

Reading aloud

Every child's basic need and a very rewarding investment

Research results on the value of reading aloud for the future of children

Read to children | Goethe Institut & Lukukeskus | Helsinki January 24, 2018 | Dr. Simone C. Ehmig



Why do we need campaigns to promote reading aloud?



FOREWORD

BY EU COMMISSIONER FOR EDUCATION, CULTURE, MULTILINGUALISM AND SPORT

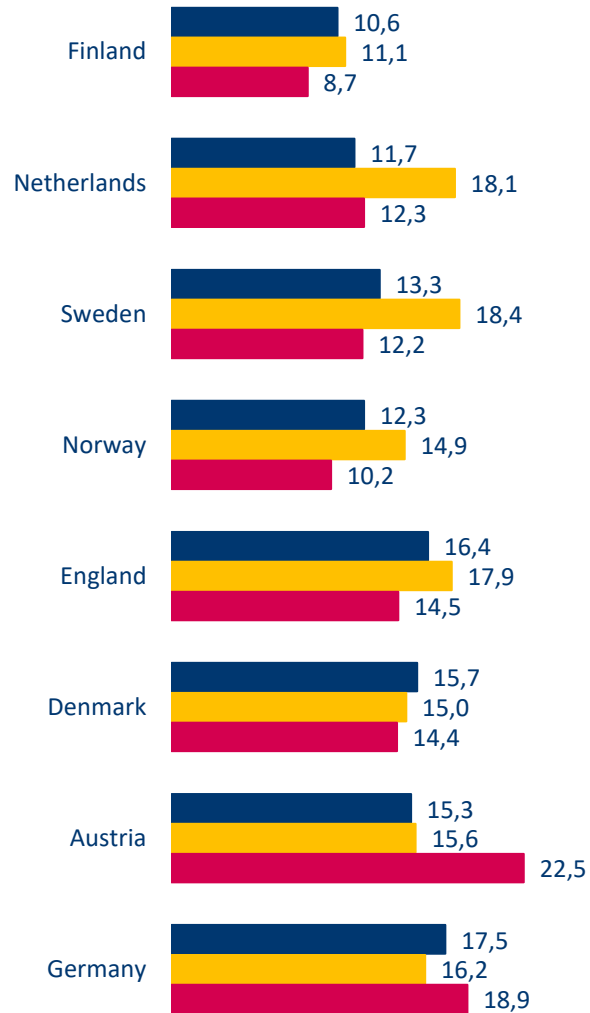
When the results from PISA, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment, were published, it was a shock to realise that one in five of our 15-year-olds in the EU still has insufficient reading skills. Another matter of concern was the widening gender gap: girls are reading better and more than boys. For adults, the need for action is just as urgent. More than 73 million adults in the EU currently have low qualifications, and many of them do not have sufficient literacy levels to cope with the daily requirements of personal, social, and economic life.

Source: EU High Level Group of Experts On Literacy (2012): Final Report, page 9

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf (12 January 2018).



Low performance in literacy – A “renewable” problem in most European countries



Percentage of low performers in reading among

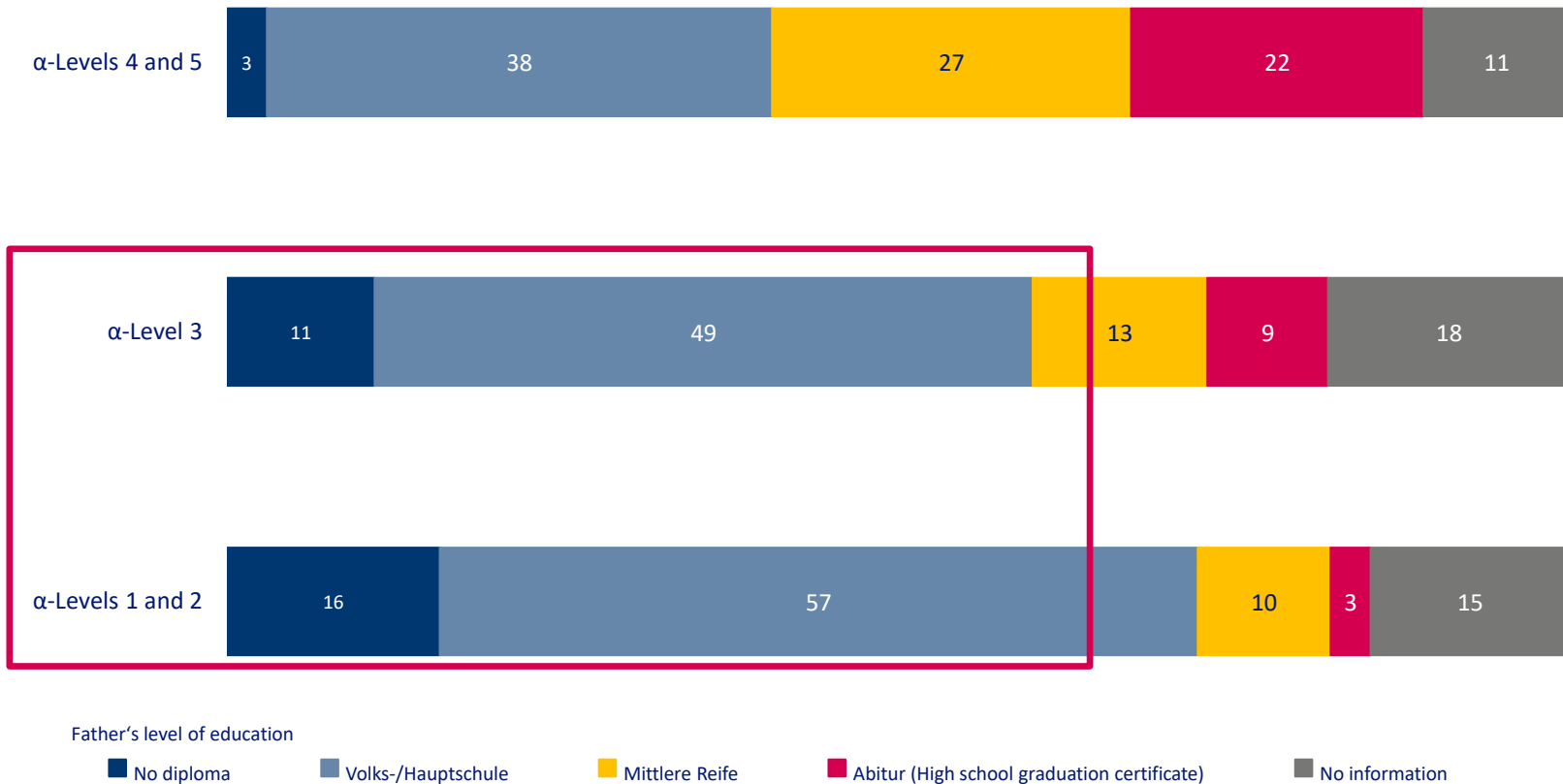
- Adults aged 16-65 (PIAAC 2013; < Competence level 2)
- Adolescents aged 15 (PISA 2015; < Competence level 2)
- Children in 4th year of schooling (PIRLS 2017; < Competence level 3)



Vicious circle: Education opportunities depend on the level of education achieved by parents

Percentage of young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 whose fathers have achieved different levels of education

Reading ability of adults between the ages of 18-35:



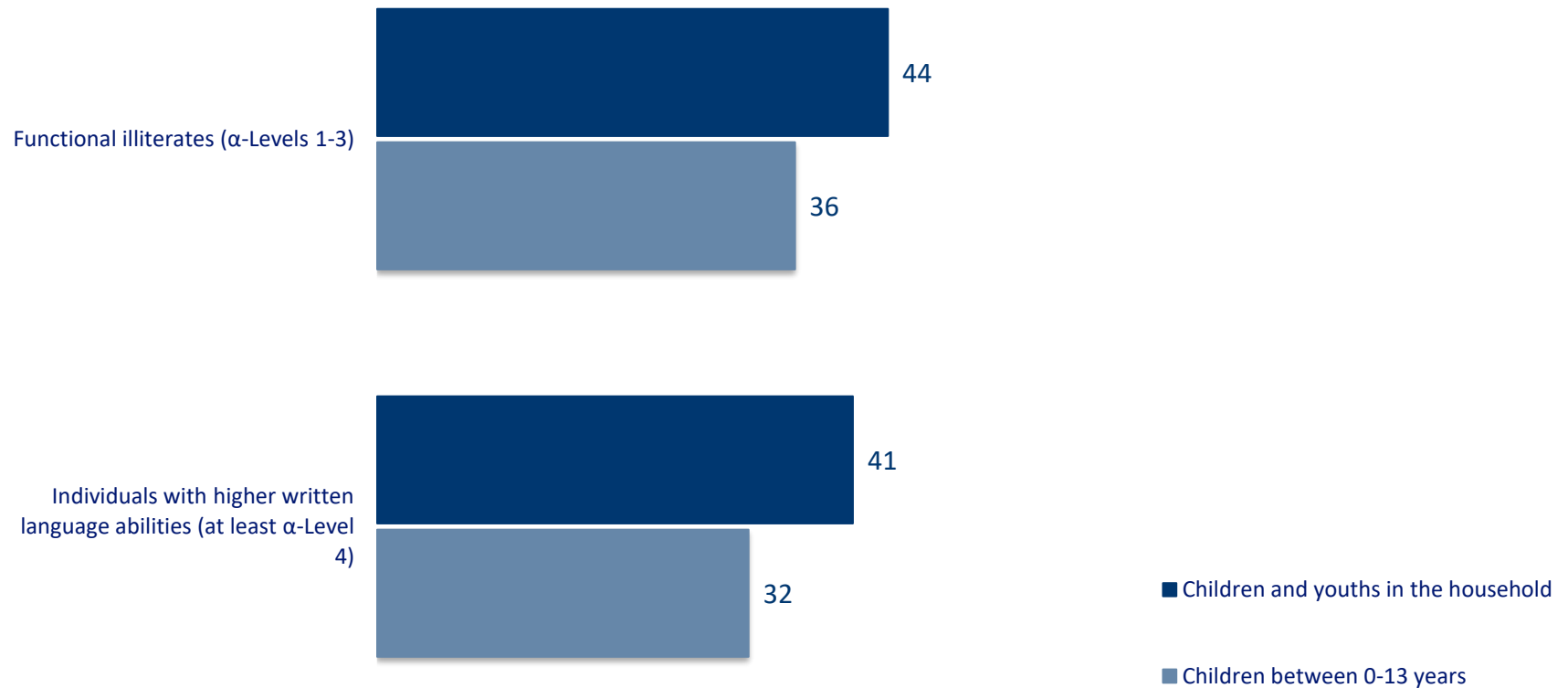
Source: leo. Level-One-Studie 2011.



Many adults with poor reading skills have children

Example: Germany

Percentage of households in which children and adolescents live



Source: leo. Level-One-Studie 2011.



Many adults with poor reading skills have children

Example: Germany

Percentage of households in which children and adolescents live

Functional illiterates (α -Levels 1-3)



**... Looked at differently:
In 16.2 percent of families with children between the ages of 0 and 13, at least one parent has problems with reading and writing.**

Individuals with higher written language abilities (at least α -Level 4)



■ Children and youths in the household

■ Children between 0-13 years

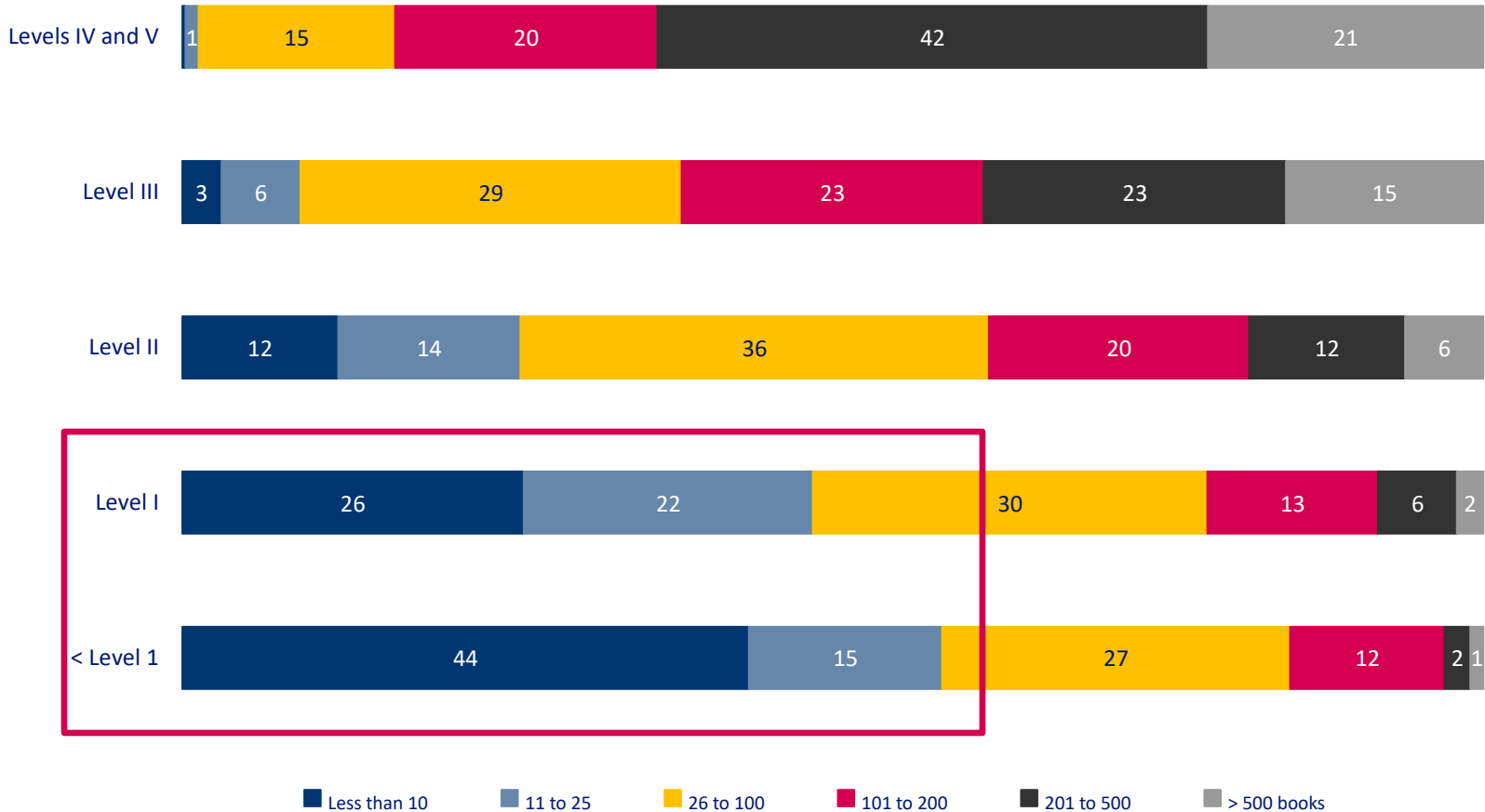
Source: leo. Level-One-Studie 2011.



In households with young adults who are poor readers there are not many reading materials

Percentage of households with young adults between the ages of 16 and 35 with different numbers of books

Reading ability according to PIAAC



Early intervention in families is key as recently confirmed by PIRLS

→ *Good Readers Had an Early Start in Literacy Learning*

PIRLS indicates two basic ways students get an early start in literacy learning:

- Having parents who often engage them in early literacy activities
- Attending preprimary education

Parents are students' first teachers, and 39 percent of the students had parents who reported often engaging their children in early literacy activities such as reading, talking, or singing to them as well as telling them stories and teaching them to write alphabet letters. These students had higher reading achievement than students whose parents engaged them less frequently in early literacy activities.

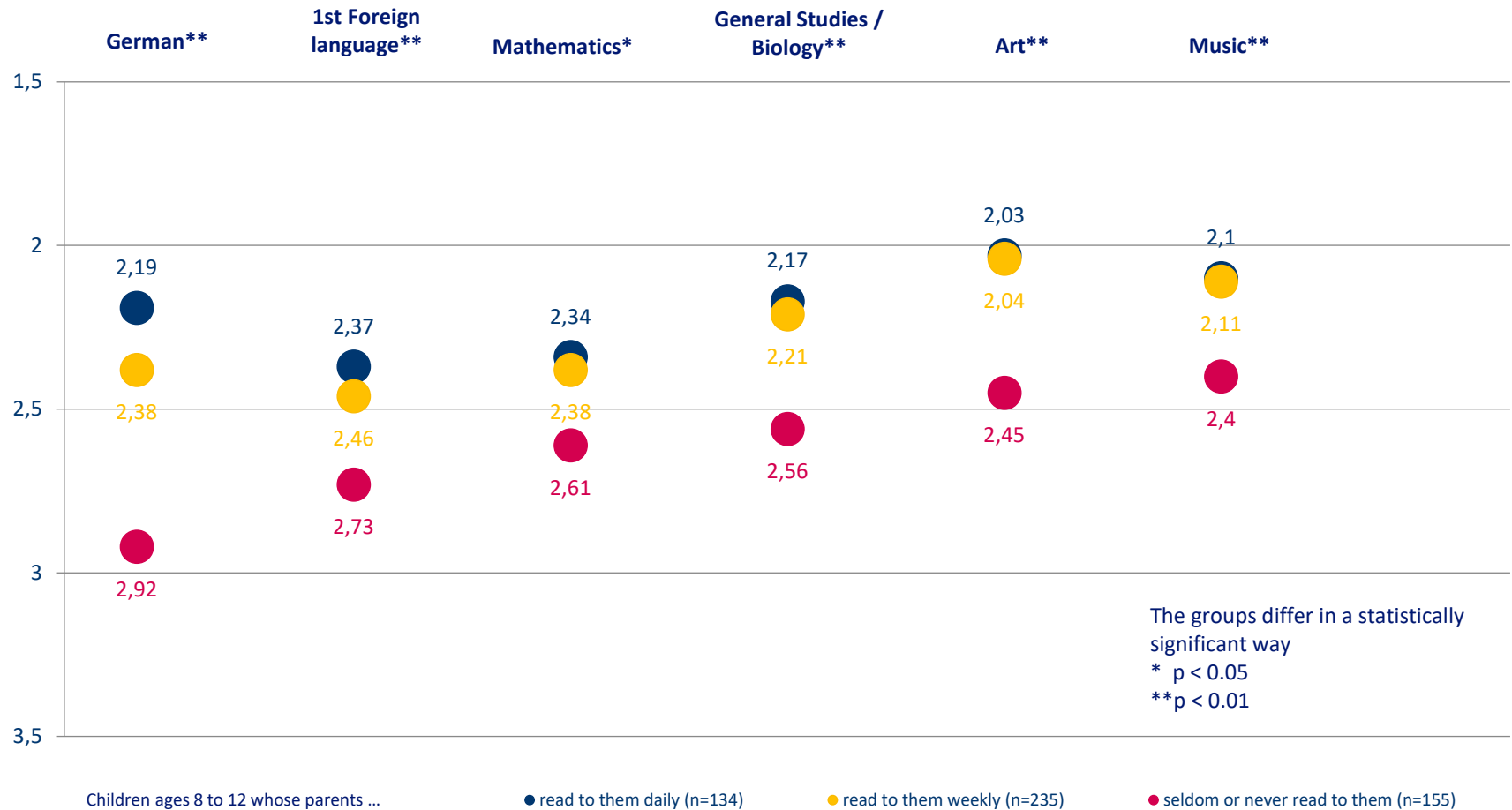


Reading aloud and promoting reading early on – Escaping the vicious circle



Children who were read to earn better grades – not just in German

Question for children (n=524): “Please tell me the grade you earned on your last report card for each subject.” | Average grades



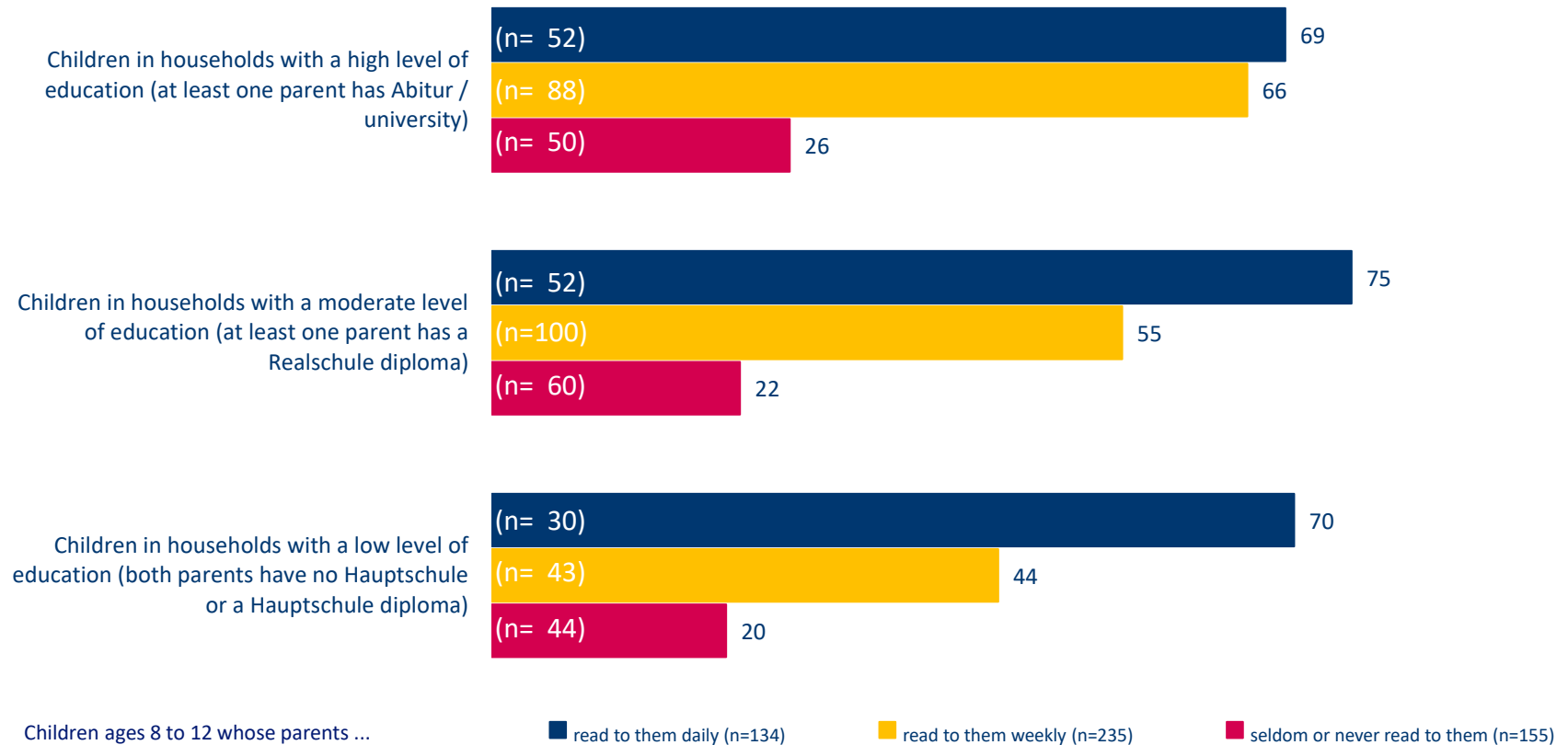
Source: German Reading Foundation | 2015 Reading Aloud Study



The differences in school grades are independent of educational background

Question for the children (n=524): "Please tell me the grade you earned on your last report card for each subject."
 Grade 1 and 2 | Numbers given in percent

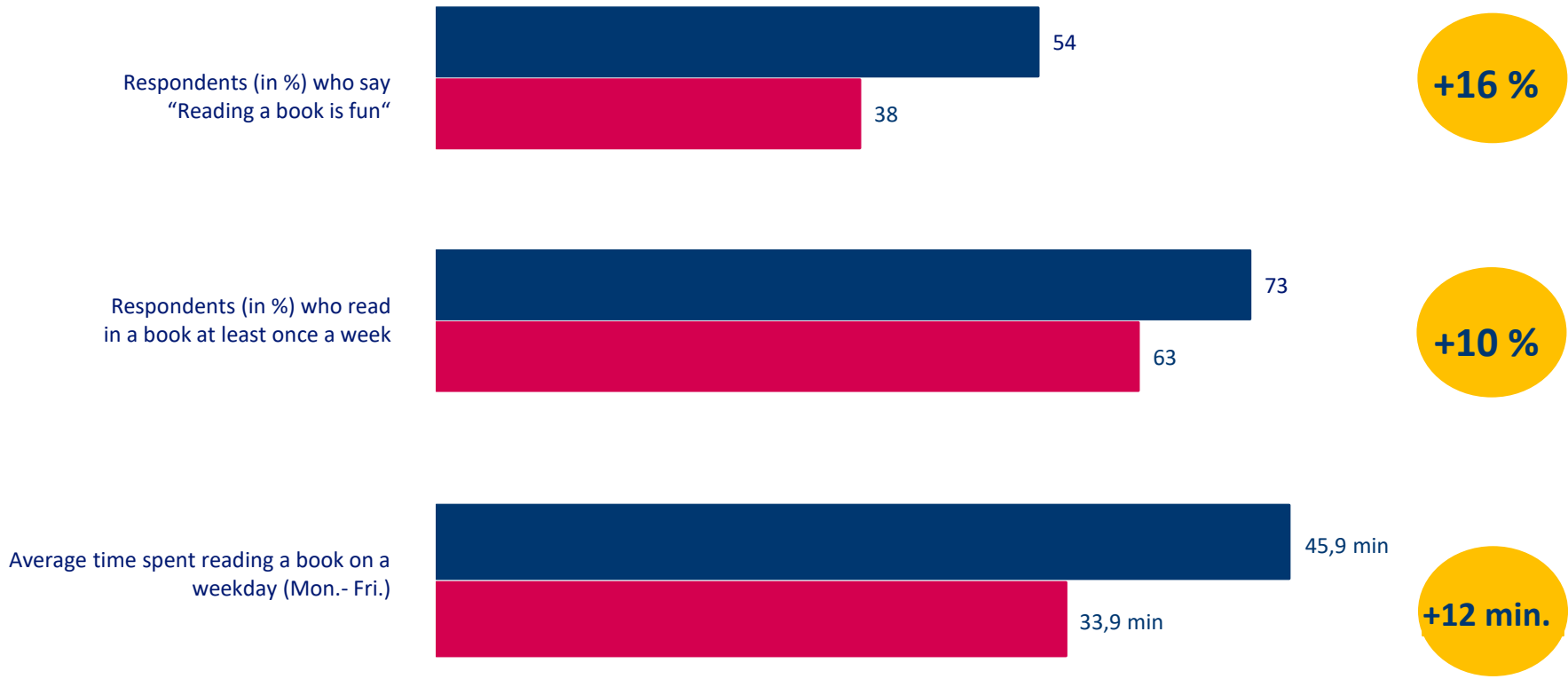
Indicator: The grade for German in the last report card was 1 or 2



Source: German Reading Foundation | 2015 Reading Aloud Study



Reading aloud is important for reading enjoyment – Indicator reading a book



Children and adolescents between the ages of 10-19 who ...

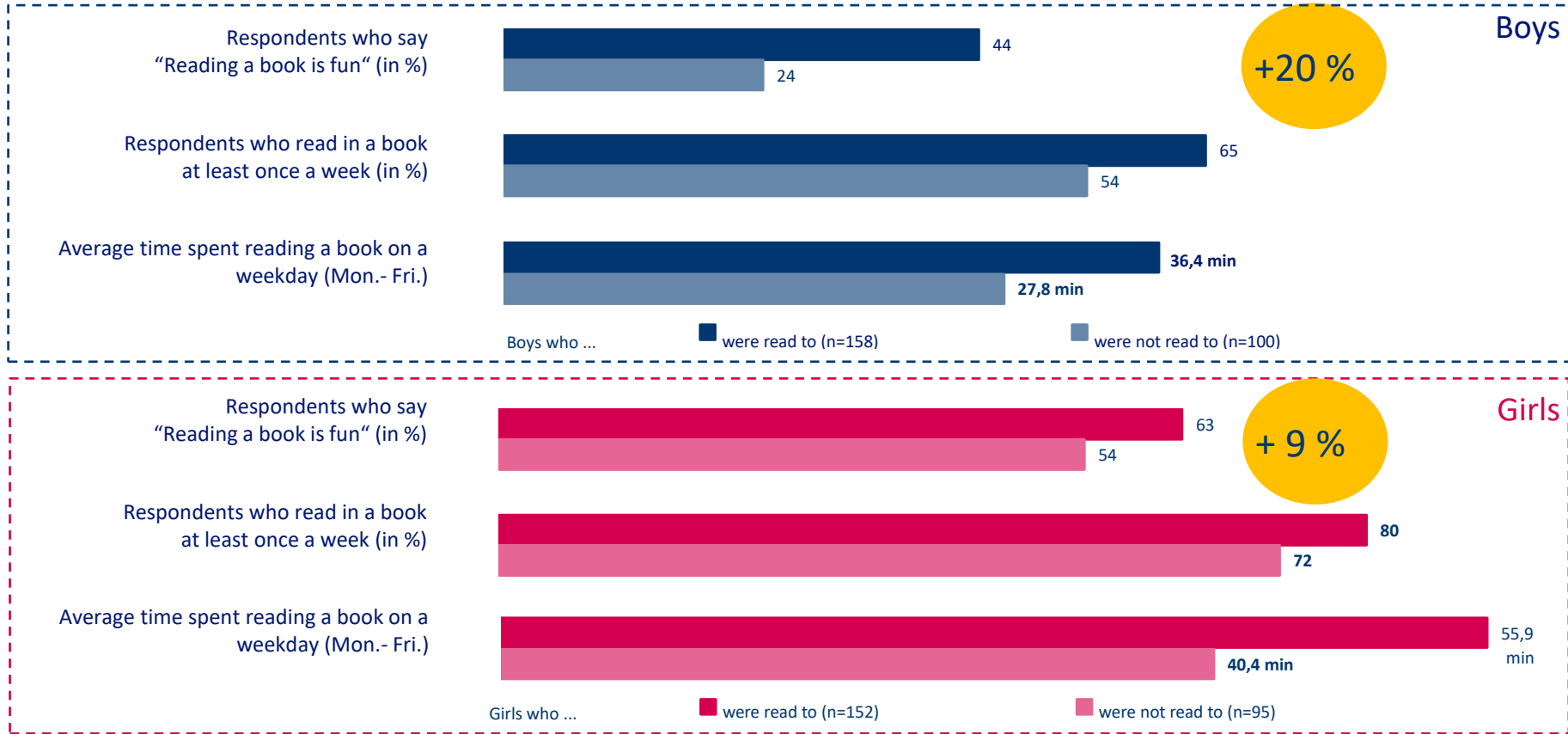
■ were read to (n=310)

■ were not read to (n=195)

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2011 Reading Aloud Study



Reading aloud increases reading enjoyment - particularly for boys

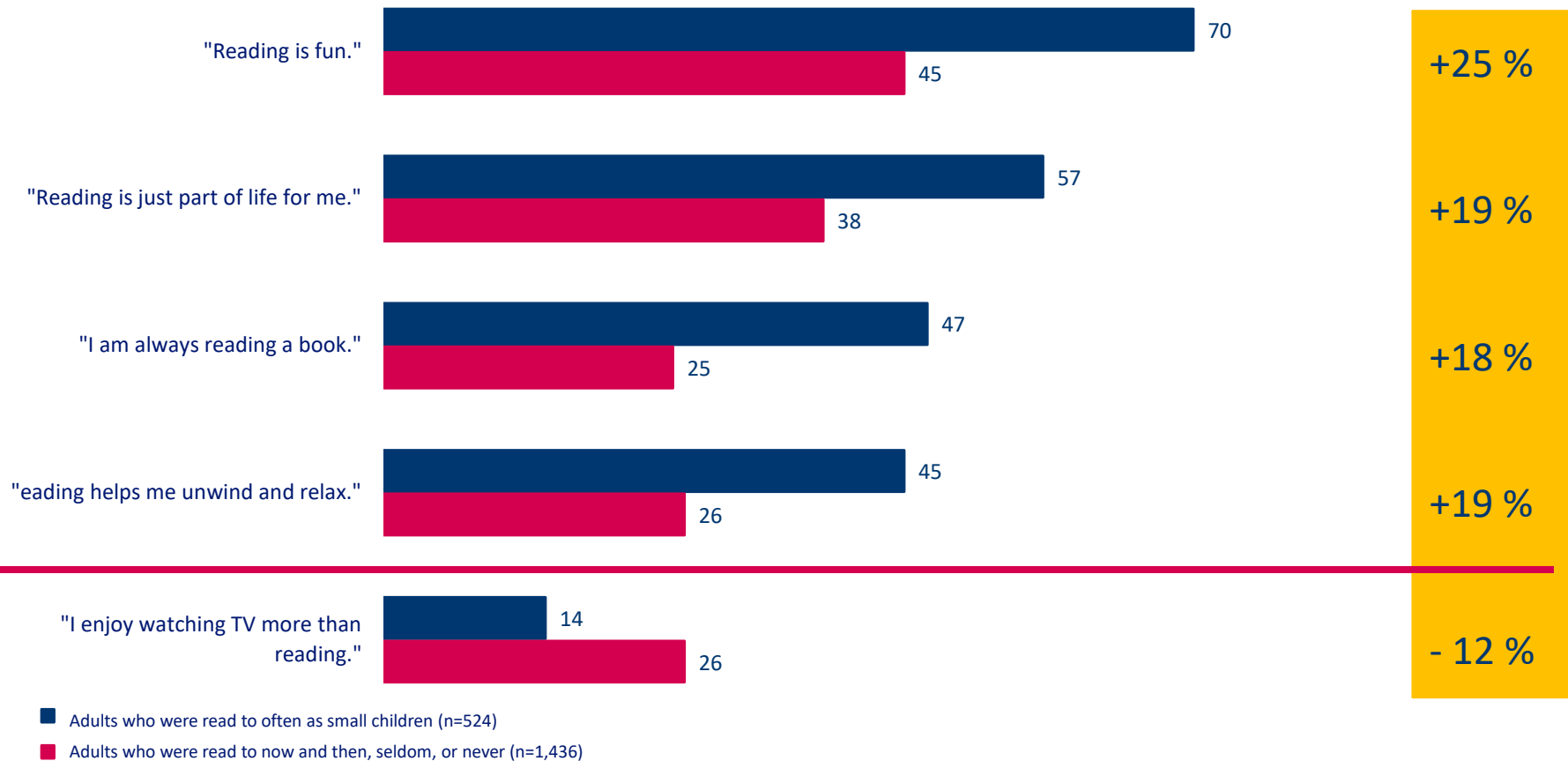


Source: German Reading Foundation | 2011 Reading Aloud Study



Reading aloud is important for reading enjoyment into adulthood

Adults say ...

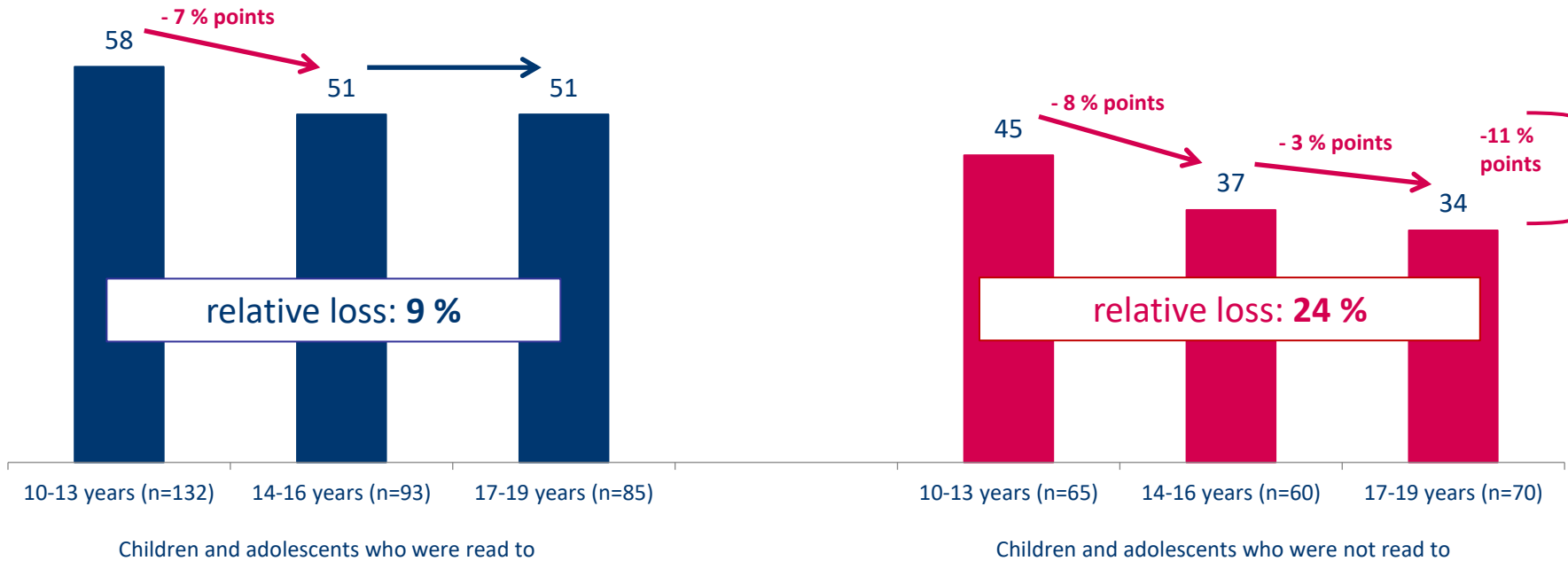


Source: German Reading Foundation: Lesesozialisation in der Familie. Representative survey of 1,960 individuals 2010



Reading aloud in childhood prevents a drop in reading levels in puberty

Percentage of children and adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 who say "Reading a book is fun" (in %)

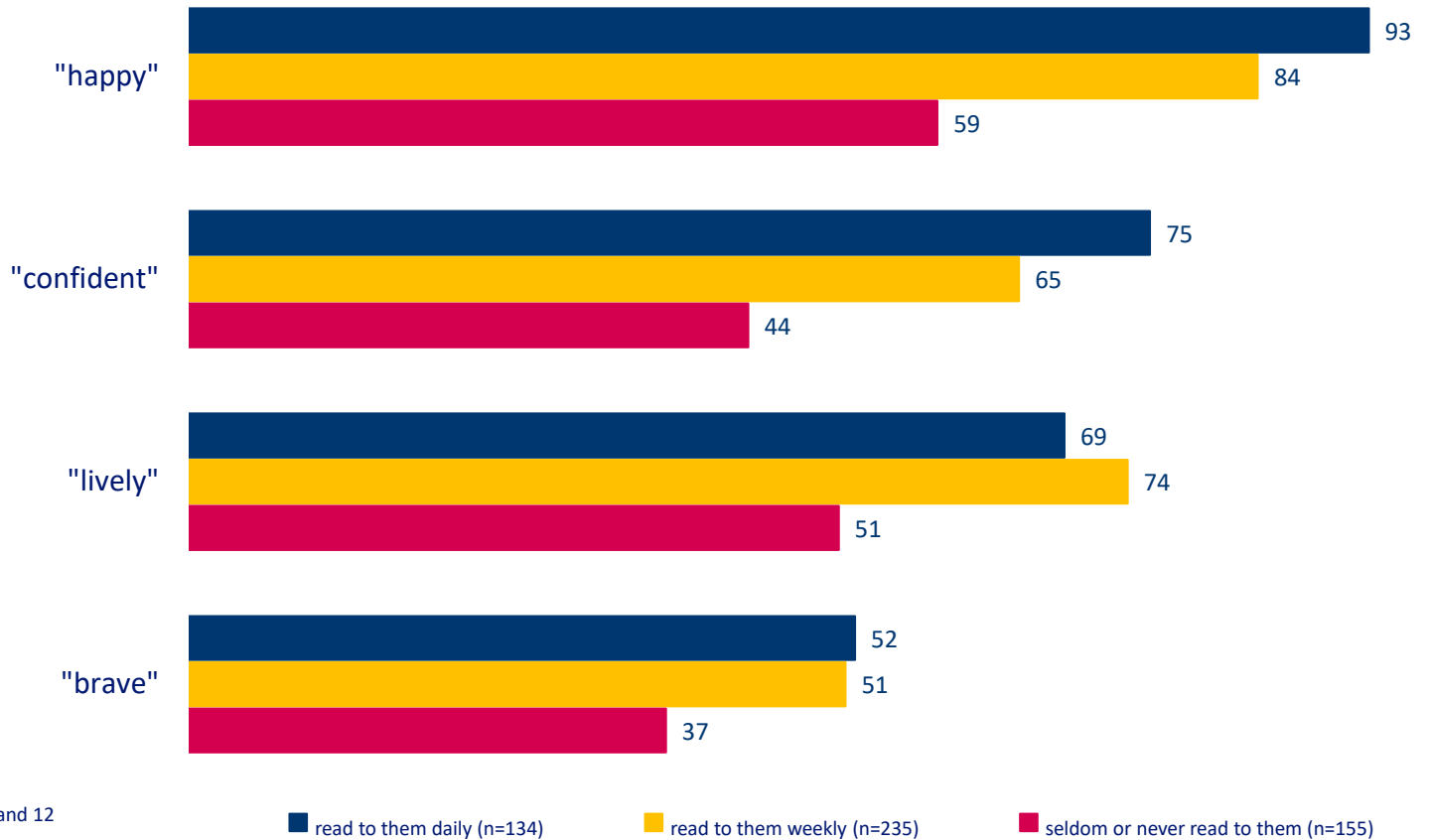


Source: German Reading Foundation | 2011 Reading Aloud Study



Children who were read to benefit when it comes to the development of their personality

Question for mothers (n=524): "How would you describe your child? Which of the following characteristics applies to your child?" | Points 4 and 5 on a scale of 1: "strongly disagree " to 5: "strongly agree " | Numbers given in percent



Children between the ages of 8 and 12 whose parents ...

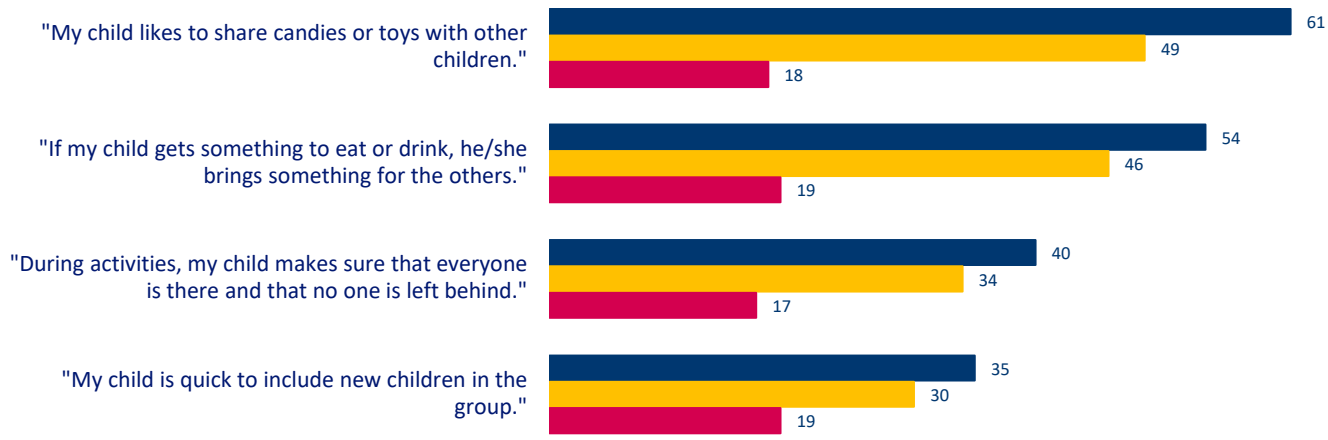
Source: German Reading Foundation | 2015 Reading Aloud Study



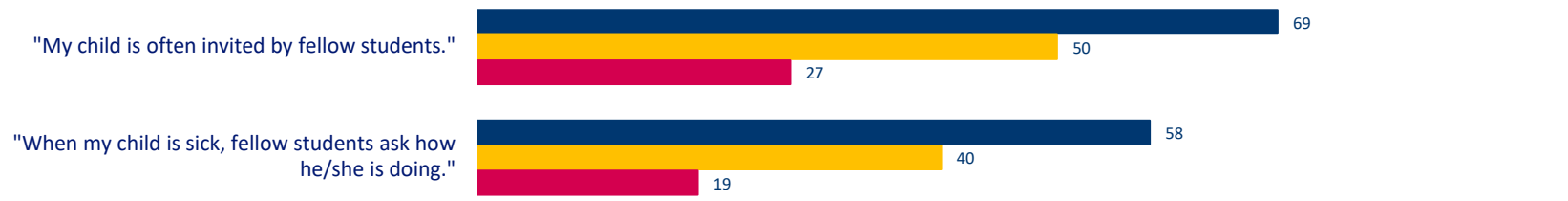
Social behavior of children who were read to creates a win-win situation

Question for mothers (n=524): "I am going to read a few excerpts from other parents who have children similar in age to yours. Which of these applies to ... ? Tell me with the help of this list." | Mothers who respond with "I experience this often, happens often" and "I sometimes experience this" | Numbers given in percent

The **environment** clearly benefits from the involvement of children who were read to...



... and **children** benefit from what their environment gives back to them.



Children between the ages of 8 and 12 who were...

■ read to them daily (n=134) ■ read to them weekly (n=235) ■ seldom or never read to them (n=155)

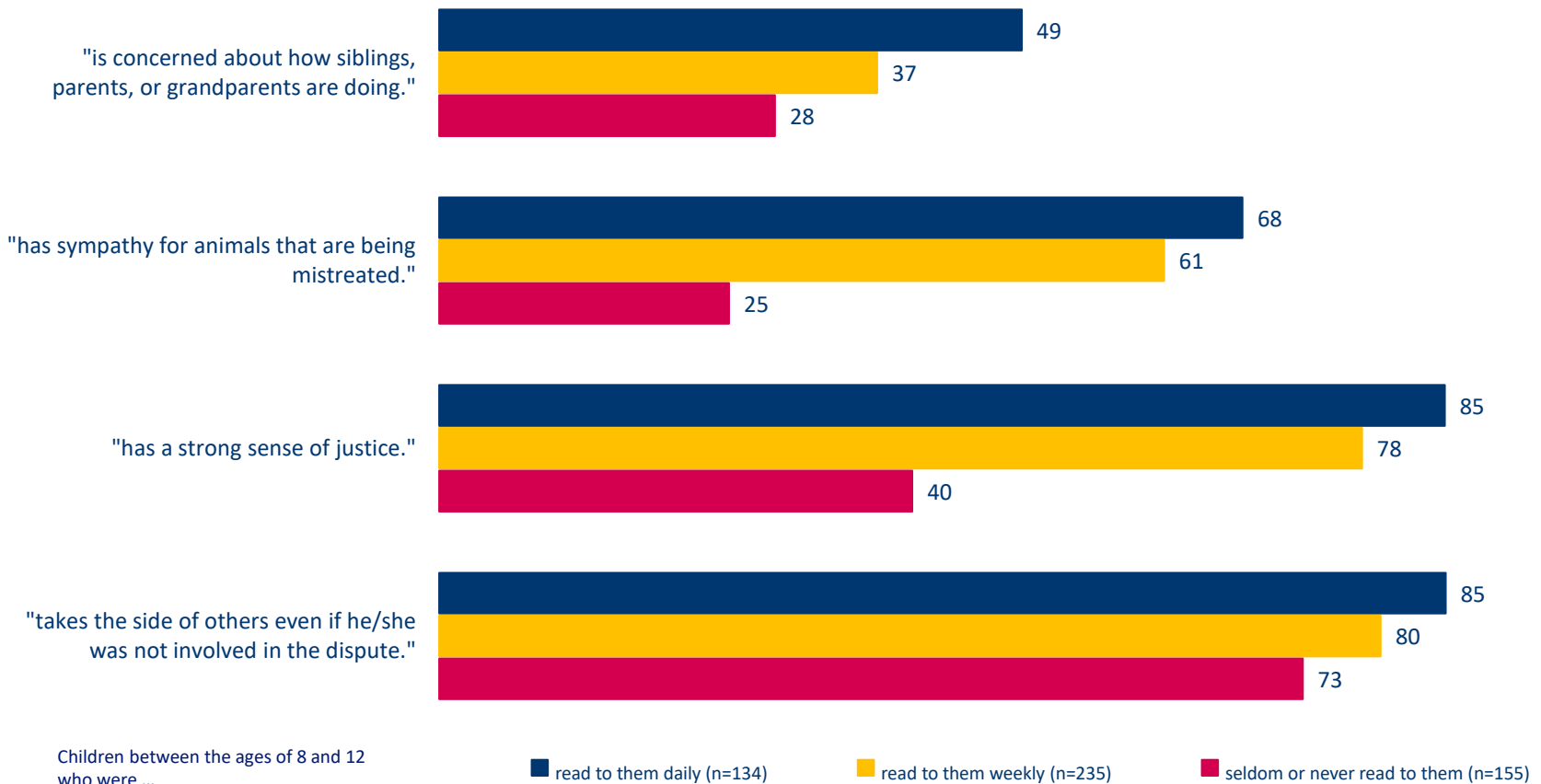
Source: German Reading Foundation | 2015 Reading Aloud Study



Children who were read to show social responsibility

Question: I am going to read a few excerpts from other parents who have children similar in age to yours. Which of these applies to ... ? Basis: Surveyed mothers (n=524) | On a scale of 4 in % whereby 1: doesn't happen / 4: I experience this often, happens often.

My child ...



Source: German Reading Foundation | 2015 Reading Aloud Study



Parents recognize that reading aloud has benefits for their family

Question: "I am going to read a few statements about reading aloud in family life. Please indicate whether or not these statements apply to you."

Mothers or fathers who read often or now and then to their child (n=431) | Number of those surveyed who respond with "applies" | in %

"Reading aloud and telling stories enrich our daily lives."



74

"I enjoy the time reading aloud as much as my child does."



76

"When reading aloud we often realize how important our family is."



73



What makes reading aloud as a preventative way to promote reading succeed over the long term?

Factors which make reading early on important are ...

- Language input ⇒ Vocabulary, expressiveness
- Contents, stories ⇒ Role and behavioral models, world knowledge
- Regularity, routine ⇒ Reading becomes a part of life
- **Closeness to familiar people** ⇒ **Bond**
- **Positive emotional experience** ⇒ **Safe space**

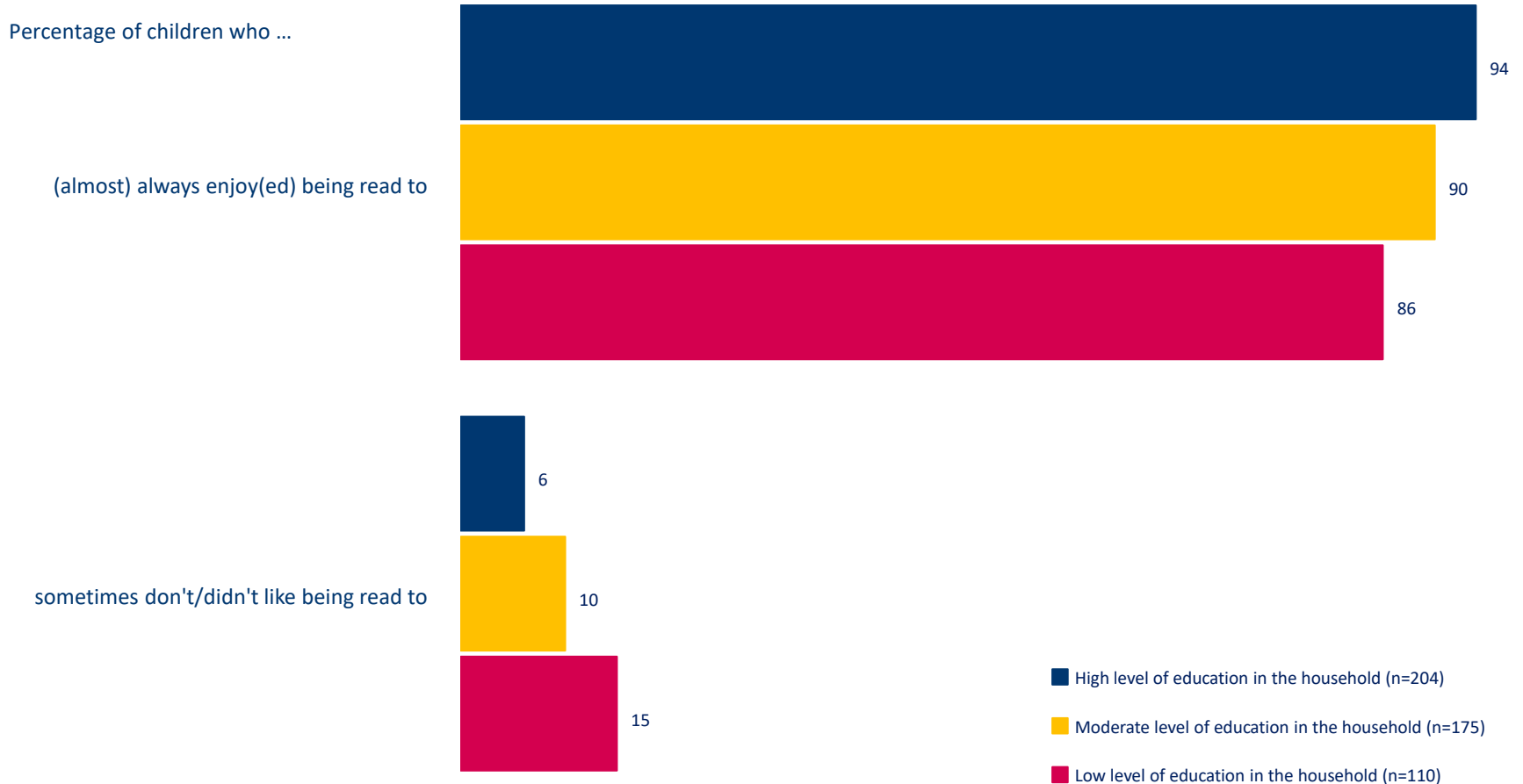
⇒ Individual attention to the children strengthens and complements the efforts involved in promoting language and reading.

⇒ **Reading aloud ensures this ideally!**



Children love being read to even in households with a lower level of education

Questions asked of children whose parents read/have read to them (n=491): "Do you sometimes not really enjoy being read to? / How often do/did you not really enjoy being read to?" | Numbers given in percent

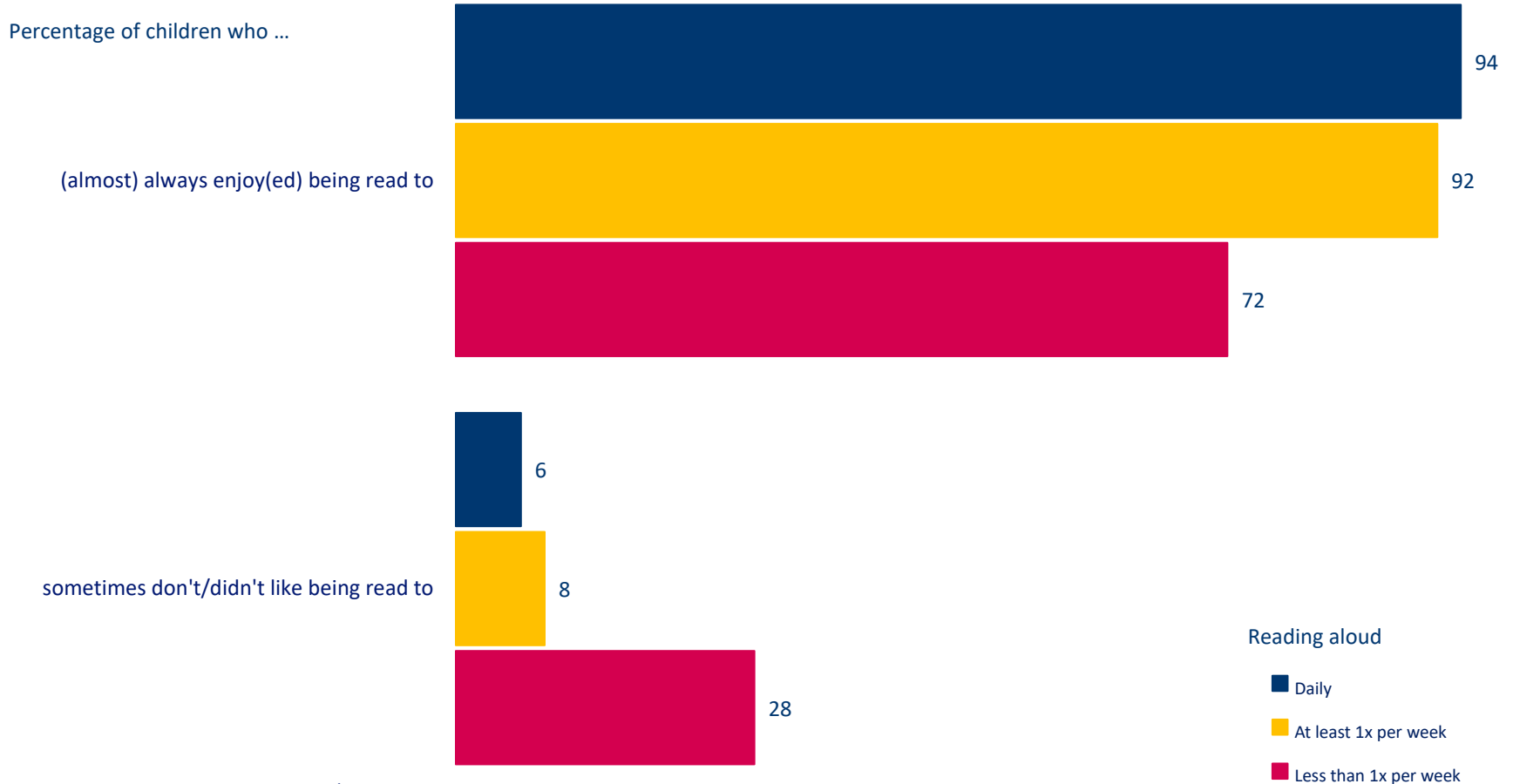


Source: German Reading Foundation | 2016 Reading Aloud Study



Children love being read to especially when this happens regularly

Questions for children whose parents read/have read to them (n=491): "Do you sometimes not really enjoy being read to? / How often do/did you not really enjoy being read to?" | Numbers given in percent

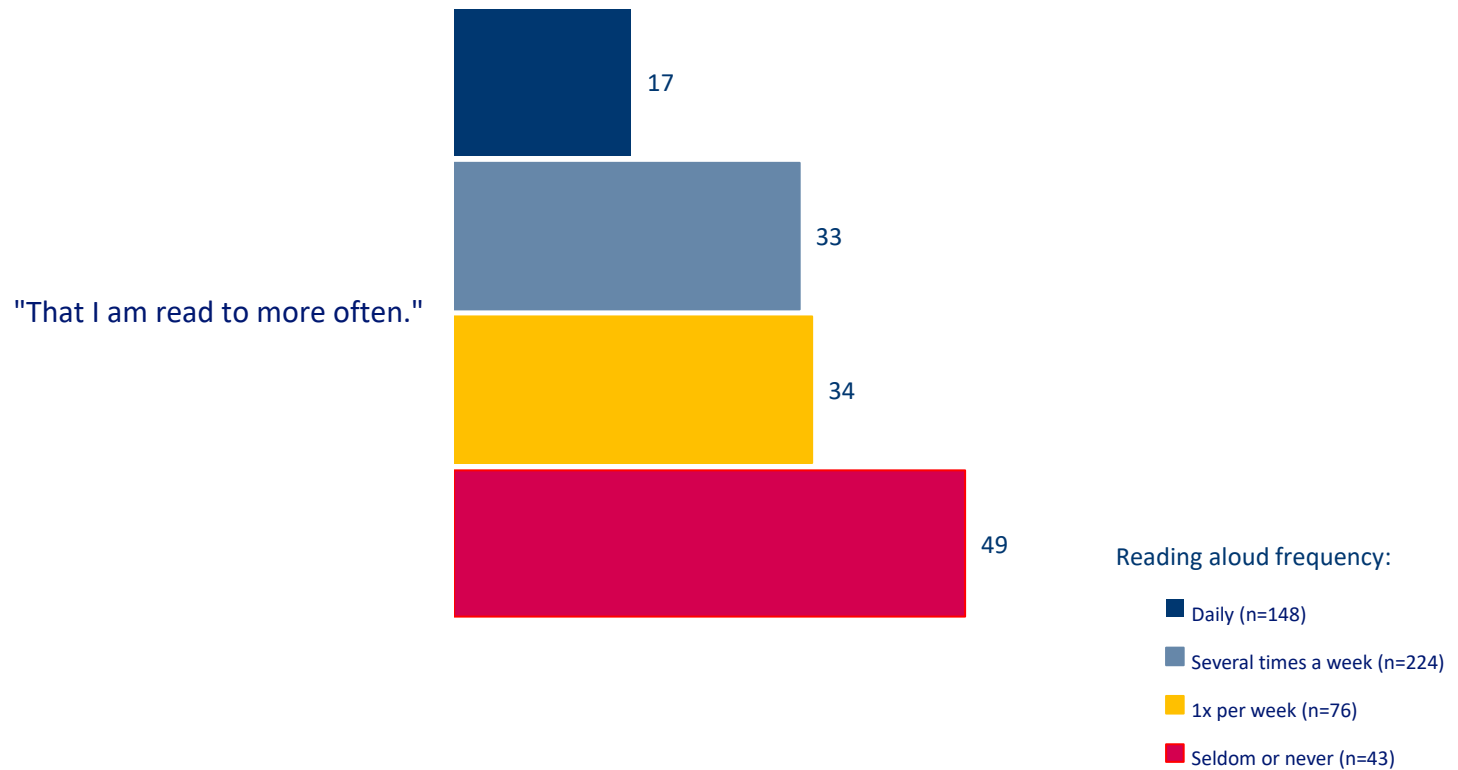


Source: German Reading Foundation | 2016 Reading Aloud Study



Children who are read to by their parents really want to be read to

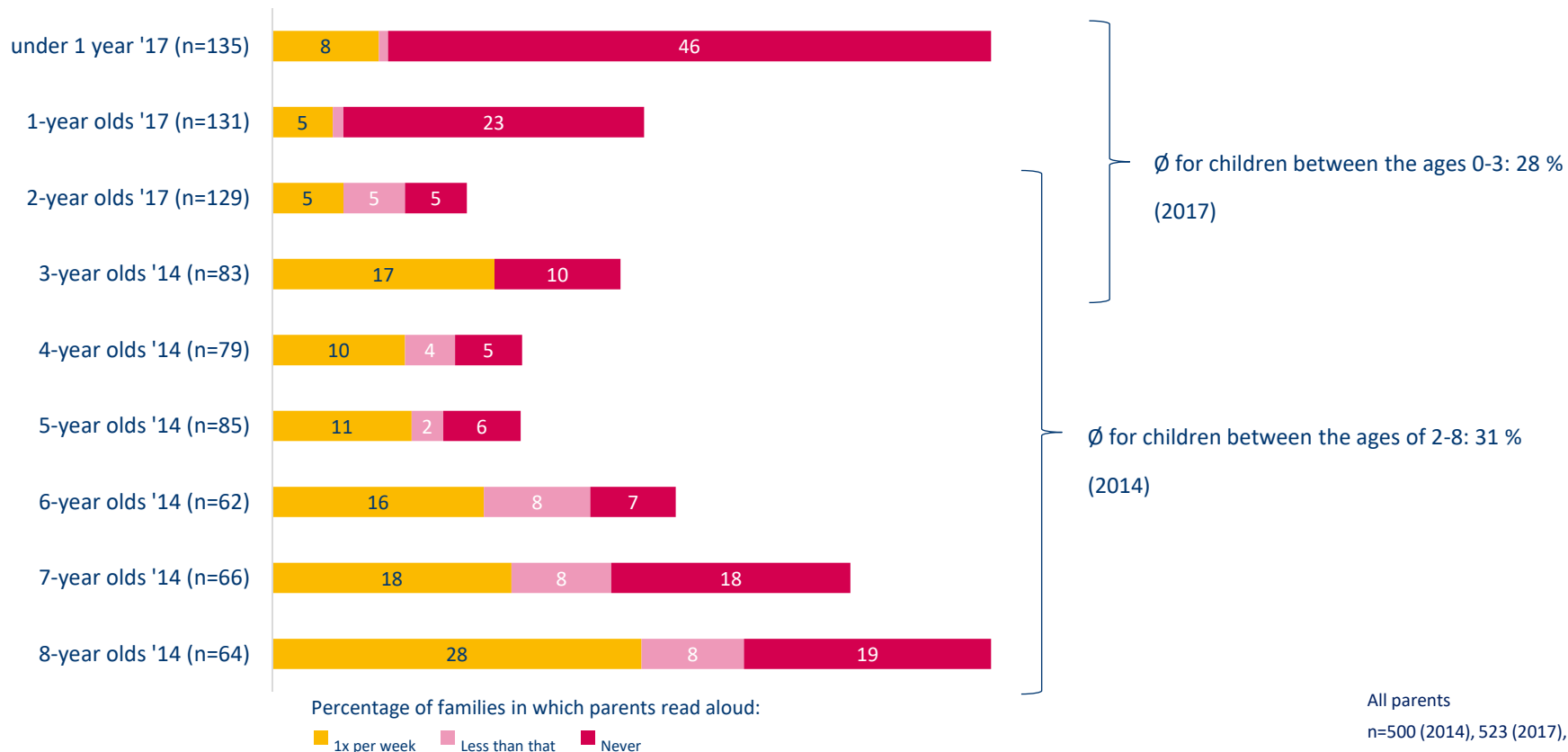
Question for children who were/are read to by parents (n=491): "What do you want when being read to? What could be done better when being read to?" | Numbers given in percent



Reading aloud and promoting reading early on –
Not a given for children in many families



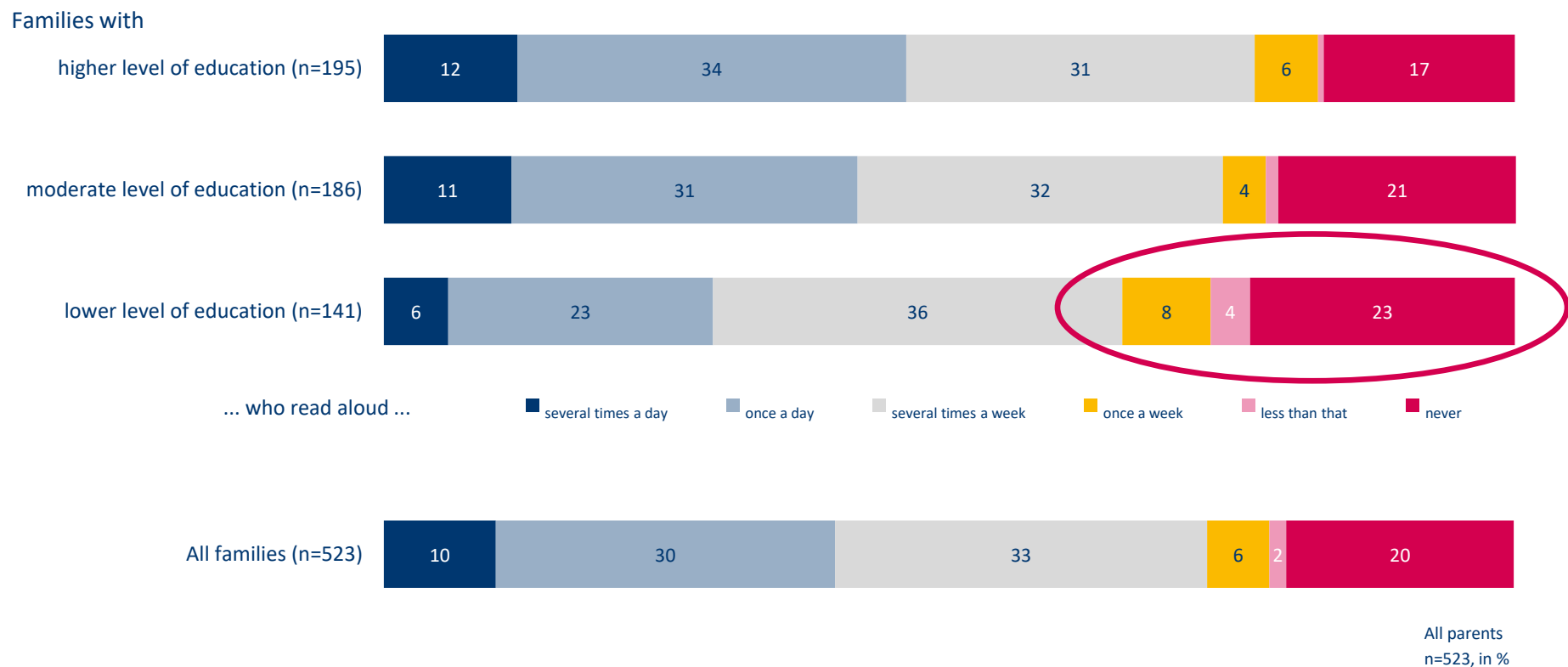
Above all, very young children and children who are learning to read are lacking in reading aloud exposure



Various questions on reading aloud frequency in the 2014 and 2017 Reading Aloud Studies



The educational level of the parents influences whether they read to their children early on

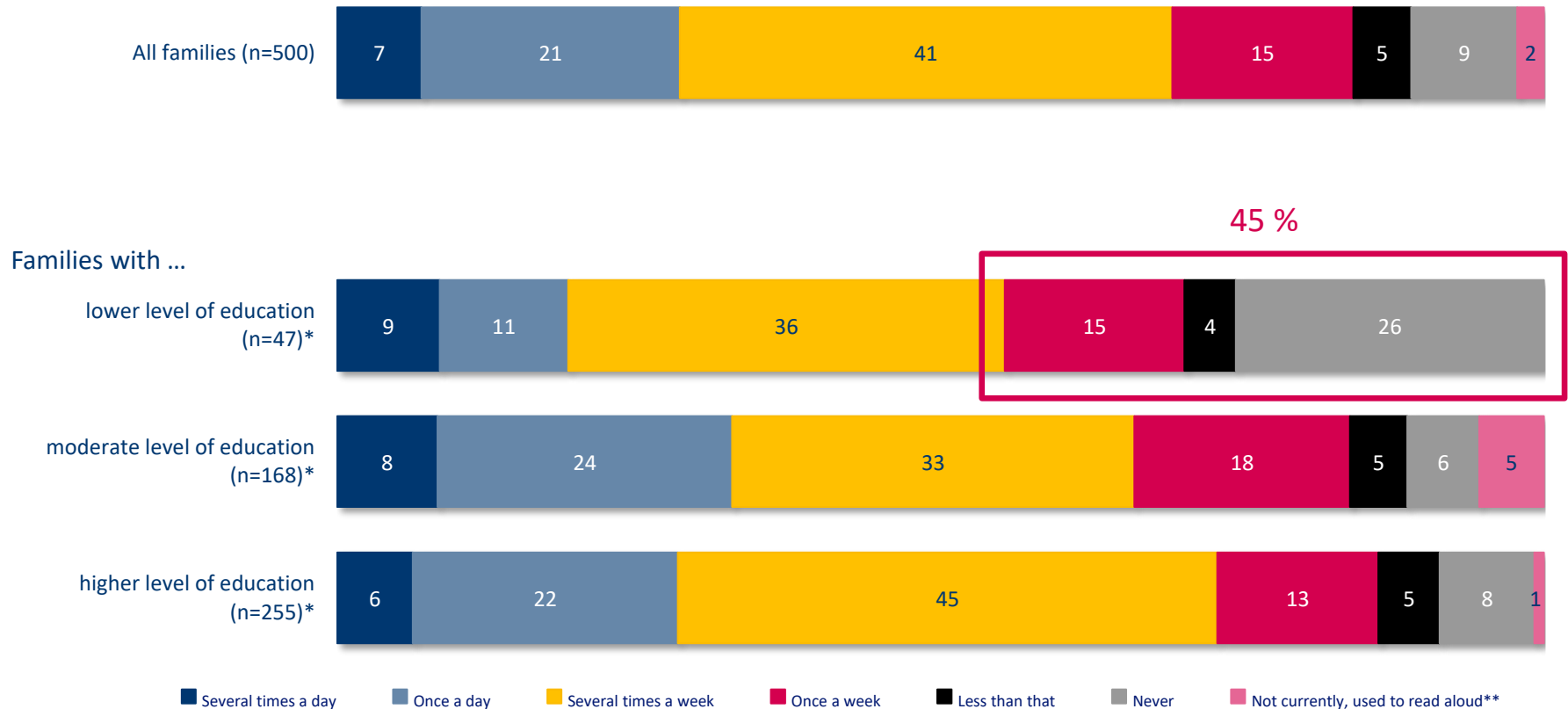


“The questions that follow deal with reading aloud. This also includes looking at picture books together, including books with few pictures or books made of other materials like fabric or wood. How often do you read to your child?” | “How often does your partner read to your child?”
 Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study



Less educated parents also read less to children between the ages of 2-8 than higher educated parents

Question: "Generally speaking, how often do you read to your son/daughter? Is it ...?" and "And how often does your partner read to the child? Is it ... | Basis: Surveyed mothers and fathers and their partners /in (n=500); numbers given in percent



* In 30 families, the education level of those surveyed and of the partner is too disparate to put them into one group.

** Given only to parents of children between the ages of 6-8 who currently don't read aloud

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2014 Reading Aloud Study

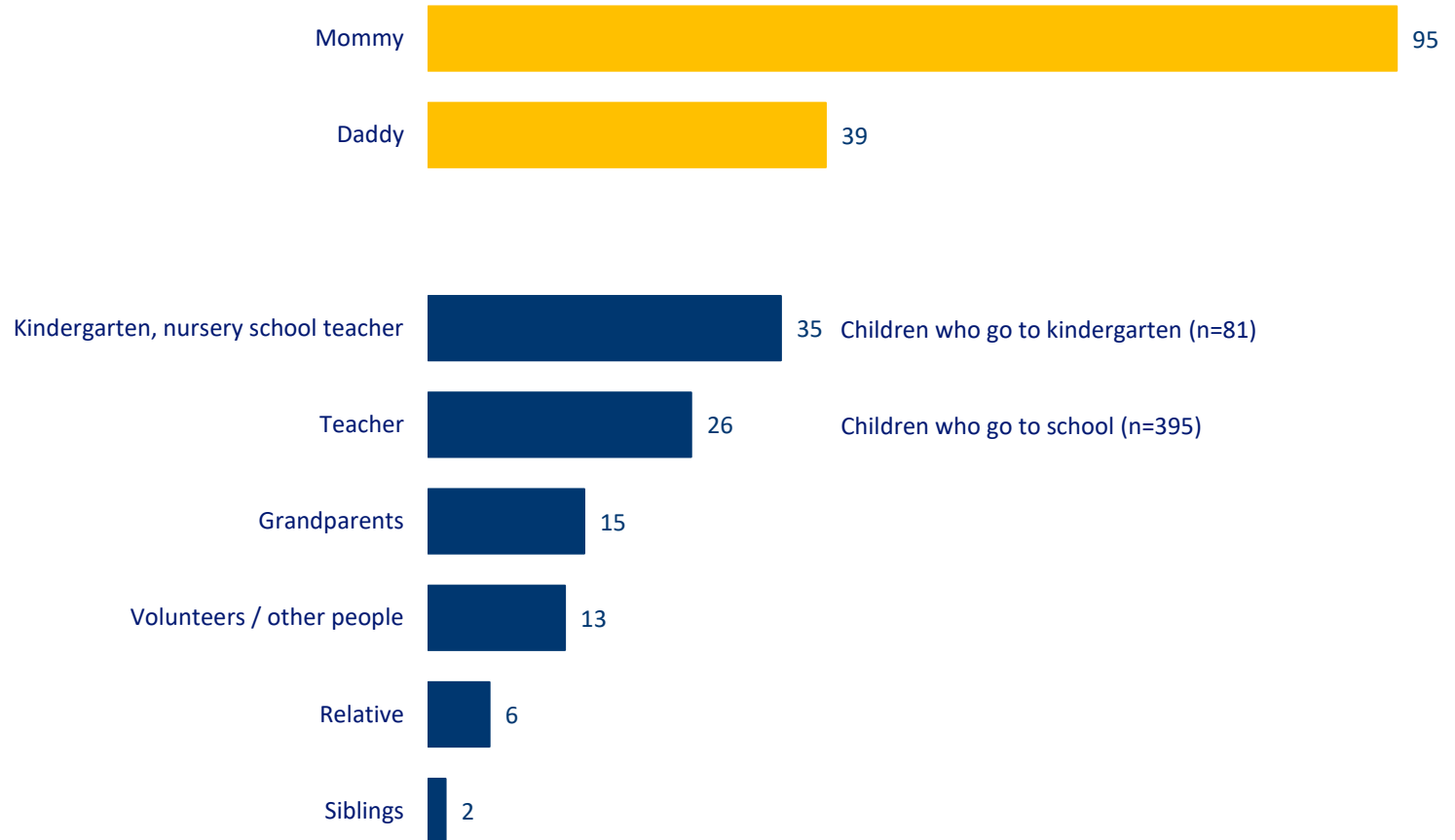


Reading aloud and promoting reading early on
is also important outside of the family!



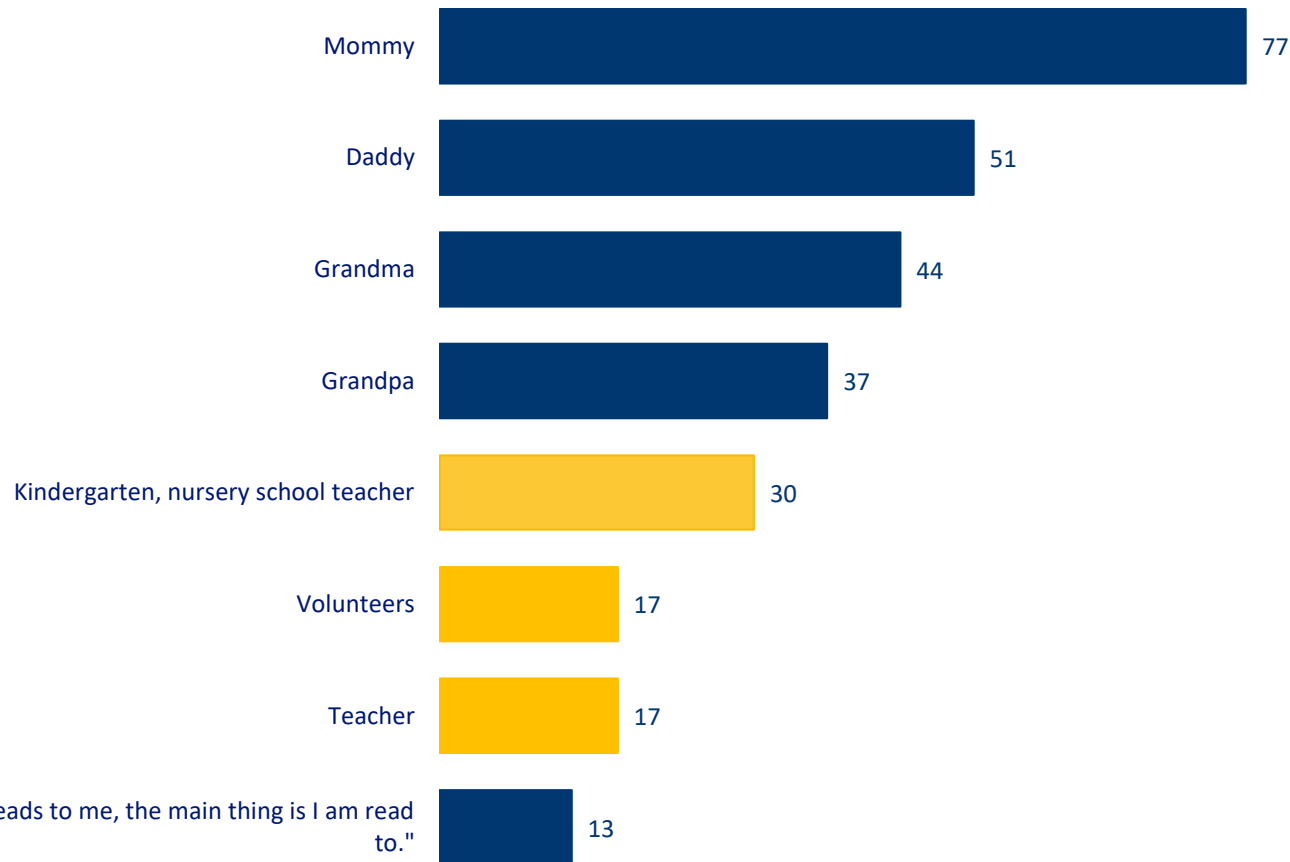
Although parents are the key reading aloud figures at home ...

Question for children who are/were read to (n=478): "Who has read to you recently?" | Numbers given in percent | Children who are currently being read to or who are currently not being read to but who were read to in the past | Responses are grouped



Children also like it if someone outside of the family reads aloud

Question for the children who are/were read to (n=491): "Who do you really want to read to you?" | Numbers given in percent | Children who are currently being read to or who are currently not being read to, but who were read to in the past | Only the named people form the basis | Responses below n=10 were not included



There are some things children like about being read to by someone outside of the family

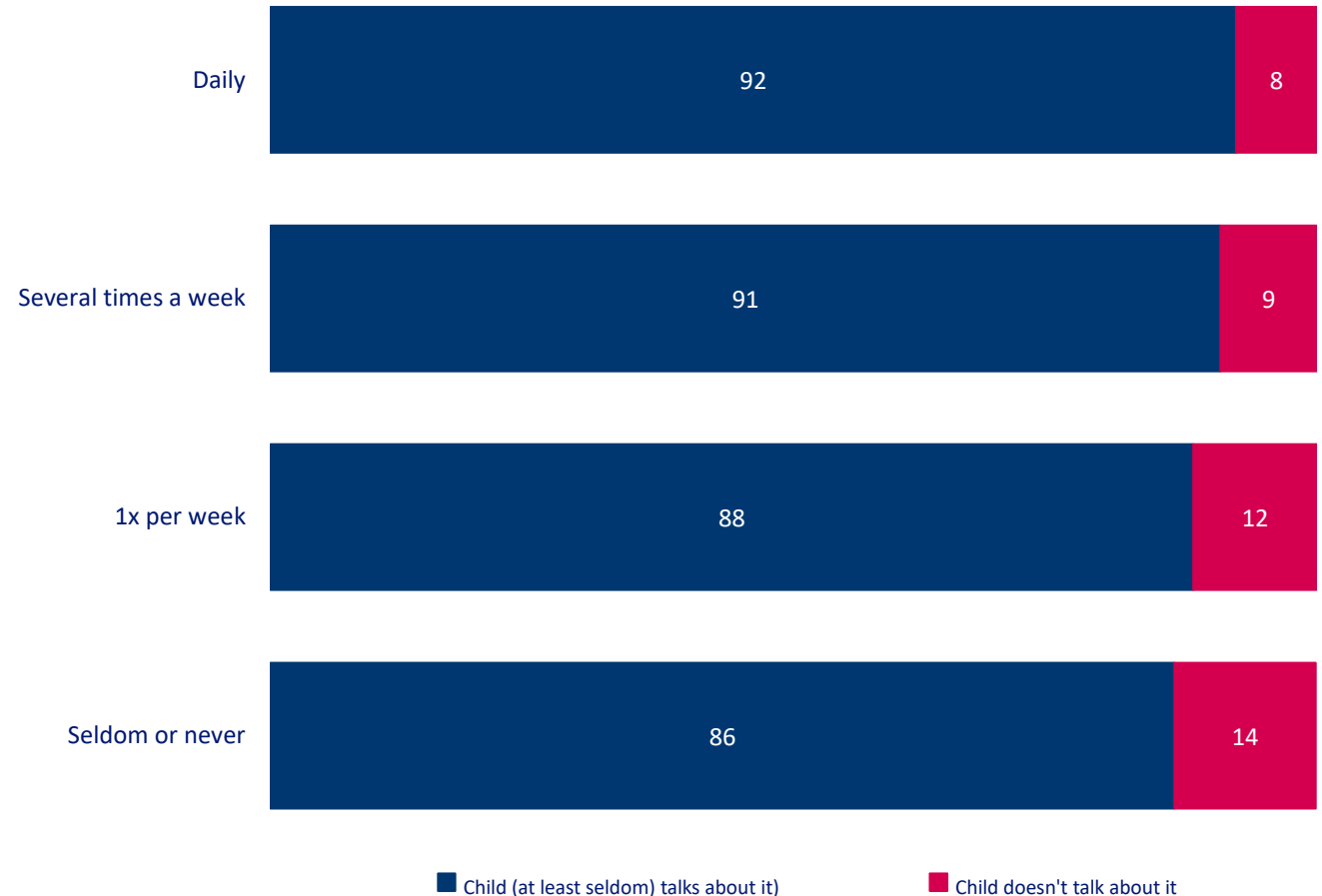
Question for children who are/were read to outside of the family (n=138): "If someone at nursery school or at school reads to you, things are a little different from home. There are other children around, someone might come in to read whom you don't know, and you often can't choose the story. Other children have told us a little about this. I am going to read to you what they said to us, and I'd like you to tell me how it is/was with you." | Numbers given in percent | Some of the responses



Reading aloud at nursery school / school is a topic of conversation at home, even in homes where there is little reading aloud

Question asked of mothers who know their child is read to outside of the family (n=334): "Does your child sometimes talk about being read to at locations other than at home such as at nursery school or school?" | Numbers given in percent

Reading aloud frequency at home



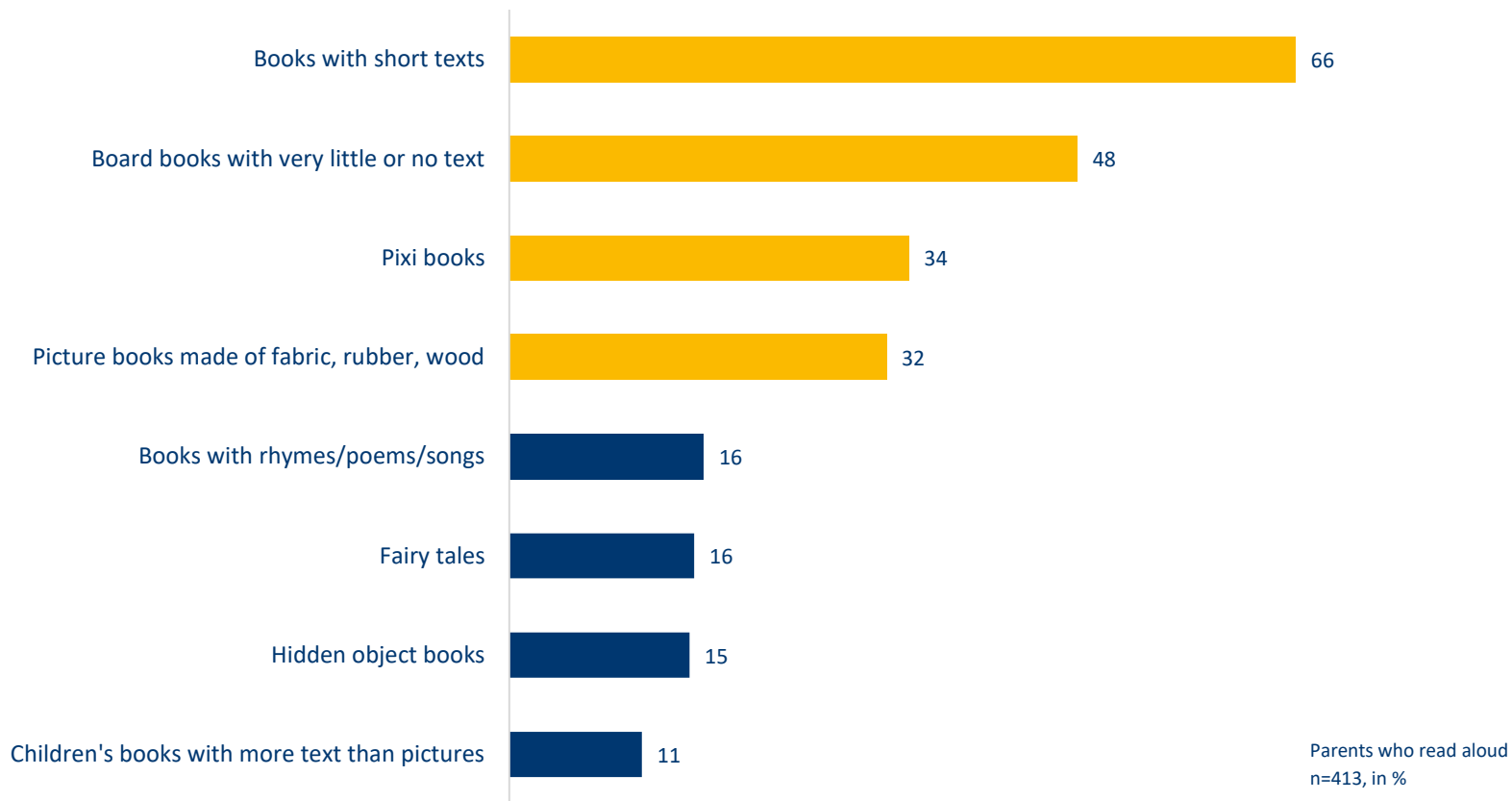
Source: German Reading Foundation | 2016 Reading Aloud Study



Reading aloud – What role do books play?



Parents who start reading to their children when they are young usually choose age-appropriate books



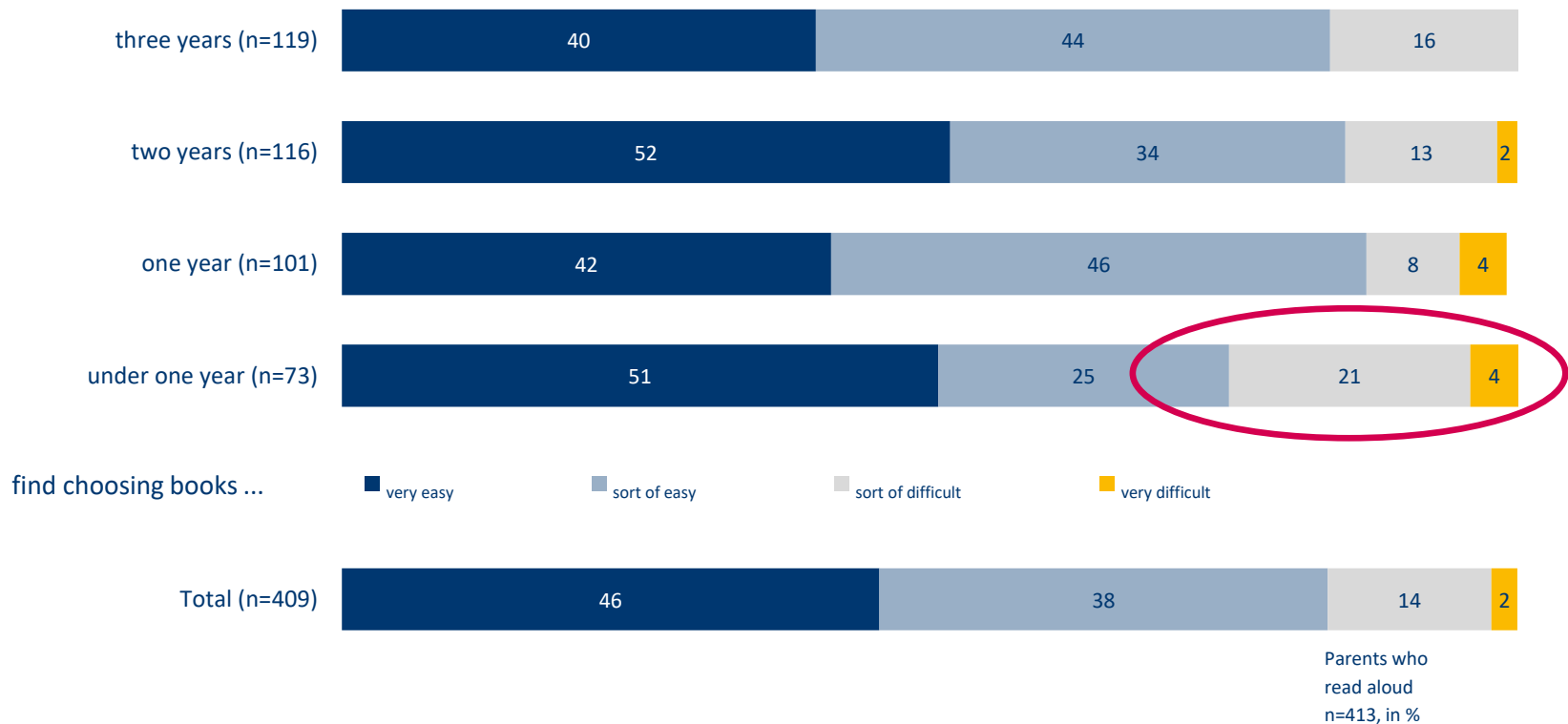
“How often do you look at the following things together with your child or read aloud to your child? I’ll name different types of books, and you tell me please with the help of this list how often you do so.” | Graph: often, very often | types of books with more than 10 % responses.

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study



Parents with very young children need extra assistance when choosing books

Families with children who are ...

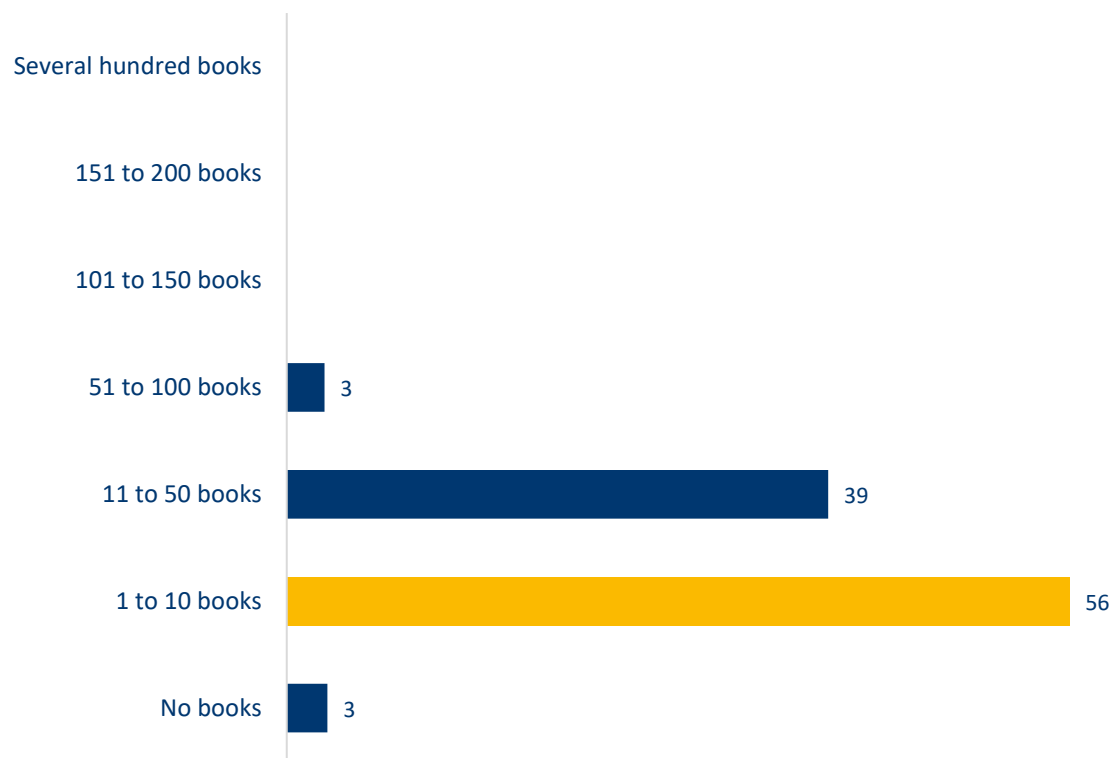


“When you are choosing new books for your child, how easy or hard is it for you to make an age-appropriate choice?”

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study



For more than every second child there are at most 10 children's books in the household



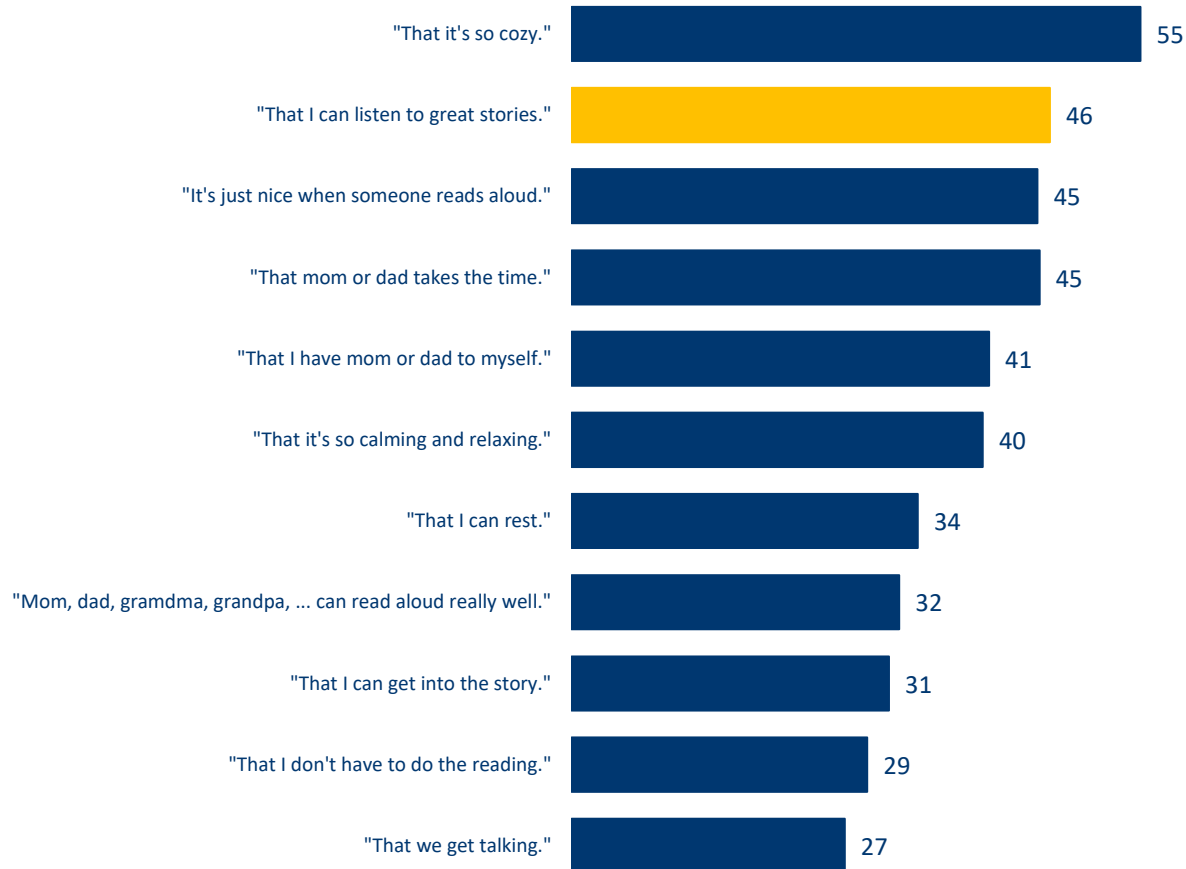
All parents
n=523, in %

“How many children's books or picture books are there in your home? This also includes Pixi books or similar smaller books.”
Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study



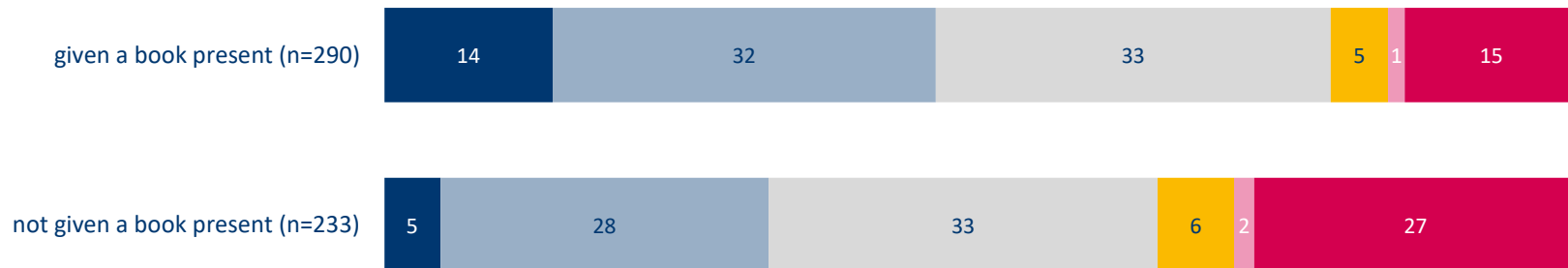
Stories make reading aloud very interesting for children

Question for children who are/were read to by their parents (n=491): "What do you/did you really like about being read to?" | Numbers given in percent | Sample of responses



The likelihood that parents start reading aloud early on increases if they are given book presents

Families, which were ...



read aloud ...

■ several times a day
 ■ once a day
 ■ several times a week
 ■ once a week
 ■ less than that
 ■ never



All parents
n=523, in %

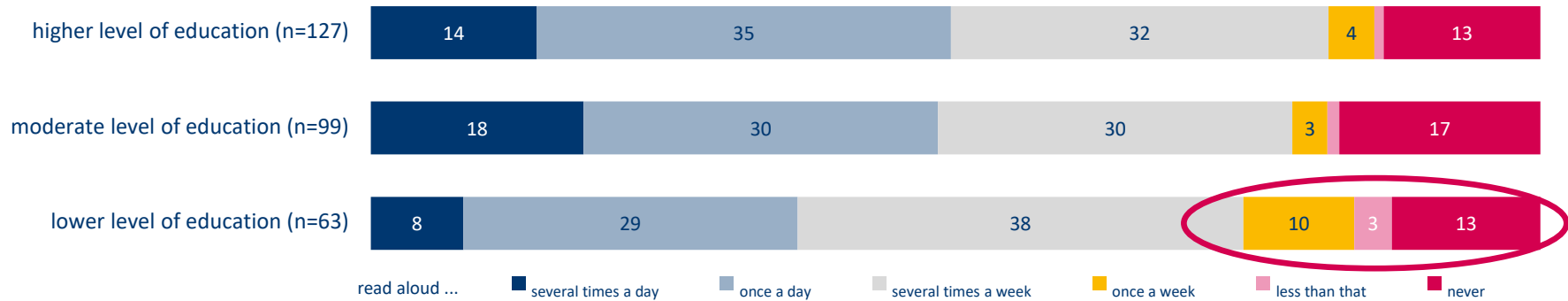
“When your first child was born, did you receive book gifts from family members, friends, or acquaintances?” | “Did you upon the birth of your child receive books from ministries or public offices, or from private companies like drugstores or diaper manufacturers, e.g., in a baby package, which you were able to register for online?”

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study

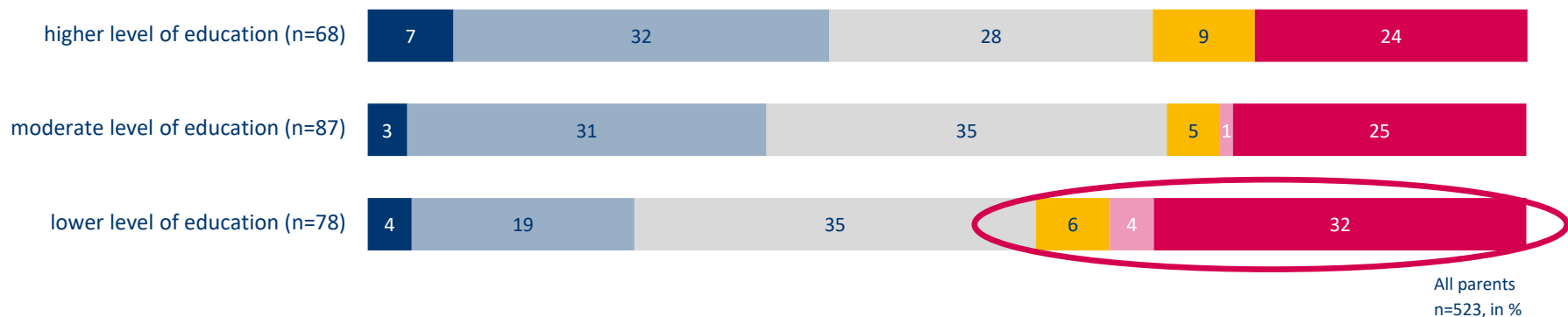


Children in households with little emphasis on education benefit enormously from book presents

Families, which received books with ...



Families, which did not receive books with ...



“When your first child was born, did you receive book gifts from family members, friends or acquaintances?” | “Did you upon the birth of your child receive books from ministries or public offices, or from private companies like drugstores or diaper manufacturers, e.g., in a baby package, which you were able to register for online?”

Source: German Reading Foundation | 2017 Reading Aloud Study

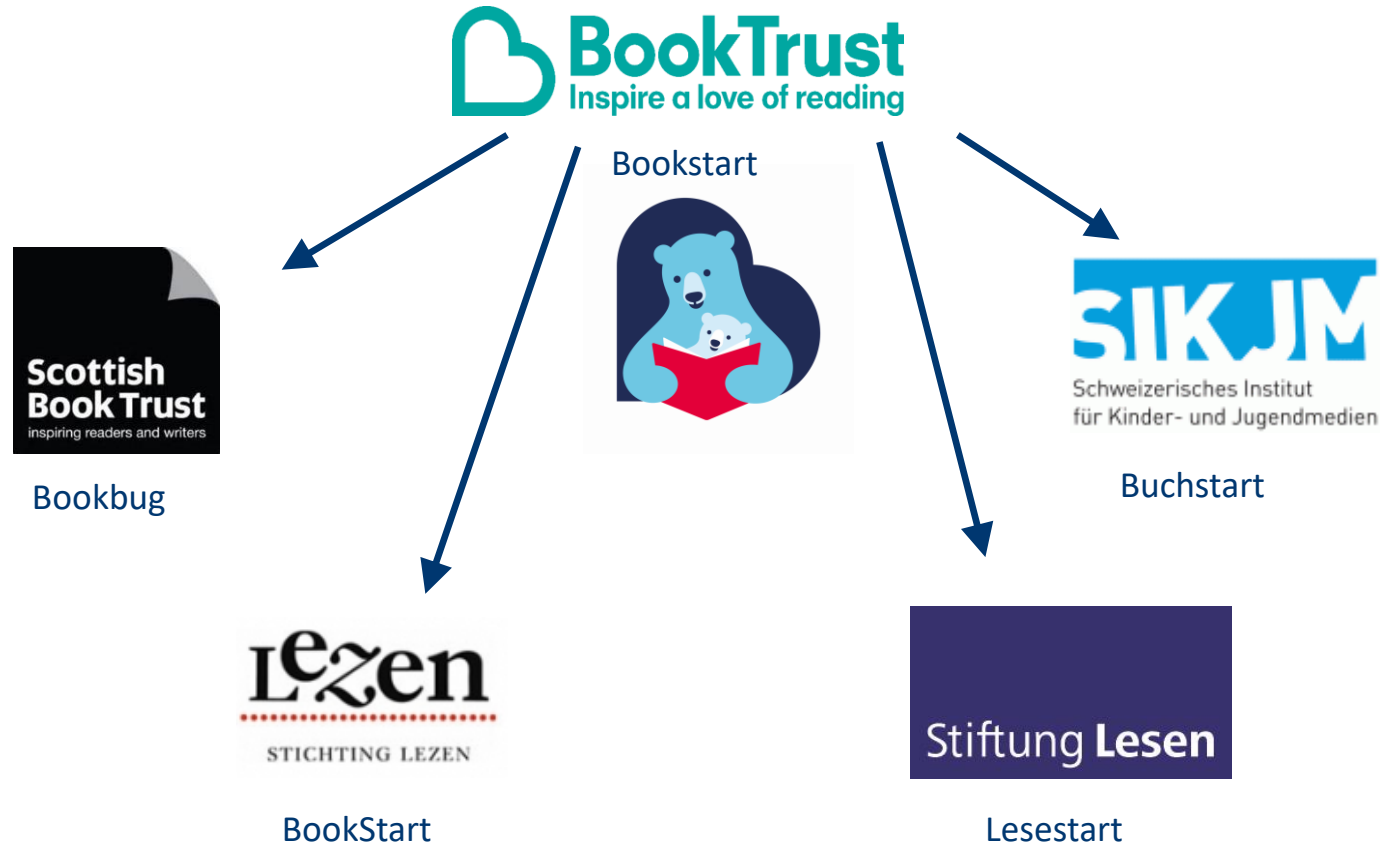


Bookstart and book gifting programs
to encourage children and families to read



Bookstart programs around the world like the British model

Here: EU Read members



Bookstart – The original program



Bookstart is the world's first national book gifting program

Bookstart was established in 1992 and is run by the reading charity BookTrust.

In 2017, we celebrated 25 years of Bookstart.



Created and administered by BookTrust

BookTrust transforms lives by getting children and families reading

What we do

- Encourage and enable parents and others to read regularly to their children
- Inspire children and adolescents to read for pleasure

Why we do it

- Help children do better at schools and in life
- Improve literacy and social mobility
- Strengthen the bond between parents and children

How we do it

- Build parents' confidence to read to their children
- Give carefully selected books to every child under the age of 5
- Give extra support to the most disadvantaged children and families
- Work with schools and other organizations to get more children reading

Bookstart

- Bookstart is built upon a simple premise
- Babies who have an early introduction to books benefit emotionally, socially, culturally, and educationally

A love of reading is a gift for life

Bookstart – Targeted products

Bookstart Baby	⇒ Families with children aged 0-12 months
Bookstart Treasure	⇒ Families with children aged 3-4 years
Bookstart Corner	⇒ Packs for children's centers
Booktouch	⇒ Blind or partially sighted children
Bookshine	⇒ Deaf children
Bookstart Star	⇒ Children who are disabled or delayed in development of fine motor skills



Lesestart – The German version of Bookstart



Program of the



and Stiftung Lesen for more educational justice right from the outset



Phase 1

Set 1 for one-year-old children

Paediatrician's office

3 x 400,000 Sets 1



Phase 2

Set 2 for three-year-old children

Library

3 x 400,000 Sets 2



Phase 3

Set 3 for children about to start school

Elementary school

3 x 800,000 Sets 3



Background

- Based on the successful British model “Bookstart“ (since 1992)
- 2006: Launch of “Lesestart“, as a pilot project in the Free State of Saxony
- 2007: The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg was the second federal state to launch “Buchstart – Kinder lieben Bücher“ [Children Love Books]
- 2008-2010: The first national “Lesestart“ initiative in cooperation with the print/paper industry, publishers, and charity organizations (800,000 sets distributed) took place.
- Across the country numerous local initiatives have launched individual projects under the “Lesestart“ umbrella.
- November 17, 2011: Start of the national initiative “Getting Started – Three Reading Milestones“.



Main target group: Children / families ...

- living in environments where there is less emphasis on education
- where parents seldom or don't read aloud

Lesestart aims at ...

- raising parents' awareness that reading aloud is an important investment in the development of their children
- motivating parents to become active in reading aloud



Lesestart for refugee children has been adapted from Lesestart – Three reading milestones and meets the needs of refugee centers

- The reading box for refugee centers:**
- Picture dictionaries
 - Picture books with little text, rhymes etc.
 - Multilingual books
 - Books that promote interaction
 - Comics / mangas
 - Games

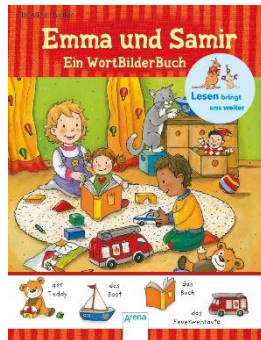


The package – A gift for the families

The bag

The book

The information



The concept

- Aim: To introduce refugee children and their families to the concept of reading aloud
- Providing material for a playful first approach to the German language
- Training multipliers who convey expertise about reading aloud to refugee children: motivating parents to read to their children!
- Needs assessment regarding the promotion of reading skills in refugee centers
- Connecting refugee centers to reading aloud initiatives in order to set up reading aloud sessions by volunteers
- Regular exchange with experts and stakeholders active in refugee aid

Information for parents about reading aloud and telling stories

Dear Parents,

Every child likes to read aloud and look at books. Children love stories. When they are read to, they learn to listen and speak well and read better later on.

With the book that comes in the Lesestart bag you and your child can discover daily life in Germany. When you look at it together, both of you can learn your first words in German.



Discovering daily life here



The book shows pictures from life in Germany:

At kindergarten, at lunch, outside or on the farm – there's lots to see on every page.

Talk with your child about the picture stories. A conversation will come about naturally on many experiences, friends, and the new environment.

Getting to know words

You can practise your first words in German together with the book.

The picture dictionary "Emma und Samir" shows you the German words for a few items in daily life. But you can just talk in your language about what you see and name the items pictured.



Reading aloud and storytelling



Reading aloud and telling stories are fun and important when learning to read!

When your child is read to, he/she learns to speak, express his/her feelings and concentrate. Reading aloud creates a closeness between the parent and child. This is the case in every language.

If you are not familiar with books and reading, don't worry. It's never too late to start reading aloud. This book invites everyone to tell stories.



You are receiving this set as part of the "Lesestart for Refugee Children" which is run by Stiftung Lesen on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research. More information about the program is available to you at www.lesestart-fuer-fluechtlingskinder.de.

Wishing you lots of fun as you read aloud and tell stories!



Initiating a growing network



Dr. Simone C. Ehmig
Stiftung Lesen
Roemerwall 40
D-55131 Mainz
+49 6131 28890 81
simone.ehmig@stiftunglesen.de

www.stiftunglesen.de

www.facebook.com/StiftungLesen

www.twitter.com/StiftungLesen

