



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Implementing School and Evidence-Based Interventions for Children from Families that are Poor

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Overview of Remarks

- SUMMARY: What I think I'm going to tell you
- Grand Challenge of Poverty and Poverty's Impact on children, families, teachers, other school personnel, schools, and communities
- INTERVENTIONS
 - All community interventions
 - All-school interventions
 - Family interventions
 - The Incredible Years
 - Attendance
 - Nurse Home Visiting
 - Family Check Up
- SUMMARY (if I have time): What I hope I told you!
- References

Note: I AM LEARNING, TOO!



My GaGa is an expert about some stuff, he tells me, but mostly not about this!

03.28.2011 16:51

Summary

1. Poor educational outcomes are multiply determined—and must be addressed at several levels
2. We have evidence based tools to address some of the levels—but primarily at the level of the student and classroom
3. We have emerging tools to address problems at the level of the family—this can and should still be done
4. We have good reason to address problems at the level of the neighborhood and school.
5. Intervention success is unlikely without effective tools at all levels

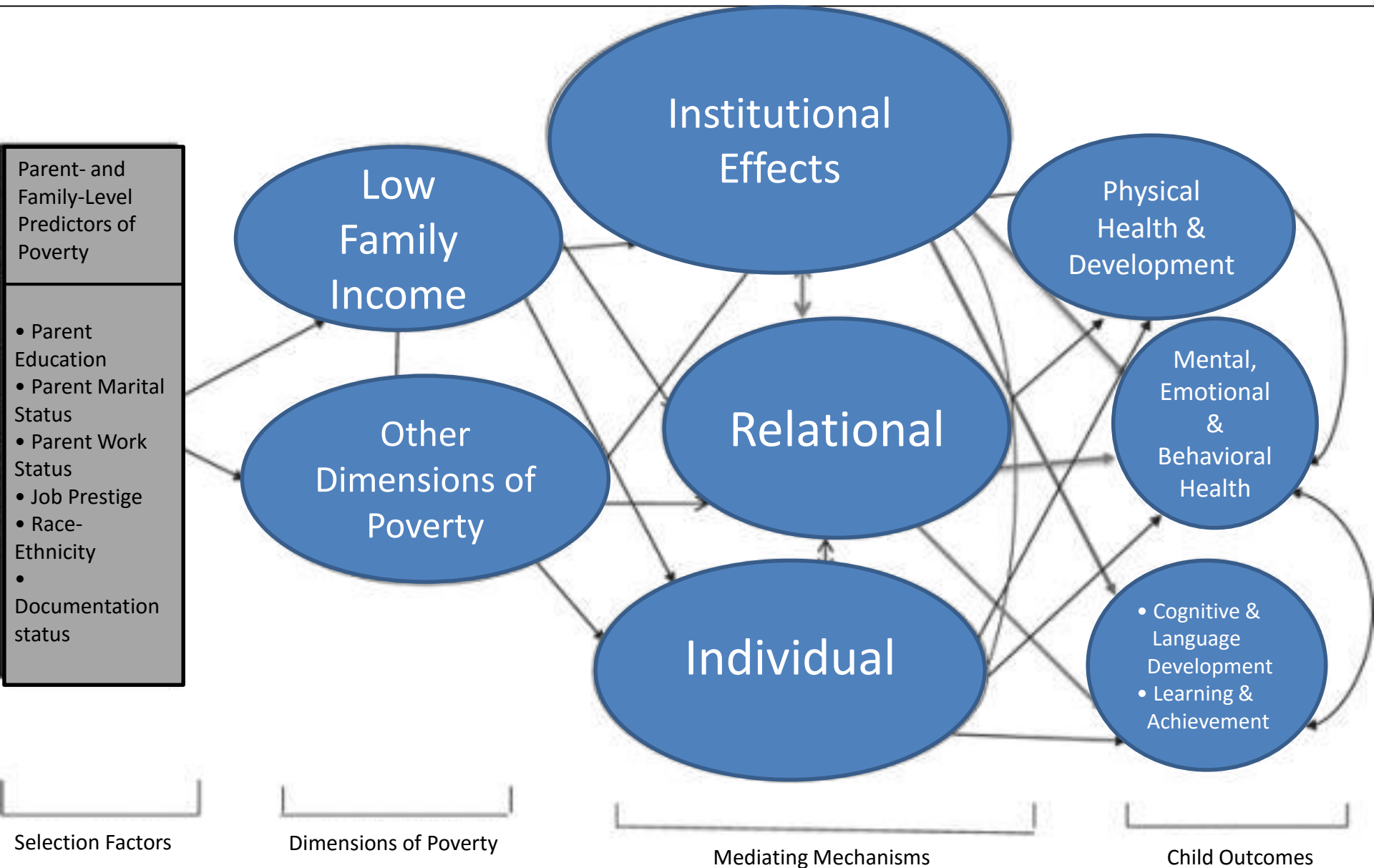
Background on Poverty in USA

- The number of families in deep poverty grew sharply during the recent recession and its aftermath, and in 2010, the share of Americans whose families made less than half of the poverty line hit a record: 6.7 percent of the population, or 1 in 15 Americans.
- In 2010, 1 in every 10 American children lived in deep poverty.

Community Agency Effects

- Erin Godfrey and Hirokazu Yoshikawa examined the impact of welfare office characteristics on children's education (*Child Development* 2012).
 - Caseworker support, caseload size, and emphasis on parental employment predicted children's reading and math achievement and internalizing behavior five years later!

Poverty: Complexly Intertwined Impact



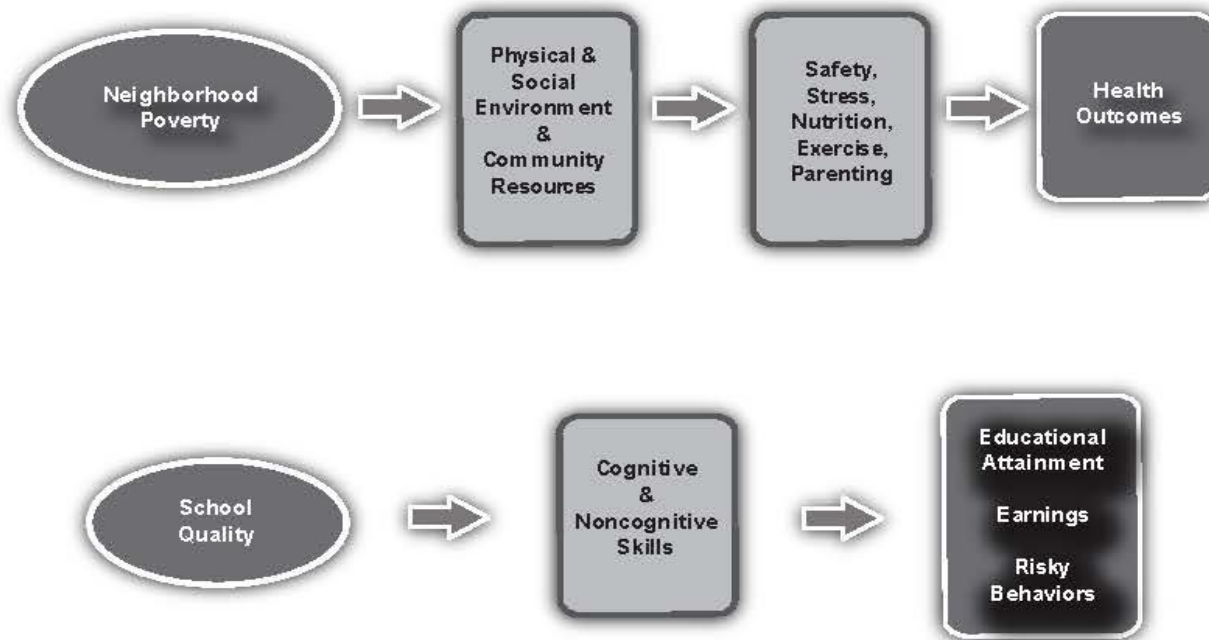


Figure 3. Pathways and effects of neighborhood and school interventions.

Katz, L. F. (2014-15). Reducing inequality: Neighborhood and school interventions. *Focus*, 31(2), 12-17.

PEDIATRICS®

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Shonkoff, J. et al. and the Section on Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption, and Dependent Care. (2011). *Early Childhood Adversity: Toxic Stress, and the Role of the Pediatrician: Translating Developmental Science Into Lifelong Health*, *Pediatrics*, originally published online December 26, 2011.

AAP Report on Toxic Stress: 1 of 5 Main Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 2.

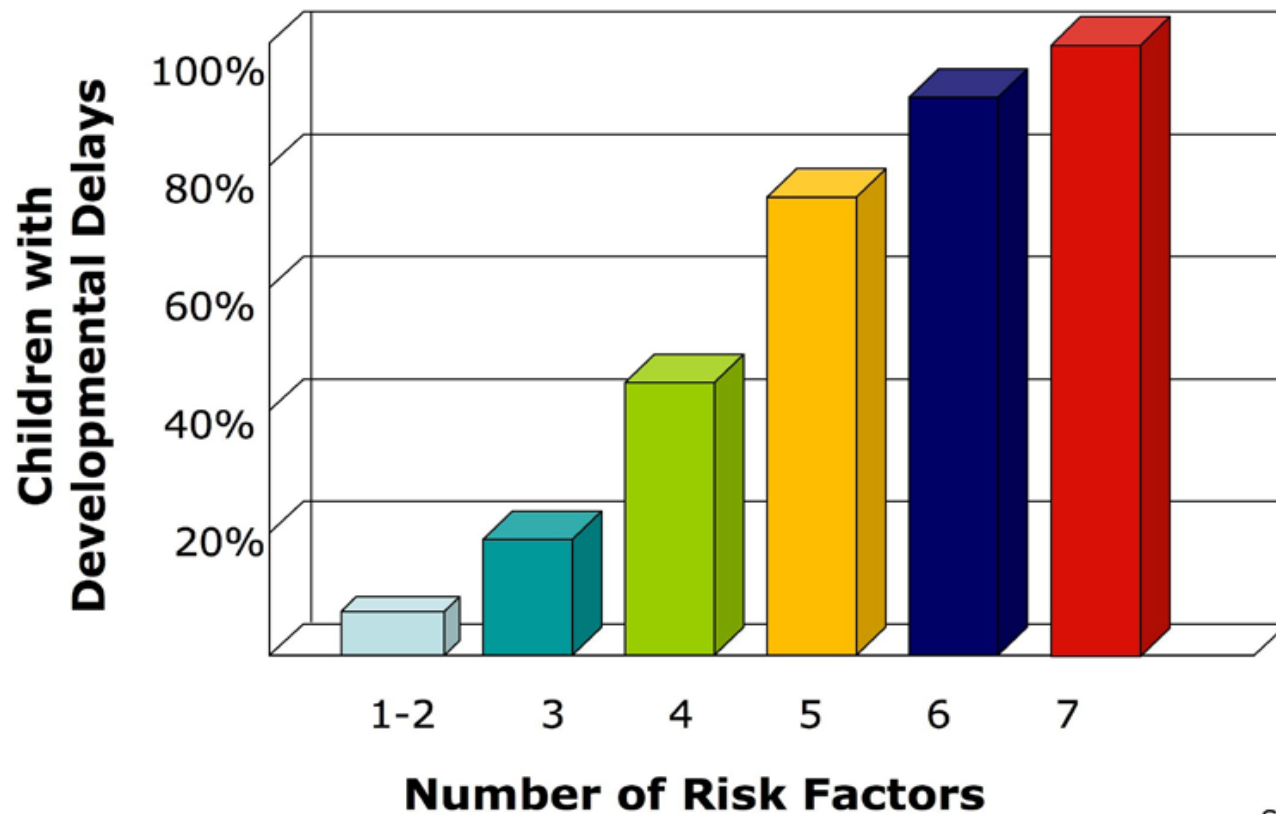
The growing scientific knowledge base that links childhood toxic stress with disruptions of the developing nervous, cardiovascular, immune, and metabolic systems, and the evidence that these disruptions can lead to lifelong impairments in learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health, should be fully incorporated into the training of all current and future physicians (and all other health service providers) [material in parentheses and bright red text not in the original].

CAPTA Early Intervention Study: Summary

- Based on Measured Delay and/or High Risk, 79% of CWS investigated children were identified as having a measured delay or high risk status
 - Children with more than 5 recognized risk factors at baseline re almost certain to develop measured delays that remain at 36 months



Significant Adversity Impairs Development in the First Three Years



Cumulative Risk & Effects on 3rd Grade Reading (R) & Math (M), Truancy (T), Conduct (C) & >1 Suspension (S)

Prevalence of individual and cumulative risk, Percentage of the Total Sample, and Significant relationship to key outcomes (N= 10,738)

Risk factors	%	Academic	Truancy & Beh
Inadequate prenatal care		34.4	(R,M)
Preterm/low birth weight		20.9	(R,M)
High lead exposure		21.3	(R,M)
Teen mother		24.7	(T,C,S)
Low maternal education		26.2	(R,M) (T,C,S)
Homelessness		9.2	(M) (C,S)
Child maltreatment		10.9	(R,M) (T,C)
Cumulative risk (not including poverty)			
No risk		1	
One risk		1.3X*	1.8X*
Two risks		1.6X*	2.0X*
Three or more risks		1.9X&	2.5X*

How
**CHILDREN
SUCCEED**



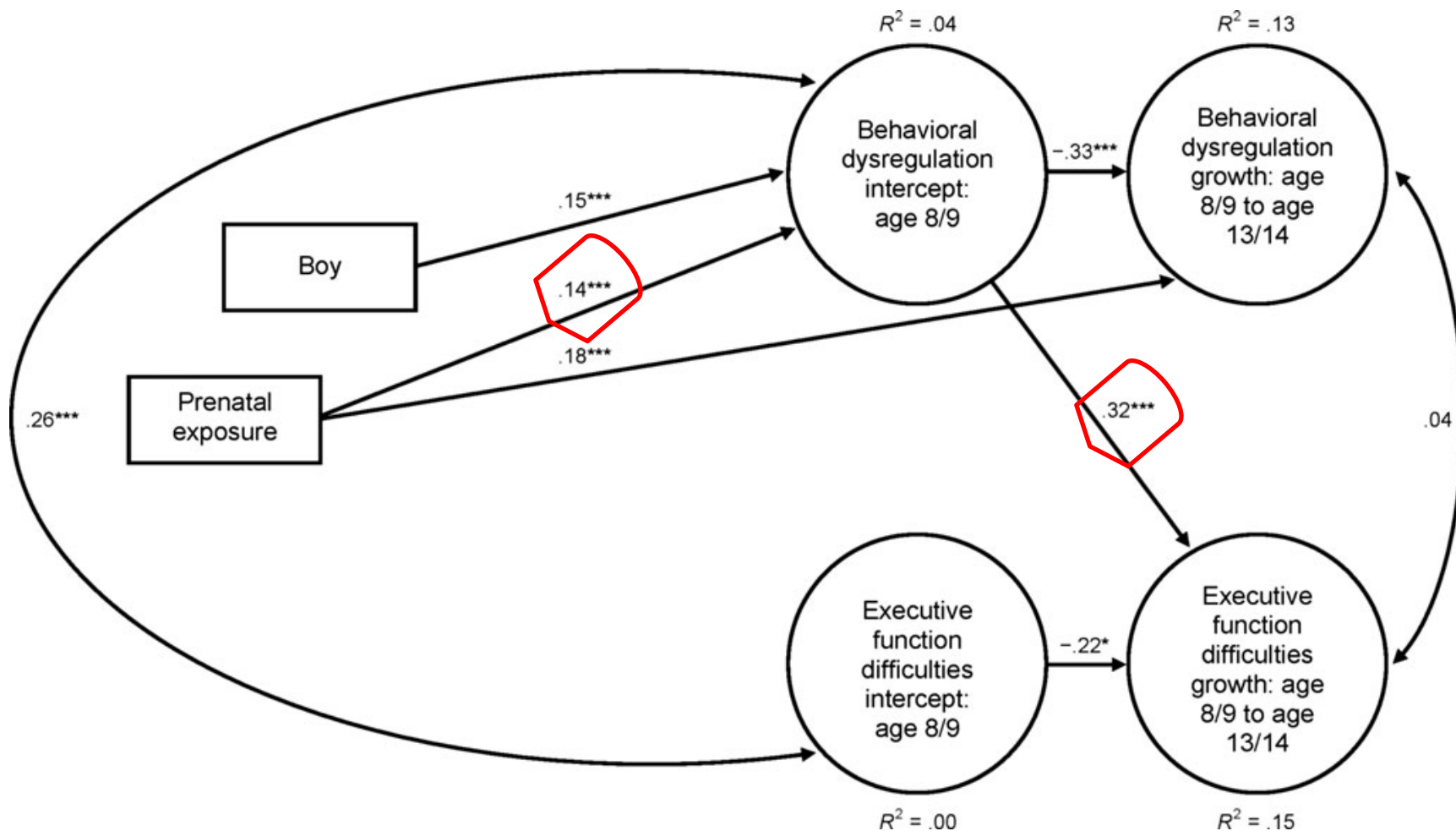
GRIT, CURIOSITY, *and the*
HIDDEN POWER *of* CHARACTER
PAUL TOUGH
AUTHOR OF *Whatever It Takes*

Although noxious and under-stimulating environments may worsen odds for children, the impact of allostatic load and other factors impairing **executive functioning** most affects the achievement of poor children!

Early Adversity is a Better Predictor of Behavior Problems than Prenatal Drug Exposure

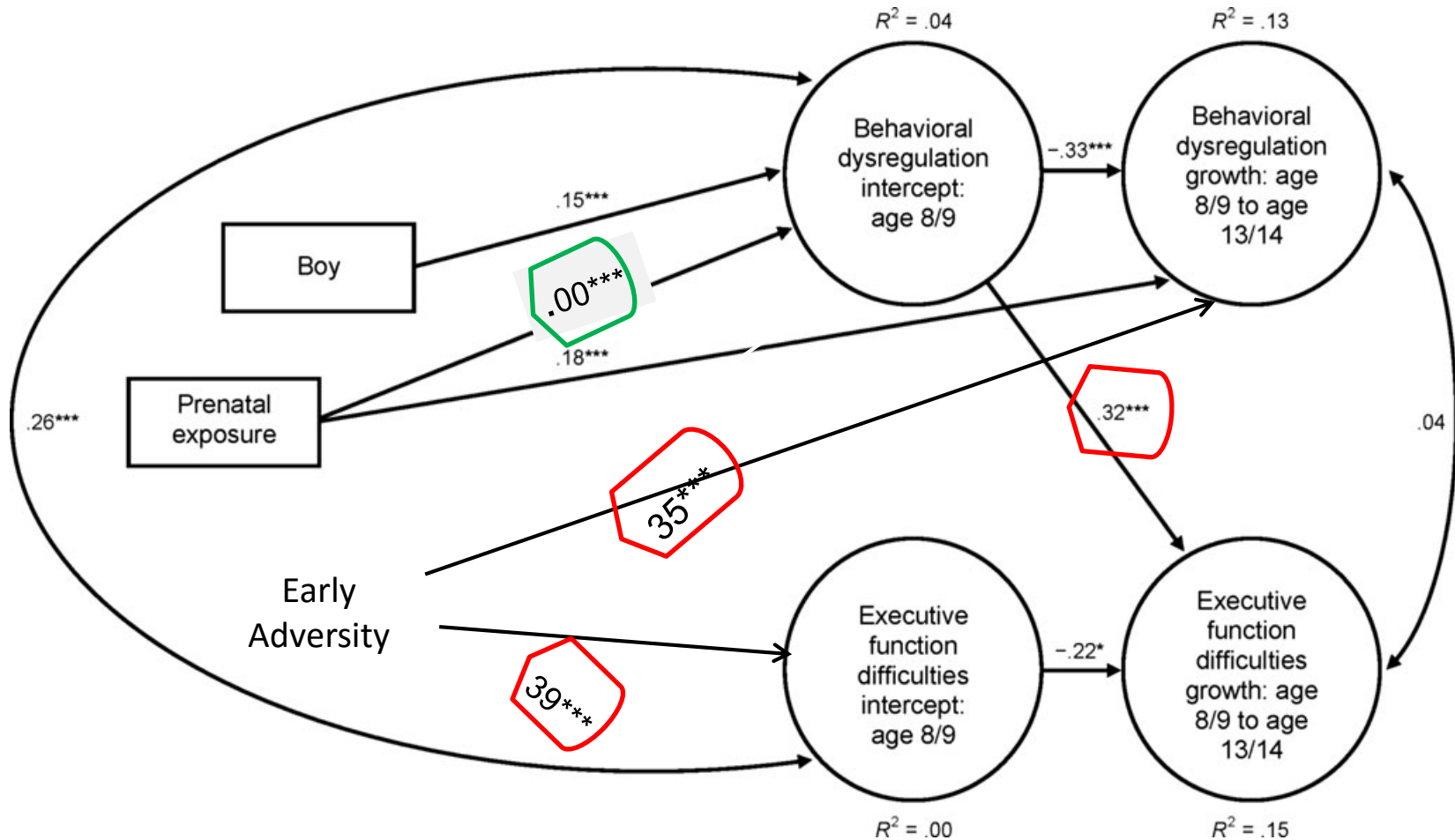
- What are the effects on behavior of children?
- What are the effects on executive functioning of children
 - Direct, indirect, interactive
- Early Adversity (EA): 10 Risk Factors
 - Parental MH/SA, community violence, HOME, abuse, income, ...

Prenatal Drug Exposure to Behavioral Dysregulation or Executive Functioning Difficulties



Model explains about 15% of variance in behavior and Executive functioning

Model with Early Adversity Added



Model explains about 25% of variance in behavior and executive functioning

Fisher, P. A., Lester, B. M., DeGarmo, D. S., Lagasse, L. L., Lin, H., Shankaran, S., . . . Higgins, R. (2011). The combined effects of prenatal drug exposure and early adversity on neurobehavioral disinhibition in childhood and adolescence. [Article]. *Development and Psychopathology*, 23(3), 777-790. doi:10.1017/S0954579411000000

What?

- Being prenatally drug exposed is a challenge for children but **almost all** of that challenge results from the adverse developmental environment that children experience.
- Behavioral dysfunction stabilized but executive functioning got worse over time (primarily as a result of drug exposure and early adversity although both PDE and EA contribute)
- **Post Natal Environments Matter as Much as Pre-Natal Environments, so the impact of PDE is not fixed!**

Early Adversity is Not Irreversible

- At least parenting can be taught to be safer
 - Safe Care (now being tested with Parents as Teachers)
 - Parent Child Interaction Therapy
 - The Incredible Years (also includes Teacher and child interventions)
 - Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care
 - ALL HAVE SHOWN SUCCESS WORKING WITH VERY TROUBLED ABUSIVE FAMILIES AND ABUSED CHILDREN

Poverty & Trauma's Effects on Executive Functioning are Not Irreversible

- Children who get responsive predictable parenting and are taught how to be more effective in making decisions and sustaining self-regulation are going to be the successes (Paul Tough)! (Tuesday October 30th, 9AM, SSW.)
- Phil Fisher has shown that the brains of young children in foster care change as a result of contingent responsive parenting when compared to other foster children.

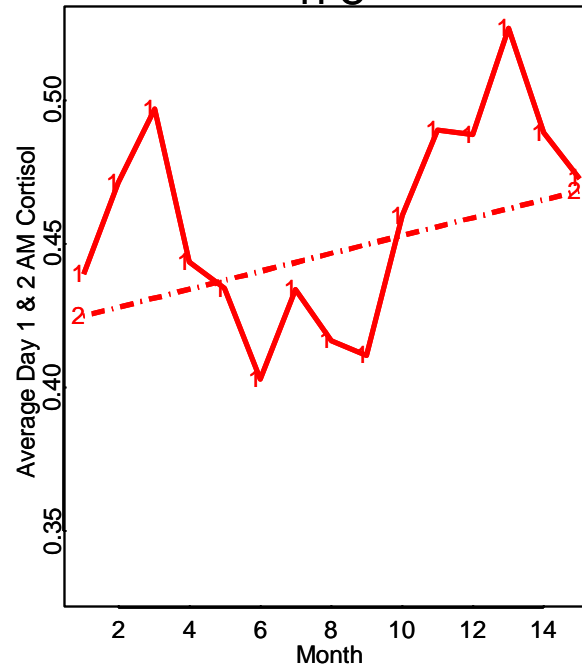
Morning Cortisol Levels By Group, Baseline To 15 Months

CC



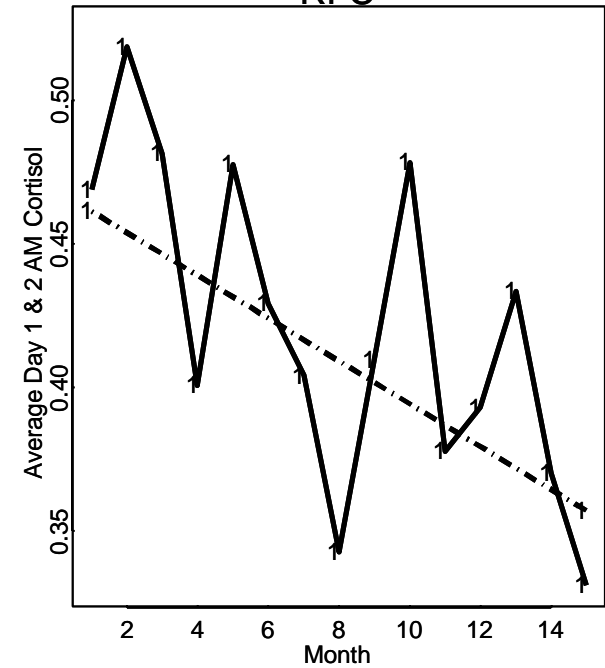
Community

TFC



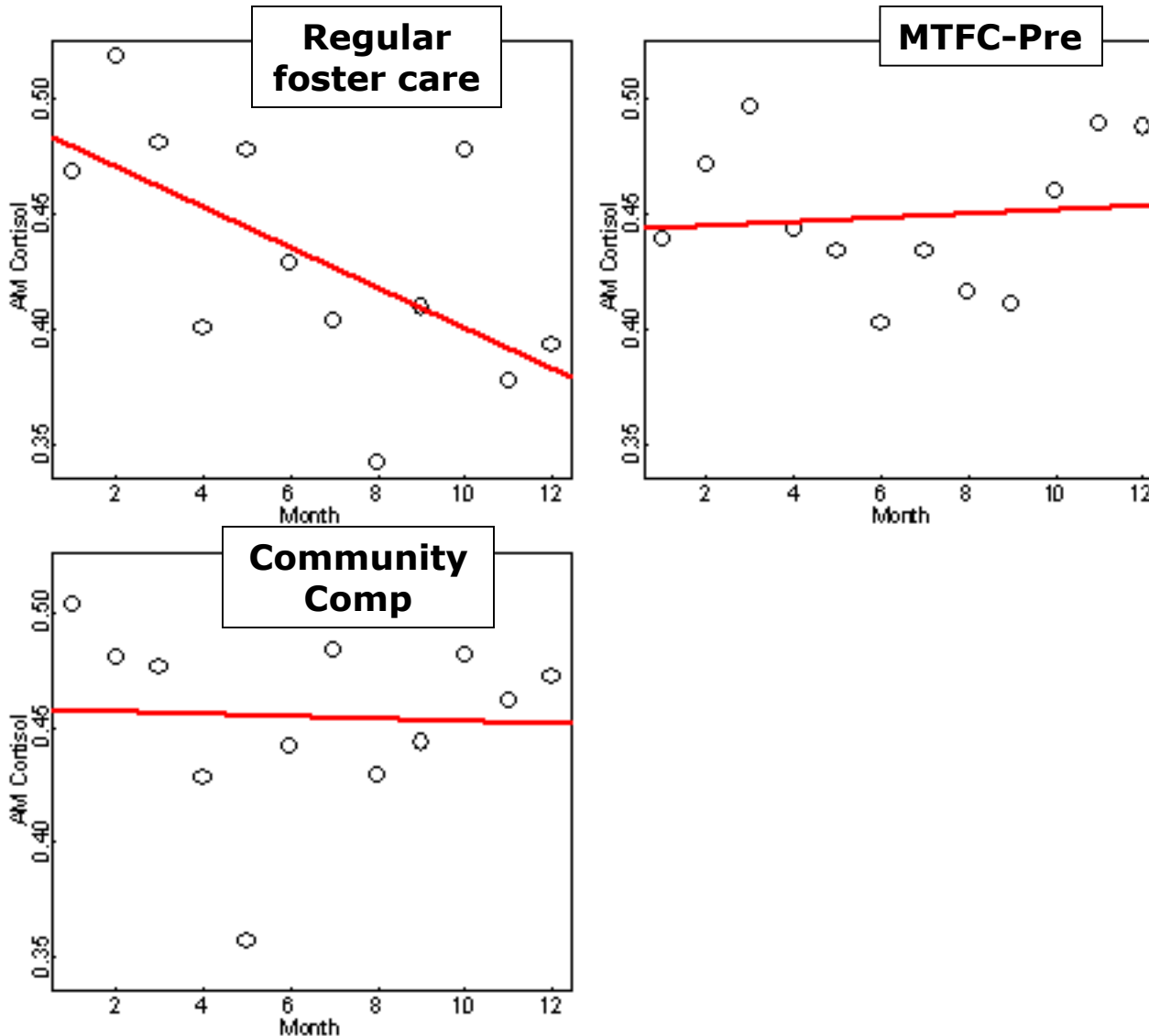
TFC-P

RFC



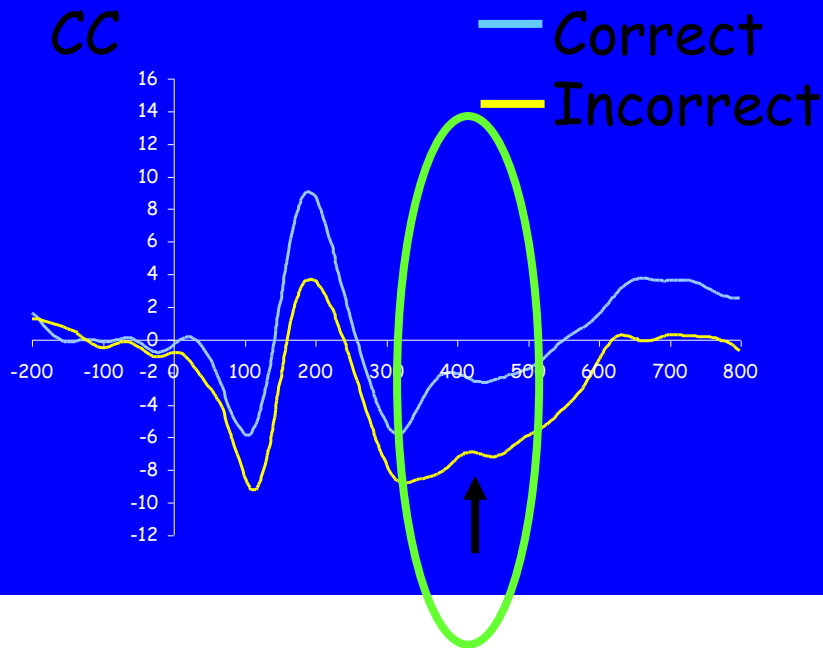
Regular FC

Positive Morning Cortisol Levels By Group, Baseline To 15 Months

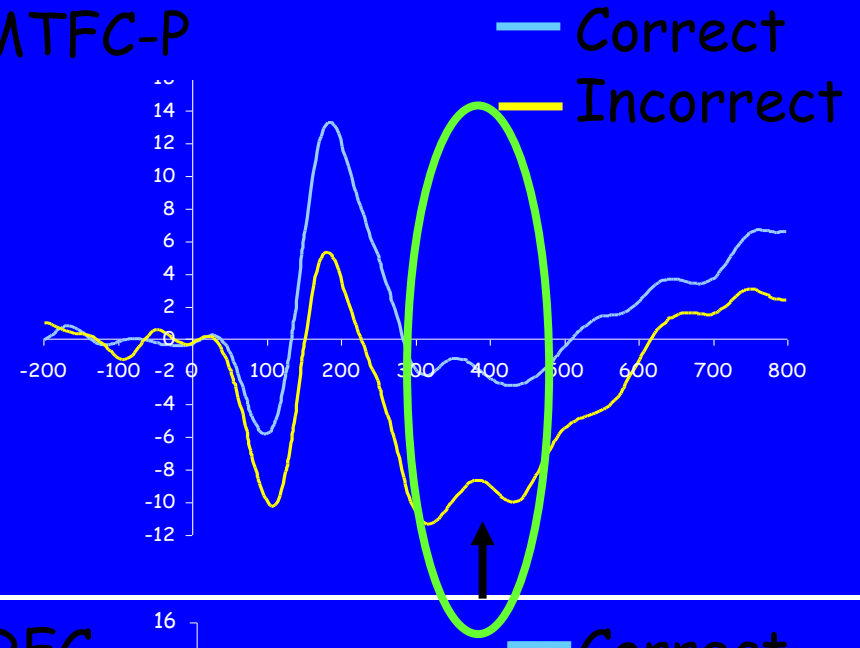


Intervention Effects On Executive Functioning

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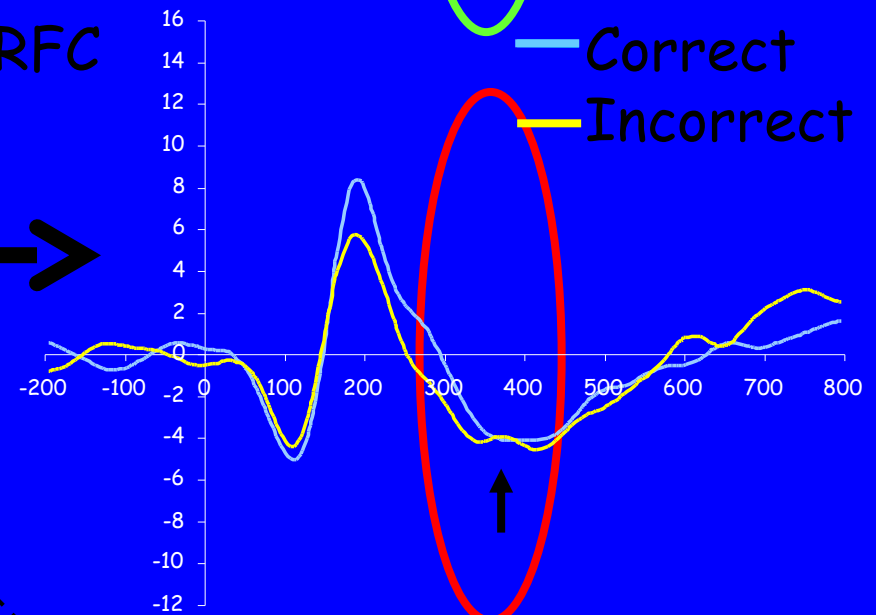
MTFC-P



Children in Regular Foster Care
Do Not Respond Differently to
Positive and Negative Feedback

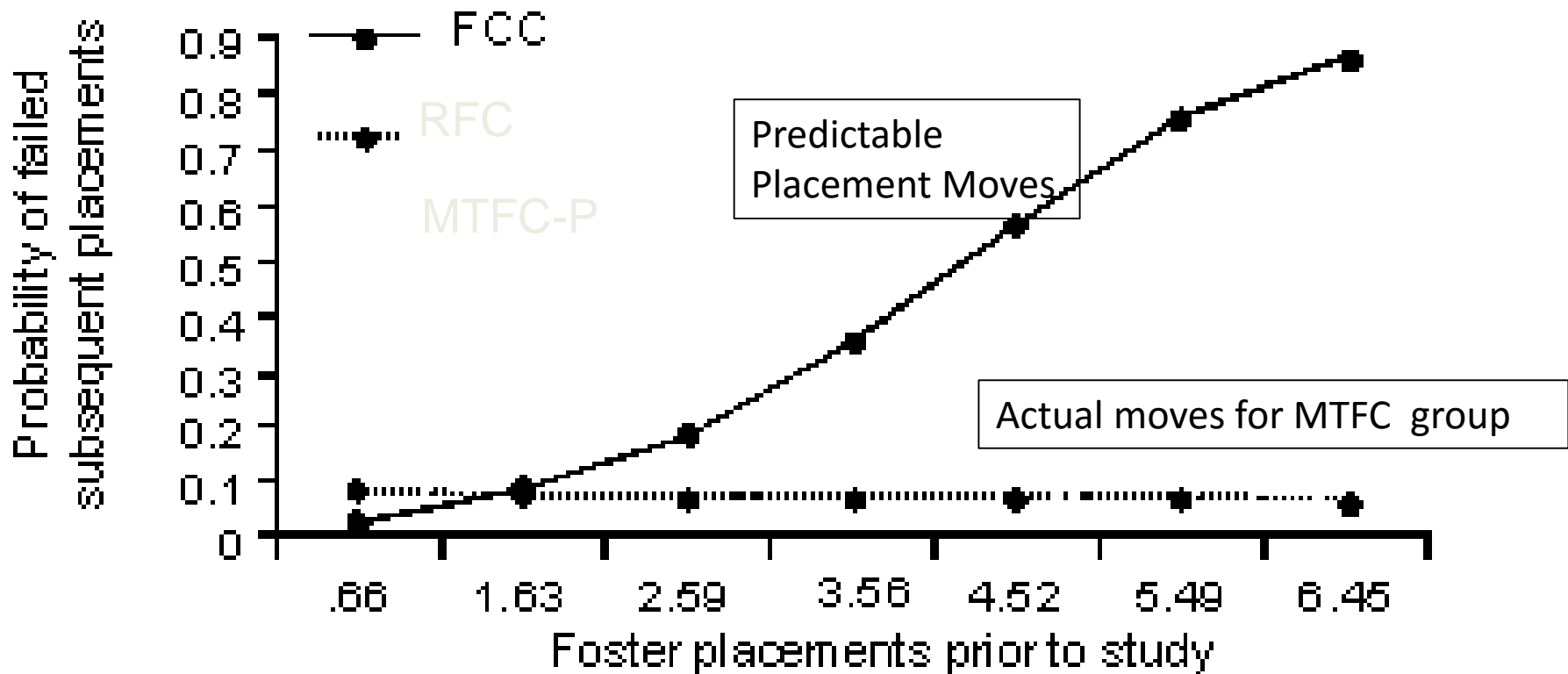
Children in MTFC-P respond more
normatively

RFC



Effect Of Prior Out-of-home Placements On Permanent Placement Failures, MTFC-P Vs. Regular FC

Figure 3. Probability of failed subsequent placements by condition.



(Fisher, Burraston, & Pears, 2005)

Prior poor and unstable history
can be overcome!

WHAT?

- The best path to improved outcomes for children and parents is evidence-based parent training (family work), based on social learning models, that have now been shown to be very effective at improving parenting and child behavioral outcomes... **but will they also improve educational outcomes?**
- **NOT YET BROADLY SHOWN**

Community Level Interventions

Are they facilitative of student success? VERY LIKELY!

Can they be effective? WE THINK SO!

Are they proven? Not yet!

Will Dobbie and Roland Fryer in the *American Economic Journal—Applied Economics*, July, 2011...

“We conclude with evidence that suggests high-quality schools are enough to significantly increase academic achievement among the poor. Community programs appear neither necessary nor sufficient.”

So, Why Do We Bother?

Not Necessary... (but can you really reduce toxic stress without reducing aversive community conditions)?

Not Sufficient? (yet, in the Fisher MLS study they did not look at quality of schools or curriculum)

Facilitative?

Accelerative?

Expeditious?



Perhaps learning by children and parents is easier with fewer fears

Or, just HUMANE?

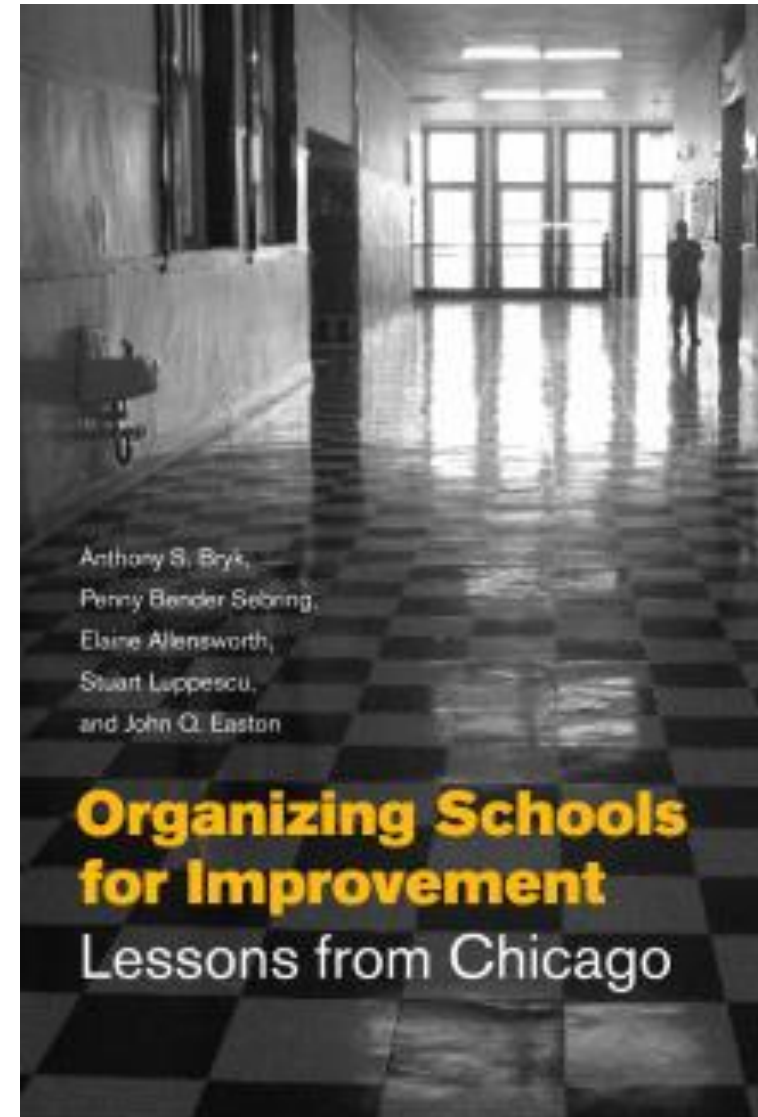
WHOLE School Level Reforms

- Chicago Teacher's Union call for more social workers and social services at high poverty schools, to give teachers in those schools and their students a fair chance of success



School Level Reforms

- Consortium on Chicago School Research (Bryk et al, 2010) shows that “truly disadvantaged schools can improve substantially if they implement proper organizational structures”
 - “community factors accounted for most of the difference in stagnation rates among schools needing improvement”
 - Yet 1/3rd of these schools did improve!



Organizing Schools for Improvement

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS (Note: Sustained weakness in just one of these areas undermined virtually all attempts at improving student learning)

- School leadership
- Parent community ties*
- Professional capacity
- Student centered learning climate*
- Instructional guidance

*Starred items are likely to require significant social services if they are to be achieved in high poverty communities

Source: Bryk et al (2010)

Chicago Area Schools in Areas with High Child Abuse Rates...

- Had a 2% chance of having strong essential supports in place (even though 20% of all Chicago Public Schools had them in place)
- Communities with many abused children (whether at home or in foster care) are doubly troubled

School Use of Child Level Data to Help Individuals

Research Report

July 2007



CONSORTIUM ON
CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools

A Close Look at Course Grades, Failures, and Attendance in the Freshman Year

Elaine M. Allensworth
John Q. Easton



- 87% of 9th graders who missed 0-4 days of school, later graduated; BUT only 1% of freshman who missed 30 days or more, later graduated from high school
- 86% of students with a freshman GPA of 2.5 graduated, only 35% of those with a 1.5 GPA or lower, later graduated
- DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR 9th GRADERS ARE?

Another Whole School Intervention Approach

The *Turnaround for Children* model posits that if high poverty schools develop the capacity to address poverty-related barriers to learning, and if this capacity-building and culture change is coupled with what has been learned from other innovative models (about effective leadership and teaching, extended learning time, and the need for common core standards), then widespread, scalable, and sustainable system reform in America's lowest performing public schools is truly possible. ..

Turnaround for Children Model

BIG POINT. Fund school-centered services that: (1) institutionalize the role of a school-based clinical social worker; (2) improve funding for evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies (e.g., counseling) that can preempt more expensive mental health and Special Education services; and (3) improve the integration of schools and child-serving systems by expanding public funding streams to cover current funding gaps (e.g., for case management, crisis intervention services, family outreach, and teacher consultation).

Mandate the incorporation of systems of support, culture change, and service integration into all reform options (transformation, turnaround, alternative management, and restart) for high poverty schools and school districts, that incorporate implementation science in their dissemination

Provide adequate funding for interventions for children with intense needs (e.g., autism, developmental disabilities, severe mental health issues).

Promote the development of student support and climate measures that can be incorporated into accountability systems, and establish incentive structures that promote the adoption of school culture and climate improvement models.

Establish standards and provide funding for leader and teacher preparation that addresses poverty-related barriers in high poverty schools.

TFC School & Student Support Model

Since 2005, TFC has worked in over 60 of the lowest performing public schools in New York City (TFC is a three year program).

Comprehensive student support *systems are introduced through three problem-solving* teams that focus on behavior, academics and school climate. The *Student Intervention Team (SIT) assumes care management for students at the highest level of behavioral and social need... The SIT reviews highest-risk students' needs, and develops and monitors intervention* plans for in-school counseling and referral to outside services.

The TFC model focuses on the most challenging students first because a small percentage of extremely high need students can be so negatively charismatic that they destroy a school culture and make it virtually impossible for teachers to teach and students to learn.

When is it Just Too Late?

- The *Pathways to Education* project began because of a community (parents) request to a local health agency to help their children succeed in high school. The community consisted mainly of people from a public housing complex, with the majority of families being poor, immigrants and from visible minority groups.
- *Pathways* has been running for six years, and the results for the first five cohorts of students have been exciting. In comparison to a pre-project cohort:
 - the absentee and academic ‘at-risk’ rate has fallen by 50% ,
 - the ‘dropout’ rate has fallen by 80% to a level below the average for district
 - the five-year graduation rate has risen from 42% to 75%.
- Of the graduates, 80% go on to college or university, compared with 42% before the Pathways project. While these initial results must be replicated in other communities, they suggest that, even at the high school level, it’s never too late
ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2528798/

The Big Secret is Family Interventions as a Part of All Levels of Intervention



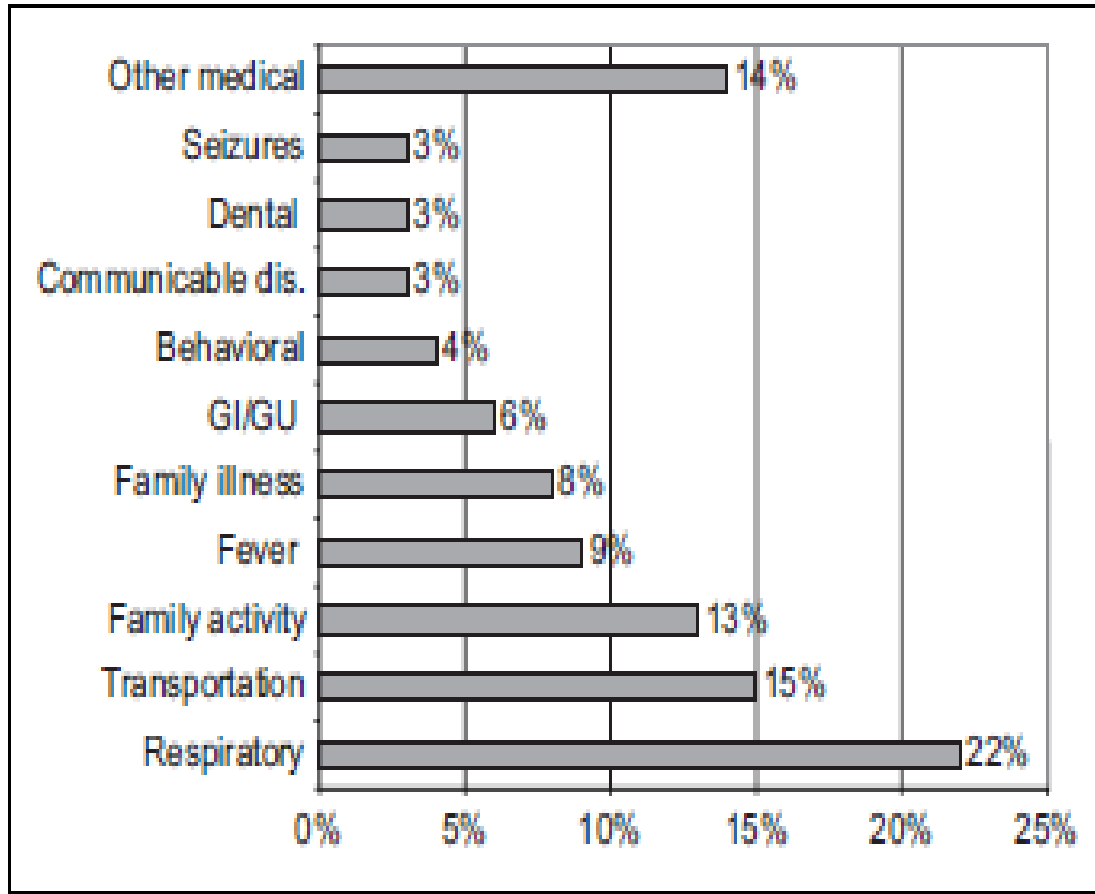
Family Nurse Visiting & Attendance (Kerr, et al, 2011)

- Children from families earning less than 300% of the federal poverty level were four times as likely to have chronic absences than children above that level (Romero & Lee, 2008)
- Frequent movement affects chronic absenteeism
 - parents dealing with job loss, divorce, housing problems including substandard housing, foster care, domestic violence, or parents' involvement in the criminal justice
- We know that maternal depression, mental illness, and substance abuse can increase rates of school absence
- Chronically absent children don't have routines for school preparation
 - children may be left alone in the morning
 - if they miss the bus they do not attend school
 - Some parents do not want their children to travel alone even one block

School Nurse Outreach Intervention (Kerr, et al, 2011)

- Intervention focused on contacting parents of children with 10% of school year absent for illness-related reason
 - Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) called family when student reached 10% of year absent due to illness
 - If parent confirmed illness, FNP schedule follow-up home visit or in school appointment
 - Each call included a brief discussion of the importance of school attendance
 - If student reached 20% absences or parent agreed to home visit, FNP and social worker would go to home
 - Home visit could include physical examination if allowed by parent
 - All home visits included a brief discussion of importance of school attendance and flyers about attendance with contact info to leave in the home

Real Causes of Absenteeism (Kerr, et al, 2011)



40% of absences reported as illness/injury in fact related to transportation, family activity, or family illness (not student illness)

Figure 2. Parent's stated reason for absence.

Main Outcome... (Kerr, et al, 2011)

There were statistically significant increases in attendance from Year 1 to Year 2 at $p < .05$, at the elementary level (but not in Head Start)

Largest effect of the intervention was the school community's awareness that someone in the school was checking attendance!

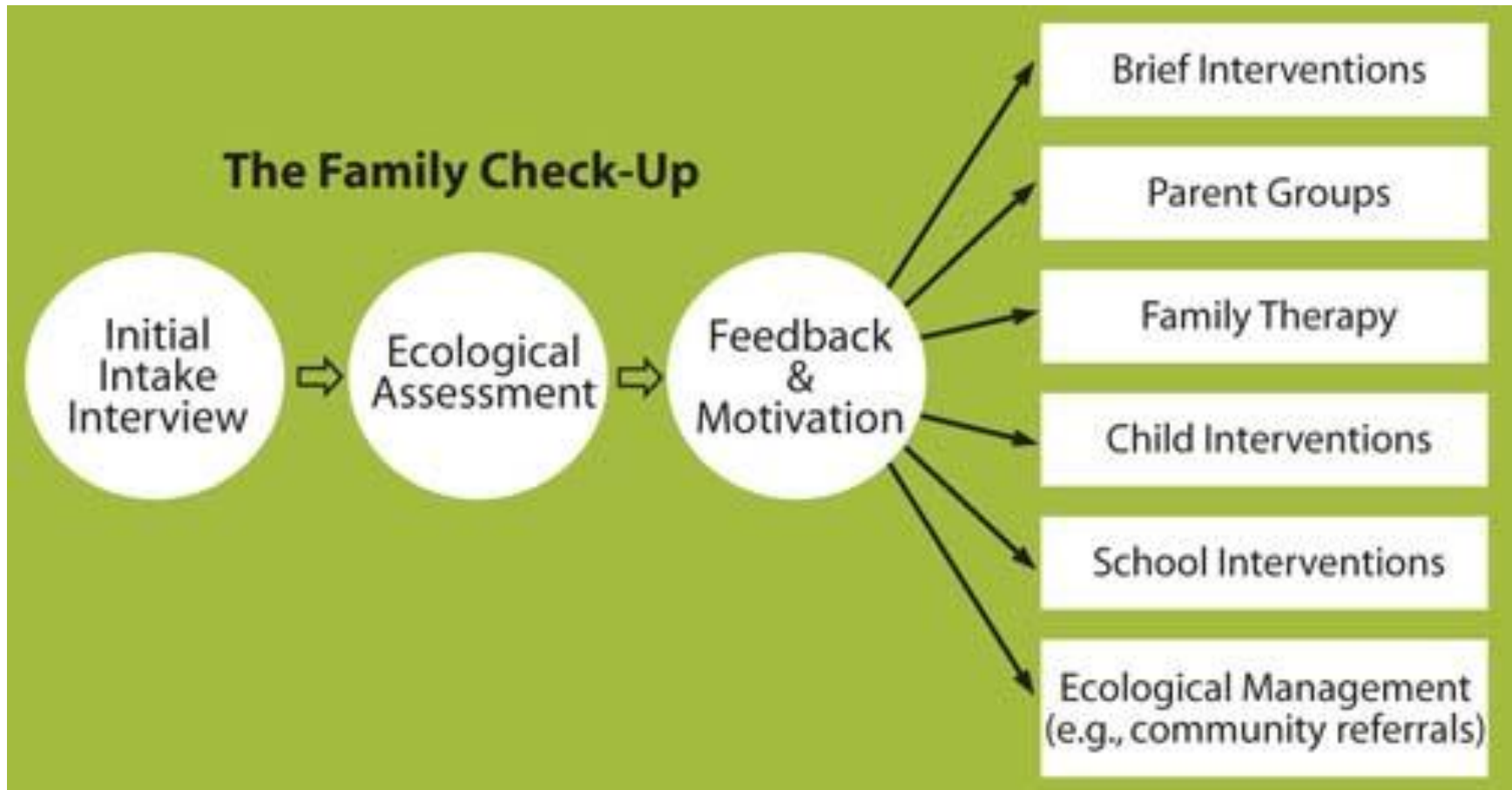
The Incredible Years (TIY): Working with Children, Parents, and Teachers

- Children of parents who are involved in joint activities with them (playing games, preparing/clearing meals, discussing school) have a significant association with child educational attainment
- TIY was offered along with SPOKES reading program (Supporting Parents on Kids' Education in School)
 - offered at 4 public schools in high poverty areas
 - 18 week (1.5 school term) intervention – 12 week IYBP + 6 week reading program
 - Each parent visited in home at least once
 - Schools also offered general practitioner medical services, additional therapeutic services (OT, speech, etc), mental health services, and other more specific referrals
- Parents showed increase in parental sensitivity and child-centered parenting – effects continued at least 6 months after end of intervention
- Children showed improvement on task attendance and concentration – no evidence though that this showed lasting effects



Parents and children use the same props/toys to learn to go slow, stay in time out, and learn

Family Check Up: Assessment Driven & Tailored



Family Check Up Results

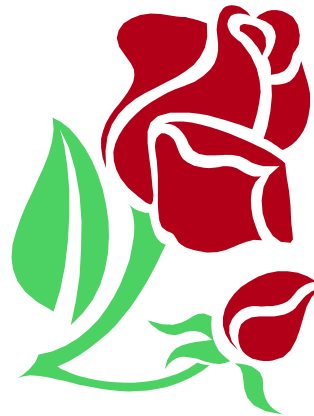
- Randomly assigned middle school adolescents showed significant reductions in late adolescence (age 18-19), growth in family conflict, alcohol use, and involvement with deviant peers (Van Ryzin, Stormshak, & Dishion, 2012).
- Lessons Learned from **Family Check Up**
 - To prevent child behavior problems there may be a need to intervene early and directly with:
 - (a) the emotional climate of the family and
 - (b) the emotional climate of the parenting relationship

The Grass Isn't Greener on the “other side” or on “your side” it's greener where you water it...

We have to more thoroughly water **family interventions** if we will best assist our poorest children



Thank you for this opportunity.



**YOU, together, can make the changes
our children need!**

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