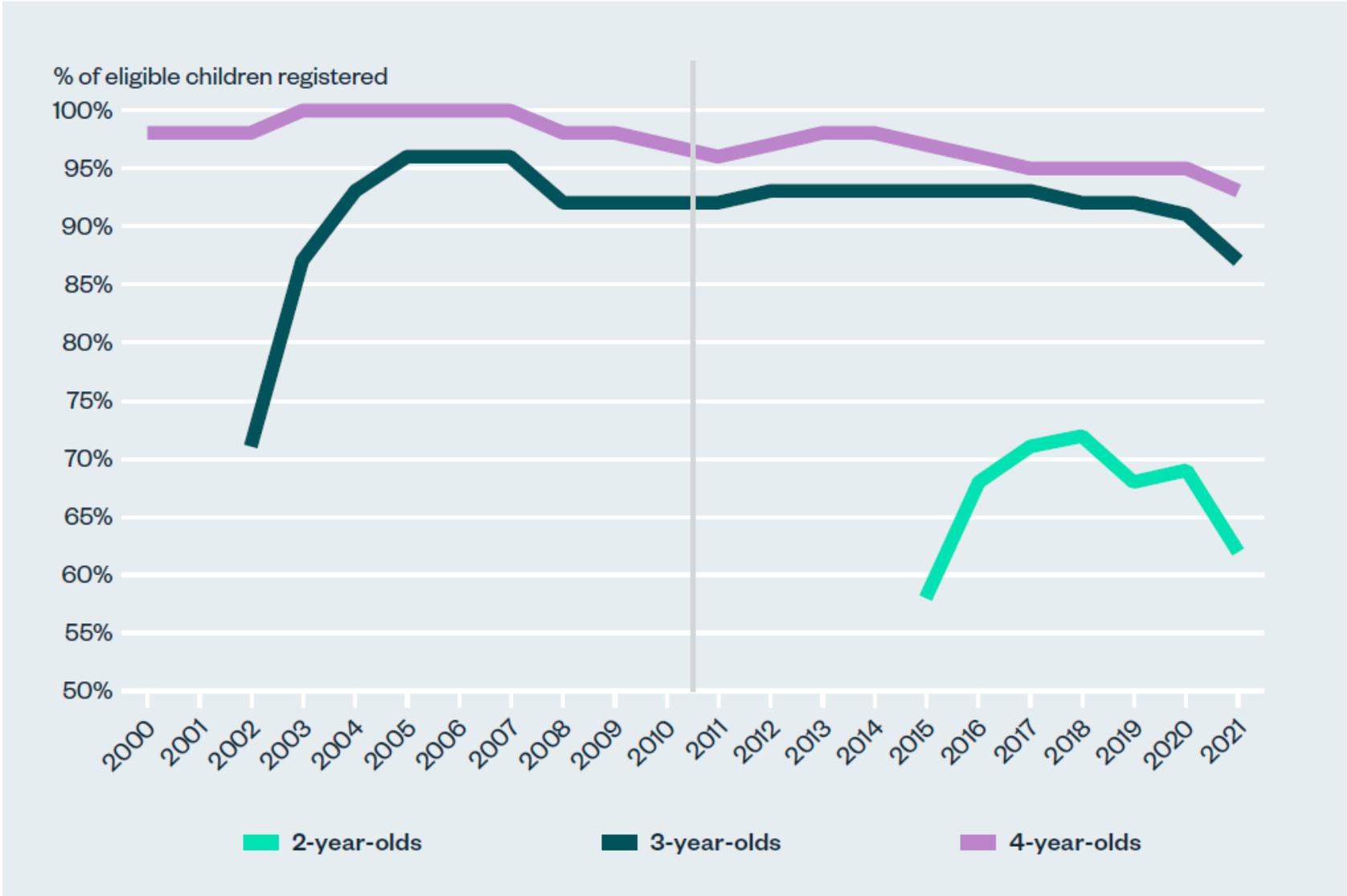
Rising employment rate for mothers of children under 4 in England, 1996-2018.

Source: ONS (2019). Adapted from Conboye and Romei (2018).



Growing proportion of eligible children taking up early years entitlement pre-Covid 2000-2021.

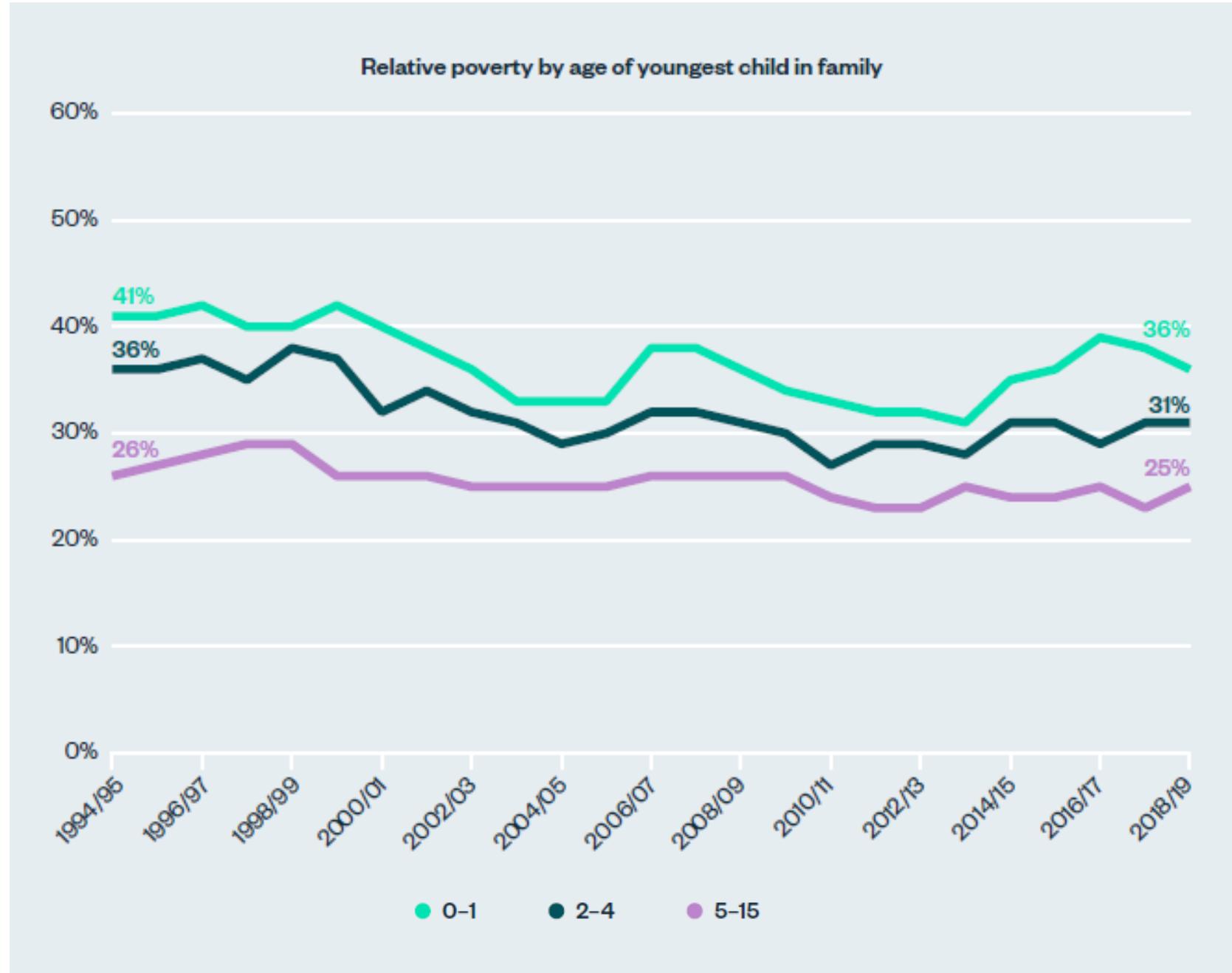
Source: West and Noden (2016); DfE (2021).



Higher rates of poverty for families with a young child

In 2019/20, the proportion of children in poverty in families with youngest child under five stood at 36% - compared to 30% in 2013/14.

(Stewart & Reader 2021)



Policy opportunities and challenges

Opportunities

- Best Start for Life
- Family Hubs
- Parenting programmes & Home Learning environment
- Independent Review of Children's Social Care
- Civic, voluntary, parent initiatives

Challenges

- Gap between the inter-related nature of early childhood development & how services, data, departments connect
- 0-3 service/support gap
- Take up & quality of early years & childcare for disadvantaged
- Home-based programmes
- Balance between national and locally driven responses

Find out more

Explore the series on our website:

www.nuffieldfoundation.org/early-childhood

Follow us on Twitter @NuffieldFound

