



# The wider benefits of learning: theory, evidence and policy implications

DfES Centre for Research on the  
Wider Benefits of Learning

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# Overview

1. The benefits of learning are wide-ranging and multi-level, spanning health, well-being, personal efficacy and social cohesion.
2. They have important implications for pedagogy, curricula, selection processes, teacher training, professionalisation, advice and guidance and the interventions of other Government departments.
3. There are wider benefits to learning at all ages but the trade-offs are not yet well-understood and a narrow skill-based focus may not be productive.
4. Selectivity bias is possibly even more important for the wider benefits than for the economic benefits.

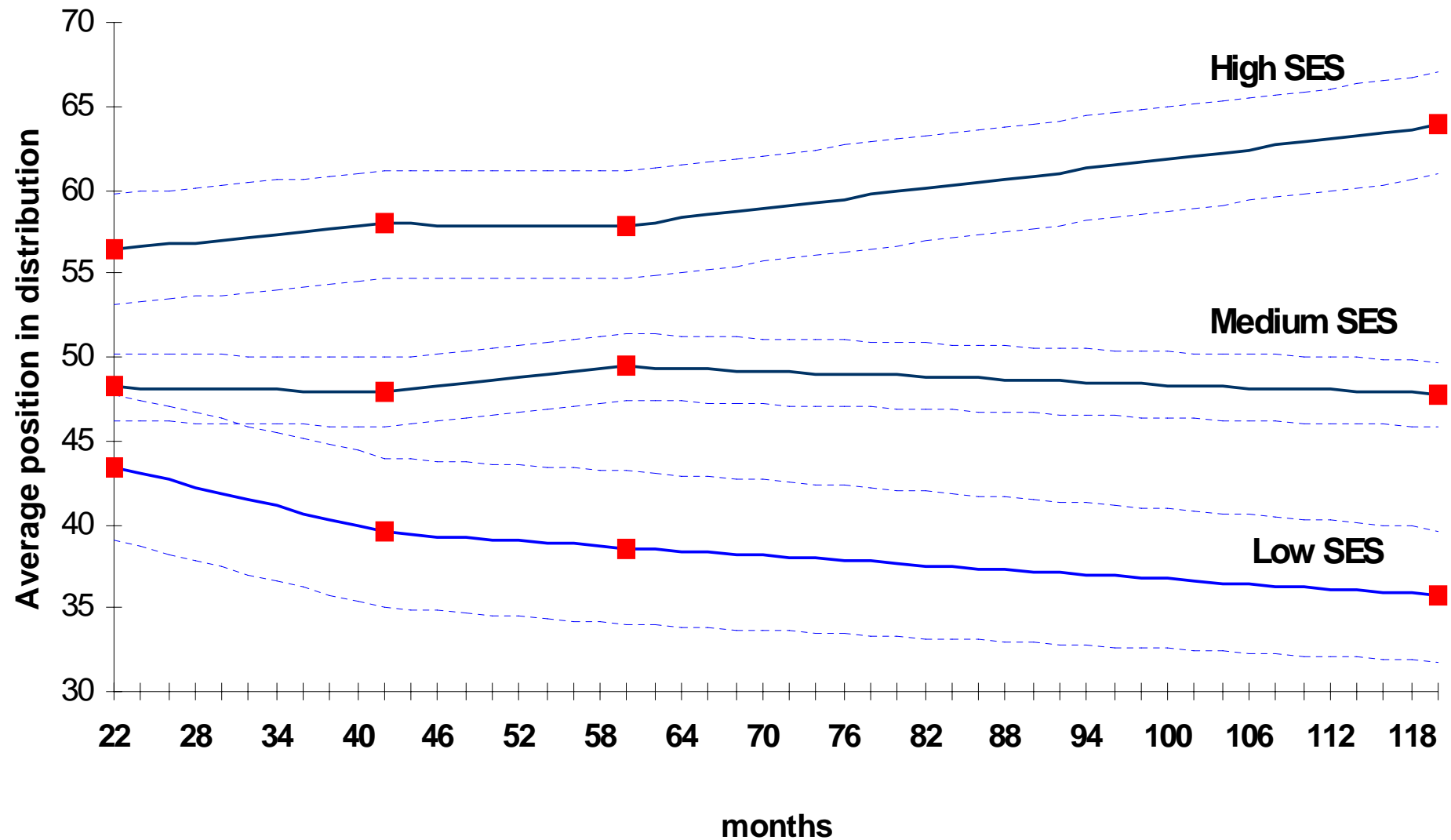


# Overview

- Conceptual work
- Evidence
- Drawing policy conclusions



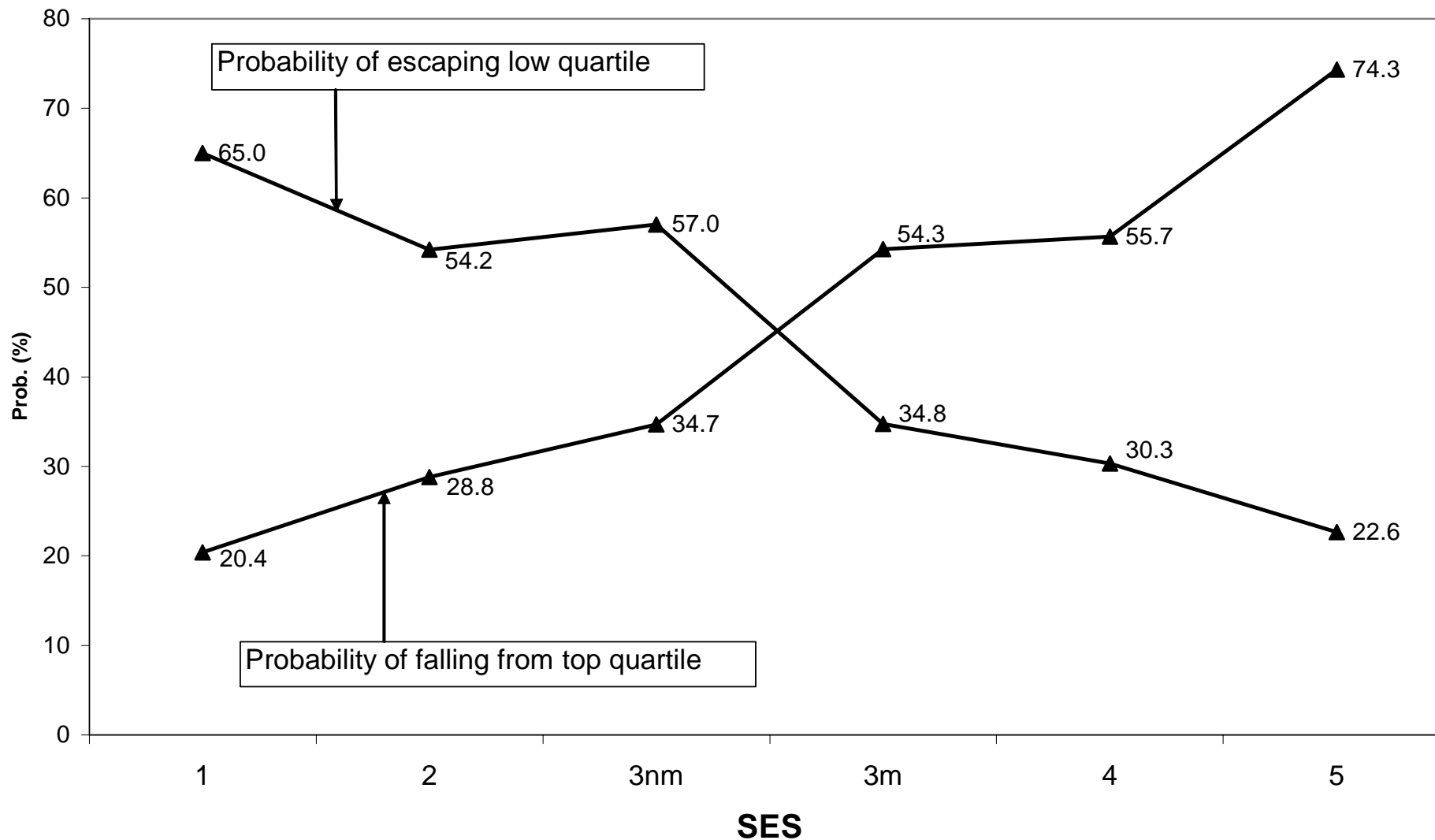
# Cognitive scores 22 months to age 10, by SES



Source: Feinstein, L. (2003) 'Inequality in the Early Cognitive Development of British Children in the 1970 Cohort', *Economica* (70) 277, 73-97

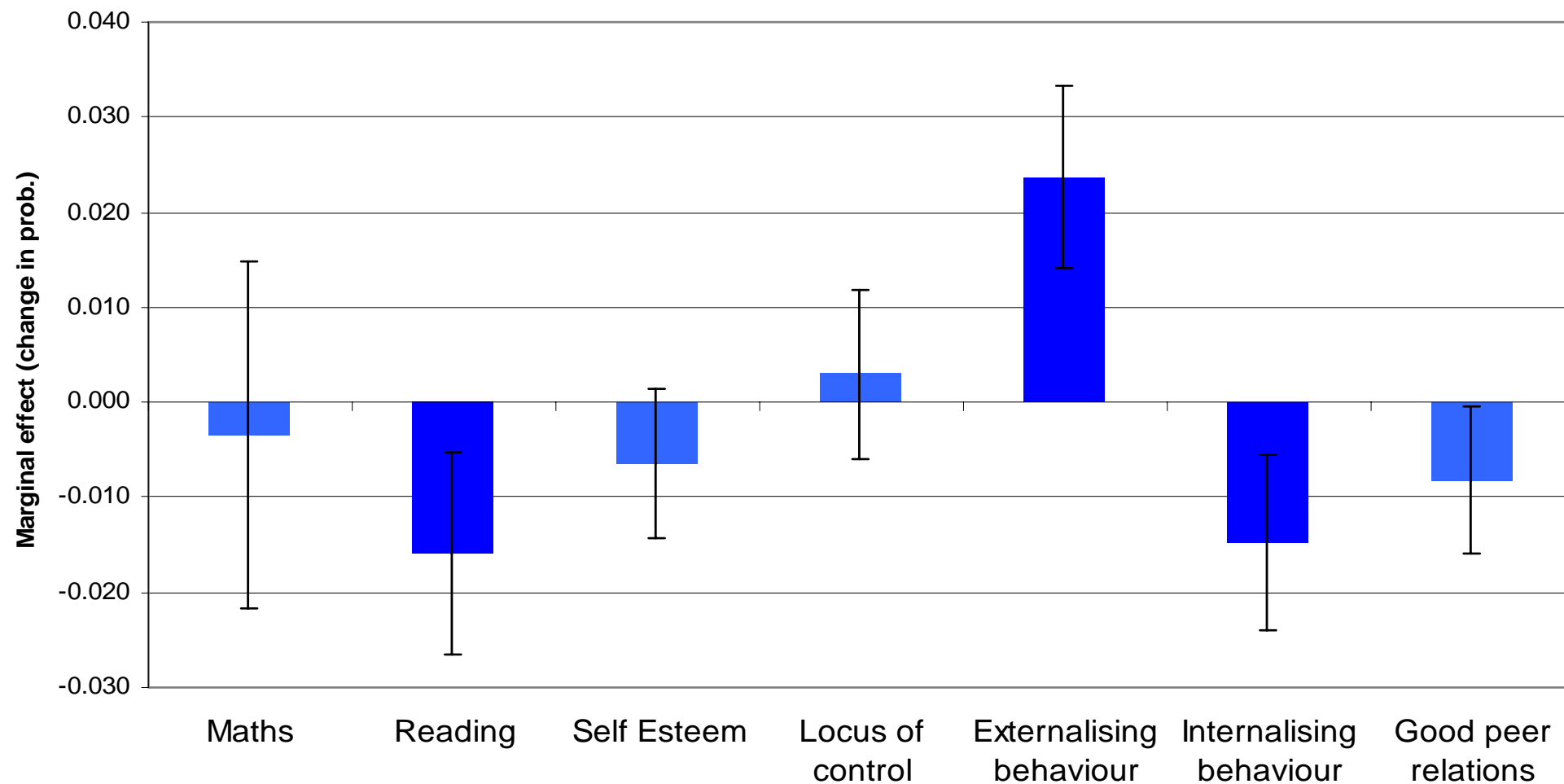


# Relative cognitive shifts, 7 -11, by SES, 1958 Cohort



# The importance of age 10 capabilities:

Probability of being in workless household with children at age 30



Source: Feinstein, L. and Bynner, J. (Dec 2003), 'The benefits of assets in childhood as protection against adult social exclusion: the relative effects of financial, human, social and psychological assets', Note to HM Treasury.

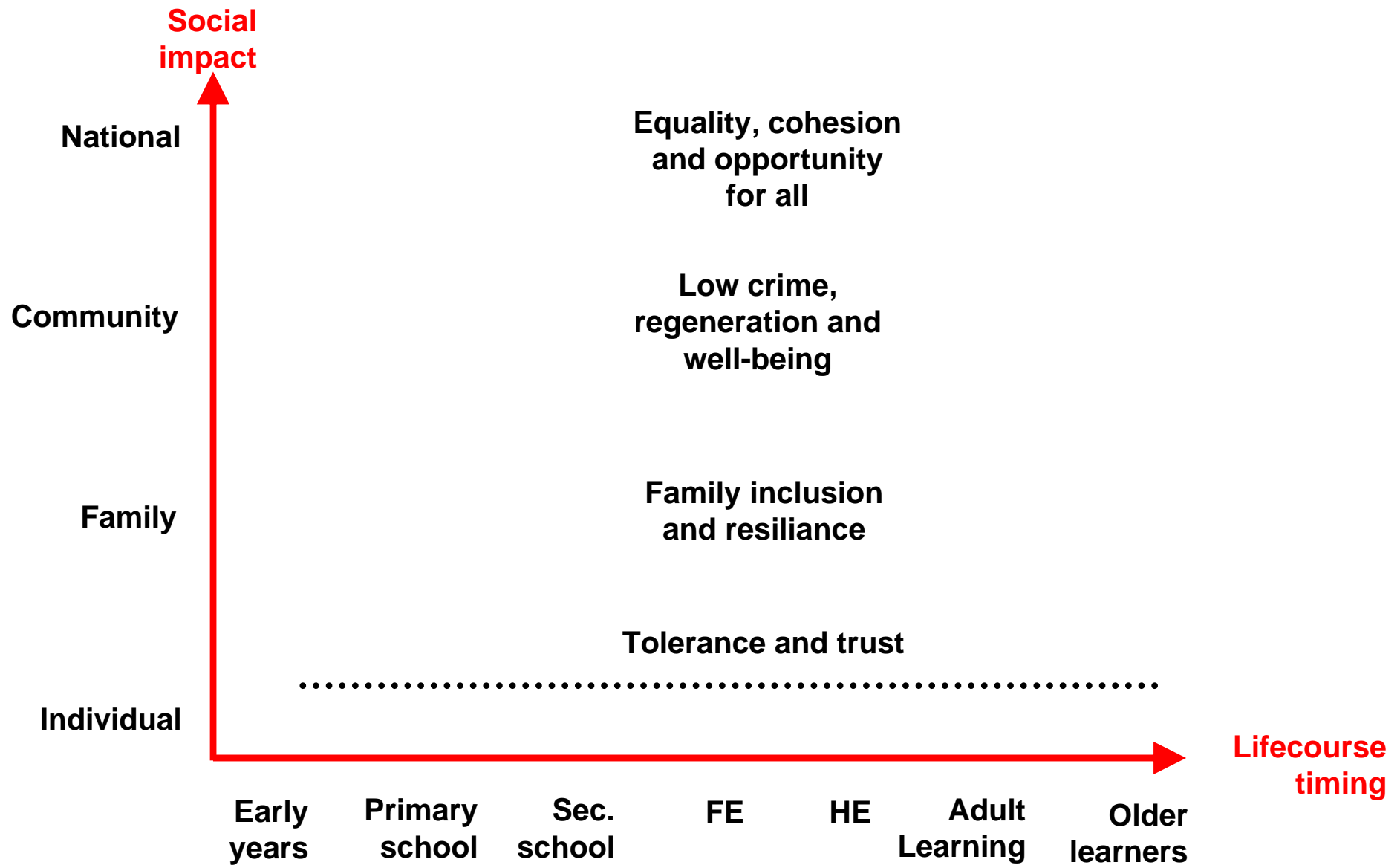


# The effects of learning and education

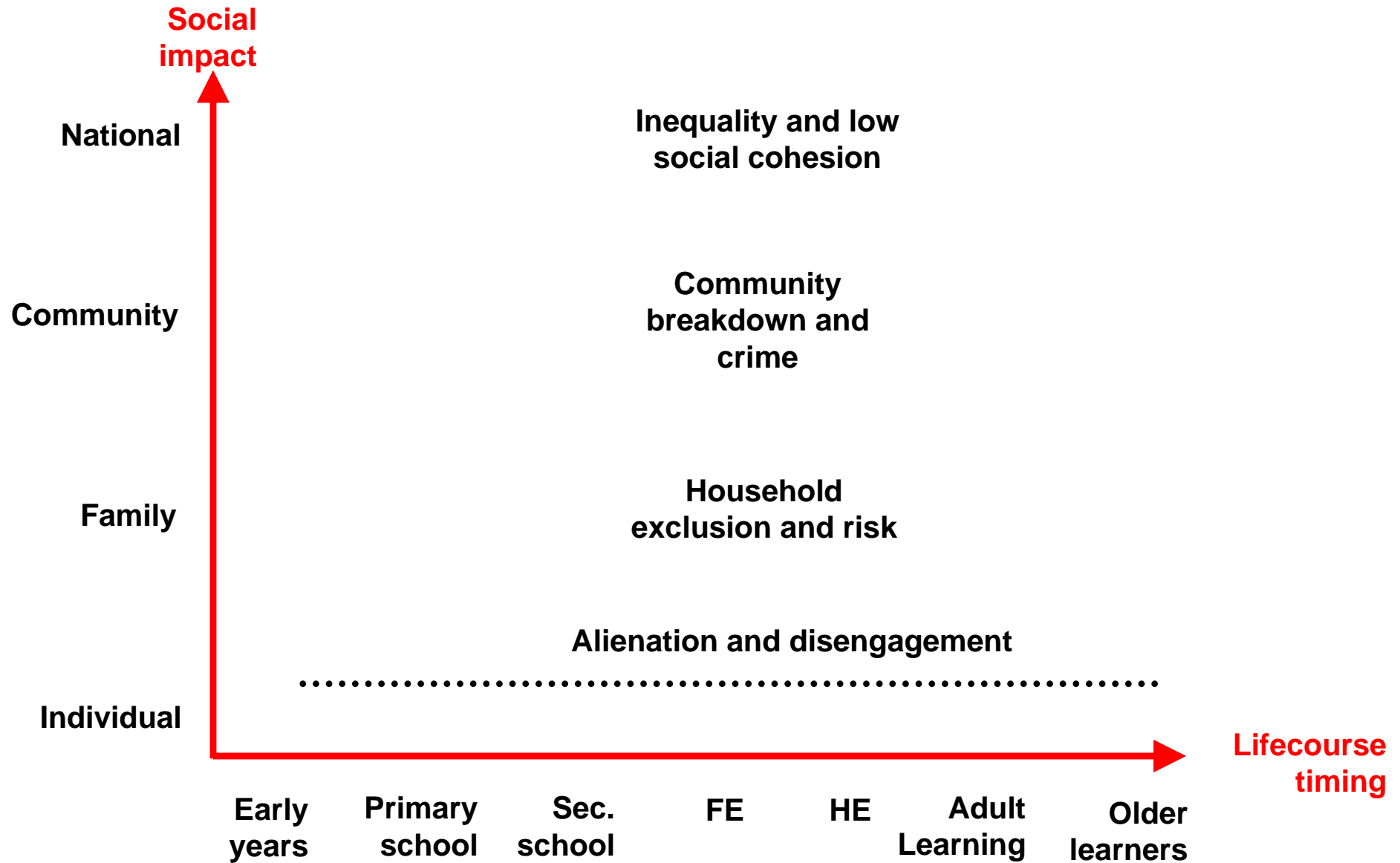
- Income
- Signalling by qualifications
- Skills
- Social inclusion
- Peer group memberships
- Cognitive development
- Psycho-social development
- Access to Information / learnability
- Lifestyles
- Agency
- Social inequality and distrust



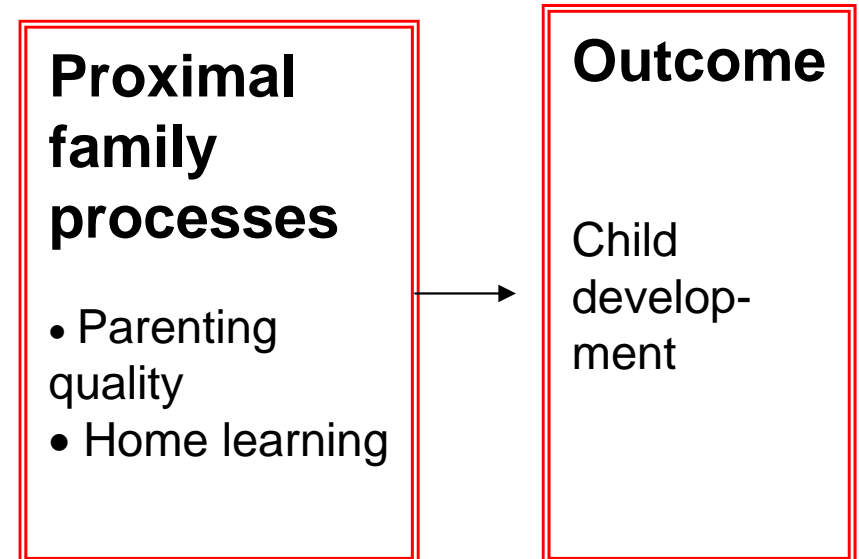
# The social cohesion benefits



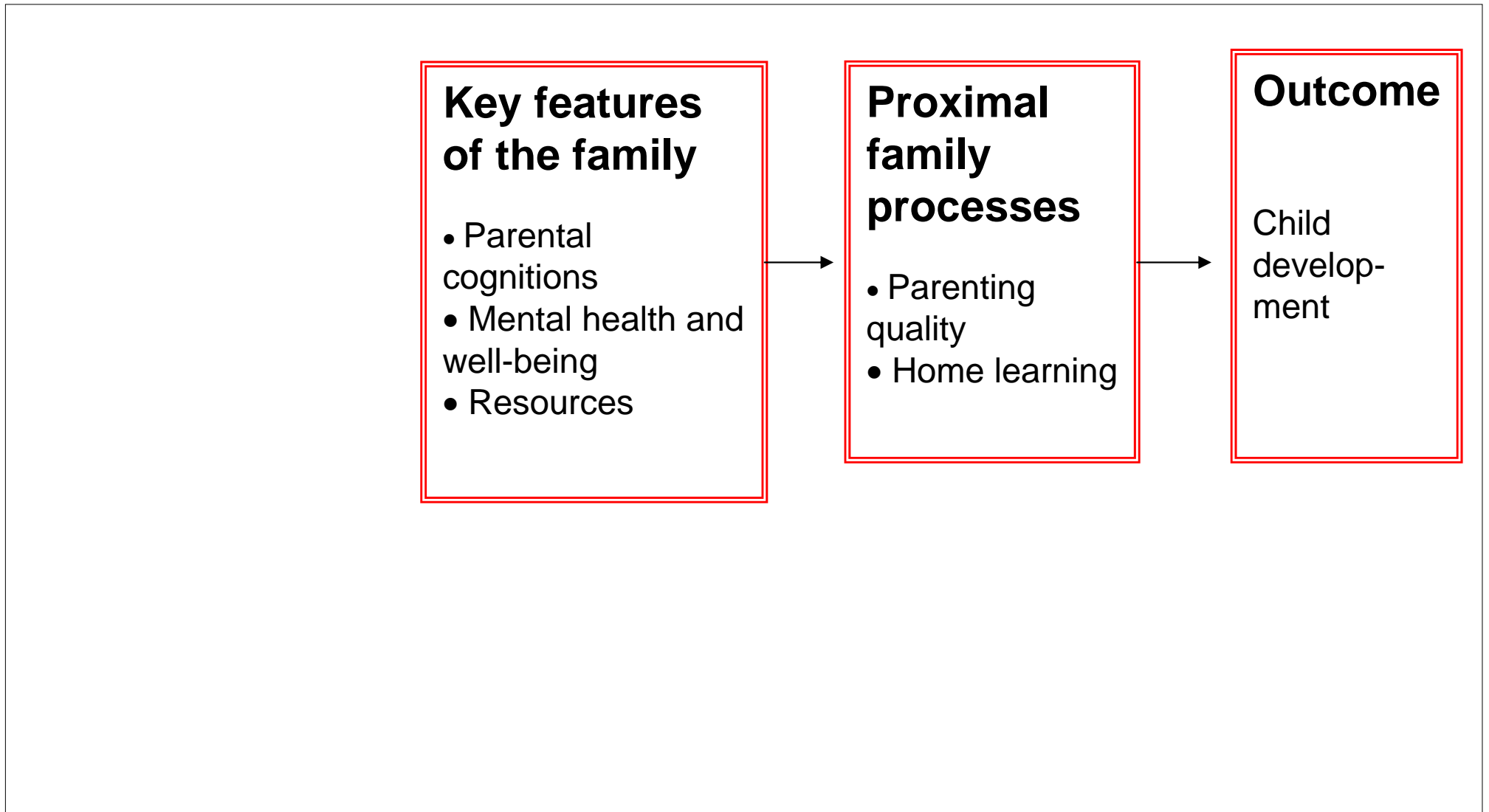
# The dis-benefits of unequal access



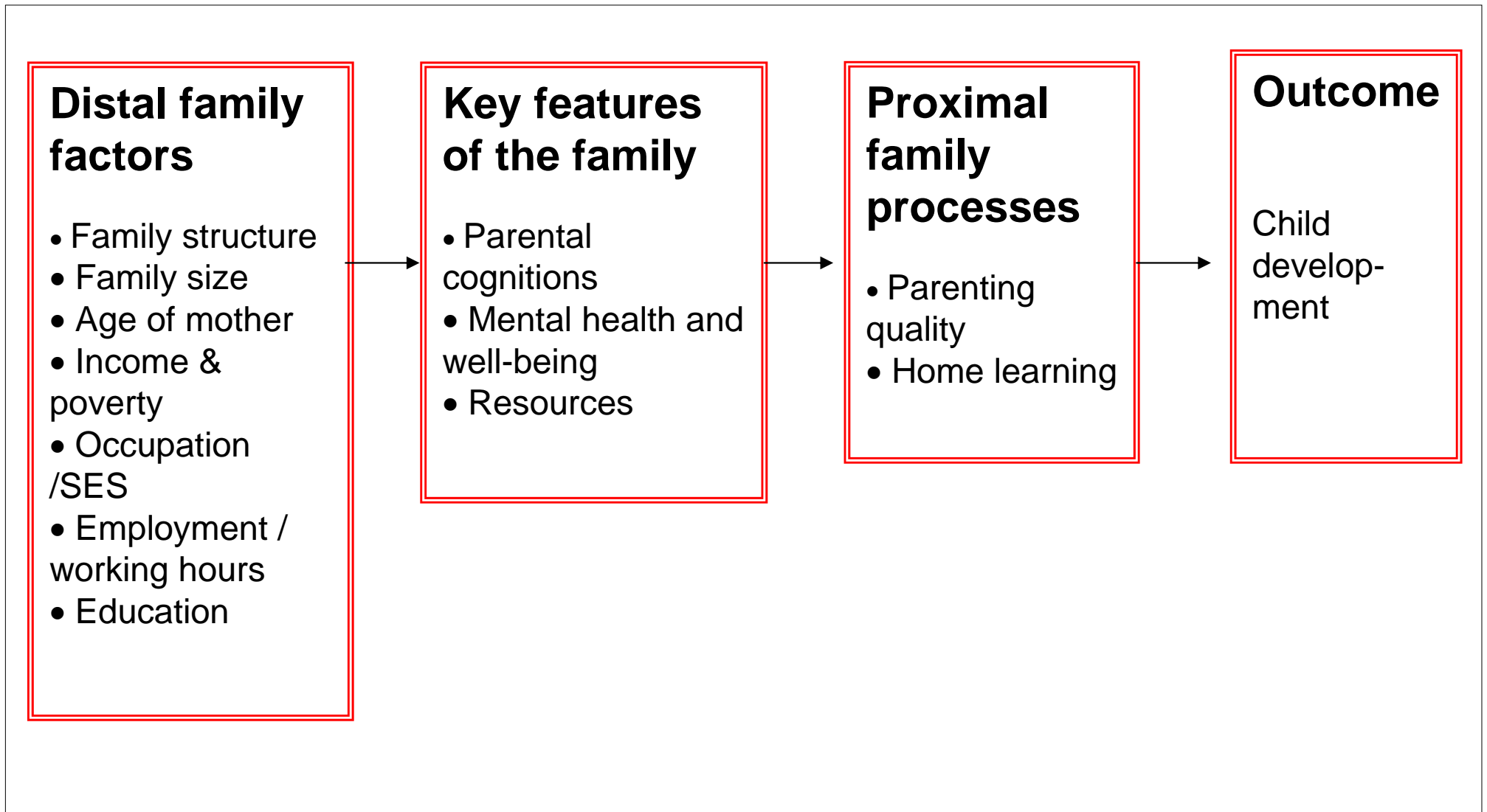
# Conceptual model for influences on child development



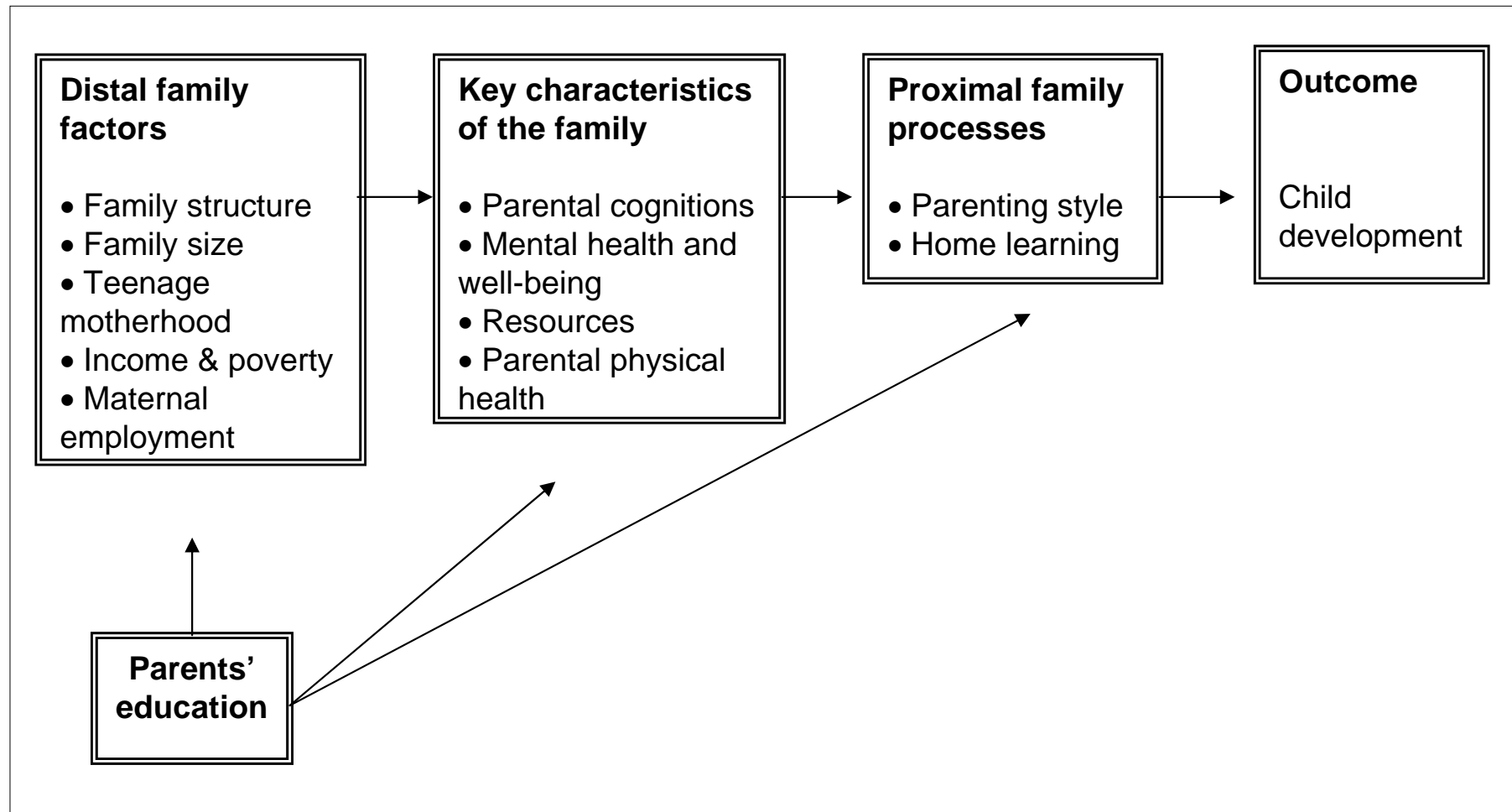
# Conceptual model for influences on child development



# Simple model for influences on child development



# Conceptual model of process for the effects of parents' education on child development



# The health and well-being in adulthood (age 33) for those without O' Levels: Odds ratios

	Females	Males
<b>Efficacy</b>		
No O's Engaged	1.37 **	1.54 **
No O's Disengaged	1.85 **	1.89 **
<b>Poor self-rated health</b>		
No O's Engaged	1.39 **	1.15
No O's Disengaged	1.45 **	1.62 **
<b>Smoking</b>		
No O's Engaged	1.79 **	1.46 **
No O's Disengaged	4.69 **	3.39 **



# Does adult learning help? Odds ratios for participation in adult learning, age 33 - 42

	Females	Males
No O's Engaged	0.71 **	0.91
No O's Disengaged	0.69 **	0.76 *



# Odds ratios for transformed health, contingent on AL, age 33 - 42

	All
<b>Efficacy</b>	
No O's Engaged	1.34
No O's Disengaged	1.70 *
<b>Self-rated health</b>	
No O's Engaged	1.36
No O's Disengaged	2.13 **
<b>Smoking</b>	
No O's Engaged	0.90
No O's Disengaged	2.07 **



# Results: EMA, RBI, EMA-RBI

	(No controls)	(Full controls)
EMA	1.447 (0.792)*	0.283 (0.343)
RBI	0.934 (0.331)***	0.183 (0.197)
EMA-RBI	2.874 (1.011)***	-0.541 (0.559)
EMA*policy-on	-0.780 (0.648)	-0.137 (0.603)
RBI*policy-on	-0.595 (0.247)**	-0.048 (0.295)
EMA-RBI * policy-on	-1.367 (0.403)***	-1.551 (0.470)***



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# Effects of education on mother's parenting style (NCDS-02)

	(OLS)	(IV)
Mother's schooling	0.094	-0.004
	(18.68)**	(0)
Father's characteristics	Yes	Yes
Mother's social background	Yes	Yes
Regional controls	Yes	Yes
Child characteristics	No	No

Notes: t-statistics in parenthesis. (\*) (\*\*) indicates significance at 5% & 1% level, respectively.

Controls: father's characteristics: schooling (left at minimum SLA; SLA+1; SLA+2; SLA+3+); age and presence of father at home.

Mother's Social Background: mothers' father SES, mother's birth order & family size.

Child Characteristics: disobedient, fights, wets bed, gender, ability, separated from mother.



# Policy issues

- Costing the benefits
- The need to improve access
- The importance of improving and maintaining quality of services: choice, targets and professionalisation
- The integration of services
- Progression and lifecourse processes
- Personalisation
- Community involvement



1. Interventions and investments should be persistent, personalised, high quality and appropriate.
2. “Measure us on our outcomes” (Tony Hunter)
3. It is not enough just to invest in the early years or just in cognitive skills
4. The people who know the service users are key. They should be highly skilled, highly-trained, well-paid, with high morale, good support and with wide-ranging set of programmes to draw on, as they see fit.

