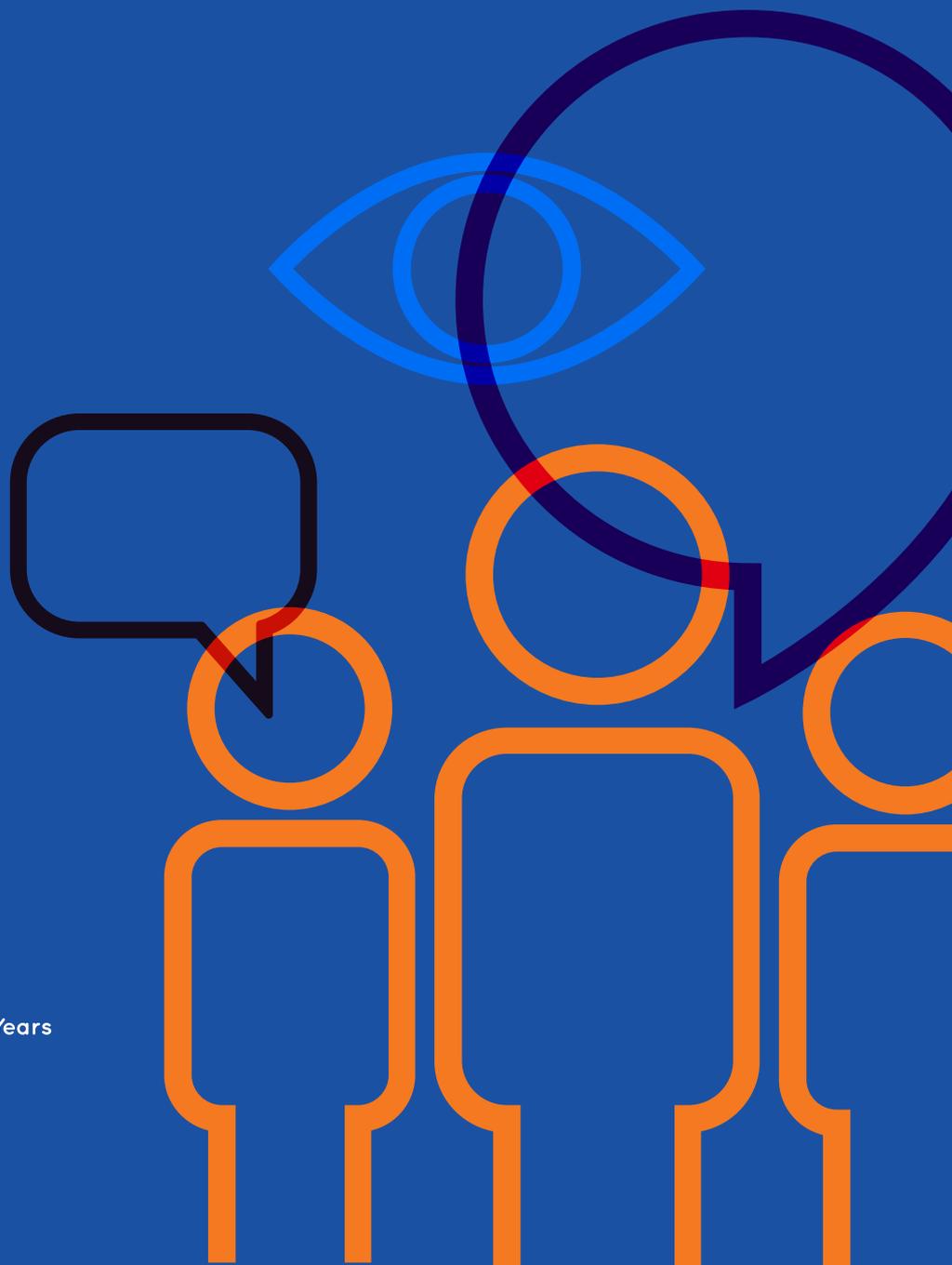


Learning Disabilities: Understanding their prevalence in the British Jewish community

L. Daniel Staetsky



The **Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)** is a London-based research organisation, consultancy and think-tank. It aims to advance the prospects of Jewish communities in the United Kingdom and across Europe by conducting research and informing policy development in dialogue with those best placed to positively influence Jewish life.

Langdon supports teenagers and adults with learning disabilities, particularly from the Jewish community. Our vision is people with learning disabilities having the same opportunities as everybody else so they can live independently in their local community. Our mission is to enable that independence by providing specialist education, employment and supported living services.

Author

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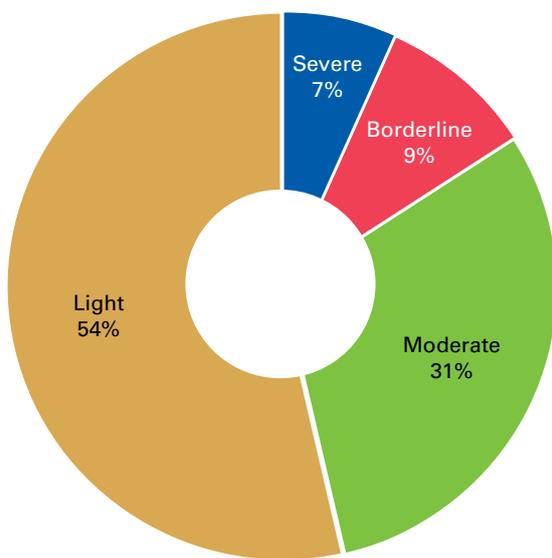
1 Summary

- We estimate that 7.4% of the UK Jewish population have some kind of learning disability.
- Looking at this 7.4% as a group, 7% of them have a “severe” learning disability (e.g. Down’s syndrome); 9% have a “borderline” learning disability (e.g. unlikely to be in mainstream education, but some ambiguity about the medical cause); 31% have a “moderate” learning disability (i.e. likely to be in mainstream education, but with a statement of special educational needs that the school is obligated to act upon); and 54% have a “light” learning disability (e.g. in mainstream education with dyslexia or dyspraxia).
- These proportions vary significantly depending on gender, with males considerably more likely than females to have all types of learning disabilities. 9.6% of males (about one in ten) have some kind of learning disability, compared to 5.1% of females (about one in twenty).
- Data providers use different terminology to distinguish between different levels of severity in learning disabilities, so the distinctions drawn between the most and the least severe conditions should be seen as a spectrum rather than as distinct and clear categories. To help deal with this, the numbers for Jews in Britain in each of the severity groups are included in the appendix to this report, by age, gender, geographical region and major Jewish denominational category. Note that the terminology employed in the field of disabilities varies over time and across space. In this report, the author has opted at all times to use the terms employed in the research referenced.
- This report draws on data from multiple sources to make its assessments: the 2011 Scottish Census (National Records of Scotland); a large-scale study of children with special needs carried out in Israel in the mid-1990s jointly by the National Insurance Institute and the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute; the American National Health Interview Survey; the General Practitioners Patient Survey in the United Kingdom commissioned by the Department of Health and conducted by Ipsos MORI; and JPR’s 2013 National Jewish Community Survey, a comprehensive study of the UK Jewish population.

Key Facts

7.4%

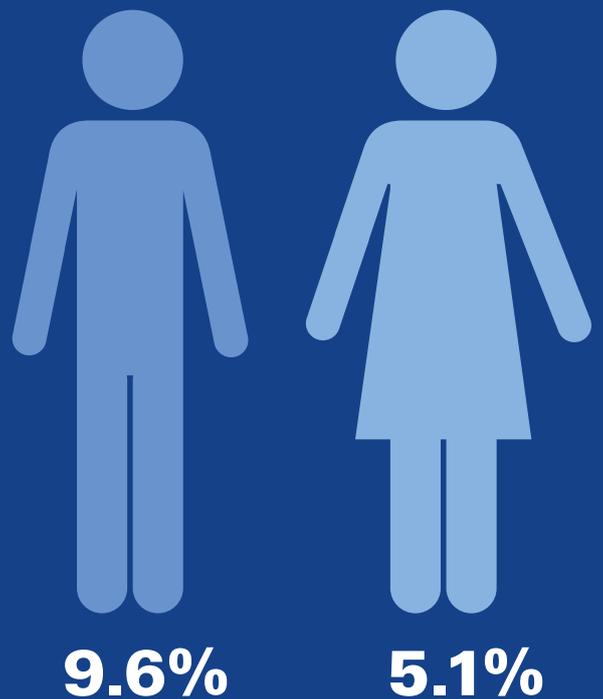
of the UK Jewish population have some kind of learning disability.



Looking at this 7.4% as a group, 7% of them have a “severe” learning disability (e.g. Down’s syndrome); 9% have a “borderline” learning disability (e.g. unlikely to be in mainstream education, but ambiguity about the medical cause); 31% have a “moderate” learning disability (i.e. likely to be in mainstream education, but with a statement of special educational needs that the school is obliged to act upon); and 54% have a “light” learning disability (e.g. in mainstream education with a condition like dyslexia or dyspraxia).

These proportions differ significantly depending upon gender. Males are almost twice as likely as their female counterparts to have learning disabilities.

The proportion for females is about one in twenty; for males it is approximately one in ten.



2 Introduction

This report presents estimates of the size and characteristics of the population of British Jews with learning disabilities. It was prepared in response to a request from Langdon for these estimates, in order to support its policy development, marketing and fundraising. Langdon provides a range of services to Jewish individuals with learning disabilities, including educational programmes, housing, employment and social activities, and its ability to both deliver these services and fundraise for them depends on the availability of empirical data. In line with Langdon's mission, the purpose of this project is to provide Langdon with an understanding of the prevalence of learning disabilities in the British Jewish community.

The major challenge in dealing with this topic is the availability of data. Direct and unambiguous, let alone detailed, data on the prevalence of learning disabilities in the British Jewish population do not exist. The characteristics of Jews, a small minority of 0.5% of the total population in the United Kingdom, can only be captured through very large datasets which have large numbers of Jewish respondents within them. Census files are the best example of such a dataset, but the 2011 Census in England and Wales did not include a question on the presence of learning disabilities. Therefore, analysts need to develop alternative techniques, which will not generate perfect results, but are designed to provide good approximations. Such techniques could be developed, for example, on the basis of the available data on the prevalence of learning disabilities in the general population and/or among non-Jews, or among Jews outside of the UK.

This project systematically examines various sources of data on the prevalence of learning disabilities. In total, it employs six different sources from contexts as varied as England, Scotland, the United States and Israel. Some of the sources represent specialised epidemiological data collection enterprises; others hold information on learning disabilities as a by-product of data gathering activities with different objectives. Different sources employ different definitions of learning disabilities. However, as will be shown, this does not need to interfere with our ability to use the sources effectively to quantify

the prevalence of learning disabilities among British Jews. Early in the course of this project we consulted the NHS definition of learning disabilities. The NHS defines learning disabilities in a broad and highly descriptive (as opposed to causal) manner as 'difficulty in understanding new or complex information, learning new skills, coping independently.'¹ Most sources of data employed in this project employ their own definitions, which are both more precise than the NHS definition and, at least in some cases, more suggestive of the causes of learning disabilities. Despite the definitional variation, the various sources converge significantly on the issue of the prevalence of learning disabilities, and even allow derivation of the prevalence by degree of severity.

The six sources we have investigated in order to determine the prevalence of learning disabilities among British Jews are as follows: The Scottish Census of 2011; a large scale study of children with special needs in Israel carried out jointly by the National Insurance Institute and the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute; the American National Health Interview Survey – a large-scale survey of the health of the United States population; a study of special educational needs conducted by the Department for Education in England; the General Practitioners' Patient Survey, conducted among adults in England; and JPR's 2013 National Jewish Community Survey. Each of these provides different ways of assessing prevalence, and collectively, allows us to sharpen our overall understanding.

In the next section we review all of these sources of data in detail and then summarise the insights in a single table showing the prevalence of learning disabilities by sex and degree of severity (severe, borderline, moderate, light). We then apply the estimates of prevalence to the population counts of the Jewish population of Great Britain. The population counts are derived from the latest censuses of England, Wales and Scotland (conducted in 2011), which we adjust to compensate for the undercount of Jews in the Census (i.e. to account for Jews who did not

1 <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Childrenwithlearningdisability/Pages/Whatislearningdisability.aspx>.

self-identify as Jews in the Census). By applying the prevalence figures to population counts we derive the absolute numbers of Jewish people with learning disabilities by degree of severity, age, sex, region and sector of Jewish community (mainstream versus strictly Orthodox).

It is impossible for an analyst to predict all possible current and future practical uses of the estimates presented in this paper. Therefore, we have created maximally detailed estimates which can be utilised in a wide variety of ways. They can be found in the Appendix to this report.

3 A review of evidence on the prevalence of learning disabilities

Source 1: Scottish Census 2011

The Scottish Census in 2011, in contrast to the Census in England and Wales, collected reasonably detailed data on the presence of learning disabilities. It asked the following question: ‘Do you have any of the following conditions which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months?’ The response options presented are below. The three highlighted in bold are of particular interest in the context of this study.

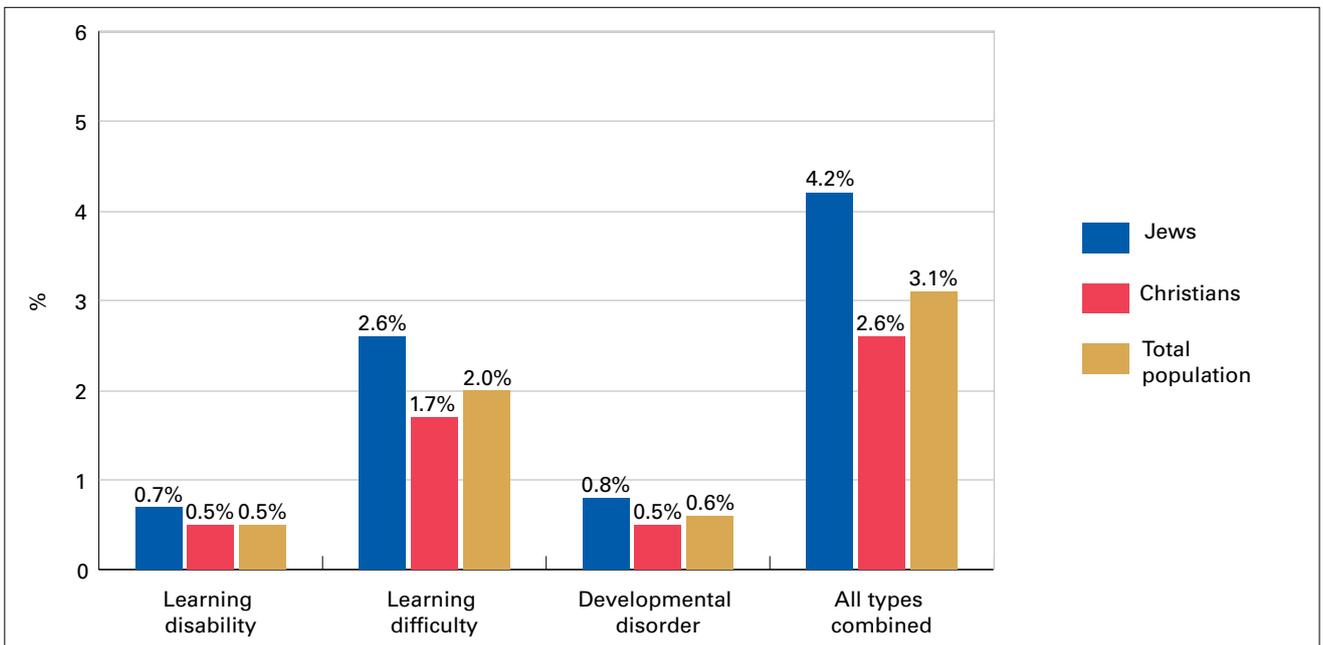
- Deafness or partial hearing loss;
- Blindness or partial sight loss;
- **Learning disability (for example Down’s syndrome);**
- **Learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia);**
- **Developmental disorders (for example, Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger’s syndrome);**
- Physical disability;

- Mental health condition;
- Long-term illness, disease or condition;
- Other condition (please write in);
- No condition.

These data have been made available by religion, and they are plotted below (Figure 1). The prevalence for Jews is set in the context of two other groups: the total population of Scotland; and its Christian population. The latter is closer to the Jewish population in terms of its age structure.

Looking just at ‘learning disabilities,’ about 0.7% of Jews indicated the presence of a disability of this kind. Another 2.6% indicated the presence of a ‘learning difficulty,’ (e.g. dyslexia). Finally, 0.8% indicated the presence of a ‘developmental disorder.’ All three statistics are meaningful. Of course, the definitions employed here are somewhat fluid and are constantly evolving with the progress made in medical science and psychology. In the case of the Scottish Census,

Figure 1. Prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews in Scotland, both sexes, 2011, compared to Christians in Scotland and the total population of Scotland



Source: Author’s calculations based on Table AT_065_2011 (National Records of Scotland).

the data are based on self-reporting (or reporting by a household member). Thus, one should allow for the possibility that some degree of overlap between learning disabilities, learning difficulties and developmental disorders exists. Bearing in mind this possibility, the combination of the three response options may have greater validity than focusing on just one. Therefore, we can establish a 4.2% prevalence of learning disabilities, and regard 0.7% – 4.2% as a range offering an idea of the minimal (0.7%) and maximal prevalence (4.2%) among Jews of Scotland.

One should also be aware that respondents were given the option of more than one answer in response to the question posed. So, for example, some may have reported learning disabilities alongside developmental disorders. Summing across the response categories does not take this into account and necessarily inflates the prevalence figure. Nevertheless, the extent of reporting of multiple conditions, in our estimation, does not make the summation overly problematic. It is reasonable to assume that 4.2% can be interpreted as the top threshold of prevalence, in a given population at a given time. We will return to the exact meaning of this figure later in the report.

Scottish Census data also allow us to look at the prevalence among females and males separately.

The prevalence of learning disabilities is generally well-known to be higher among males. Figure 2 repeats the comparison above, now limited to males only. Among Jewish males the prevalence of ‘learning disabilities’ is 1%, the prevalence of learning difficulties is 3.5%; and that of developmental disorders is 1%, summing up to a combined figure for all types of 5.5% (i.e. higher than the average equivalent figure of 4.2%).

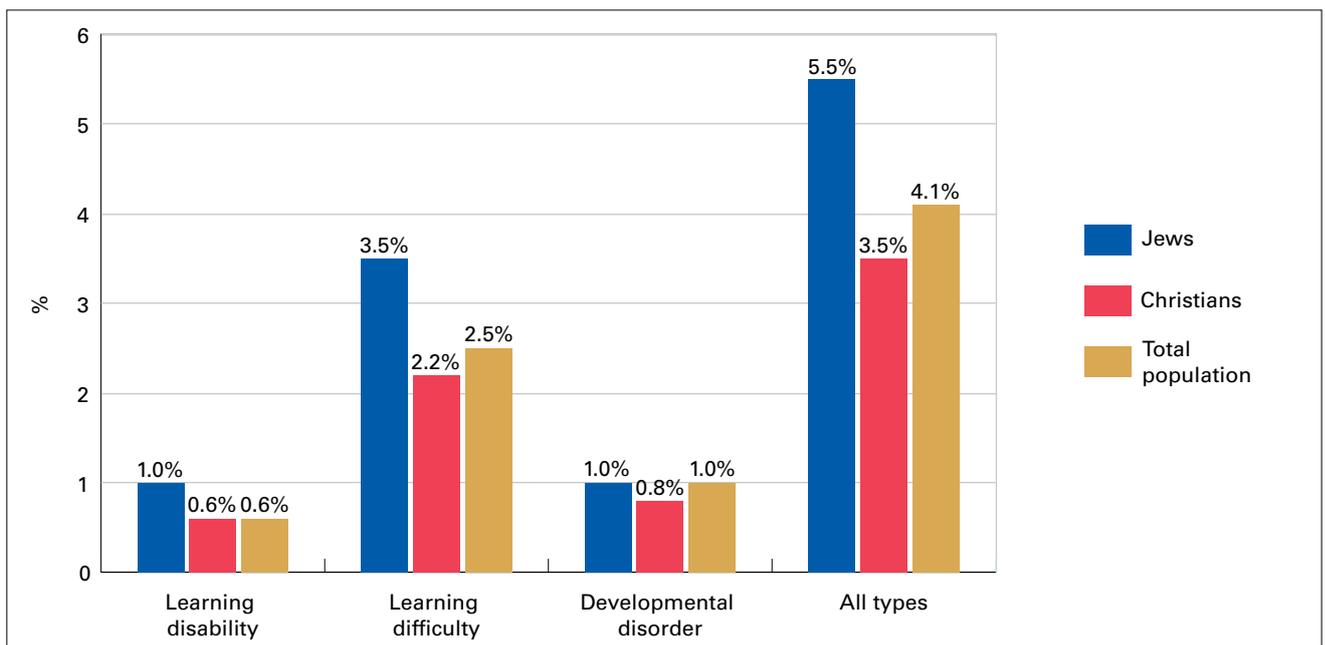
By contrast, among females, the corresponding figures for Jews are: 0.4%, 1.9%, 0.7% and 2.9% (Figure 3).

To sum up: the Scottish Census allows us to come up with some ranges for the prevalence of learning disabilities for British Jews:

- 1 For Jewish males: 1.0% – 5.5%
- 2 For Jewish females: 0.4% – 2.9%
- 3 For both sexes combined: 0.7% – 4.2%.

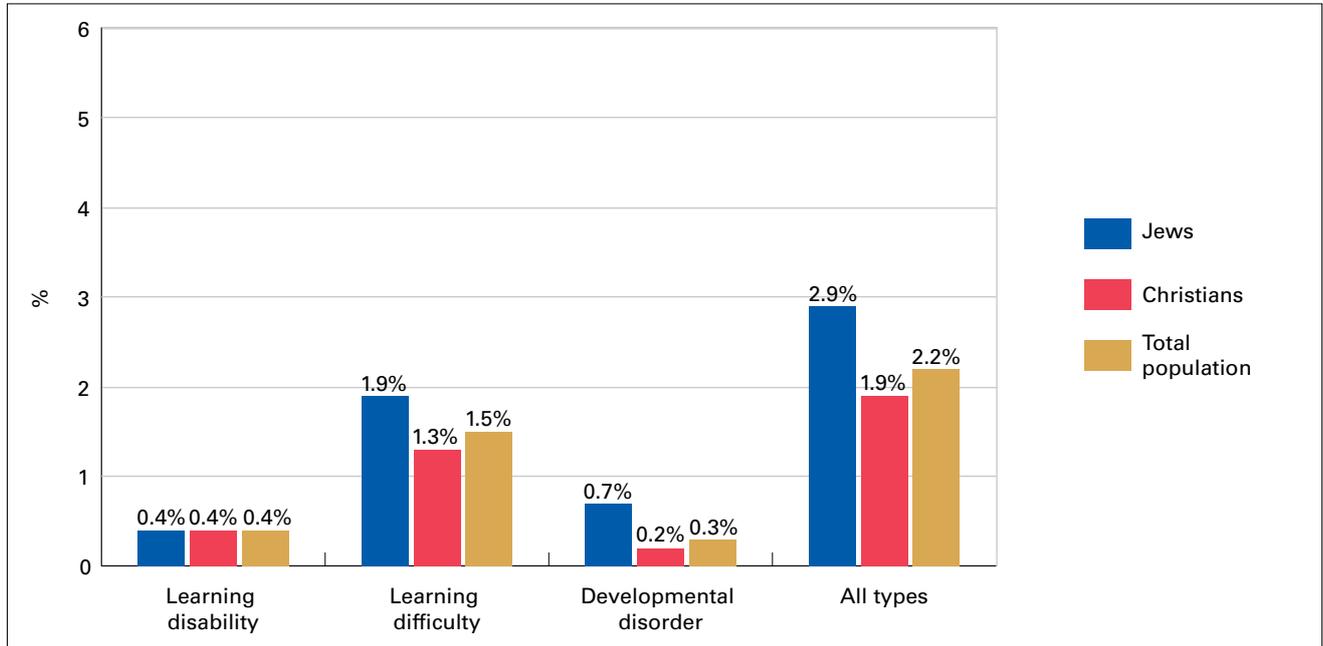
Can these figures be applied to the British Jewish population as a whole to produce the number of people with learning disabilities? Given the genetic, socio-economic and demographic similarities between English and Scottish Jews, one might assume that the answer is yes. However, there are reasons to be cautious about doing this.

Figure 2. Prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews in Scotland, males, 2011



Source: Author’s calculations based on Table AT_065_2011 (National Records of Scotland).

Figure 3. Prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews in Scotland, females, 2011.



Source: Author's calculations based on Table AT_065_2011 (National Records of Scotland).

For example, we can see that the prevalence of learning difficulties among Jews is higher than among non-Jews, and this stands in contrast to other medical conditions. For both sexes the prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews is about 1.5 times higher than the prevalence among Christians, and 1.3 times higher than in the Scottish population as a whole. Jewish males compare to Christian males less favourably than Jewish females to their Christian counterparts. This finding stands in stark contrast to the comparison between Jews and non-Jews in relation to physical disabilities (as a whole, as well as deafness and blindness): nowhere else do we find that the Jewish prevalence is elevated to the same degree. Figure 4 shows the ratios of the Jewish to the non-Jewish prevalence: if prevalence rates were identical, the ratio would appear as 1.0; figures above 1.0 indicate a higher prevalence found among Jews; figures below 1.0 indicate a lower prevalence among Jews.

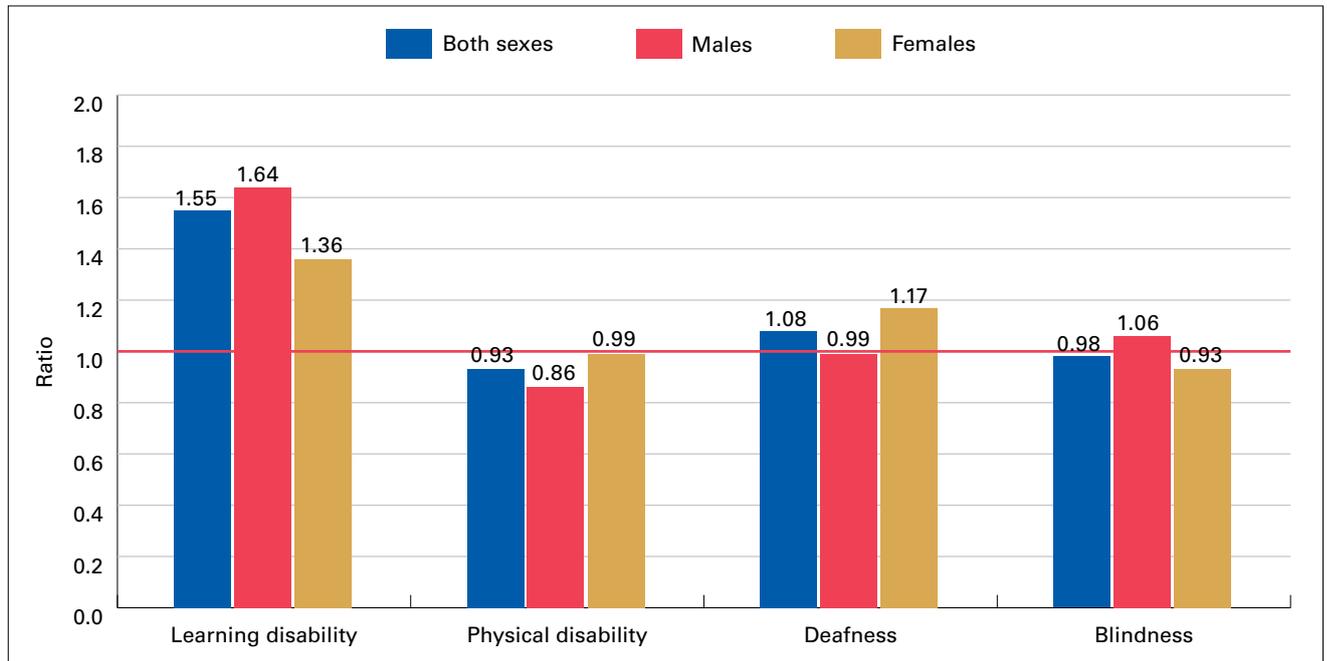
Critically, one can see that, whereas the prevalence of a physical disability, deafness or blindness is very similar in the Jewish and non-Jewish populations, it is strikingly different in the case of learning disabilities. Why might this be the case? The data reviewed so far come from the Scottish Census and, as such, are based on self-reporting

or self-characterisation, or characterisation by a proxy. Reports of self-assessed health often suffer from a degree of bias: they may be affected by a lack of medical knowledge, a lack of awareness of a particular diagnosis, a stigma attached to possessing certain conditions, privacy considerations etc. In addition, both the Scottish population as a whole, and the Jewish population of Scotland in particular are relatively aged. As understanding and diagnostic practices relating to learning disabilities develop constantly, and as it is the youngest members of the population who are most likely to benefit from these developments, an age factor may be playing into these findings in some way. Investigating epidemiological research, based on the administrative databases or specialised surveys, with a special focus on the young, should help to verify the figures above.

Sources 2–5: Epidemiological research

Four epidemiological resources are available to enhance the picture of the prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews in the UK. The first source is a large-scale study of children with special needs carried out in Israel in the mid-1990s jointly by the **National Insurance Institute** and the **Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute**. The study deployed a three-phase design: (1) a screening

Figure 4. Ratio of prevalence of disabilities among Jews compared to Christians in Scotland, 2011



Source: Author's calculation based on Table AT_065_2011 (National Records of Scotland).

telephone survey of the random sample of 14,000 households in Israel, aiming at a preliminary assessment of the prevalence of various types of disabilities among children aged 0–17 years; (2) in-depth interviews with the parents of children with disabilities identified during the first phase (777 children in total); (3) analysis by multidisciplinary professional teams of additional medical information pertaining to children whose parents took part in the second phase, on a case-by-case basis.

The study identified a group of children suffering from a persistent disability requiring treatment and/or medical help. The size of this group – defined as children with special needs – was estimated at 7.7% of all children in Israel. Children with ‘learning disabilities,’ ‘behavioural issues’ and ‘borderline intelligence’ constituted over 90% of this group and, consequently, 7% of all children in Israel. About 0.4% of all children in Israel were identified as having ‘mental retardation.’ Incidentally, the prevalence of mental retardation among children closely resembles the average prevalence of severe mental disabilities among school children in the contemporary Western world.²

2 Leonard, H. and Wen, X. 2002. The epidemiology of mental retardation: challenges and opportunities

The results of the Israeli study are summarised in Figures 5A and 5B. As has been shown elsewhere, males have a greater prevalence of learning disabilities than females. The peak of prevalence of such disabilities in terms of age is among the 6–11 years-old band (9.6%). Some learning disabilities only become apparent at a later stage in a child's life, thus the difference between younger and older children is not surprising. Mental retardation does not show any differentiation by sex and age, though this may be related to rounding of figures.

There is more than one way to capture mental retardation and its relationship with learning difficulties. Severe mental retardation has been separated out in Figures 5A and 5B. However, ‘borderline intelligence’ was included within the larger category of ‘learning disabilities.’ When separated, it constitutes about 0.5% of all children. Together, categories of borderline intelligence and severe mental retardation combined apply to about 1% of all Israeli children aged 0–17 years.

in the new millennium, *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 8, pp. 117–134. Note that the terminology employed in the field of disabilities varies over time and across space. In this report, the author has opted at all times to use the terms employed in the research referenced.

Figure 5A. Prevalence of learning disabilities among children aged 0-17 years in Israel, by selected characteristics, mid-1990s: males and females

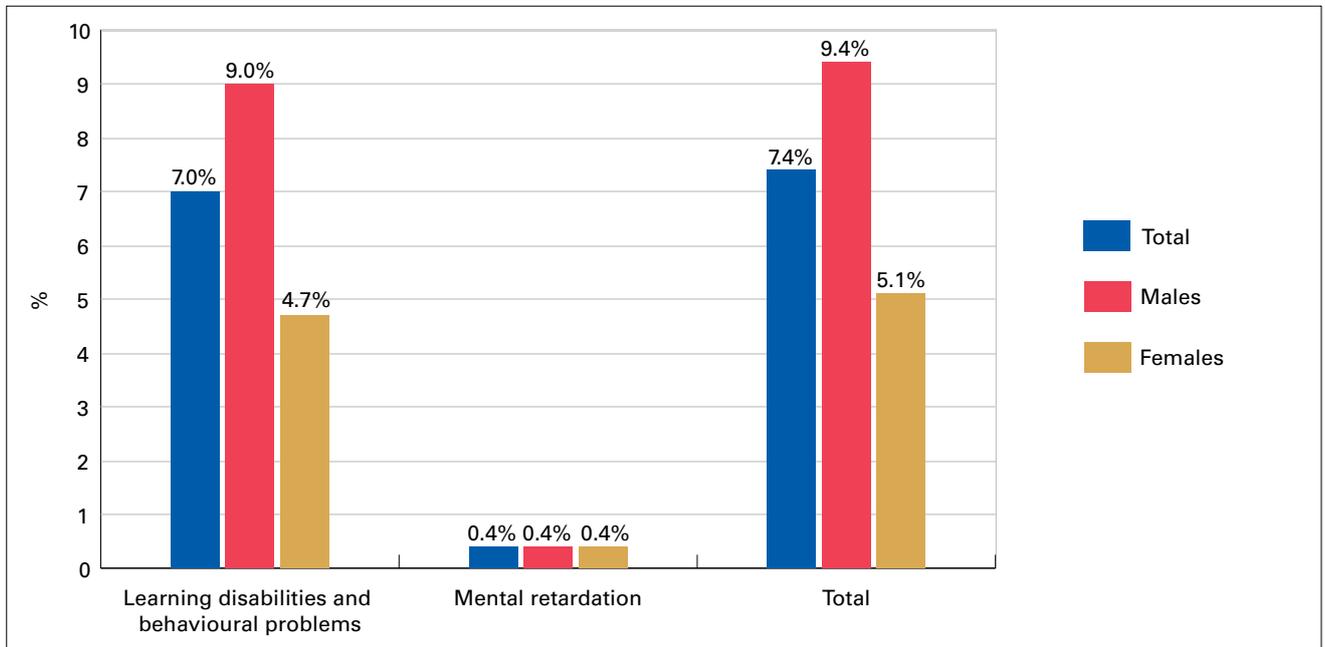
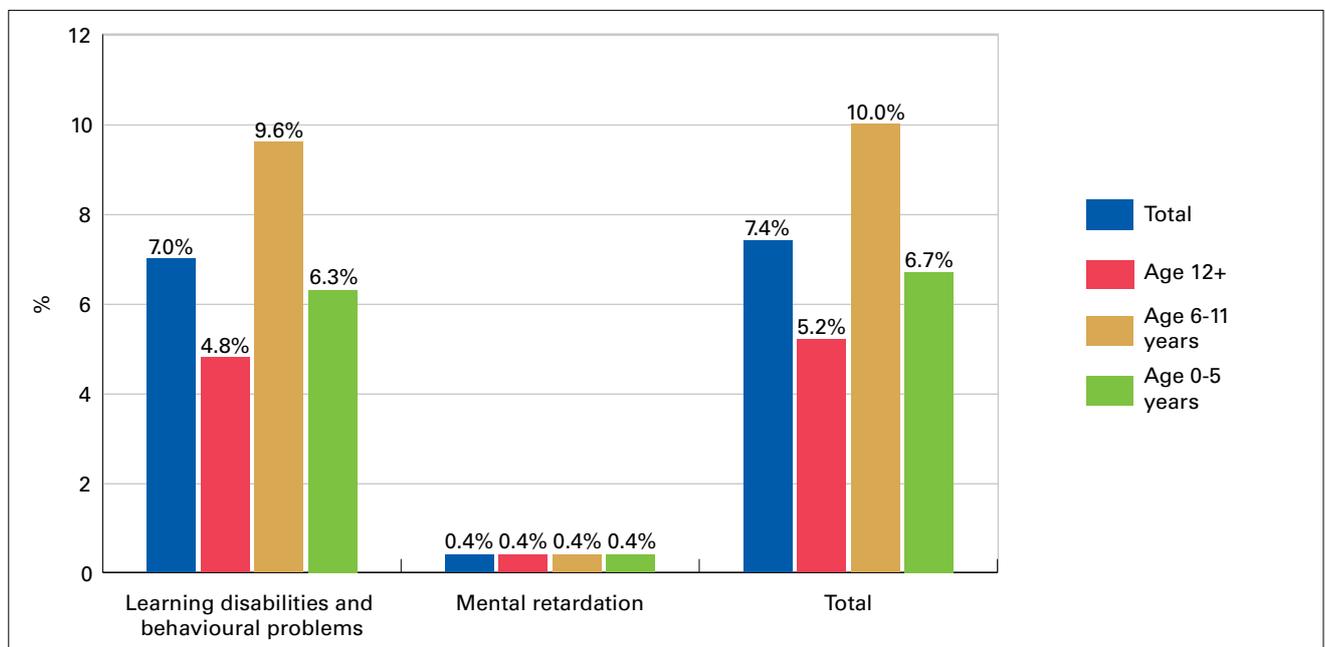


Figure 5B. Prevalence of learning disabilities among children aged 0-17 years in Israel, by selected characteristics, mid-1990s: age bands



Source: Naon, D., Morginstin, B., Schimmel, M., and Rivlis, G. (2000). *Children with special needs: an assessment of needs and coverage by services*. Jerusalem: JDC-Brookdale Institute and National Insurance Institute (Hebrew).

These findings allow us to create some prevalence ranges, as previously. The cross-tabulation of sex by age prevalence figures is not available for this study, but using some approximations, these figures can be inferred from the figures that

have been made available.³ We assumed that the

³ The relationship between the total prevalence (7.4%) and maximal prevalence (10%) found at age 6–11 years is 1.35 (10% ÷ 7.4%). Assuming that this

prevalence in the 6–11 years age group can serve as an indication of the maximal prevalence at a given time and in a given population, subjected to modern diagnostic practices. That would include a number of conditions that were not likely to be diagnosed and interpreted as requiring intervention in the past. We further assume that the prevalence in the 0–5 years age group is the minimal prevalence – again, at a given time and in a given population. The most visible and unambiguous disabilities would be diagnosed at this age.

Thus, this study of the prevalence of learning disabilities among children in the Israeli population suggests the following ranges (all numbers have been rounded):

- 1 For Jewish males: 7.0%–13.0%
- 2 For Jewish females: 4.0%–7.0%
- 3 For both sexes combined: 5.0%–10.0%.

The second epidemiological source is the **American National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS)** – a large-scale health data collection exercise aimed at documenting the health status of the population of the United States of America. The particular strengths of this cross-sectional survey are its sample size (119,367 people – for the purposes of analysis here) and the carefully tailored interview schedule. The survey attempts to capture the prevalence of developmental disabilities among American children through in-person interviews with their parents or legal guardians. Specifically, the question used by the NHIS asks the parents (or legal guardians) whether or not a representative of the child’s school or a health professional has ever told him/her that the child has a learning disability. The respondents were not asked to describe the type of their child’s disability in detail, but we know from the examination of the entire questionnaire

relationship applies to females and males, then the maximal prevalence for males can be calculated on the basis of their known all-age prevalence and the multiplier as 13.0% (9.4% x 1.35). For females, using the same techniques, the maximal prevalence would be 7% (5.1% x 1.35). The relationship between total prevalence and the minimal prevalence found at age 0-5 years is 0.7 (5.1% ÷ 7.4%). Then the minimal prevalence for males is 7% (9.4% x 0.70) and for females it is 4% (5.1% x 0.7).

that conditions such as ADHD and autism were excluded from the definition of learning disability.

The NHIS found that the prevalence of learning disabilities among American children aged 3–17 years was 7.7%, with an additional 0.71% being identified as having some form of ‘mental retardation.’ Almost 4% of children were reported as having a developmental delay of some kind. Here too the respondents were given the option of multiple responses to the question. Summing up across categories would produce a (knowingly) inflated figure of 12.0%. Note the remarkable resemblance of the prevalence of learning disabilities alone in the NHIS (7.7%) and in the Israeli study (7.4%). Note further the patterns of differentiation in the prevalence of learning disabilities between males and females (with males having a significantly higher prevalence) and between age groups (with older children showing a higher prevalence). These patterns also match well the patterns seen in the Myers-JDC-Brookdale study in Israel.

Below are the ranges of prevalence calculated on the basis of the NHIS. In deriving them we used the same principle and techniques that were applied to the findings of the Myers-JDC-Brookdale study.

- 1 For males: 12.0%–16.0%
- 2 For females: 7.0%–9.0%
- 3 For both sexes combined: 10.0%–14.0%.

The third epidemiological source comes from the **Department of Education in England**, which collects data on the prevalence of special educational needs among school children. The particular strengths of this source lie both in its sheer coverage and the administrative and diagnostic clarity of the definitions applied. All state schools are included in the data collection exercise and children need to be in possession of a formal certificate (a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or SEN) to be reported as having special educational needs. According to this source, in the age groups with a stable prevalence of learning disability, the prevalence of severe learning disabilities is 0.38% among females and 0.6% among males. Severe learning disability is approximated by having a statement of SEN associated with severe or profound

Figure 6A. Prevalence of learning disabilities among children aged 3-17 years in USA, by selected characteristics, 1997-2008: males and females

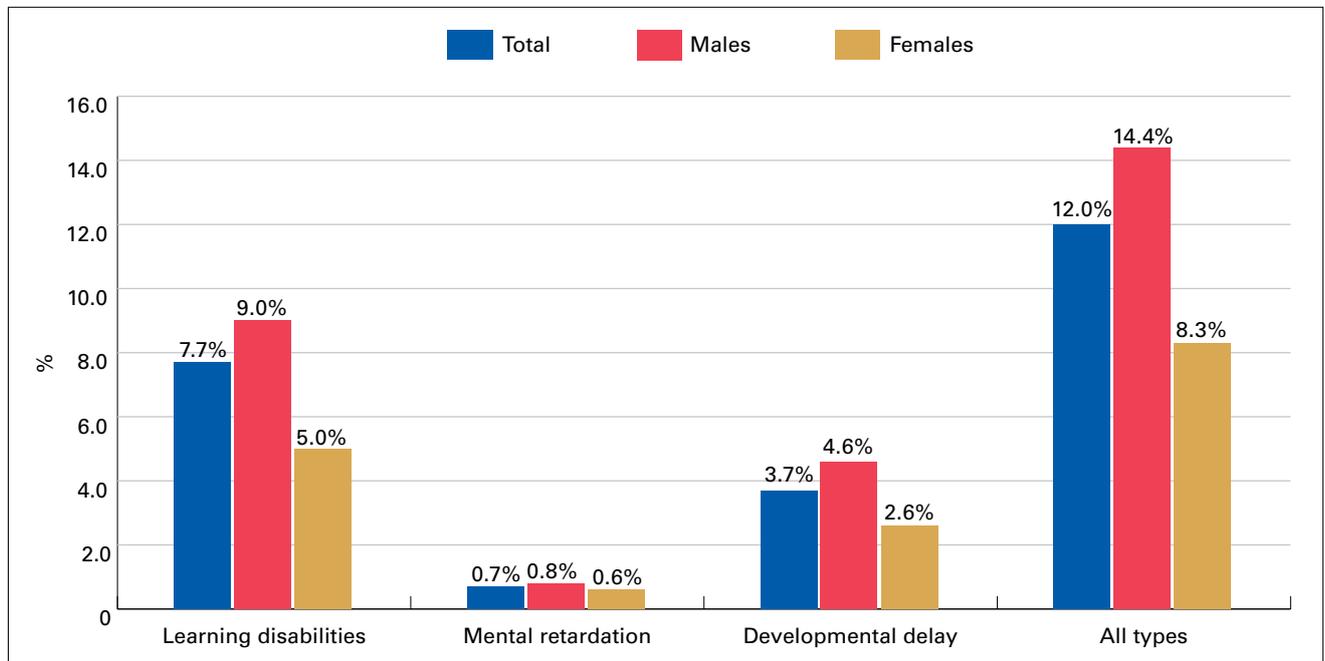
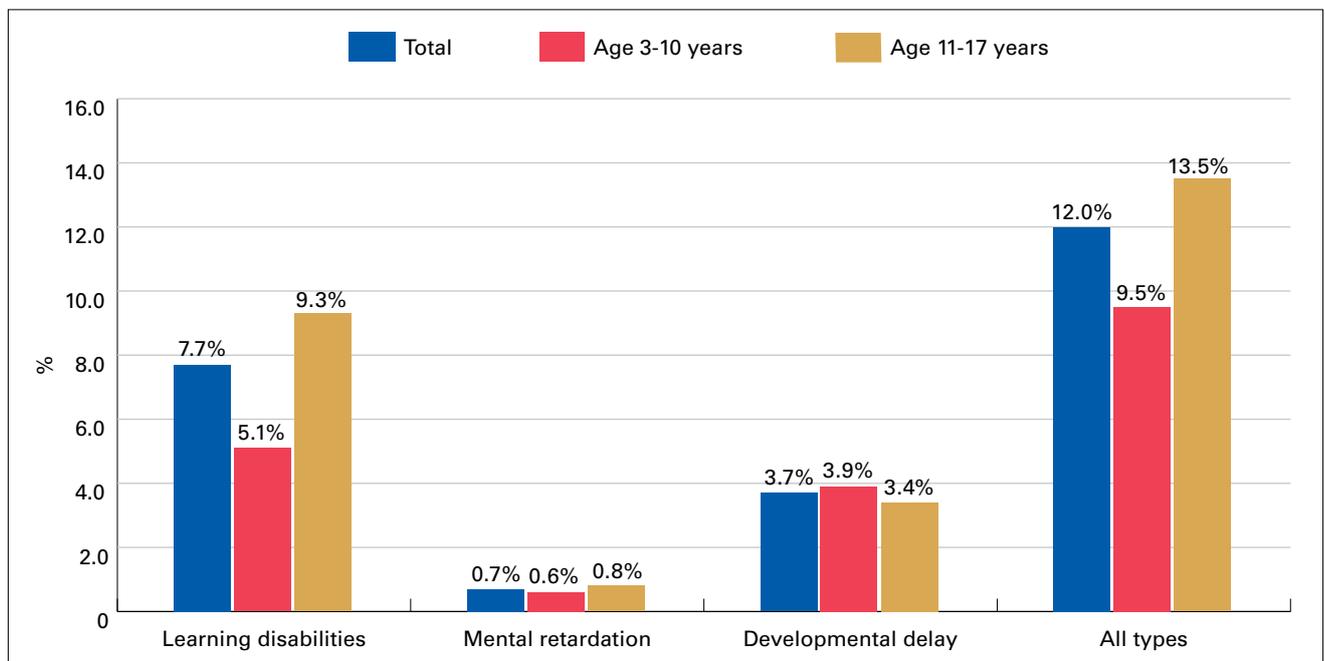


Figure 6B. Prevalence of learning disabilities among children aged 3-17 years in USA, by selected characteristics, 1997-2008: age bands

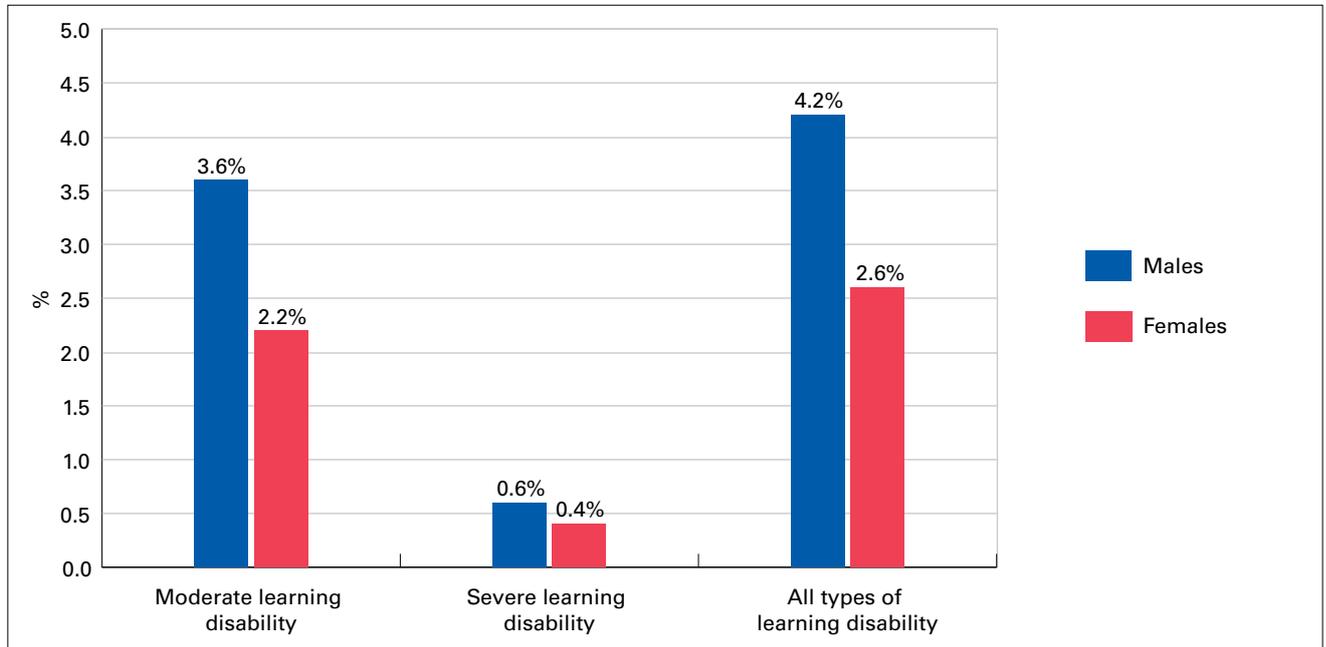


Source: Author's calculation based on Boyle, Coleen A., Boulet, Sheree, Schieve, Laura A., Cohen, Robin A., Blumberg, Stephen J., Yeargin-Allsopp, Marshalyn, Visser Susanna, Kogan, Michael D. (2011). "Trends in the Prevalence of Developmental Disabilities in US Children, 1997-2008," *Pediatrics* 2011, v.127, Issue 6, pp.1034-1042.

multiple learning difficulties. A majority of these children (70–80%) are educated in special schools. The prevalence of moderate learning

disabilities is 2.2% for females and 3.6% for males. About 90% of these children are educated in mainstream schools.

Figure 7. Prevalence of learning disabilities among children aged 5-17 years in England, by sex, around 2010



Source: Author's calculation based on: Emerson, E., Hatton, C., Robertson, J., Roberts, H., Baines, S., Gyles, G. (2010). *People with Learning Disabilities in England 2010: Services and Supports*. Learning Disabilities Laboratory, Department of Health.

Below are the ranges of prevalence calculated on the basis of the English Department of Education data:

- 1 For males: 0.6%–4.2%
- 2 For females: 0.4%–2.6%.

Our fourth and final epidemiological source is the **General Practitioners Patient Survey (GPPS)**. GPPS covers the population of England aged 18 years and over. It is implemented through self-completion, either in a paper or electronic form. The survey is commissioned by the Department of Health and conducted by Ipsos MORI. The Department of Health uses the survey in order to inform understanding of the quality of primary care received by people living in Britain and as a mechanism to allocate resources between GP practices. GPPS collects data on a number of socio-demographic variables, including the religion of respondents and selected medical conditions affecting the respondents. Specifically, the GPPS 2011–2012 dataset contains 4,860 records of people self-identifying as Jews (weighted number).

The survey asked the following question: ‘Which, if any, of the following medical conditions do you

have?’ Among the response options offered was ‘learning difficulties.’ 1.6% of Jews across all age groups and both sexes reported having a learning difficulty. It is not possible to break down the data by age or sex. However, one ought to remember that GPPS is a survey based on self-completion, and individuals with serious problems in the areas of literacy, numeracy or general orientation are excluded from the survey. Equally, people with severe problems in these areas who live in communal settings are excluded as GPPS is a household-based survey. Thus, considering these factors, the 1.6% figure should be treated as an underestimation.

Source 6: The National Jewish Community Survey (NJCS)

In 2013 JPR conducted a large-scale survey of the Jewish community in the UK. In the absence of the possibility of random sampling, the survey employed communal lists from a wide variety of Jewish organisations to create a convenience sample of 3,736 respondents. The survey asked the following three questions on the topic of learning disabilities:

- 1 Do any of your children have a learning disability? By ‘learning disability’, we mean

what used to be known as a ‘mental handicap’ e.g. Down’s syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, cerebral palsy etc.

- 2 Do you currently have any of the following conditions? (A long list of possibilities was offered including ‘learning disability’, which was explained as a condition that “used to be known as a ‘mental handicap,’ e.g. Down’s syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, cerebral palsy etc.”)
- 3 Do you currently have any of the following conditions? (Among the list of options included was ‘learning difficulty,’ explained as “a difficulty with one or more areas of learning: reading, writing and arithmetic, e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia.”)

The reported prevalence of learning disabilities among the respondents’ children was 1.6%, extremely well aligned with the figure obtained from the GPPS. 2.1% of respondents reported that they had some kind of learning difficulty, and a very small number (0.1%) reported having a learning disability. Here too it is reasonable to suspect that people with a serious learning disability were not captured in the survey dataset. Due to the small number of cases with a learning difficulty, it was not possible to test whether or not

the prevalence of learning disabilities shows any differentiation between different types of Jews: for example, it was not possible to test whether or not strictly Orthodox Jews exhibit a higher or lower prevalence when compared to mainstream Jews.

Putting it all together

Despite the definitional inconsistencies and differences in study design, all reviewed studies revealed a significant degree of compatibility in relation to the prevalence of learning disabilities. Moreover, the studies provided numerous indications as to the boundaries between what can be considered severe versus moderate learning disabilities. This allows us to put the reviewed findings together to make an overarching assessment of the proportion of British Jews with learning disabilities (Table 1).

First, it is clear that the estimates of prevalence of severe learning disabilities are well aligned across many sources. They all hover around 1%, often somewhat below and very occasionally somewhat above that figure. Second, the prevalence of learning disabilities among males is consistently found to be higher than among females. The usual ratio of male to female prevalence is in the range of 1.3–2.0. The single exception here is the study from Israel, but in this case, rounding of figures

Table 1. Various estimates of the prevalence of learning disabilities

Study	Population	Prevalence %		Comments
		Severe	Moderate	
Scottish Census	Jews in Scotland	Males: 1.0% Females: 0.4%	Males: 3.55 – 5.5% Females: 2.2% – 3.0%	-
NII/Myers-JDC-Brookdale study, Israel	Jews in Israel	Males: 0.4% Females: 0.4%	Males: 9.0% Females: 4.7%	‘Borderline intelligence’ included in ‘moderate’
England, Department for Education	General population of England	Males: 0.6% Females: 0.4%	Males: 3.6% Females: 2.2%	-
GPPS, England	Jews in England	-	Total: 1.6%	Figure applies to both sexes combined; underestimation is likely.
NJCS, UK-1, respondents	UK Jewish community	Total: 0.1%	Total: 2.1%	Figure applies to both sexes combined; underestimation is likely.
NJCS, UK-2, respondents' children	UK Jewish community	Total: 1.6%	-	Figure applies to both sexes.
NHIS, USA	General population of USA	Males: 0.8% Females: 0.6%	Males: 12.8% – 13.6% Females: 7.0% – 7.6%	-

may have been the reason behind the similarity of male and female estimates. Third, in relation to both severe and moderate learning disabilities, estimates from the English Department of Education and estimates for Jews in the Scottish Census are especially well aligned. The fact that two such large-scale sources from the British context are so similar lends significant confidence to the findings.

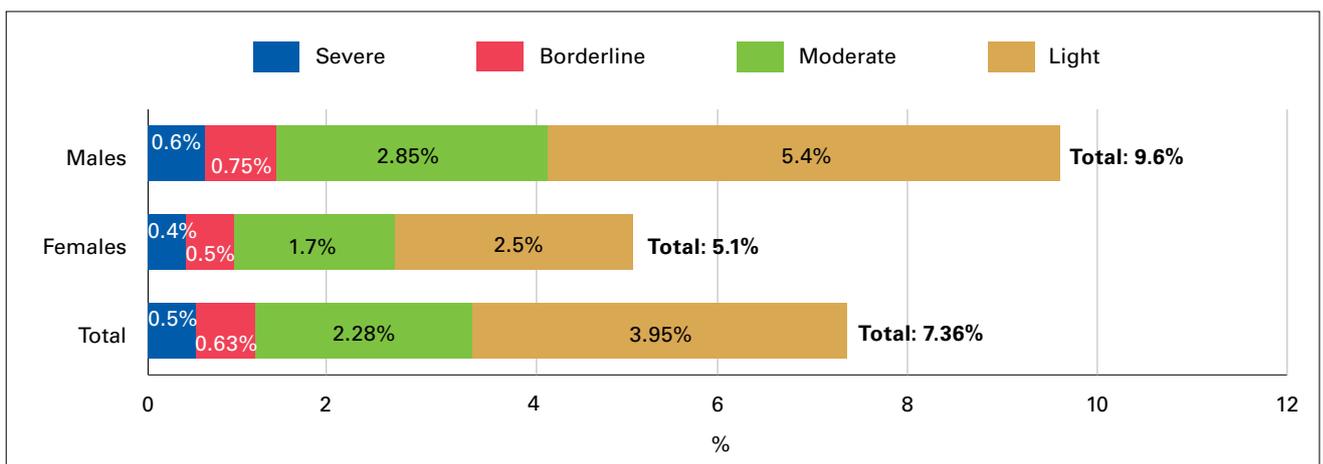
Drawing largely on the basis of three key sources – the Scottish Census, the estimates of the English Department of Education and the NII and Myers-JDC-Brookdale study from Israel – Figure 8 constitutes our best assessment of the prevalence of learning disabilities among British Jews, according to the severity of the condition.

In the figure above, the category of severe disabilities is kept approximately at the same level as the Scottish Census, the English Department of Education and the Israeli study would suggest. The category of ‘borderline’ is added in line with the understanding gained from the Israeli study: there is a category of people who fit in-between the categories of severe and moderate disabilities. Together, the severe and the borderline categories constitute 0.9% of females and 1.4% of males. The majority of people in these two categories would require special education during their childhood and teenage years, and some assistance with the practical, social and economic aspects of life during adulthood. In addition, around 2%–3%

of people (rounded for readability) have moderate levels of learning disabilities but the majority would be accommodated by the mainstream educational system and lead independent lives at adulthood. Finally, another 3%–5% are people with light learning disabilities whose educational lives will be spent in mainstream education and who may require some support while there. They too are expected to be independent in adulthood. In total, 5%–10% (again rounded) of Jews in the UK are expected to have some sort of learning disability, and for the majority it would be a light or moderate disability.

Which one of these figures should be used by those concerned with making an assessment in the context of the British Jewish population? The answer depends on the purpose of any proposed use. In presenting the whole spectrum of severity of learning disabilities, this paper creates the possibility for different organisations to choose their own figures which will be the most appropriate given the envisaged practical uses. By way of example, if an organisation’s policy focus is on providing suitable educational facilities for children with severe learning disabilities, then the proportion of Jews with severe and, possibly, borderline levels of learning disabilities is the figure to use. If, on the other hand, the levels of provision for people with learning disabilities in mainstream educational settings are of interest, then the proportion of people with moderate disabilities should be used for guidance.

Figure 8. Quantification of learning disabilities in the British Jewish population



4 Assessing the prevalence of learning disabilities among Jews in the United Kingdom

In this section, we apply the prevalence figures developed earlier in this paper to population counts of Jews in Great Britain. All population counts come from the 2011 Census, and they have been adjusted for any undercount using an adjustment factor derived from the JPR National Jewish Community Survey.

Taking into account the social, economic and religious differences between the Jewish mainstream and strictly Orthodox sub-populations, we also provide separate estimates for these two groups (see Appendix). For both sub-populations, estimates are split by geography, age and sex.

Among mainstream Jews (i.e. those who are not strictly Orthodox), we estimate 19,900 people (~7.4%) have some form of learning disability or difficulty, of whom, 3,055 persons (~1.1% of the total Jewish population) have severe or borderline levels of learning disabilities. The majority of this latter group (1,647 persons, 54%) lives in London, and about one third (940 persons) lives in the regions of the East of England (which includes South Hertfordshire), the South East, and the North West (including Manchester) combined. Children and

adolescents form about 20% of mainstream Jews with severe and borderline learning disabilities (603 persons).⁴

Among the strictly Orthodox, we estimate that, in total, 3,271 people have learning disabilities, of whom 501 (1.1%) have severe and borderline levels of learning disabilities. The majority of the latter group (310 people, 62%) lives in London (Stamford Hill and Barnet), and the rest in Manchester (152 people) and Gateshead (40 people). Children and adolescents constitute about one half of those with severe and borderline learning disabilities (Table 3).

The snapshot of the prevalence of learning disabilities presented in the main body of this report is designed to provide a broad picture. Specific policies may require more detailed estimates. While it is impossible for an analyst to predict all policy uses, it is possible to create a flexible enough set of numbers to help inform many such uses. The appendix to this paper serves exactly this purpose. Policy makers are advised to familiarise themselves with it and, when designing policy, select the figures and categories which are maximally aligned with the target groups of that particular policy.

Table 2. Mainstream Jews with severe and borderline learning disabilities, by region and age group

	London	East	North West	South East	Midlands
Children and adolescents	331	106	48	41	22
Adults	1316	353	200	193	95
Total	1647	458	248	234	117
	North East	Yorkshire and Humber	South West	Wales	Scotland
Children and adolescents	3	23	13	4	13
Adults	17	108	71	24	76
Total	20	131	84	27	89

Note: Children and adolescents are defined as those aged 0-19 years.

4 In certain instances, the numbers quoted do not sum exactly to the figures shown in the table. This is due to rounding.

Table 3. Strictly Orthodox Jews with severe and borderline learning disabilities, by region and age group

	London	North West	Gateshead
Children and adolescents	169	73	27
Adults	141	79	13
Total	310	152	40

Note: children and adolescents are defined as those aged 0-19 years.

5 Appendix

1a. Mainstream Jewish males with learning disabilities, by region

LONDON (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	26	33	125	237
Age 5 to 9	23	29	111	210
Age 10 to 14	22	28	106	202
Age 15 to 19	18	23	87	166
Age 20 to 29	51	64	241	457
Age 30 to 44	90	112	426	807
Age 45 to 64	106	133	504	956
Age 65-79	59	74	282	535
Age 80+	32	40	153	289
Total	429	536	2037	3859

EAST OF ENGLAND (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	7	9	35	66
Age 5 to 9	7	9	34	65
Age 10 to 14	8	10	37	69
Age 15 to 19	7	8	31	59
Age 20 to 29	11	13	51	97
Age 30 to 44	23	29	111	211
Age 45 to 64	35	43	165	313
Age 65-79	17	21	78	149
Age 80+	5	7	25	48
Total	120	149	568	1076

EAST MIDLANDS (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	2	3
Age 5 to 9	1	1	3	5
Age 10 to 14	0	1	2	4
Age 15 to 19	2	2	7	14
Age 20 to 29	3	4	16	30
Age 30 to 44	2	3	11	20
Age 45 to 64	4	6	21	40
Age 65-79	2	2	9	17
Age 80+	1	1	3	6
Total	15	19	73	139

NORTH EAST (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	1	1
Age 5 to 9	0	0	1	2
Age 10 to 14	0	0	1	2
Age 15 to 19	0	0	1	3
Age 20 to 29	1	1	4	8
Age 30 to 44	1	1	4	7
Age 45 to 64	1	2	7	13
Age 65-79	1	1	4	7
Age 80+	1	1	3	5
Total	5	7	25	47

NORTH WEST (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	3	4	14	26
Age 5 to 9	3	3	13	25
Age 10 to 14	3	4	15	28
Age 15 to 19	4	5	17	33
Age 20 to 29	7	9	34	65
Age 30 to 44	10	13	50	94
Age 45 to 64	19	24	90	170
Age 65-79	10	13	49	93
Age 80+	5	6	23	43
Total	64	80	305	578

SOUTH EAST (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	2	3	11	21
Age 5 to 9	2	3	12	22
Age 10 to 14	3	3	13	25
Age 15 to 19	3	4	17	31
Age 20 to 29	6	8	29	54
Age 30 to 44	11	13	50	95
Age 45 to 64	19	24	91	172
Age 65-79	10	13	49	93
Age 80+	4	5	20	37
Total	61	77	291	551

SOUTH WEST (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	3	5
Age 5 to 9	1	1	4	7
Age 10 to 14	1	1	4	8
Age 15 to 19	1	2	7	13
Age 20 to 29	3	4	13	25
Age 30 to 44	3	4	15	28
Age 45 to 64	6	8	31	58
Age 65-79	4	5	19	36
Age 80+	2	2	8	16
Total	22	27	104	196

WEST MIDLANDS (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	2	5
Age 5 to 9	0	1	2	4
Age 10 to 14	0	1	2	4
Age 15 to 19	1	2	6	12
Age 20 to 29	3	4	15	29
Age 30 to 44	2	3	10	19
Age 45 to 64	4	5	21	39
Age 65-79	2	3	11	20
Age 80+	1	1	5	9
Total	16	20	74	141

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	6	11
Age 5 to 9	1	1	5	9
Age 10 to 14	2	2	8	14
Age 15 to 19	2	3	10	20
Age 20 to 29	5	6	22	42
Age 30 to 44	5	6	24	46
Age 45 to 64	10	12	47	89
Age 65-79	6	7	28	52
Age 80+	3	4	14	27
Total	34	43	163	309

WALES (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	1	2
Age 5 to 9	0	0	1	2
Age 10 to 14	0	0	1	2
Age 15 to 19	0	0	1	3
Age 20 to 29	1	1	5	10
Age 30 to 44	1	1	6	10
Age 45 to 64	2	3	11	20
Age 65-79	1	2	7	12
Age 80+	0	1	2	4
Total	7	9	35	66

SCOTLAND (MAINSTREAM, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	3	6
Age 5 to 9	1	1	3	6
Age 10 to 14	1	1	5	9
Age 15 to 19	1	2	6	11
Age 20 to 29	4	4	17	32
Age 30 to 44	4	5	18	33
Age 45 to 64	7	9	33	63
Age 65-79	4	4	17	32
Age 80+	2	2	8	15
Total	23	29	109	206

1b. Mainstream Jewish females with learning disabilities, by region

LONDON (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	17	21	70	103
Age 5 to 9	15	19	63	93
Age 10 to 14	14	17	58	85
Age 15 to 19	12	14	49	72
Age 20 to 29	34	42	143	210
Age 30 to 44	58	72	246	362
Age 45 to 64	77	96	326	479
Age 65-79	46	57	194	286
Age 80+	32	41	138	203
Total	303	379	1288	1894

EAST OF ENGLAND (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	5	6	20	30
Age 5 to 9	5	6	20	29
Age 10 to 14	4	6	19	28
Age 15 to 19	4	5	18	27
Age 20 to 29	7	9	31	45
Age 30 to 44	18	22	76	112
Age 45 to 64	24	31	104	153
Age 65-79	12	15	50	74
Age 80+	5	6	20	29
Total	84	105	358	526

EAST MIDLANDS (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	1	1
Age 5 to 9	0	0	1	2
Age 10 to 14	0	1	2	3
Age 15 to 19	1	1	4	6
Age 20 to 29	2	2	8	12
Age 30 to 44	1	2	6	9
Age 45 to 64	3	3	11	17
Age 65-79	1	2	5	8
Age 80+	1	1	3	4
Total	10	12	41	61

NORTH EAST (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	0	1
Age 5 to 9	0	0	1	1
Age 10 to 14	0	0	1	1
Age 15 to 19	0	0	1	2
Age 20 to 29	0	1	2	3
Age 30 to 44	0	1	2	3
Age 45 to 64	1	1	4	6
Age 65-79	1	1	2	3
Age 80+	0	1	2	3
Total	4	4	15	22

NORTH WEST (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	2	2	8	12
Age 5 to 9	2	2	8	12
Age 10 to 14	2	3	9	13
Age 15 to 19	3	4	12	18
Age 20 to 29	4	6	19	28
Age 30 to 44	7	9	31	45
Age 45 to 64	13	16	55	81
Age 65-79	8	10	33	48
Age 80+	5	6	20	30
Total	46	57	195	287

SOUTH EAST (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	2	6	9
Age 5 to 9	2	2	7	11
Age 10 to 14	2	2	8	11
Age 15 to 19	2	3	9	13
Age 20 to 29	4	5	18	26
Age 30 to 44	8	10	33	49
Age 45 to 64	13	16	55	81
Age 65-79	7	9	30	44
Age 80+	4	5	16	23
Total	43	53	182	267

SOUTH WEST (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	1	2	3
Age 5 to 9	0	1	2	3
Age 10 to 14	1	1	2	3
Age 15 to 19	1	1	3	4
Age 20 to 29	2	2	7	10
Age 30 to 44	2	3	9	14
Age 45 to 64	5	6	20	30
Age 65-79	3	4	12	18
Age 80+	2	2	8	11
Total	15	19	66	96

WEST MIDLANDS (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	1	2
Age 5 to 9	0	0	2	2
Age 10 to 14	0	0	1	2
Age 15 to 19	1	1	5	7
Age 20 to 29	2	3	10	15
Age 30 to 44	2	2	7	10
Age 45 to 64	3	3	11	16
Age 65-79	2	2	7	10
Age 80+	1	1	4	6
Total	11	14	48	71

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	4	5
Age 5 to 9	1	1	3	5
Age 10 to 14	1	1	4	6
Age 15 to 19	1	2	6	9
Age 20 to 29	3	4	12	18
Age 30 to 44	4	5	15	23
Age 45 to 64	6	8	27	40
Age 65-79	4	5	18	26
Age 80+	3	3	11	16
Total	24	30	101	149

WALES (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	0	0	1
Age 5 to 9	0	0	0	1
Age 10 to 14	0	0	1	1
Age 15 to 19	0	0	1	2
Age 20 to 29	1	1	2	4
Age 30 to 44	1	1	3	4
Age 45 to 64	2	2	7	10
Age 65-79	1	1	3	5
Age 80+	1	1	2	3
Total	5	6	20	30

SCOTLAND (MAINSTREAM, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	0	1	2	3
Age 5 to 9	0	1	2	3
Age 10 to 14	1	1	2	3
Age 15 to 19	1	1	3	5
Age 20 to 29	2	3	11	16
Age 30 to 44	3	3	11	16
Age 45 to 64	5	6	20	30
Age 65-79	3	3	12	17
Age 80+	2	2	7	11
Total	17	21	70	103

2a. Strictly Orthodox Jewish males with learning disabilities, by region

LONDON (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	16	20	76	144
Age 5 to 9	13	16	61	116
Age 10 to 14	10	12	46	88
Age 15 to 19	6	8	30	56
Age 20 to 29	12	15	58	110
Age 30 to 44	11	14	54	102
Age 45 to 64	9	11	41	79
Age 65-79	3	4	16	30
Age 80+	1	2	7	13
Total	82	103	390	738

NORTH WEST (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	6	8	30	56
Age 5 to 9	6	7	27	51
Age 10 to 14	4	5	21	39
Age 15 to 19	3	3	13	24
Age 20 to 29	4	5	20	38
Age 30 to 44	6	7	28	53
Age 45 to 64	6	8	30	58
Age 65-79	2	3	11	22
Age 80+	1	2	6	11
Total	39	49	186	352

GATESHEAD (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, MALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	2	7	13
Age 5 to 9	1	2	6	11
Age 10 to 14	1	2	6	11
Age 15 to 19	3	4	16	30
Age 20 to 29	1	2	7	13
Age 30 to 44	1	1	5	10
Age 45 to 64	1	1	4	7
Age 65-79	0	0	1	2
Age 80+	0	0	0	1
Total	11	14	52	99

2b. Strictly Orthodox Jewish females with learning disabilities, by region

LONDON (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	10	13	43	63
Age 5 to 9	8	10	35	51
Age 10 to 14	7	8	29	42
Age 15 to 19	5	6	21	32
Age 20 to 29	9	11	38	56
Age 30 to 44	7	9	32	46
Age 45 to 64	6	7	25	36
Age 65-79	2	3	9	13
Age 80+	1	2	6	9
Total	56	70	237	348

NORTH WEST (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	4	5	17	26
Age 5 to 9	4	5	16	23
Age 10 to 14	3	4	12	18
Age 15 to 19	3	4	12	18
Age 20 to 29	3	4	14	21
Age 30 to 44	4	5	16	24
Age 45 to 64	4	5	18	26
Age 65-79	2	2	8	12
Age 80+	2	2	7	10
Total	28	35	120	177

GATESHEAD (STRICTLY ORTHODOX, FEMALE)				
AGE	Severe	Borderline	Moderate	Light
Age 0 to 4	1	1	4	6
Age 5 to 9	1	1	5	7
Age 10 to 14	1	1	3	4
Age 15 to 19	2	3	9	13
Age 20 to 29	1	1	3	4
Age 30 to 44	1	1	3	4
Age 45 to 64	1	1	2	3
Age 65-79	0	0	1	1
Age 80+	0	0	0	0
Total	7	9	29	43

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