From Discord to Distress: Exploring Parental Conflict and its Toll on Dutch Children's Well-being After Divorce.

Name: Milou de Zeeuw (7710704)
Master program: Social challenges, policies and interventions
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Supervisor: Janna Besamusca
Internship: National- and Children's Ombudsman, Marit Hopman
Words: 4980

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of divorce on children's well-being in the Netherlands, focusing on the differences between contested and uncontested divorces, as well as the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on the attachment theory and the risk-and-resilience perspective, we examined how divorce affects children across multiple levels and which perspective holds within the Dutch setting. Data analysis (n=7520) revealed that divorce generally has a negative impact on children's well-being, with contested divorces exacerbating these effects compared to uncontested divorces.

This aligns with the attachment theory, stating that the villainization within divorce leads to higher chances of insecure attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1982; Starr et al., 2014). This leads to higher chances of internalizing or externalizing problematic behaviour. Some resilience was observed within the divorced group but did not outweigh the traumatic impact, as described by the risk-and-resilience perspective (van der Wal et al., 2019). In conclusion, attachment theory stands most prominently within the Dutch setting, but some resilience, following the risk-and-resilience perspective, is noticeable. The findings underscore the importance of considering the timing and nature of divorce when assessing its impact on children's well-being. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced additional stressors and disruptions, further compromising the well-being of children from divorced families. Gender differences, girls reporting higher impact of divorce, were also observed in response to divorce, highlighting the need for gender-specific support strategies. Future research should explore underlying mechanisms driving gender differences and develop tailored interventions to address the specific needs of children affected by divorce. This study contributes to a better understanding of the complex interplay between divorce, children's well-being, societal factors, and the perspectives in the Dutch setting, emphasizing the importance of supportive family environments and policy interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of divorce on children.

Introduction

The consequences of divorce remain a significant theme in the lives of children of divorce as they grapple with recurrent loss and separation themes (Diamond et al., 2018; Miles & Servaty-Seib, 2010; Rootalu & Kasearu, 2016). In 2022 alone, 22,000 children in the Netherlands faced the consequences of their parents' divorce (Statistics Netherlands, n.d.). A 17-year-old respondent to a 2018 questionnaire highlighted the profound personal impact: "At the start of this year, my parents divorced. I have had much difficulty with and sometimes still do. This has influenced my view on the future a lot." Understanding these experiences is crucial for developing policies that effectively support children through such transitions.

A separation can be made when looking at divorce: contested and uncontested. While both indicate a separation, a contested divorce also includes a dynamic characterized by heightened aggression (Johnston, 1994). Research examining the effects of divorce on children often yields mixed outcomes (Brand et al., 2019; Castleton, 2019; Rootalu & Kasearu, 2016; Schaan et al., 2019; Shimkowski et al., 2018). These mixed findings underscore the need for nuanced policies to address the specific needs of children in different types of divorce situations.

The mixed findings have also led to different perspectives on the effect of divorce. Attachment theory states divorce can disrupt attachment bonds due to emotional distress and adjustment difficulties for the child, leading to insecure attachment (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991; Castleton, 2019; Nair & Murray, 2005; Sutton, 2019). Such insecure attachment increases the prevalence of externalising and internalising problematic behaviour (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012). Addressing these attachment issues through targeted support programs can help mitigate the negative impacts on children.

An alternative view is the risk-and-resilience perspective, which states that children can adapt and thrive in the face of adversity, showing better results in various aspects of life, such as emotional well-being, social interactions, and academic performance (Van der Wal et al., 2019). This perspective is supported by coping and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Promoting resilience in children through social support systems and coping strategies is vital for developing effective interventions.

To reconcile these disparities within perspectives, it is plausible that both perspectives may hold simultaneously: high-conflict parental divorce represents a risk for traumatic impacts, such as disrupting attachment bonds; however, it may also provide a context in which children demonstrate resilience (Masten, 2012). This research could enlighten which perspective stands regarding the effect of divorce on well-being and whether a contested divorce has a more significant impact on different aspects of the child-rearing environment than an uncontested divorce in the Netherlands. Such insights can inform more specific policies and interventions such as "Scheiden zonder Schade", which is aimed at supporting children through their parents' divorce.

Within the Dutch context, societal dynamics underwent significant shifts in terms of divorce between 2016 and 2022. The advent of COVID-19 has been shown to increase tensions from shared

custody arrangements and decreased contact with parents, exacerbated by health risks during transitions between homes and remote schooling, often leading to disagreements and heightened conflict (Goldberg, 2021; Pasteels, 2022). Understanding the moderation effect of COVID-19 on the relationship between divorce and children's well-being can further inform policies to support children through current and future crises.

This leads to the following research question: *How do contested and uncontested divorces affect children's well-being in the Netherlands?* Additionally, we question: *Is there a moderation effect in the experience children have had with COVID-19 on the relationship between divorce and the well-being of children?*

By addressing these questions, this research aims to provide insights that can enhance the support structures for children of divorce, ensuring policies are inclusive and effective in promoting their well-being. More specific policies towards helping children, including those from uncontested divorces, can improve the support system. Furthermore, this study can guide youth-related professionals, such as psychologists, social workers, and educators, by providing them with a clearer understanding of the causes behind the struggles of children from divorced families, allowing for better-focused support and intervention strategies.

Theoretical background

Well-being encompasses aspects such as decent housing, eating three nutritious meals a day, exercising enough, etc. (WHO, 2022). Due to its magnitude, the focus will be on the pedagogical facet of well-being. Bartels and Heiner (1994) and Kalverboer & Zijlstra (2006) also looked through such a pedagogical lens with a legal frame in mind to identify conditions for optimal development in relation to Article Three of the Children's Rights Convention, which child's best interest is of primary consideration (Art. 3) (United Nations, 1989), which they call the quality of the child-rearing environment. Combined with the self-noted well-being score, these are indicators of well-being (Zijlstra et al., 2023).

This child-rearing environment measures well-being with a multidimensional approach: family and society dimensions (Zijlstra et al., 2023). Within the family dimension, interaction within the family unit, like an affective atmosphere, is central. The society level includes interacting with peers, teachers, and adults besides their parents in situations like education. Infraction of these elements worsens the child's well-being (Zijlstra et al., 2023).

The mixed impact of divorce on children's lives is also prominent in these differentiating dimensions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Eyo, 2018; Amato, 1996; Hetherington, 2003). Divorce substantially impacts familial dynamics, such as parents' attitudes and the relationship between parent and child, leading to new family structures (Nazli, 2023). Possibly leading to problems of adjustment, psychological distress, vulnerability to abuse, animosity towards one parent and emotional imbalance (Eyo, 2018).

The adjustment to divorce extends beyond the family dimension (Emery & Forehand, 1996; Fagan & Churchill, 2012; Nazli, 2023). This potentially influences the child's stance towards parents and the family dynamics. Moreover, the broader societal dimension, such as teacher education, employment opportunities, joint custody, and the economic and social structure, indirectly affects children's divorce adjustment (Eyo, 2018; Fagan & Churchill, 2012).

Views on the impact of divorce on the well-being

Due to the complexity of both concepts, well-being and divorce, views on their relation are not singular either. Two divergent perspectives persist each drawing from distinct psychological theories and frameworks.

Ainsworth provided empirical support for Bowlby's propositions, stating that attachment styles develop in interaction between children and parents, impacting the child's emotional and social development (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1982). Leading to internal working models of attachment (IWMs), beliefs and expectations about the self (whether oneself is worthy of love and support) and close others (the sensitivity and responsiveness of the caregiver) (Bowlby, 1982; Bretherton, 1985; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Collins & Allard, 2001; River et al., 2022). These IWMs, which are

attachment styles, are generalized and carried forward, affecting emotions, behaviour, and functioning in close relationships across the lifespan.

Ainsworth identified four attachment styles (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Secure attachment develops when caregivers consistently respond to the children's needs, leading to a trusting relationship where the child feels safe to explore their environment. In contrast, insecure-avoidant attachment arises when caregivers are consistently unresponsive, causing the child to suppress their attachment needs and become self-reliant, while insecure-ambivalent/resistant attachment results from inconsistent caregiver responsiveness, leading to clingy behaviour and difficulty trusting the caregiver's availability (Ainsworth et al., 2015). Disorganized attachment is characterized by a lack of a coherent strategy for dealing with separation and reunion, often resulting in confused or contradictory behaviours toward a caregiver.

Attachment theory suggests that disruptions in early emotional bonds impact children's well-being (Ainsworth et al., 2015; Castleton, 2020; Nair & Murray, 2005; Sutton, 2018). Divorcing parents often experience heightened stress and challenges in mentalization, the capacity to understand the child's mental states and behaviours (Fonagy & Allison, 2012). This stress can make parents absent and emotionally unavailable (Midgley & Vrouva, 2012). Consequently, parents may struggle to empathize with their children's feelings, becoming colder, more withdrawn, and resistant (Sirvanli-Ozen, 2005). Simultaneously, children perceive unavailable caregivers as unsupportive and unresponsive to their needs for comfort and guidance during life changes like divorce (Bowlby, 1969; 1979; Van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2015).

In contrast, the risk-and-resilience perspective, as introduced by Van der Wal et al. (2019), offers a framework stating that despite experiencing the upheaval of divorce, many children demonstrate remarkable resilience, displaying adaptive coping mechanisms, and achieve positive outcomes. It highlights that children often report considerable levels of adjustment following divorce, alongside specific traumatic impacts associated with the experience (Van der Wal et al., 2019). Children may exhibit resilience by improving aspects like displaying enhanced emotional regulation skills, developing stronger coping strategies, and exhibiting greater independence as they navigate the changes in their family structure (Van der Wal et al., 2019). Moreover, they often demonstrate resilience by maintaining positive relationships with both parents, adapting to new family dynamics, and flourishing in various domains of their lives.

The coping and social learning theories support the risk-and-resilience perspective. Coping theory focuses on individuals' efforts to manage stress, highlighting strategies like seeking social support and problem-solving (Amato & Afifi, 2006; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Sandler et al., 2000). Social learning theory suggests children learn coping skills through observing and imitating parental behaviours (Bandura, 1977; Cummings & Davies, 2011).

Dutch setting

These theories help examine divorce's impact nothing that contested and uncontested divorces are fluid and not unanimously defined, that parents involved in a contested divorce are characterized by long-lasting conflict, hostility, blame criticism, and the inability to take responsibility for their part in the dispute (Anderson et al., 2010), and may even engage in domestic violence (Fotheringham et al., 2013). Contested divorces tend to exacerbate the negative consequences experienced by children, leading to greater psychological and emotional distress compared to uncontested, but research on this is at variance (Garriga & Pennoni, 2022; Kalmijn, 2015; Kleinsorge & Covitz, 2012; Kumar, 2022; Sorek, 2019).

The attachment theory describes the villainization that takes place (Starr et al., 2014), which can be defined as parents displaying an outward expression of anger, hate, jealousy, and negative opinions of the child's other parent, aligning with our definition of a contested divorce, alters and impacts the IWMs of the child leading to an aggressive and hostile caregiver representation and insecure attachment (Zeanah & Zeanah, 1989 and Heider 2020). Therefore, more villainization, thus a more aggressive and contested divorce, is expected to demonstrate worse than an uncontested divorce.

The risk-and-resilience perspective looks at this differently; children are seen as active agents who adapt to environmental challenges and shape their own adjustment (Frankenhuis et al., 2016; Lamb, 2012; Van der Wal et al., 2019). The children's experience of the divorce-specific experience is partly independent of their experiences in other domains (Hetherington, 2006; Masten & Narayan, 2012; Miller et al., 2011; Tein et al., 2000). This domain spill-over implies the adverse experience in one domain (e.g. divorce, poverty) may not create adverse performance across other domains such as social relationships, job performance and school performance. This ability to perform in other domains can be perceived as the resilience and adjustment of the child (Van der Wal et al., 2019). Thus, children who experienced a contested divorce, following this theory, should perform similarly to children who experienced an uncontested divorce.

With both perspectives opposing each other regarding the expectations of the impact of a contested and uncontested divorce, we can conclude that only one can be prominently present in the Dutch setting. Therefore, we hypothesise:

H_{1A}: *When the attachment theory holds in the Dutch setting, we expect to see more adverse effects on children who experienced a contested divorce when compared to children who experienced an uncontested divorce on their well-being.*

H_{1B}: *When the risk-and-resilience perspective holds in the Dutch setting, we expect to see an equal effect of divorce on children who experienced a contested or uncontested divorce on their well-being.*

COVID-19

The Dutch setting has been impacted in recent years due to COVID-19. While there were programs of the government trying to support families going through divorce, like "Scheiden zonder Schade", which aims to minimize the impact of divorce on children, the pandemic laid new struggles for children in divorce settings (Ministry of Justice and Security & Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2022). COVID-19 exacerbated tensions in shared custody arrangements, increased financial strain, disrupted routines and remote schooling, and introduced health risks during home transitions, leading to disruption of family dynamics and heightened stressors within families (Apriasi et al., 2021; Goldberg, 2021; Pasteels, 2012; Van der Wal et al., 2019). The IWM of children are expected to be more negatively impacted due to this disruption of family dynamics and heightened stressors in an already impactful setting of divorce. Which increases the possibility of an insecure attachment and has a negative impact on the well-being of children. The risk-and-resilience perspectives view the impact of COVID-19 similarly. The spill-over effect was hindered by the lockdown, which prevented children from going to school and meeting peers and other important figures in their lives. Impacting the presence and cultivation of resilience overturning the possibility to outweigh the traumatic impact of divorce, leading to a more negative outcome on the well-being of children. Therefore, we hypothesise the following:

H_2: COVID-19 negatively impacted the effects of divorce on children's well-being.

<div align="center">**Methods**</div>

<div align="center">**Study Design**</div>

We employed a repeated cross-sectional design using data from the Children's Rights Monitor in the Netherlands (translated from Dutch: de Kinderrechtentour), spanning four waves of data collection from 2016 to 2022. This initiative, conducted by the Dutch Children's Ombudsman, aimed to provide a snapshot of children's well-being over time and identify potential areas for improvement. However, it is susceptible to self-selection bias, as participants do not fully represent the broader population due to systematic differences between participants and nonparticipants. Quantitative methods were chosen to systematically measure and analyse the well-being of a large sample of children over multiple time points, allowing for statistical comparisons and generalisations about trends and differences across groups.

Participant Sample and Recruitment

The sample consisted of children aged 8 to 18 residing in the Netherlands, recruited primarily through online platforms and youth organisations. The sample was compared to demographic data from Statistics Netherlands to ensure representativeness and recruitment strategies were adjusted accordingly. The inclusion criteria were all children aged 8 to 18 living in the Netherlands, and the exclusion criteria were children from the Caribbean Netherlands and questionnaires with missing data. The majority (5603 children) did not experience a divorce, 1210 did experience an uncontested divorce, and 707 experienced a contested divorce.

Study Variables and Operationalization

For the study variables, the main dependent variable consisted of the well-being score and the Best Interest of the Child Total score (BIC). The well-being score, measured on a scale from 0 to 10, reflects the children's overall well-being. Zero is interpreted as the worst well-being experience, and a ten is the best score of well-being. This scale is familiar to Dutch children as it is commonly used in education. The BIC measured the child's rearing environment quality based on 14 conditions across family and societal dimensions (See Table 1) (Zijlstra et al., 2023). Responses were dichotomised to 'sufficient' (when respondents answered good/satisfactory) or 'insufficient' (when respondents answered mediocre/unsatisfactory). The dichotomisation was done to simplify the analysis, possibly due to sample size restrictions or conceptual reasons, such as no significant difference between 'good' and 'satisfactory.'

Table 1

The distribution of fourteen conditions on the two dimensions and their translation into questions

Dimensions	Conditions	Questions
Family	Adequate physical care	I think the care I get is…
	The safe, direct physical environment	I think the level of safety in my house is….
	Affective atmosphere	I think the love and attention I get from my parents or educators is …
	Supportive, flexible childrearing structure	I think the structure, rules and support we have at home are…
	Adequate examples from parents	I think the example of my parents of educators set for me is…
	Interest in the child	I think the interest my parents or educators take in what I find important is…
	Continuity in upbringing conditions	I think my upbringing is…
Society	Safe, wide physical environment	I think the level of safety in my neighbourhood is…
	Respect	I think the respect I get is…
	Social network	I think the help I get from other adults is…
	Education	I think going to school and my free time are…
	Contact with peers	I think my contact with friends is…
	Adequate examples in society	I think the example the people I know set for me is…
	Stability in life circumstances, future perspective.	I think the level of stability and security in my life is…

Note. The questions were originally in Dutch. To hint at their meaning, multiple examples were provided for each question. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The independent variable of interest was divorcing status, coded as 'not divorced,' 'uncontested divorce,' and 'contested divorce.' Uncontested divorces were identified based on the child's living situation: 'co-parenting,' 'living only with their mother,' or 'living only with their father.' Contested divorces included situations where children answered that parents were unable to interact normally. The survey didn't directly ask if the parents were divorced and whether this was a contested or uncontested divorce. Due to the possibility of other group, we opted for a stricter alpha for the p-value with $p<0.01$.

Control variables included age and gender. Age was treated as a continuous variable, and gender was a categorical variable (male, female, other). Additionally, the study examined the experience of COVID-19 as a moderator. This was evaluated in 2020 and 2022. In 2020, children could choose four positive options (scored +1) and four negative options (scored -1). In 2022, there was one positive option (scored +1) and six negative options (scored -1). These were added into a total score indicating the overall impact of COVID-19 on the child.

Data management procedures included anonymising responses and securely storing data following GDPR guidelines. The study obtained ethical approval from the UU-SER committee.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and RStudio. Initially, an ANOVA with bootstrapping was selected; however, it did not meet the assumptions of normality, multicollinearity, and heterogeneity (see Figure 1). Consequently, we opted for a nonparametric approach. Given the independent sample, participants could only fall within one divorce category; we employed a Kruskal-Wallis test instead of Friedman's ANOVA:

Figure 1.
Distribution of the residuals.

$$H_2 = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \Sigma_{j=1}^{3} \frac{R_j^2}{n_j} - 2(N+1)$$

With H_2 representing the Kruskall-Wallis test statistic of the relationship between divorce and well-being. N is the total number of observations across all groups for divorce status. R_j is the sum of ranks for group j. n_j is the number of observations in group j (for $j = 1, 2, 3$, representing not divorced, uncontested divorce, and contested divorce groups, respectively).

This test shows a significant difference in median well-being scores among at least one pair of groups when $p < 0.01$. To measure the effect size, we used Cliff's delta (δ), calculated as:

$$\delta = \frac{N_1 - N_2}{N_1 \times N_2}$$

Cliff's delta ranges from -1 to 1, with values close to 0 indicating no difference between the two groups. Effect sizes are categorized as small (0 to 0.147), medium (0.147 to 0.33), and large (greater than 0.33). Positive values indicate that group 1 tends to have higher well-being scores than group 2, while negative values suggest the opposite.

To measure the moderation of the COVID-19 experience on the relationship between divorce and children's well-being, we used the PROCESS macro for SPSS with model 1. Analyses were conducted separately for 2020 and 2022, with children's well-being (BIC score and life satisfaction grade) as the dependent variable, divorce type as the independent variable, and COVID-19 experience as the moderator. By looking at the interaction effect, the input of COVID-19 was estimated.

Additional controls for age and gender were implemented to account for potential confounding variables and enhance internal validity. This adjustment addresses potential biases and ensures a more accurate representation of the construct under investigation. Consequently, this approach strengthens internal validity by minimising biases and improving the precision of the findings. Within this analysis, a Kruskal-Wallis test was performed between divorce and well-being while being split for age or gender. When the Kruskal-Wallis test results showed a significant chi-squared value, indicating differences between age groups or gender groups, the magnitude of the effects was elucidated with Cliff's delta effects.
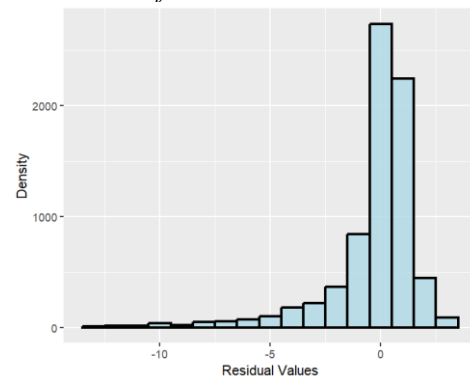
Results

Descriptive statistics

In this section, we present the results on the impact of divorce on children's well-being. We begin with descriptive statistics across different divorce statuses (see Table 1), followed by hypothesis testing and the moderation effects of COVID-19.

Most children belonged to families who did not divorce, with proportions ranging from 71.17% to 78.56% over the study period (for all statistics, see Table 2). These children consistently exhibited well-being scores ranging from 7.60 to 8.33 and BIC scores, indicating the child-rearing environment, ranging from 12.89 to 13.06. The average age of children from married parents varied across the years, reflecting demographic shifts.

Children from families undergoing contested divorces fluctuated slightly from 10.17% to 7.75%. Within this group, average well-being scores ranged from 6.32 to 6.98, indicating a consistent challenge to the well-being of these children when compared to the non-divorced children. Correspondingly, the average BIC scores were worse in the non-divorced group, ranging from 10.45 to 11.51. Gender distribution within this cohort fluctuated across the years, with shifts observed in the proportions of boys and girls. Notably, the average age of children from contested divorces decreased over time, suggesting a younger demographic in recent years. This could be due to differentiating recruitment strategies in different years.

Children from families experiencing uncontested divorces exhibited relatively stable proportions, ranging from 16.34% in 2016 to 17.55% in 2022. Compared to contested divorces, children from uncontested divorces generally demonstrated higher average well-being scores, ranging from 7.16 to 8.02. Similarly, BIC scores within this group ranged from 11.96 to 13.11, indicating comparatively better child-rearing environments than the contested divorced group. The average age of children from uncontested divorces varied across the years but lacked a discernible pattern.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics across different divorce statuses between 2016 and 2022.

Type of divorce	Year	2016	2018	2020	2022	2016 t/m 2022
Uncontested divorce	Proportion	16,34%	15,26%	14,92%	17,55%	16,09%
	Age	15,04	12,32	13,24	11,38	12,73
		b: 20,2%	b: 41,9%	b: 40,2%	b: 46,6%	b: 39,0%
	Gender	g: 79,4%	g: 57,7%	g: 57,7%	g: 51,2%	g: 59,6%
		o: 0,4%	o: 0,04%	o: 2,1%	o: 2,2%	o: 1,4%
	BIC	12,47	11,96	13,11	11,9	12,31
	Well-being score	7,16	7,95	7,82	8,02	7,8
Not divorced	Proportion	72,90%	71,17%	78,56%	74,69%	74,51%
	Age	14,94	11,96	13,14	10,96	12,51
		b:15,6%	b: 44,5%	b: 34,1%	b: 48,3%	b: 37,6%
	Gender	g: 83,8%	g: 54,5%	g: 65,3%	g: 49,6%	g: 61,2%
		o:.0,6%	o: 1,0%	o: 0,5%	o: 2,1%	o: 1,1%
	BIC	12,89	12,29	13,06	12,03	12,52
	Well-being score	7,6	8,35	7,97	8,33	8,11
Contested divorce	Proportion	10,17%	13,60%	6,51%	7,75%	9,40%
	Age	14,88	13,51	13,55	11,53	13,3
		b:12,7%	b: 30,6%	b: 33,2%	b: 50,0%	b: 32,2%
	Gender	g: 85,3%	g: 66,9%	g: 64,6%	g: 45,6%	g: 64,9%
		o: 2,0%	o: 2,4%	o: 2,4%	o: 4,4%	o: 2,8%
	BIC	10,78	10,74	11,51	10,45	10,81
	Well-being score	6,32	6,92	6,81	6,98	6,79

Note. With Gender: b= boy, g= girl, o=other.

Attachment or risk-and-resilience perspective

To answer whether attachment or risk-and-resilience perspective stands in the Dutch setting concerning the relation between divorce and the well-being of children, whether differentiation can be found between the groups when looking at the well-being scores. The analysis of well-being, a composite measure incorporating both well-being and BIC scores, revealed significant differences among groups, as confirmed by the Kruskal-Wallis test ($\chi^2 = 310.24$, p<0.001 and $\chi^2 = 316,413$, p<0.001) (see column 2016 until 2022 in Table 3). This statistical approach discerns disparities among groups, with lower p-values indicating distinction. Complementing this analysis, Cliff's delta (δ) offers insights into the magnitude and direction of these differences. Negative δ values denote adverse impacts on well-being, with larger magnitudes signifying more pronounced effects.

Table 3

Results of Kruskall-Wallis analyses and Cliff's delta (δ)

	BIC-score				
Year	2016	2018	2020	2022	2016 until 2022
Kruskall-Wallis effect	$\chi^2 = 67.238$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 152.71$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 72.457$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 74.575$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 316,413$ p<0.001
Contested vs. uncontested divorce	δ=-0.26	δ=-0.30	δ=-0.37	δ=-0.25	δ=-0.30
Contested vs. not divorce(d)	δ=-0.36	δ=-0.42	δ=-0.39	δ=-0.33	δ=-0.38
Uncontested vs. not divorce(d)	δ=-0.12	δ=-0,14	δ=-0.04	δ=-0.10	δ=-0.10
	Well-being score				
Year	2016	2018	2020	2022	2016 until 2022
Kruskall-Wallis effect	$\chi^2 = 75.486$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 143.28$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 60.205$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 =56.026$ p<0.001	$\chi^2 = 310.24$ p<0.001
Contested vs. uncontested divorce	δ=-0.26	δ=-0.30	δ=-0.36	δ=-0.25	δ=-0.29
Contested vs. not divorce(d)	δ=-0.36	δ=-0.42	δ=-0.39	δ=-0.33	δ=-0.38
Uncontested vs. not divorce(d)	δ=-0.12	δ=-0.14	δ=-0.04	δ=-0.10	δ=-0.11

Note. Significant for p<0.01; δ indicating a Cliff's delta.

The well-being and BIC scores exhibited similar trends (see Figure 2). The comparison of contested divorces with the not-divorced group yielded substantial negative effects (well-being score: δ=-0.29, p<0001; BIC-score: δ=-0.30, p<0.001). Similarly, children from uncontested divorces exhibited a smaller yet significant negative impact compared to the not-divorced group (well-being score: δ=-0.11, p<0001; BIC-score: δ=-0.10, p<0.001). The contested divorced group performs substantially worse than the not-contested divorced group. This difference is smaller with uncontested divorces but still negatively influences well-being.

Figure 2

Course of the well-being and BIC-scores through the years
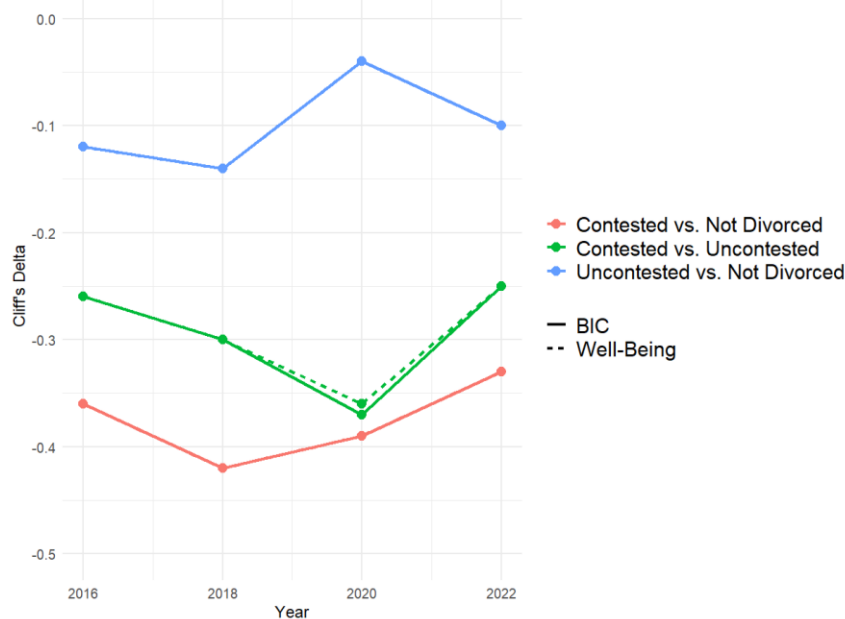
Over the years, contested divorces consistently demonstrated larger negative effects than uncontested ones (well-being and BIC-score: δ=-0.38, p<0.001). The well-being of children of contested divorces is more negatively impacted than children of uncontested divorces. These findings underscore the differences and are thus more in line with the attachment theory than the risk-and-resilience perspective in the Dutch setting.

When assessing the theories, a focus can also be put on how divorce affects specific aspects of children's well-being (See Table 4 and Figure 3). Four aspects stand out in their magnitude: 'affective atmosphere', 'adequate examples from parents', 'continuity in upbringing conditions' and 'stability in life circumstances'. These four aspects align with the attachment theory, which states villainization, parents displaying outward negative emotions regarding the other parent, and altering the IWMs of the child, leading to an insecure attachment.
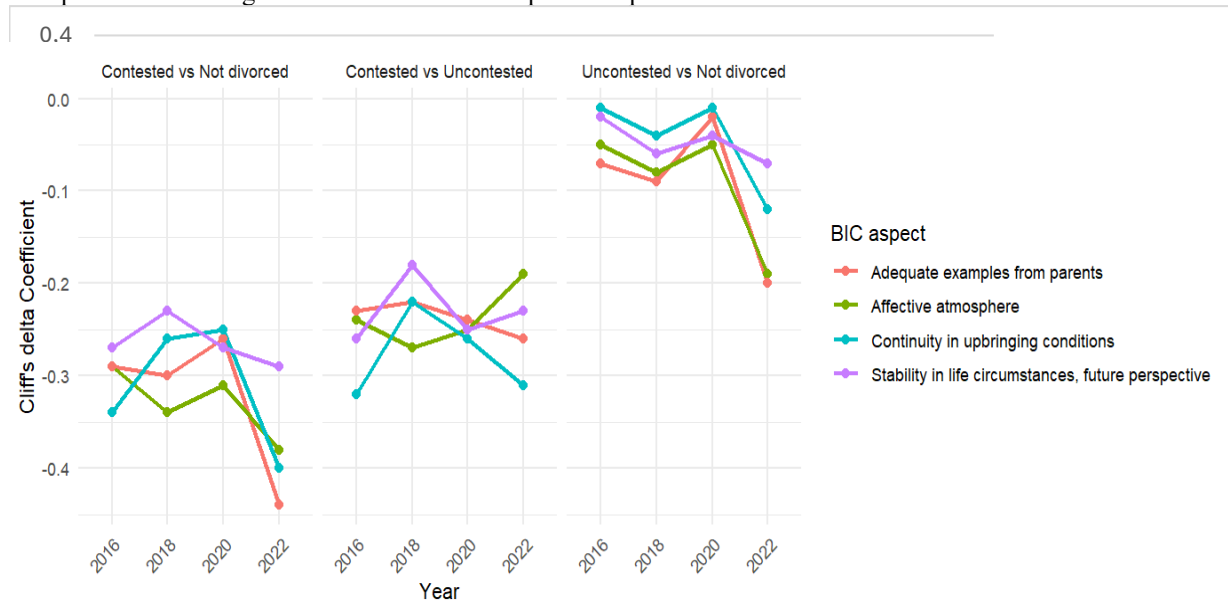
Table 4

The largest effect of divorce on aspects of the BIC-model.

Contested divorce vs Not divorced				
	Affective atmosphere	Adequate examples from parents	Continuity in upbringing conditions	Stability in life circumstances, future perspective.
2016	-0,29	-0,34	-0,31	-0,38
2018	-0,29	-0,30	-0,26	-0,44
2020	-0,34	-0,26	-0,25	-0,40
2022	-0,27	-0,23	-0,27	-0,29
2016 t/m 2022	-0,29	-0,28	-0,26	-0,38
Contested divorce vs Uncontested divorce				
	Affective atmosphere	Adequate examples from parents	Continuity in upbringing conditions	Stability in life circumstances, future perspective.
2016	-0,24	-0,27	-0,25	-0,19
2018	-0,23	-0,22	-0,24	-0,26
2020	-0,32	-0,22	-0,26	-0,31
2022	-0,26	-0,18	-0,25	-0,23
2016 t/m 2022	-0,26	-0,22	-0,24	-0,26
Uncontested divorce vs Not divorced				
	Affective atmosphere	Adequate examples from parents	Continuity in upbringing conditions	Stability in life circumstances, future perspective.
2016	-0,05	-0,08	-0,05	-0,19
2018	-0,07	-0,09	-0,02	-0,20
2020	-0,01	-0,04	-0,01	-0,12
2022	-0,02	-0,06	-0,04	-0,07
2016 t/m 2022	-0.04	-0.07	-0.02	-0.14

Note. The extended table with the other aspects can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 3

Comparison of the largest effects of divorce on specific aspects of the BIC-model

Note. Extended table with values is listed in Appendix B

The risk-and-resilience perspective, these aspects are expected to indicate the domain spill-over since they represent situations in other domains where children can thrive: 'contact with peers', 'education', and 'social networks'. A smaller negative effect indicates smaller differences between the groups in the aspects of 'education' and 'contact with peers' but not with 'social network' (see Figure 4 and Appendix B). This could be interpreted as some resilience being gained by children of divorced parents with peers and within their school setting but not from a wider social network. The differences between these and the other aspects are rather small, hinting at minimal development of the resilience built within divorce. This could lead to the traumatic effect of divorce, overshadowing the resilience built from the domain spill-over, as the risk-and-resilience perspective describes.

Figure 4

Comparison between aspects focussing on the domain spill-over aspects.
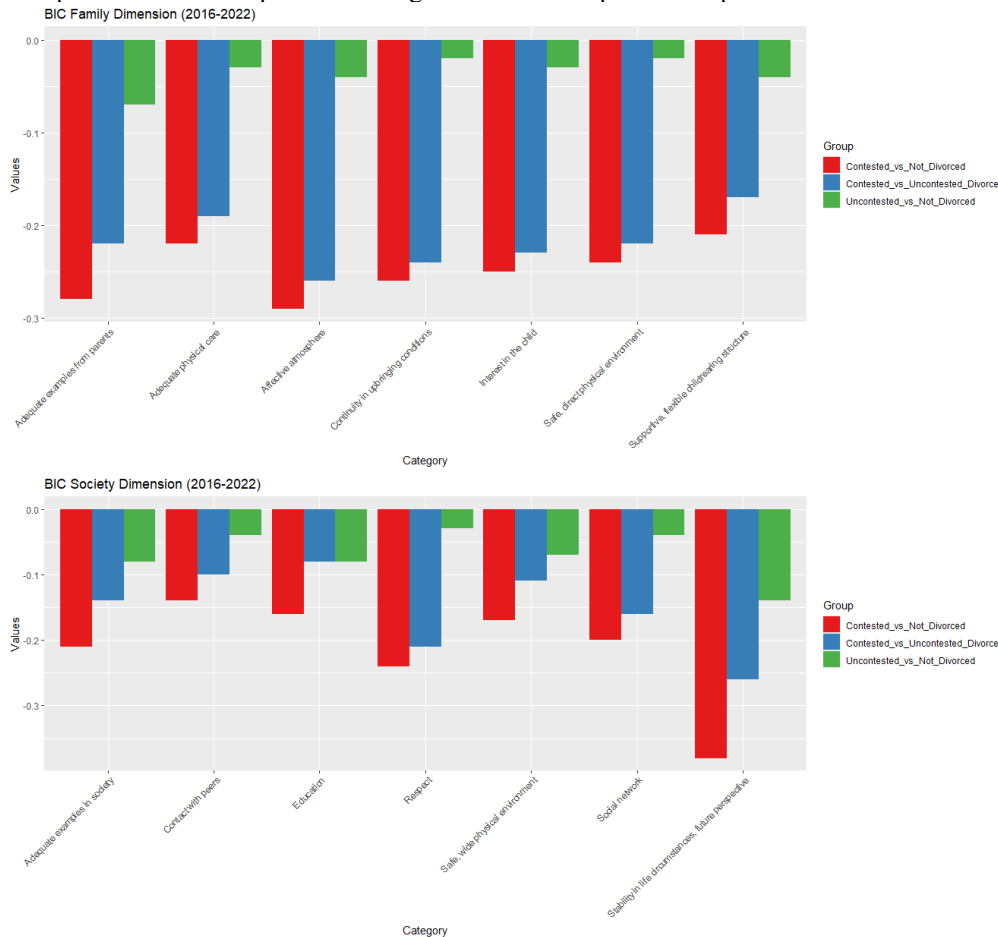
Note. Aspects that can be seen as domain spill-over aspects are: 'social network', 'education' and 'contact with peers' and are based on the risk-and-resilience perspective (Van der Wal et al., 2019). The extended table with the other aspects can be found in Appendix A.

COVID-19

Additionally, we examined the moderation effects of COVID-19 on the relationship between divorce and children's well-being. We hypothesized that the experience of COVID-19 would negatively influence the association between divorce type and children's well-being.

The moderation analysis for 2020 revealed a significant interaction-effect between divorce type and COVID-19 experience on the BIC score ($p = 0.0351$). The moderation effect was quantified as 9%, indicating the impact of divorce type on the BIC score varies by 9% depending on children's exposure to COVID-19-related experiences in 2020. However, when examining the well-being scores children gave in their lives, which reflect their overall life satisfaction, the interaction effect was non-significant

(p = 0.4523). Suggesting the COVID-19 experience in 2020 did not significantly moderate the relationship between divorce type and children's self-rated life satisfaction.

In 2022, the moderation analysis also yielded a significant interaction effect between divorce type and COVID-19 experience on the BIC score (p = 0.0007) (see Table 5). The moderation effect indicated that the impact of divorce type on the BIC score varies by 14% depending on children's exposure to COVID-19-related experiences in 2022. Similarly, the interaction effect between divorce type and COVID-19 experience in 2022 for the grade children gave their life was non-significant (p = 0.0435), suggesting COVID-19 experience in 2022 did not significantly moderate the relationship between divorce type and children's self-rated life satisfaction.

Concluding we can state that the experience of COVID-19 has only partly moderated the relationship between divorce and well-being. Significant moderation effects were observed with the BIC score but not the well-being score.

Table 5
Moderation effects of COVID-19 on the relation between divorce and well-being

Moderation effect (p-value)	Outcome variable: BIC score	Outcome variable: well-being score
2020	9% (p = 0.04)	Non-significant (p=0.45)
2022	14% (p < 0.001)	Non-significant (p=0.04)

Influences of Gender and Age

Lastly, we were interested in the possible influence of gender on the effect of divorce on the well-being of children. An overrepresentation is only visible in 2016 and 2020. When split on gender, we found that the negative effect of divorce on well-being is larger for girls than for boys (see Figure 4). Which is most prominent when comparing contested to uncontested divorces. This means that due to the overrepresentation of girls in our sample in 2016 and 2020, the effects of divorce on well-being are larger than in 2018 and 2022.

Besides gender, age fluctuation was noticeable in the samples between the years. The Kruskall-Wallis tests revealed very few significant results (See table 8 In appendix C), indicating no differences between the divorce groups and their effects on well-being when looking per age. Due to these results, we can assume the effect sizes through the ages are equal per group.

Figure 5

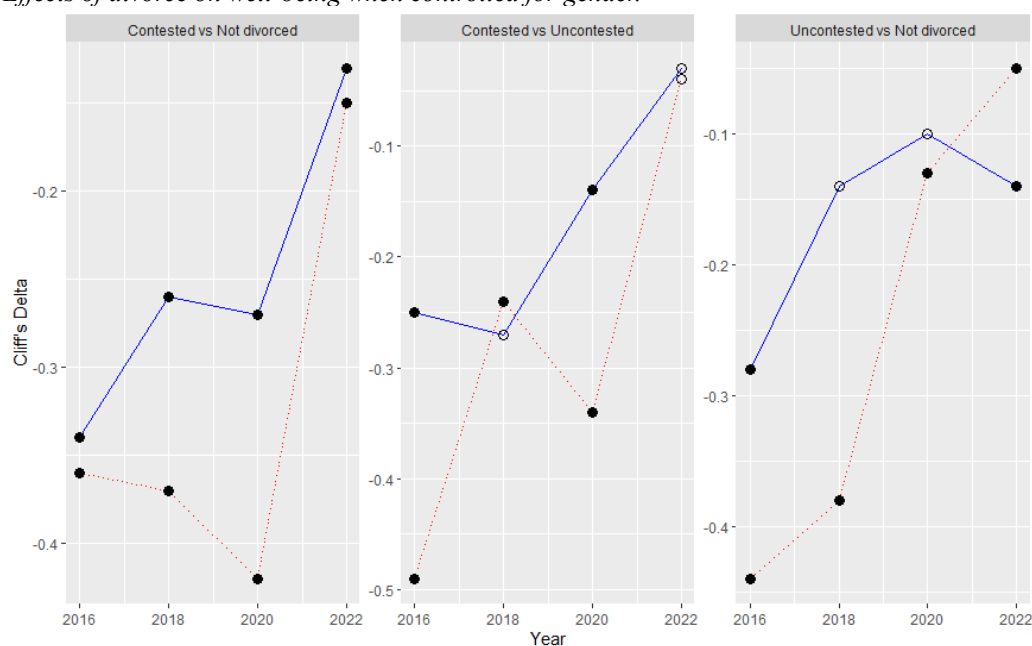*Effects of divorce on well-being when controlled for gender.*

Table 5

Concluding table of hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Fully/partly/not supported	Explanation	Corresponding Figure/Table
H_{1A}: When the attachment theory holds in the Dutch setting, we expect to see more adverse effects on children who experienced a contested divorce when compared to children who experienced an uncontested divorce on their well-being.	Fully supported	Children who experienced a contested divorce showed significantly lower well-being scores compared to those with uncontested divorces.	Table 3, Figure 2 & 3
H_{1B}: When the risk-and-resilience perspective holds in the Dutch setting, we expect to see an equal effect of divorce on children who experienced a contested or uncontested divorce on their well-being.	Not supported	The effects of divorce on well-being were significantly different between contested and uncontested divorces, contradicting the risk-and-resilience perspective.	Table 3, Figure 2 & 4
H_2: The experience of COVID-19 by children negatively moderates the effect on the relationship between divorce and well-being.	Partly supported	There was a moderating effect of the experience of COVID-19 in 2022 but not in 2020.	Table 5

Discussion

This study aimed to answer the research question: How do contested and uncontested divorces affect children's well-being in the Netherlands, and what is the moderation effect of COVID-19 on this relationship?

The study's findings support the attachment theory, which posits that disruptions in family structure due to divorce can lead to emotional distress and adjustment difficulties, resulting in insecure attachment (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Children from contested divorces exhibited significantly lower well-being scores than those from uncontested divorces. This aligns with the notion that high-conflict divorces exacerbate the negative effects on children's emotional security and stability (Johnston, 1994).

The risk-and-resilience perspective suggests that children can adapt and thrive despite the challenges posed by divorce (Van der Wal et al., 2019). Even though some resilience within the contested divorced group was noticeable, it did not outweigh the traumatic impact described by this perspective (Bandura, 1977; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). This shows the complexity of the effects of divorce and does not fully exclude the possibility of the risk-and-resilience perspective within the Dutch setting.

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced additional stressors that exacerbated the impact of divorce on children's well-being. The lockdown measures and health risks associated with transitions between homes increased tensions in shared custody arrangements and disrupted family dynamics (Goldberg, 2021; Pasteels, 2022). The findings indicate that children's well-being was more negatively affected in 2022 than in 2020. Therefore, showing a small interplay between COVID-19 and the relationship between divorce and well-being. Gender was also shown to be influential, with girls showing more impact of divorce on their well-being than boys.

An interdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from psychology, sociology, and legal studies, has strengthened the analysis and given it a holistic nature, which enables it to inform interventions and policies more effectively. By combining attachment theory and the risk-and-resilience perspective, this research offers a nuanced understanding of the impact on children's well-being across multiple environmental levels.

The findings underscore the importance of tailored interventions and support programs. Policies like "Scheiden zonder Schade" minimize the impact of divorce on children are crucial but need to be adaptable to account for varying degrees of conflict, gender and external stressors such as pandemics (Ministry of Justice and Security & Ministry of Health Welfare and Sport, 2022). Implementing support systems that address both the immediate and long-term needs of children from high-conflict divorce situations is essential. Interventions should focus on reducing parental conflict and fostering secure attachments to mitigate the adverse effects of contested divorces on children's well-being. Policies and programs must emphasise parents' critical role as they are responsible for a healthy upbringing environment and provide them with the necessary resources and support to manage their conflicts constructively (Art. 18) (United Nations, 1989). Professionals working with divorced families should

prioritize helping parents understand their impact on their children's well-being and develop strategies to minimize harm.

This study has several limitations, including potential self-selection bias and the reliance on self-reported measures of well-being. This questionnaire did not entail directly asking the children whether their parents were divorced and, if so, whether the conflicts had occurred during the divorce. Therefore, our allotment of the children towards one of these groups could have weakened validity. Additionally, the timing of the divorce was not known, which could provide important insights into its immediate impact.

Future research should explore longitudinal data to capture long-term effects and whether there is an impact on the timing of the divorce. Qualitative approaches should also be considered to gain deeper insights into children's experiences. Examining the specific dimensions in which children can develop resilience could provide further guidance for effective interventions.

The study provides crucial insights into the differential impacts of contested and uncontested divorces on children's well-being in the Netherlands, highlighting the exacerbating effect of COVID-19. The results emphasize that attachment theory is held within the Dutch setting but does not fully exclude the presence of resilience, following the risk-and-resilience perspective. The findings emphasize the need for comprehensive and flexible policies to support children through divorce, considering both the risks and resilience factors to promote their overall well-being. By understanding these dynamics, policymakers and practitioners can better address the diverse needs of children in divorced families, ensuring more effective support and intervention strategies.

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* 1. **Ik ben een:**
Jongen
Meisje
Anders

* 2. **Hoe oud ben je?**
Schuifbalk 8 – 18 jaar

* 3. **Bij wie woon je de meeste dagen van de week?**
Bij mijn beide ouders samen
Alleen bij mijn vader
Alleen bij mijn moeder
Bij mijn vader en zijn partner
Bij mijn moeder en haar partner
Ongeveer de helft van de tijd bij mijn ene ouder en de helft van de tijd bij mijn andere ouder (coouderschap)
Bij mijn pleeggezin
In een instelling of op een groep
Anders, namelijk:

* 4. **Heb je thuis te maken met één van deze punten? Vink die dan aan. Je kunt meerdere hokjes aanvinken.**
We hebben thuis weinig geld
Er is thuis vaak ruzie, waarbij soms gescholden, geslagen of geschopt wordt
Mijn ouders zijn gescheiden. Ze kunnen ook niet meer normaal met elkaar omgaan.
Een van mijn ouders heeft een lichamelijke ziekte
Een van mijn ouders is verslaafd (niet roken) of heeft een psychische ziekte
Geen van deze punten geldt voor mij

* 5. **Geldt één van deze punten hieronder voor jou? Vink die dan aan. Je kunt meerdere hokjes aanvinken.**
Ik heb een lichamelijke ziekte of aandoening
Ik heb psychische problemen
Ik kom uit een ander land en ben naar Nederland gevlucht
Ik krijg jeugdhulp of jeugd-GGZ
Ik krijg nog geen hulp, maar sta op een wachtlijst
Ik ga naar een school voor speciaal onderwijs
Geen van deze punten geldt voor mij

* 6. **In welke provincie woon je?**
Drenthe
Flevoland
Friesland
Gelderland
Groningen
Limburg
Noord-Brabant
Noord-Holland
Overijssel
Utrecht
Zeeland
Zuid-Holland

* 7. **Welk cijfer geef jij aan jouw leven?**
Schuifbalk 1 - 10

We gaan verder met wat vragen over jouw opvoeding.
* 8. **Ik vind de liefde en aandacht die ik van mijn ouders of opvoeders krijg…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? tijd voor je als je ze nodig hebt
Je hebt een goede band met ze
* 9. **Ik vind de structuur, regels en ondersteuning die er thuis zijn…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende

Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **mee bedoelen we:**
r is thuis iemand die je helpt als dat nodig is
* 10. **Ik vind het goede voorbeeld dat mijn ouders of opvoeders geven…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen?**:**
ebben werk of doen vrijwilligerswerk
* 11. **Ik vind de interesse die mijn ouders of opvoeders hebben in wat ik belangrijk vind…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen?
 je vrije tijd mag je zelf kiezen wat jij wilt doen
* 12. **Ik vind mijn opvoeding…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **Hiermee bedoelen we:**
Er wordt altijd goed voor je gezorgd
Je bent al bijna op de helft. Heel goed! De volgende vragen gaan over je school en vrije tijd.
* 13. **School en mijn vrije tijd, vind ik…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **ee bedoelen we:**
jvoorbeeld sport, muziek, toneel, scouting of skateboarden).
* 14. **Ik vind het contact met mijn vrienden…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **Hiermee bedoelen we:**
ouw vrienden houden rekening met wie jij bent
* 15. **De hulp die ik van andere volwassenen krijg, vind ik…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **Hiermee bedoelen we:**
zit bij een (sport)club of vereniging
Hieronder nog een paar vragen over of er goed voor je gezorgd wordt.
* 16. **De verzorging die ik krijg, vind ik…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **ermee bedoelen we:**
Je krijgt genoeg te eten en te drinken
* 17. **Het goede voorbeeld dat ik krijg van mensen die ik ken, vind ik…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? Kinderen en volwassenen die jij kent zorgen goed voor zichzelf en voor anderen
eren en volwassenen die jij kent hebben een goede invloed op je
* 18. **Ik vind het respect dat ik krijg…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? ouw ouders, opvoeders of anderen, lezen niet zomaar mee met je WhatsApp-gesprekken, e-mails of brieven
Je bent al bijna aan het einde. Nog een paar vragen over of je veilig kunt opgroeien.
* 19. **Ik vind de veiligheid bij mij in huis…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **Hiermee bedoelen we:**
Je voelt je veilig bij jou thuis
* 20. **Ik vind de veiligheid bij mij in de buurt…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen? **iermee bedoelen we:**
Je voelt je veilig in jouw buurt
* 21. **De rust en zekerheid in mijn leven vind ik…**
Goed/ Voldoende/ Matig/ Onvoldoende
Wil je daar iets over vertellen?
Hiermee bedoelen we:
Dit zijn de laatste vragen. Goed gedaan!

22. **Wat vind je fijn in jouw leven?**
(Bijvoorbeeld bij jou thuis, op school of in jouw buurt)

23. **Wat kan er beter in jouw leven?**
(Bijvoorbeeld bij jou thuis, op school of in jouw buurt)

24. **Er gebeurt op dit moment veel in de wereld. Maak jij je ergens zorgen over? Zo ja, wat is dat dan?**

* 25. Questions regarding the focus of wave
* 26. Questions regarding the focus of wave

* 27. **Ga je naar school? Welk soort onderwijs volg je?**
Ik ga naar de basisschool
Ik ga naar het speciaal basisonderwijs
Ik heb Praktijkonderwijs
Ik zit op het VMBO basis of -kader
Ik zit op het VMBO gl of -tl
Ik zit op de HAVO
Ik zit op het VWO
Ik ga naar het HBO of WO
Ik zit op het Voortgezet Speciaal Onderwijs (VSO)
Ik ga niet naar school maar ik werk
Ik ga niet naar school en ik werk ook niet
Iets anders, namelijk…

28. **Hoe vond je het om deze vragenlijst in te vullen? Je kunt meerdere hokjes aanvinken.**
Wel oké
Niet zo nodig
Ik vind het goed dat hier naar gevraagd wordt
Interessant
Ik vond de vragen te persoonlijk
Ik vond het moeilijk om de vragen 'eerlijk' te beantwoorden
Sommige vragen begreep ik niet
Ik werd er een beetje verdrietig of zenuwachtig van
Anders, namelijk…
29. **Hoe heb je van de vragenlijst van de Kinderombudsman gehoord?**
30. **Wist je vóór deze vragenlijst al wat kinderrechten zijn?**
Ja
Nee
31. **Had je vóór deze vragenlijst al eens van de Kinderombudsman gehoord?**
Ja
Nee

Appendix B: Effects of divorce on BIC-aspects

Table 6

Effect of divorce on each aspect in the family and society dimension

BIC family dimension	Contested divorce vs Not divorced	Contested divorce vs Uncontested divorce	Uncontested divorce vs Not divorced	BIC society dimension	Contested divorce vs Not divorced	Contested divorce vs Uncontested divorce	Uncontested divorce vs Not divorced
Adequate physical care				**Safe, wide physical environment**			
2016	-0,19**	-0,12**	-0,08**	2016	-0,19**	-0,14**	-0,05
2018	-0,23**	-0,19**	-0,04**	2018	-0,13**	-0,04	-0,08**
2020	-0,19**	-0,2**	-0,01	2020	-0,22**	-0,17**	-0,06
2022	-0,25**	-0,22**	-0,03	2022	-0,21**	-0,15**	-0,06*
2016 t/m 2022	-0,22**	-0,19**	-0.03**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,17**	-0,11**	-0.07**
The safe, direct physical environment				**Respect**			
2016	-0,29**	-0,28**	-0,009	2016	-0,19**	-0,16**	-0,02
2018	-0,16**	-0,15**	-0,01	2018	-0,28**	-0,23**	-0,06
2020	-0,22**	-0,22**	-0,002	2020	-0,23**	-0,24**	-0,001
2022	-0,31**	-0,27**	-0,05*	2022	-0,25**	-0,21**	-0,04**
2016 t/m 2022	-0,24**	-0,22**	-0.02**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,24**	-0,21**	-0,03**
Affective atmosphere				**Social network**			
2016	-0,29**	-0,24**	-0,05	2016	-0,16**	-0,08	-0,07*
2018	-0,29**	-0,23**	-0,07**	2018	-0,25**	-0,18**	-0,08
2020	-0,34**	-0,32**	-0,01**	2020	-0,26**	-0,26**	-0,002
2022	-0,27**	-0,26	-0,02	2022	-0,16**	-0,13**	-0,03
2016 t/m 2022	-0,29**	-0,26**	-0,04**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,20**	-0,16**	-0,04**
Supportive, flexible childrearing structure				**Education**			
2016	-0,23**	-0,18**	-0,05	2016	-0,14**	-0,05	-0,1**
2018	-0,23**	-0,15**	-0,08**	2018	-0,15**	-0,07	-0,07**
2020	-0,23**	-0,21**	-0,03	2020	-0,2**	-0,16**	-0,05**
2022	-0,21**	-0,18**	-0,04	2022	-0,19**	-0,09**	-0,11**
2016 t/m 2022	-0,21**	-0,17**	-0,04**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,16**	-0,08**	-0,08**
Adequate examples from parents				**Contact with peers.**			
2016	-0,34**	-0,27**	-0,08**	2016	-0,16**	-0,06	-0,1**
2018	-0,3**	-0,22**	-0,09**	2018	-0,16**	-0,16	-0,001
2020	-0,26**	-0,22**	-0,04	2020	-0,08**	-0,09**	-0,01
2022	-0,23**	-0,18**	-0,06**	2022	-0,16**	-0,08	-0,08**
2016 t/m 2022	-0,28**	-0,22**	-0,07**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,14**	-0,1	-0,04**
Interest in the child				**Adequate examples in society**			
2016	-0,26**	-0,24**	-0,02	2016	-0,31**	-0,25**	-0,06
2018	-0,28**	-0,24**	-0,05	2018	-0,21**	-0,08	-0,13**
2020	-0,22**	-0,25**	-0,03	2020	-0,18**	-0,17**	-0,01
2022	-0,23**	-0,18**	-0,06**	2022	-0,17**	-0,09*	-0,09**
2016 t/m 2022	-0,25**	-0,23**	-0,03**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,21**	-0,14**	-0,08**
Continuity in upbringing conditions				**Stability in life circumstances, future perspective.**			
2016	-0,31**	-0,25**	-0,05**	2016	-0,38**	-0,19**	-0,19**
2018	-0,26**	-0,24**	-0,02	2018	-0,44**	-0,26**	-0,2**
2020	-0,25**	-0,26**	-0,01	2020	-0,40**	-0,31**	-0,12**
2022	-0,27**	-0,25**	-0,04	2022	-0,29**	-0,23**	-0,07**
2016 t/m 2022	-0,26**	-0,24**	-0.02**	2016 t/m 2022	-0,38**	-0,26**	-0.14**

Note. **= p<0.01; *=p<0.05

Appendix C: Influence of gender and age on the relationship between divorce and well-being

Table 7

Effects of divorce on well-being when controlled for gender.

	Boy		Girl	
	Cliff's delta	p-value	Cliff's delta	p-value
Contested divorce vs Not divorced				
2016	-0,34	0,008	-0,36	0,001
2018	-0,25	0,001	-0,49	0,001
2020	-0,28	0,001	-0,44	0,001
2022	-0,26	0,001	-0,37	0,001
Contested divorce vs Uncontested divorce				
2016	-0,27	0,07	-0,24	0,001
2018	-0,14	0,06	-0,38	0,001
2020	-0,27	0,001	-0,42	0,001
2022	-0,14	0,05	-0,34	0,001
Uncontested divorce vs Not divorced				
2016	-0,1	0,27	-0,13	0,003
2018	-0,13	0,006	-0,15	0,001
2020	-0,03	0,55	-0,04	0,32
2022	-0,14	0,001	-0,05	0,16

Table 8

Kruskall-Wallis test results of divorce on well-being when controlled for age.

Age	Year	Chi-squared (χ^2)	p-value	Age	Year	Chi-squared (χ^2)	p-value
8	2016	20.531	0.36	14	2016	22.933	0.32
	2018	11.098	0.57		2018	11.374	0.57
	2020	40.396	0.13		2020	46.197	0.11
	2022	42.765	0.12		2022	80.239	0.67
9	2016	18.687	0.39	15	2016	63.521	0.04
	2018	76.978	0.02		2018	48.493	0.09
	2020	71.264	0.03		2020	30.481	0.22
	2022	57.757	0.06		2022	11.863	0.55
10	2016	55.736	0.06	16	2016	69.296	0.03
	2018	20.032	0.90		2018	36.072	0.16
	2020	39.268	0.14		2020	17.423	0.42
	2022	16.033	0.45		2022	10.125	0.60
11	2016	2.773	0.25	17	2016	10.827	0.58
	2018	25.991	0.27		2018	1.827	0.40
	2020	39.112	0.14		2020	6.142	0.05
	2022	16.612	0.44		2022	44.685	0.11
12	2016	2.047	0.36	18	2016	61.652	0.05
	2018	27.387	0.25		2018	17.271	0.42
	2020	57.288	0.75		2020	46.896	0.10
	2022	15.683	0.46		2022	30.067	0.22
13	2016	48.622	0.09				
	2018	36.038	0.17				
	2020	52.595	0.07				
	2022	85.407	0.65				