



Children *and* Family Research Center

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



Does child disability increase or decrease the risk of victimization? Divergent results depending on level of functioning and disability type

International Family Violence Conference

Jesse J. Helton
Theodore P. Cross
Tatiana Gochez-Kerr

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Prior Research

Prior Research Indicates

- Childhood disability increases child maltreatment risk
- Lowers disclosure rate and increases disclosure delay
- Serious harm from maltreatment more likely

Limitations

- Disability as a dichotomous measure: disabled or not
- Disability as a single category
- Undiagnosed and misdiagnosed children skew results
- Selective sampling reduces generalizability



Addressing Limitations

Importance of the disability continuum

- Recent studies indicate a disability continuum with different disability types is better.
- Children with severe disabilities at increased risk of sexual abuse
- Children with some but not all disabling conditions are at increased maltreatment risk
- Different types of disabilities influence risk of different types of victimization
- New disability continuum of type of functionality and level of impairment within that type, rather than disability categories



Previous Study

- Explored linear and curvilinear relationships in predicting the likelihood of physical abuse (minor and severe) with a new disability continuum (type of functioning and level of impairment)
- Linear relationships for social skills and behavioral problems
- Curvilinear relationship for language skills
- Conclusion: Disability continuum is vital to better understanding physical assault risk, and should be examined with both linear and curvilinear models



Purpose

This presentation will examine the association between levels of social abilities, everyday living skills, and internalizing and externalizing behaviors at baseline and the prevalence of single or multiple types of victimization over the next 18 months.



Methods

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being II

- Baseline data (2008) and 18 month follow-up
- N=1212 children 6 to 17 years of age
- In-home placements following the close of an investigation

Outcome Variable:

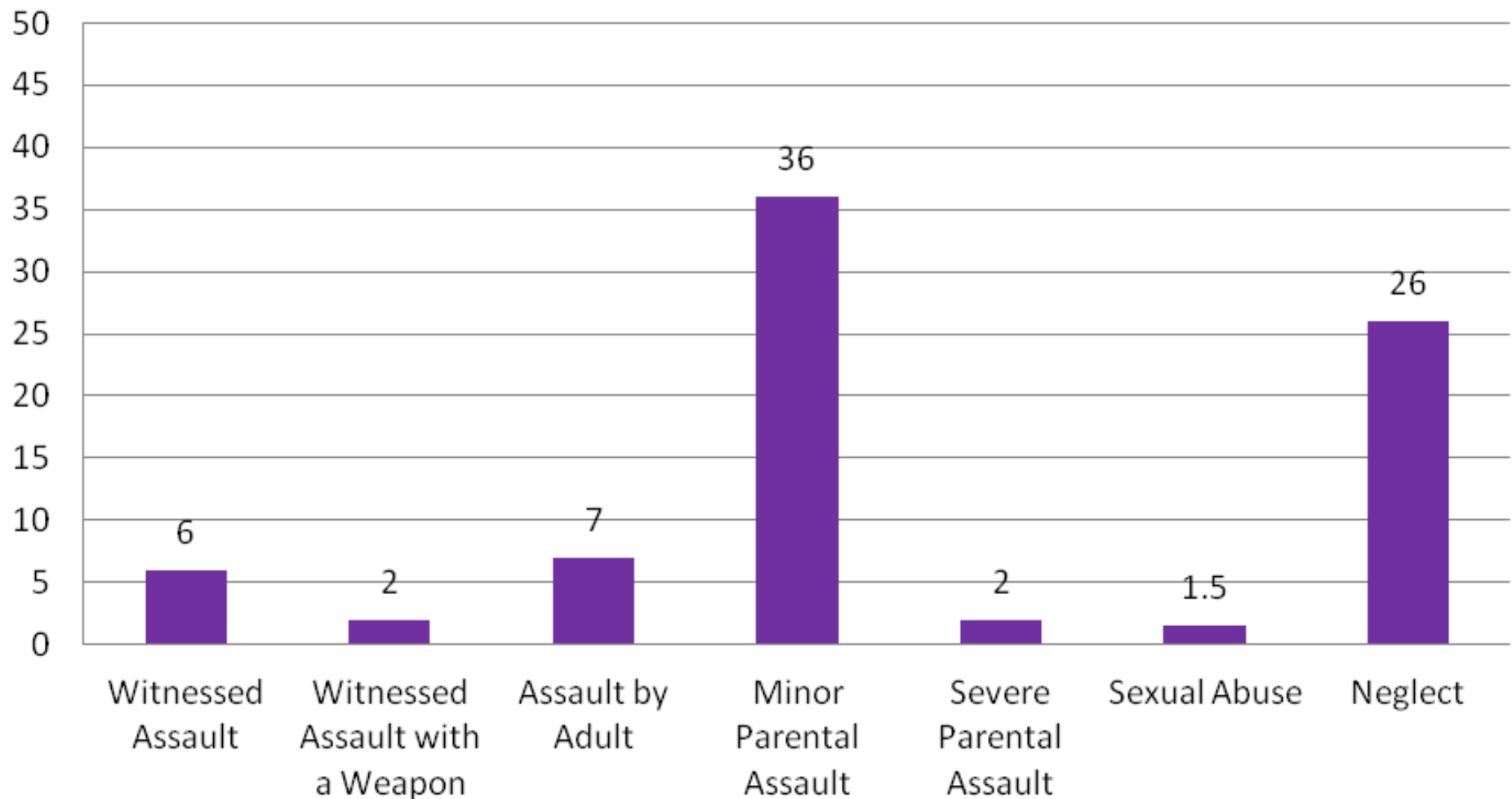
- Abuse: caregiver, child, or caseworker report
- Witness violence
- Experienced violence

Disability:

- Vineland
 - Socialization
 - Daily Living
- CBCL
 - Internalizing
 - Externalizing

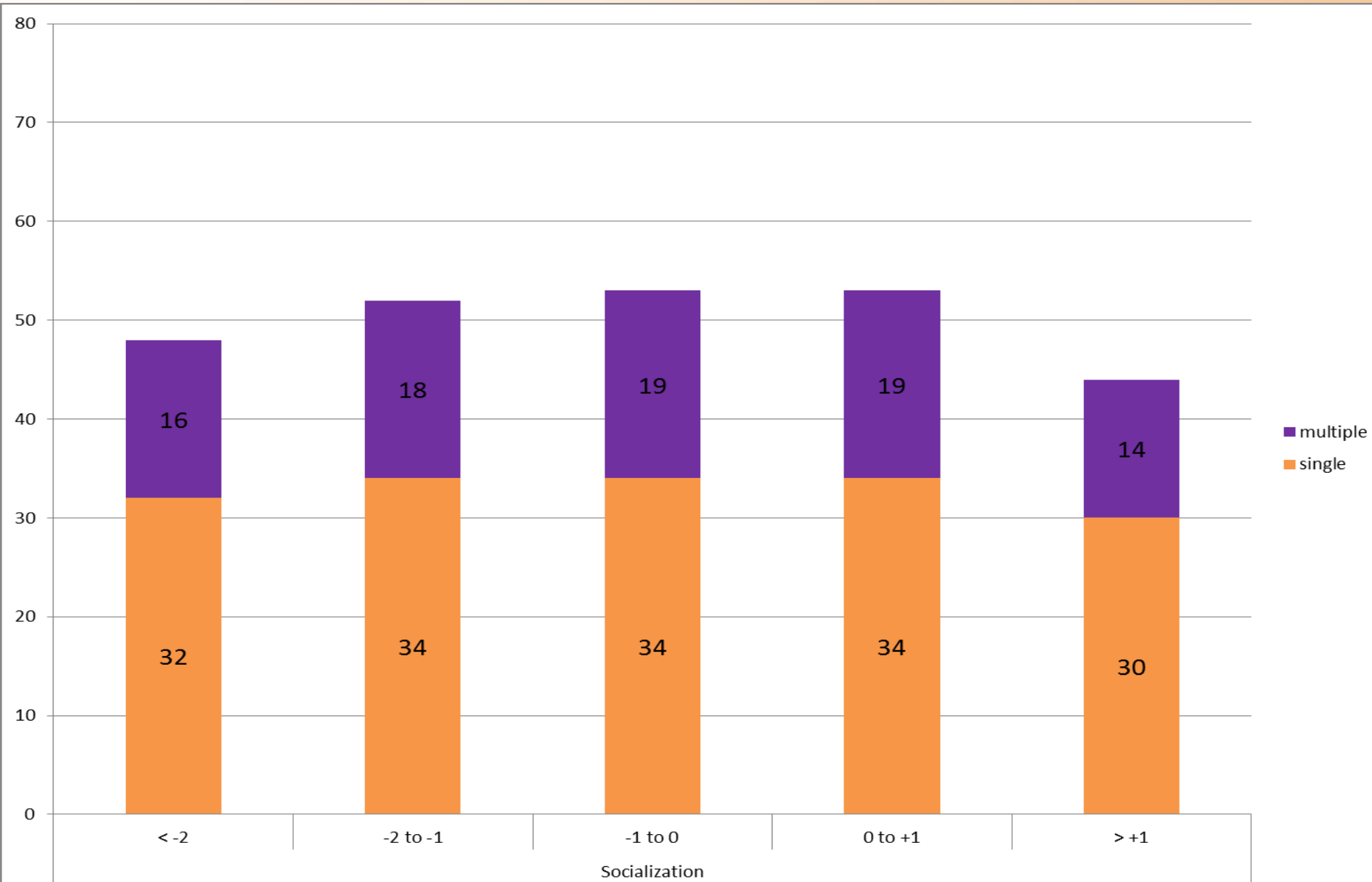


Percent of Children Witnessing or Experiencing Victimization by Wave 2



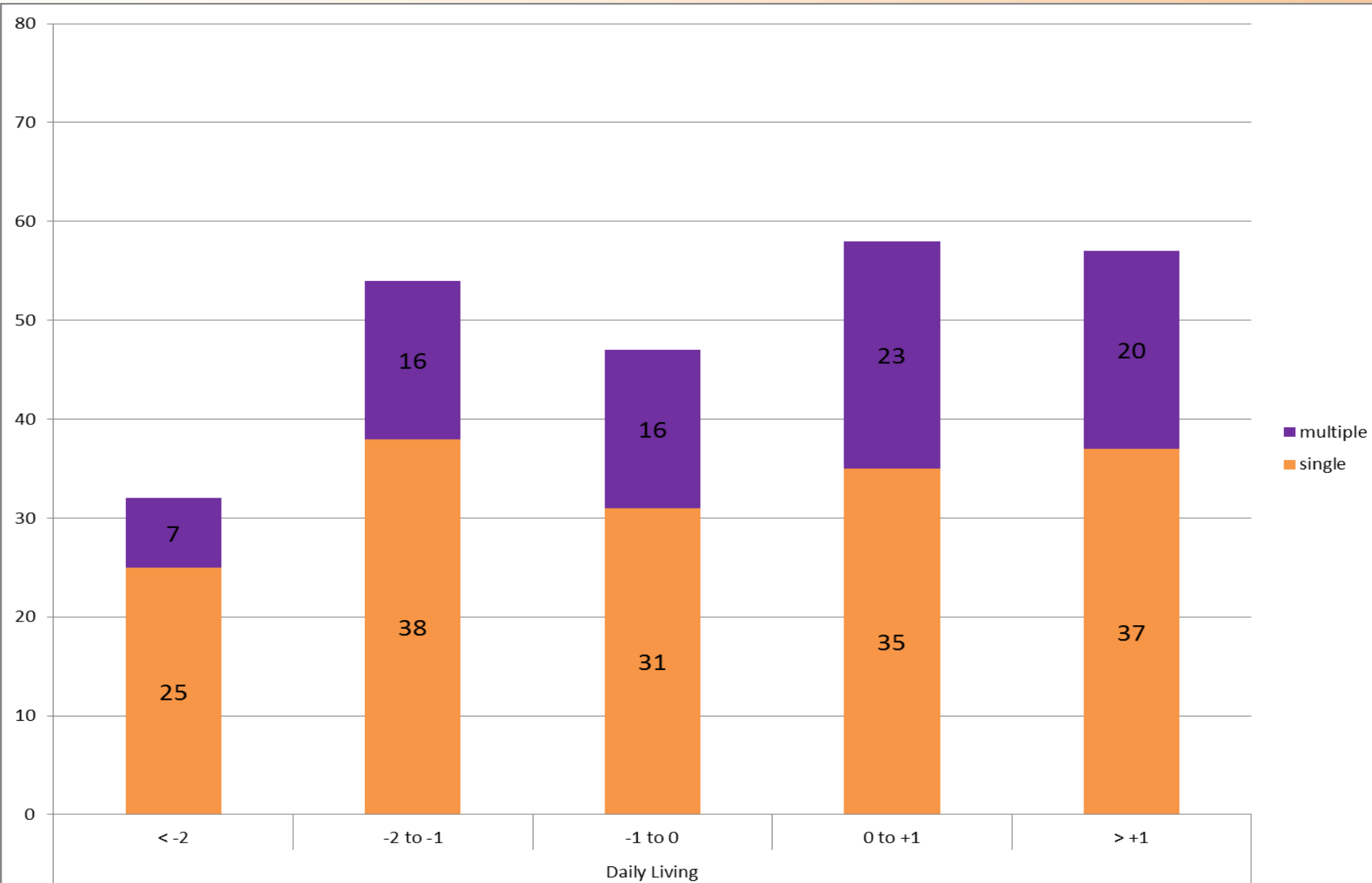


Single and Multiple Victimizations by Level of Social Ability



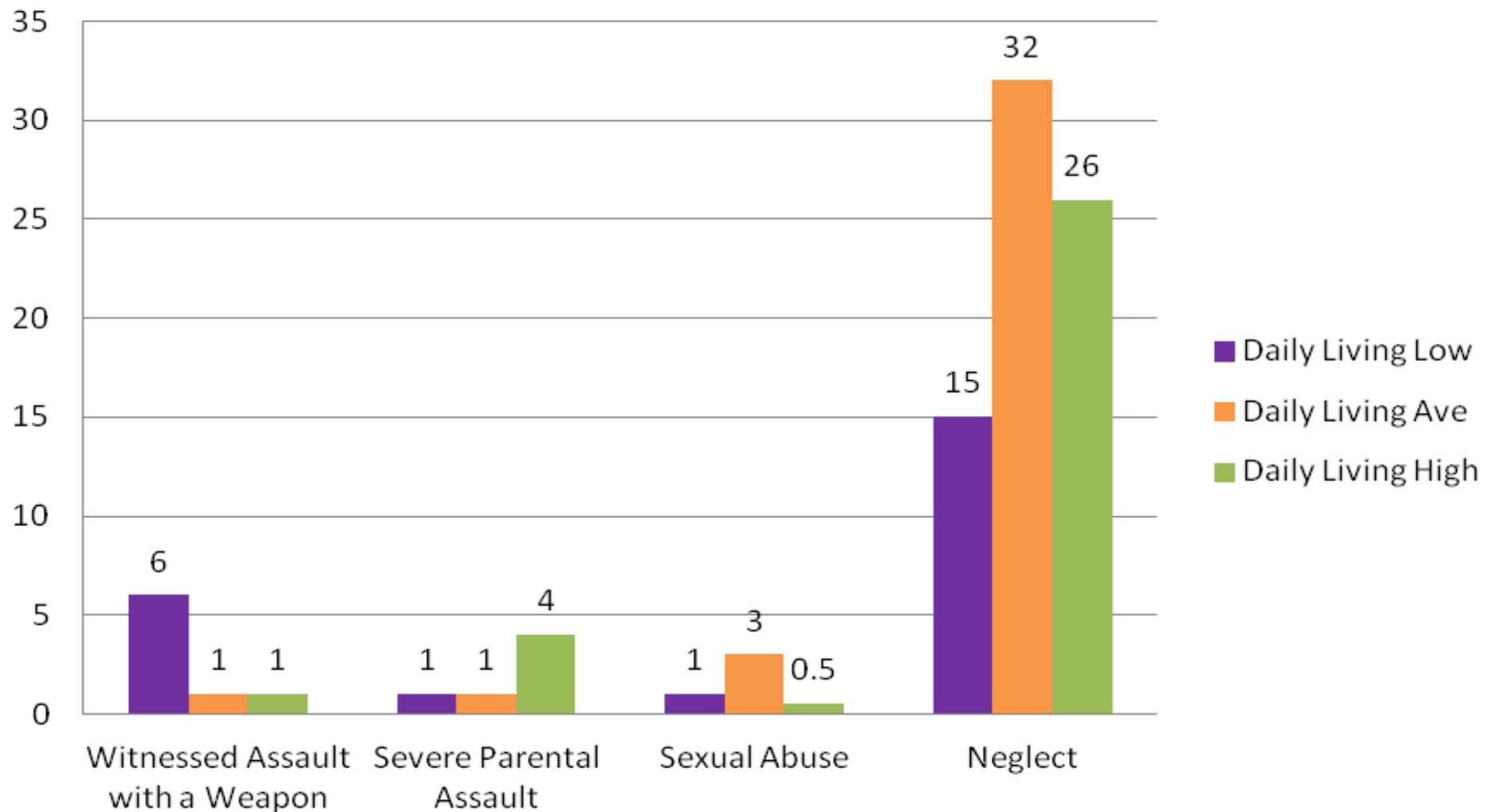


Single and Multiple Victimizations by Level of Daily Living Skills



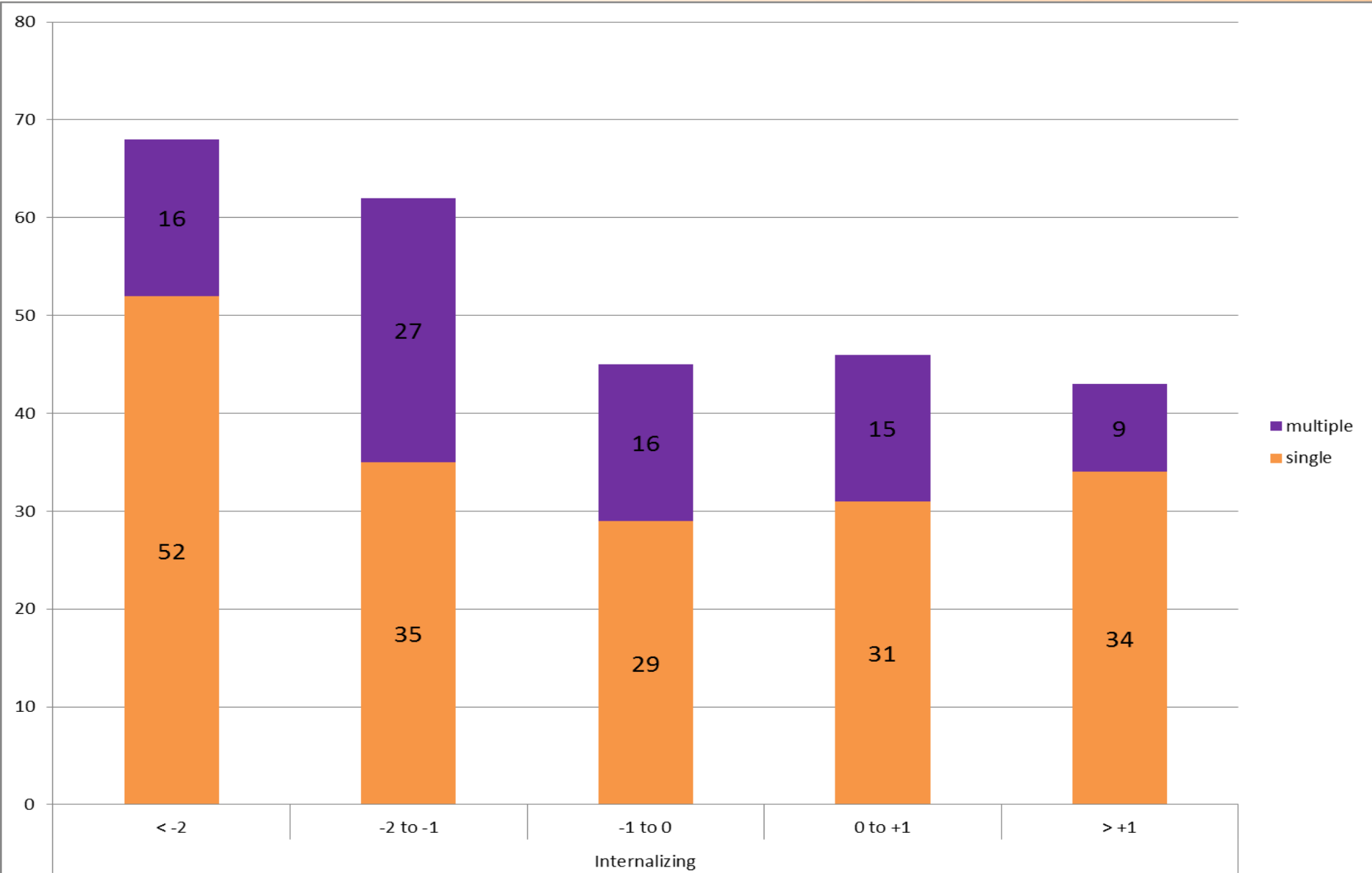


Percent of Victimization at Wave 2 by Level of Daily Living Skills



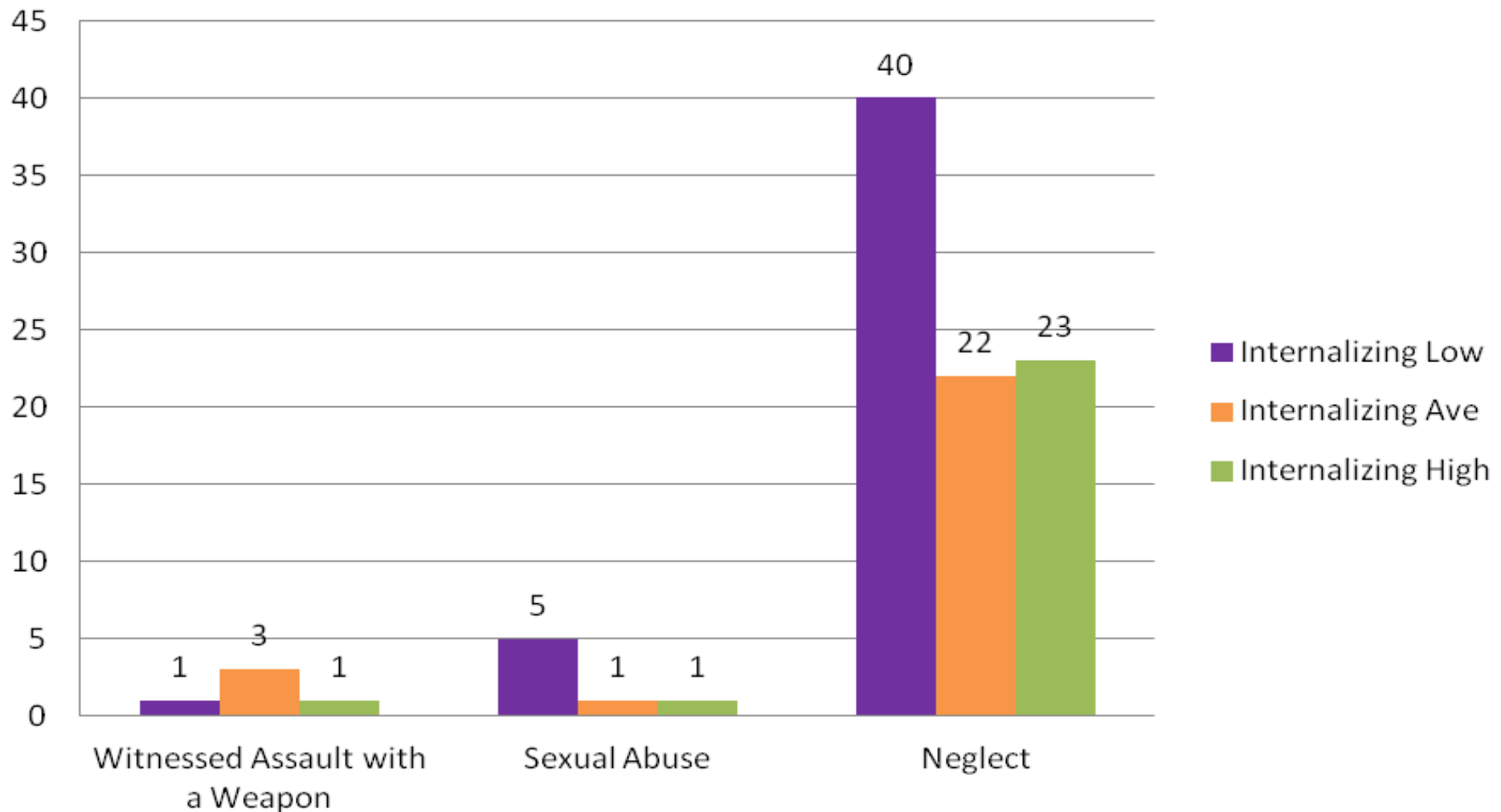


Single and Multiple Victimizations by Level of Internalizing Behavioral Problems



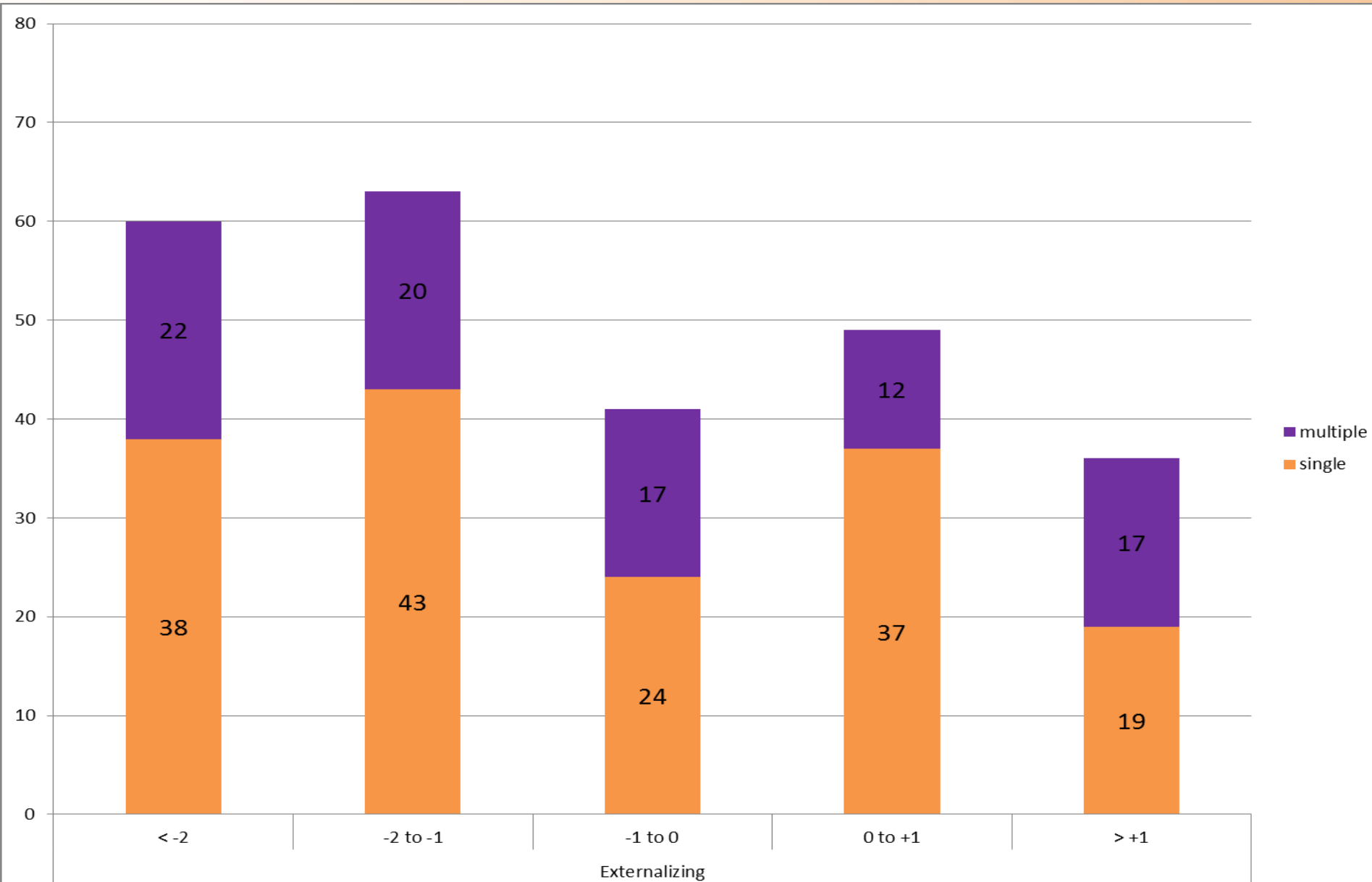


Percent of Victimization at Wave 2 by Level of Internalizing Behavioral Problems



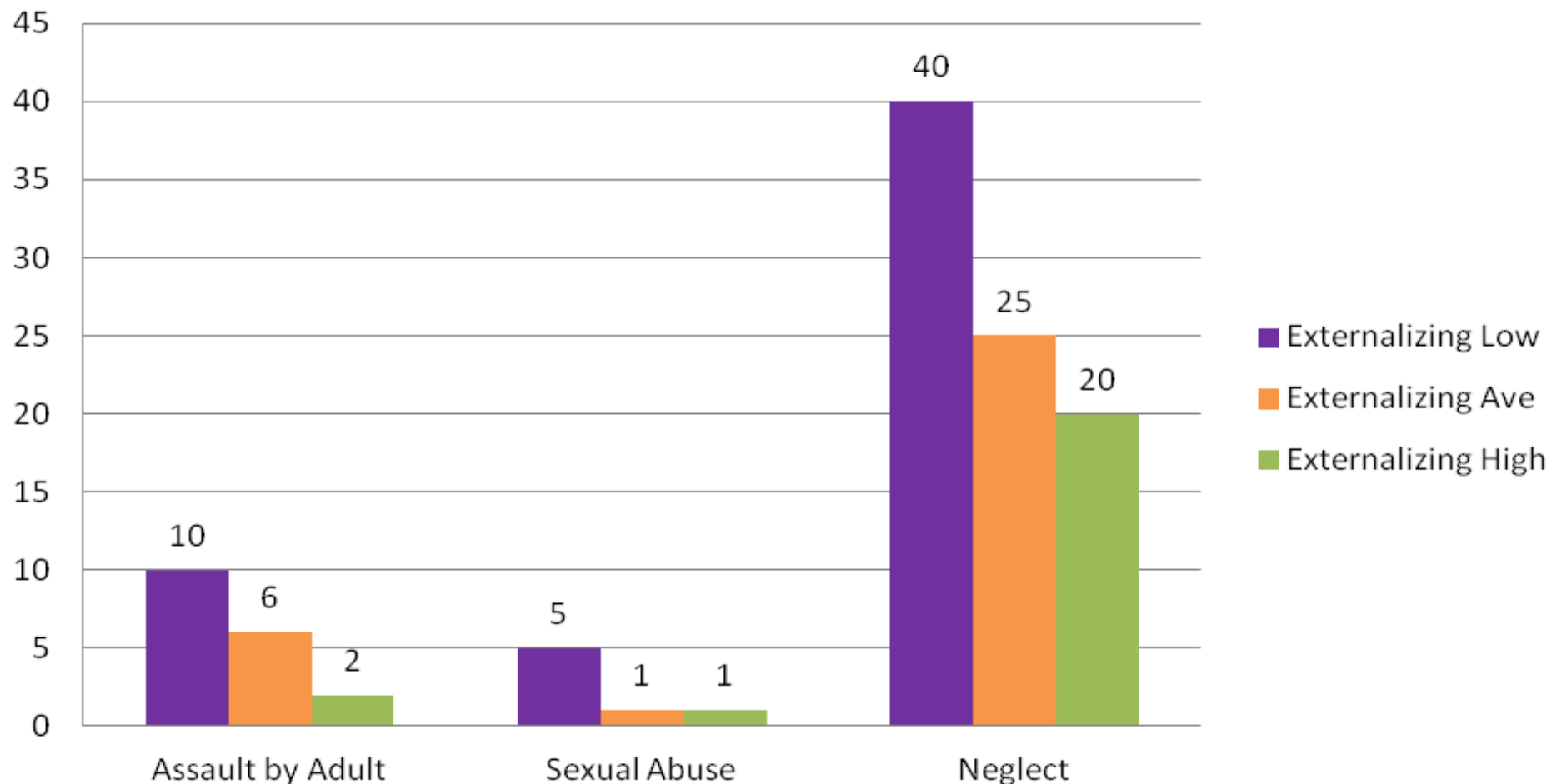


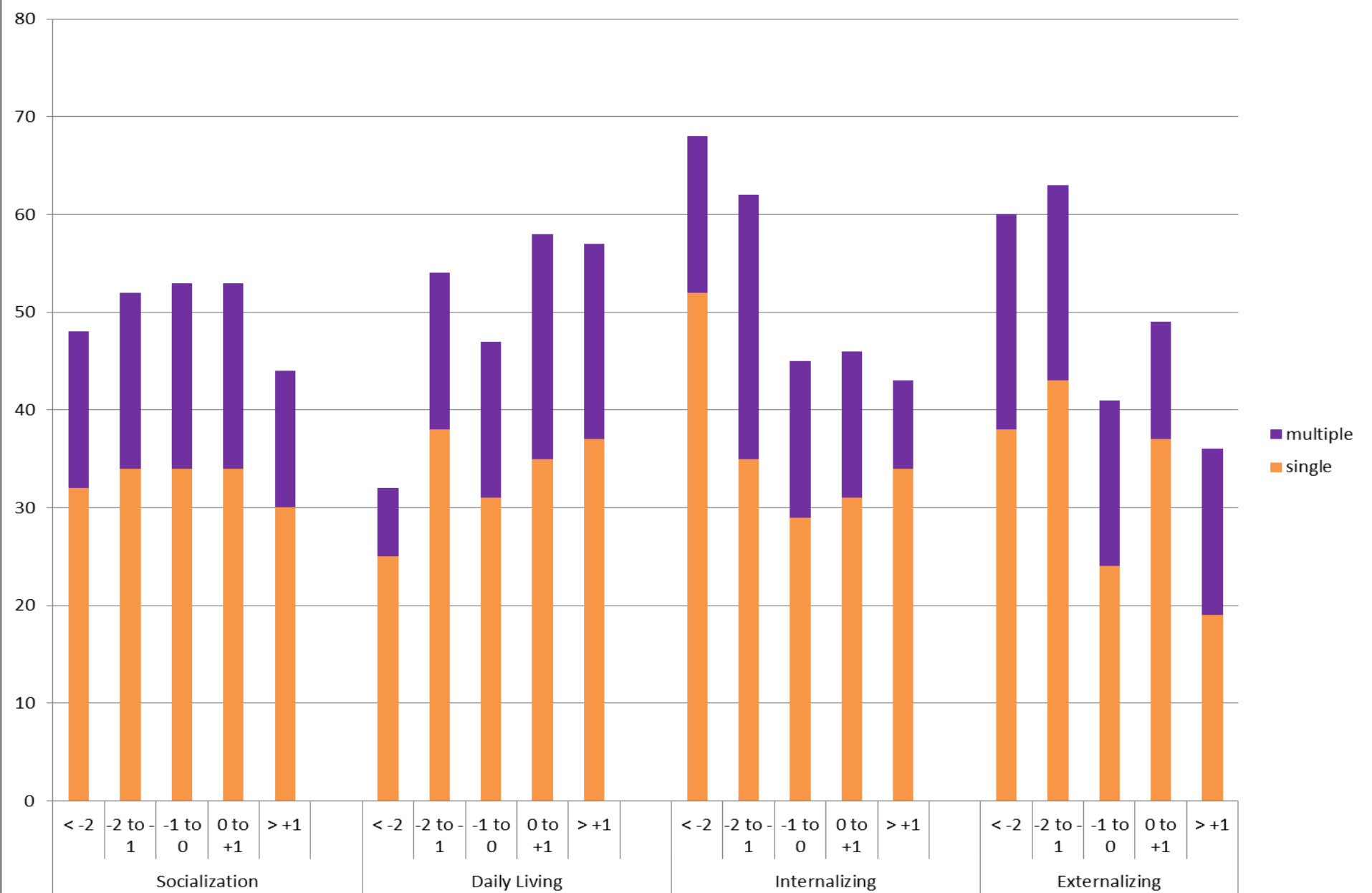
Single and Multiple Victimizations by Level of Externalizing Behavioral Problems





Percent of Victimization at Wave 2 by Level of Externalizing Behavioral Problems







Conclusion

- Very severe impairments in living skills were at a **decreased** risk of both single and multiple victimizations than low to normal functioning peers
- Very severe internalizing problems were at an **increased** risk of a single type of victimization – either sexual abuse or neglect - than low to normal functioning peers
- Very severe to severe externalizing problems were at an **increased** risk of a single type of victimization – sexual abuse, neglect, or assault - than normal functioning peers.



Conclusion

Limitations

- Caregiver report of ability
- Incomplete CPS records
- Sample bias

Future research

- Parse out types and combinations of victimizations
- Infuse child welfare with disability theory and WHO
 - Implications
 - Maltreatment prevention
 - Identification of hidden group



Contact information

Jesse J. Helton

Children and Family Research Center
School of Social Work
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Jhelton2@illinois.edu