

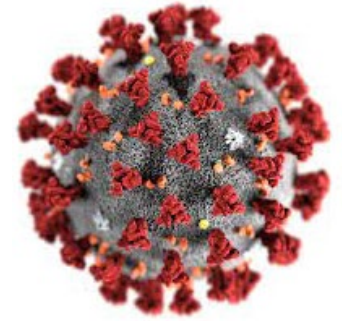
# THE IMPACT OF ROUTINES ON EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES IN CHILDREN AND ON PARENTAL ANXIETY DURING COVID-19

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# Background

- The Covid-19 pandemic
- Little data on younger children
- Protective factors
- Routine



# Hypotheses

- Keeping to routine may be associated with fewer emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Being a keyworker parent may be associated with fewer emotional and behavioural problems

# Methods

- Associations between
  - **Keeping to a routine and emotional and behavioural difficulties**
  - **Keeping to a routine and parental anxiety**
  - **Keyworker parent and emotional and behavioural difficulties**
- Carey Infant Temperament Questionnaire
- Revised Rutter Parent Scale for Preschool Children
- GAD7
- 289 parents completed questionnaires about their 411 children (average age 3.4 years)

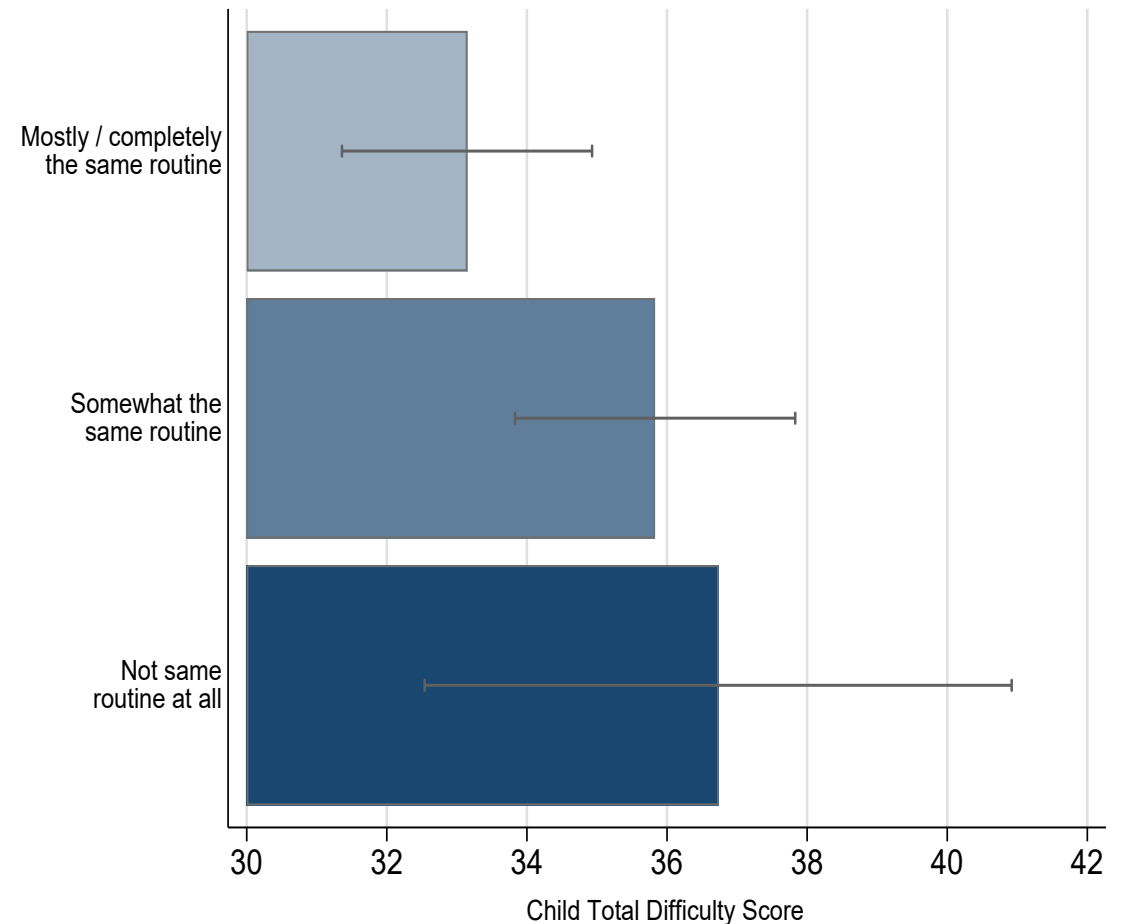
# Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)

- Ongoing population-based study
- In 2012, ALSPAC began recruiting and collecting data on the next generation G2
- Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the ALSPAC Ethics and Law committee and the Local Research Ethics Committees
- The study website contains details of all data available through a fully searchable data dictionary <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/researchers/our-data/>



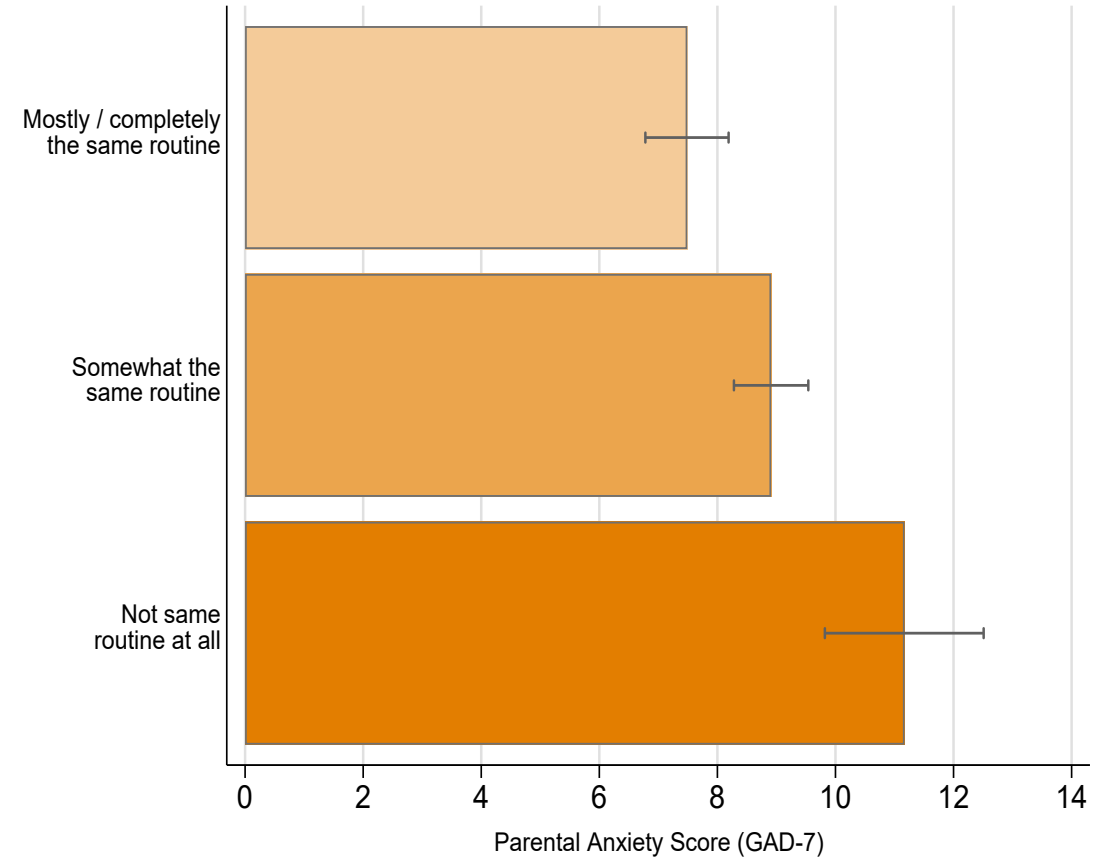
# Results: Routine and Emotional and behavioural difficulties in children

Routine	Linear regression coefficient for emotional difficulties score
Not at all	REF
A bit the same	-1.59 (95% CI -6.31 to 3.13) p=0.509
A lot / Completely the same	-5.01 (95% CI -10.02 to -0.12) p=0.045

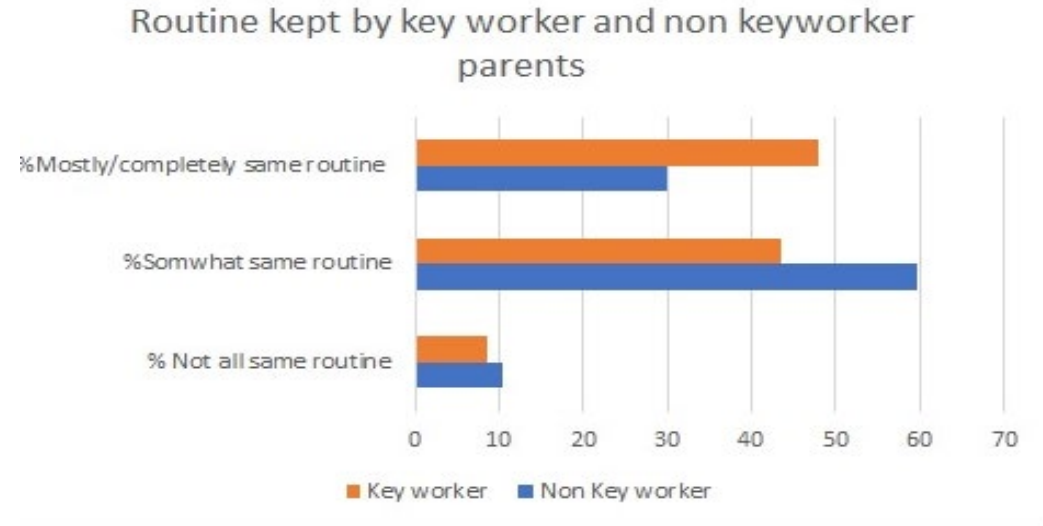


# Results: Routine and Parental anxiety

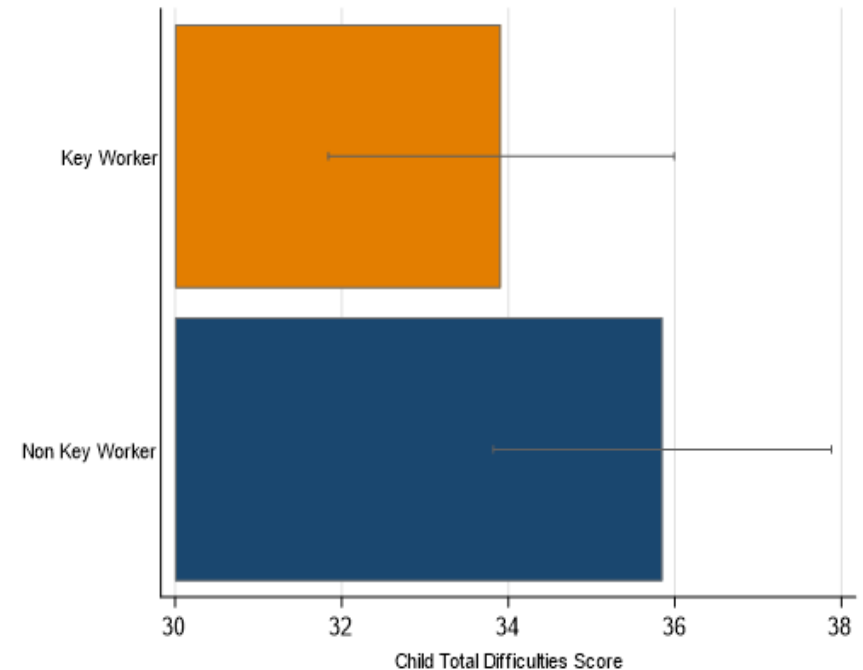
Routine	Linear regression coefficient for maternal anxiety score
Not at all	REF
A bit the same	-4.43 (95% CI -7.60 to -1.30) p=0.005
A lot/Completely the same	-4.30 (95% CI -7.5 to -1.10) p=0.009



# Results: Key Workers



	Linear regression coefficient for emotional difficulties score
Not Keyworker	REF
Keyworker	-3.09 (95% CI -6.26 to 0.08) p = 0.056







## Conclusions

- Maintaining **routine** may be **beneficial for children's emotional wellbeing** as well as **parental anxiety**, although it is also possible that lower parental anxiety levels made maintaining a routine easier
- Being the **child of a keyworker** parent during lockdown may have been **protective** for child emotional wellbeing

## Implications and Recommendations

- Evidence that routines could be important
- Both home and education environments are equally supported
- Parents should be supported with their mental health
- Education settings should continue with structured provision, should future school closures occur

# Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths**

- Large study
- Pre-pandemic data

- **Limitations**

- Population
- Causality
- 'Routines' compares current routine to pre-lockdown routine
- Parent reports
- Confounding

# Acknowledgements

- ALSPAC participants
- Co-Authors