

Impact of school closures on primary school children and their mothers

A longitudinal qualitative study



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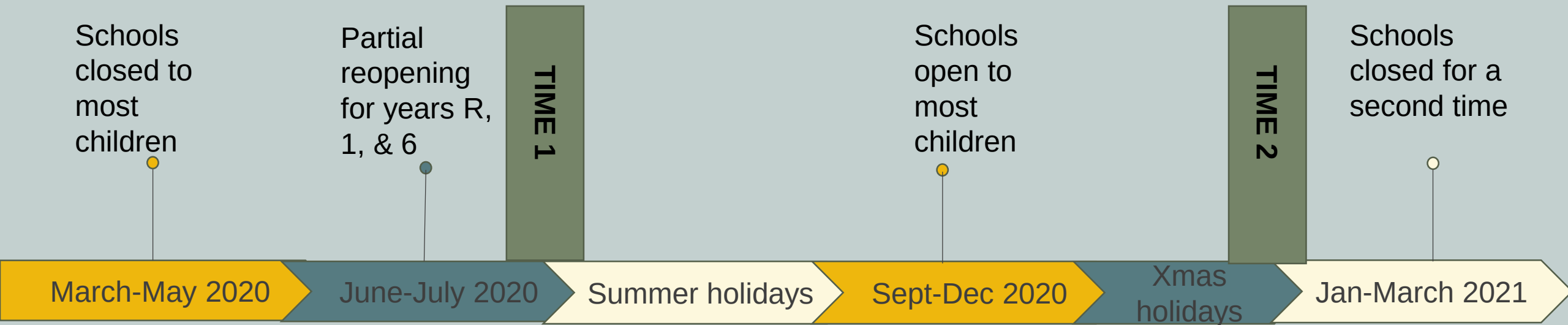


Background & Rationale

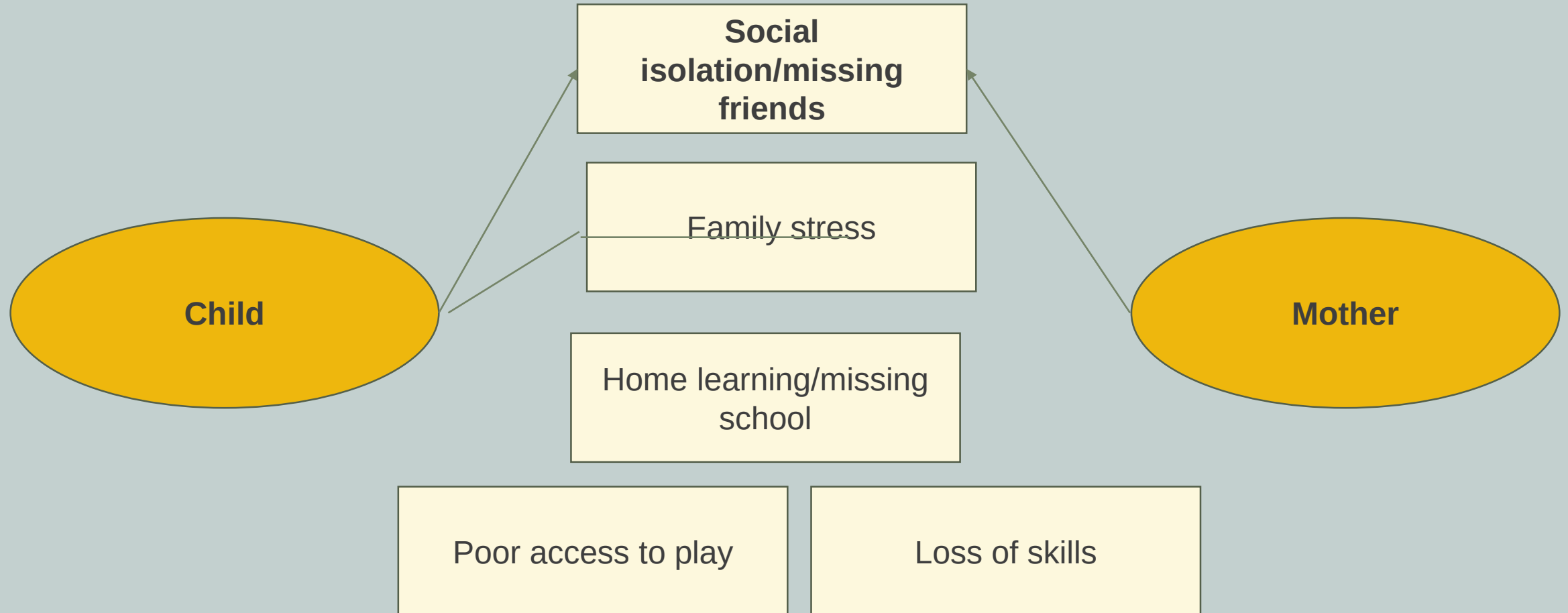
- Urgent need to understand the ways in which families adjusted *over time* to the sudden and drastic changes to education, family life and social relationships caused by national school closures.
- Two faces of lockdown: families reported benefits as well as disadvantages of school closures. Qualitative approaches able to capture fluid, nuanced, context-specific responses to change
- Dual perspective: child's voice frequently missing from COVID-focused research

Methodology

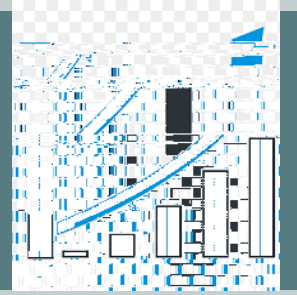
- 21 mothers and children in KS2 (Years 3-6 during academic year 20/21) took part in a semi-structured interview at two time-points.
 - T1: Impact of school closures on child's emotional, social, educational well-being
 - T2: Reflections on Autumn term and response to second period of school closures



Time 1: Negative impact of lockdown



Children's well-being over time



- The extent to which families experienced these positive and negatives influenced the extent to which school closures were associated with a decline in well-being.
- However, at T2 we observed strikingly similar well-being trends despite variability in family SES, parental availability, access to resources, and well-being prior to lockdown.

Most children (86%) experienced prolonged decline in mood, motivation, and/or behaviour during LD1 that completely (57%) or partially (19%) resolved with the return to school

“Frank's mood nose-dived so much that he was barely able to get off the sofa... it was absolutely heart-breaking. It was terrible.”

”[Every day] she will shriek, cry, tantrum, hit, kick.”

“It's like somebody came and lived here for lockdown and now I have my Ada back.”

“It's like the old Frank's back. You know, he's just been himself again”

Conclusions & Next Steps



1. Paper in preparation:

- ❖ RISK and PROTECTIVE factors for optimal family adjustment during lockdown over time
- ❖ Lessons learned for schools: home learning strategies and support for families at home
- ❖ Whole school approaches and interventions: what parents and children found useful during the autumn term

2. **Interview study with teachers** ($N = 20$) developed based on findings identified in parent/child interviews.