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# Capacity-Building Family-Centered Practices: Characteristics and Evidence Base

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# Purpose

- Describe the key characteristics of capacity-building family-centered practices as one component of a family system intervention model
- Summarize findings from different meta-analyses of the relationships between family-centered practices and parent and child behavior and functioning



# Description of Family-Centered Practices

- Family-centered practices treat families with dignity and respect; provide family members with information needed to make informed decisions and choices; and actively involve families in obtaining resources and supports.
- Family-centered practices are a particular type of help giving style which builds cooperative relationships between parents, other family members, and practitioners that explicitly focuses on family capacity-building as the way in which support, resources, and services are provided or procured.



# Two Types of Family-Centered Practices

Research that my colleagues and myself have conducted has consistently found that there are two distinct types of practices that constitute subcategories of family-centered practices:

- Relational family-centered practices
- Participatory family-centered practices



# Relational Family-Centered Practices

- Relational practices include behavior typically associated with effective clinical practice, including, but not limited to, compassion, active and reflective listening, empathy, and effective communication.
- Relational practices also include practitioner beliefs and attitudes about family and cultural strengths, values, and attitudes, and practitioner sensitivity to these beliefs and values as part of intervention practices.

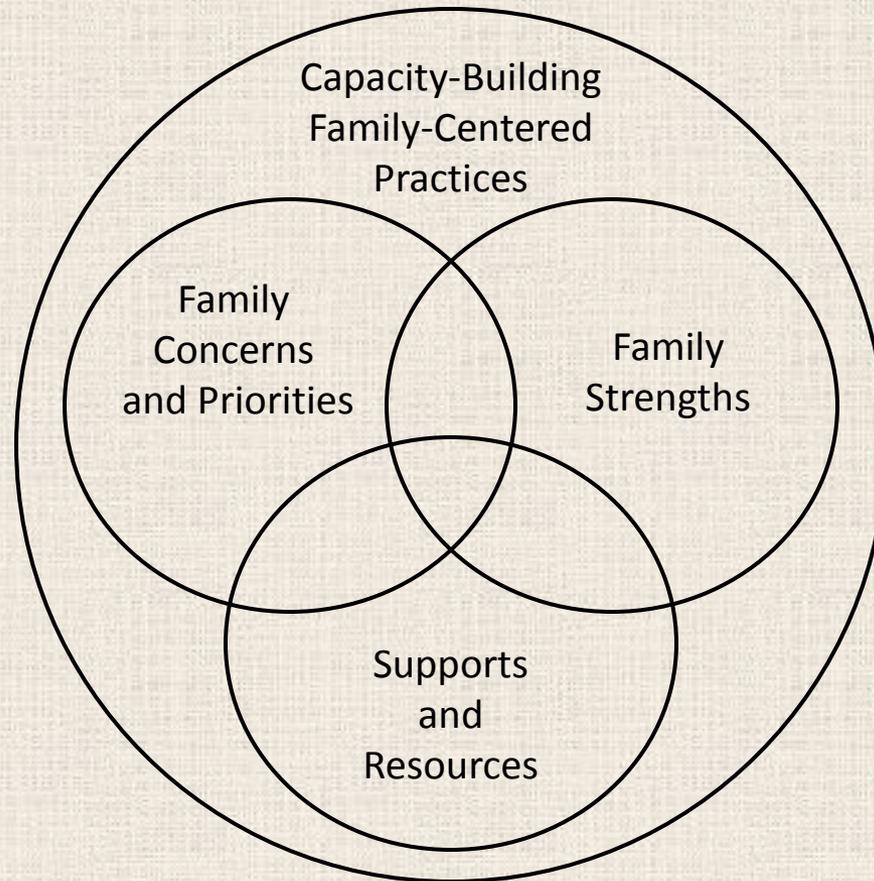


# Participatory Family-Centered Practices

- Participatory practices include behavior that actively involve family members in (a) informed choice and decision making, and (b) using existing strengths and abilities as well as developing new capabilities needed to obtain resources, supports, advice, etc.
- Participatory practices also include practitioner responsiveness to and flexibility in how help is provided to children and their families.



# Family-Systems Intervention Model<sup>a</sup>



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<sup>a</sup> Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M. (2009). Capacity-building family-systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 12, 119-143.



# Research on the Relationships Between Capacity-Building Family-Centered Practices and Parent, Family, and Child Behavioral Functioning

My colleagues and I, as well as other researchers, have been investigating the manner in which family-centered practices are related to parent, family, and child outcomes for more than 25 years. This research has involved the use of different research methodologies for investigating the influences of family-centered practices on parent, family, and child outcomes

- Basic research studies
- Structural equation modeling investigations
- Meta-analyses of family-centered practices research studies
- Meta-analytic structural equation modeling studies



# Meta-Analyses of Family-Centered Practices Research

Assess the extent to and manner in which the use of family-centered practices are directly and indirectly related to (a) parent involvement in their children's learning and early education, (b) parenting confidence and competence, (c) parent and family well-being, and (d) child behavior and development ***mediated by parents' self-efficacy beliefs***

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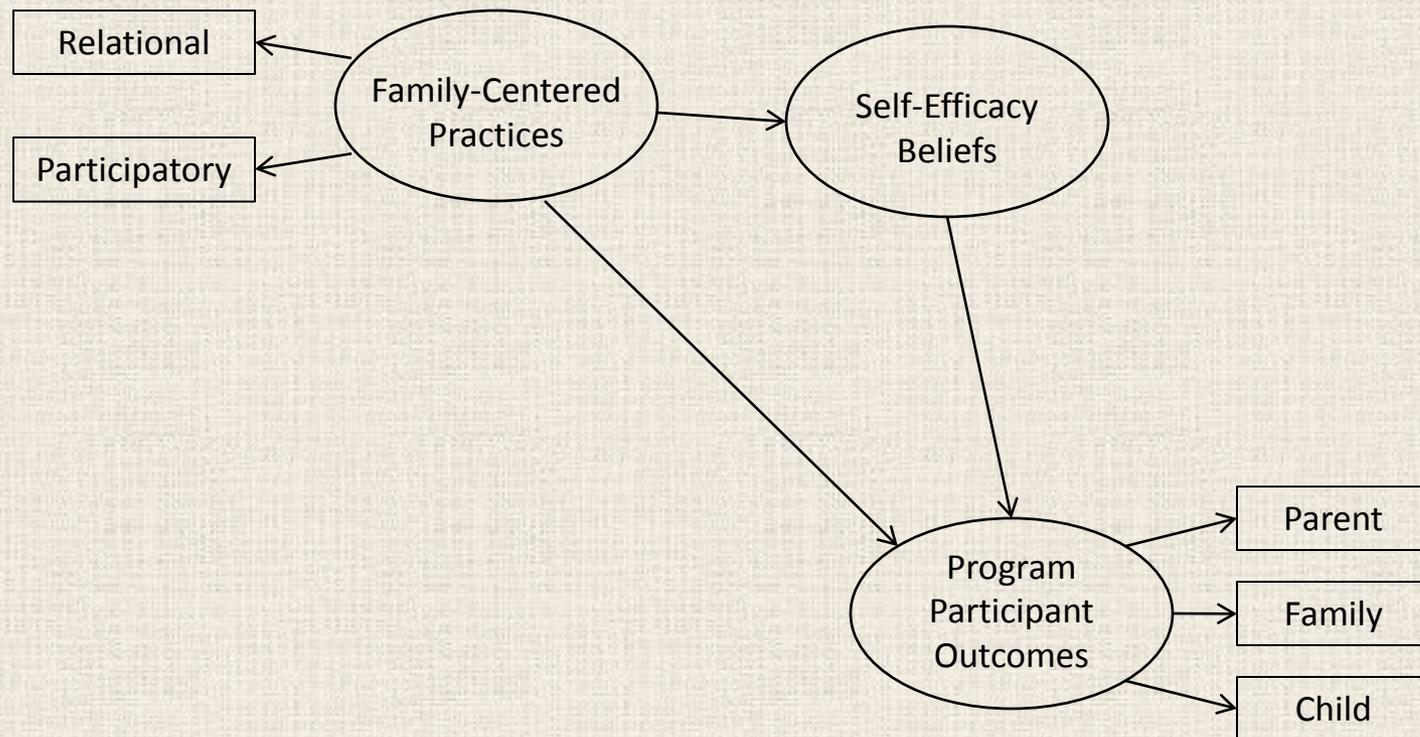
Dunst, C.J., Trivette, C.M., & Hamby, D.W. (2006). *Family support program quality and parent, family and child benefits*. Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.

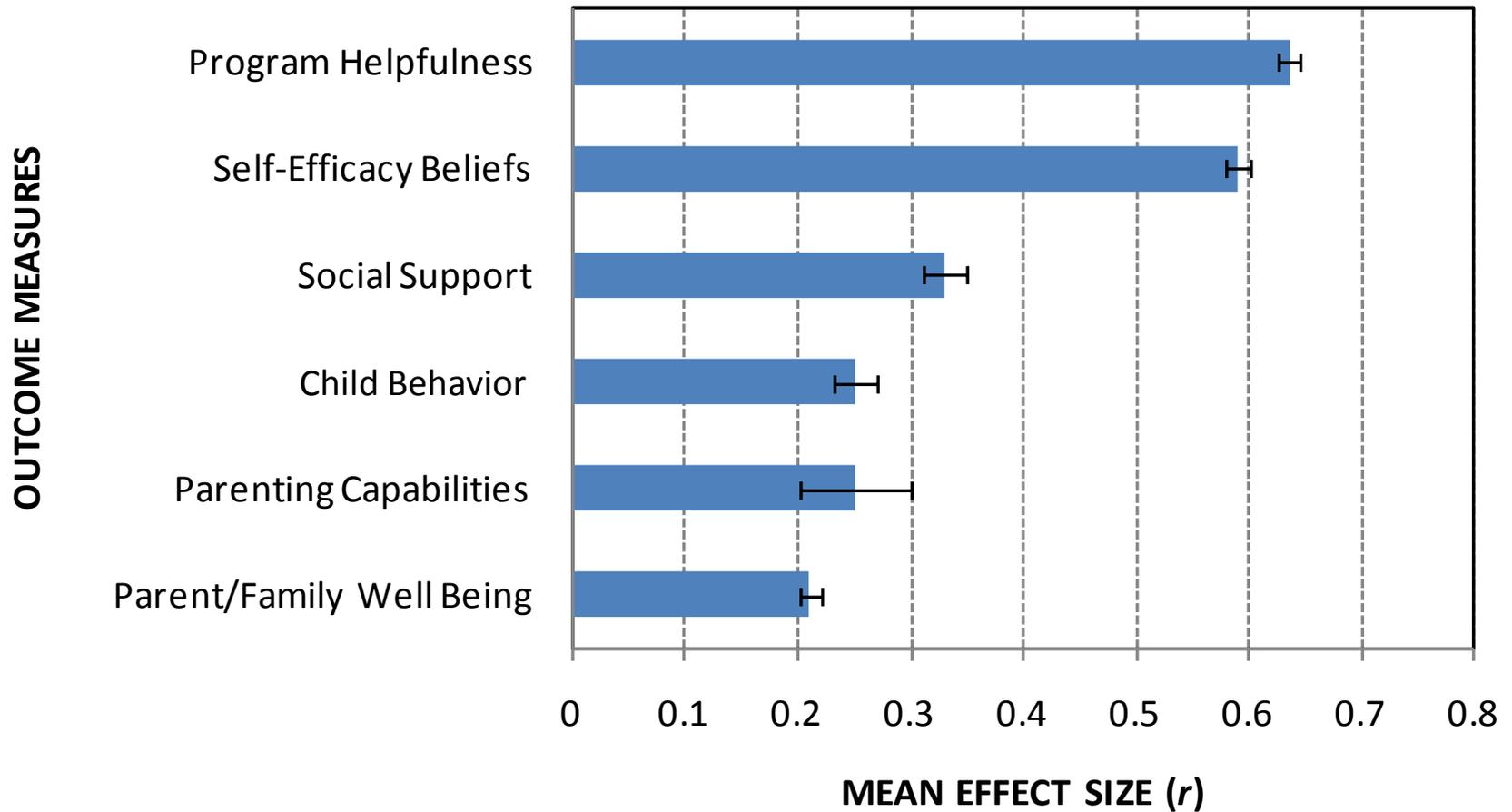
Dunst, C.J., Trivette, C.M., & Hamby, D.W. (2007). Meta-analysis of family-centered help-giving practices research. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 13, 370-378.

Dunst, C.J., Trivette, C.M., & Hamby, D.W. (2008). *Research synthesis and meta-analysis of studies of family centered practices*. Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.



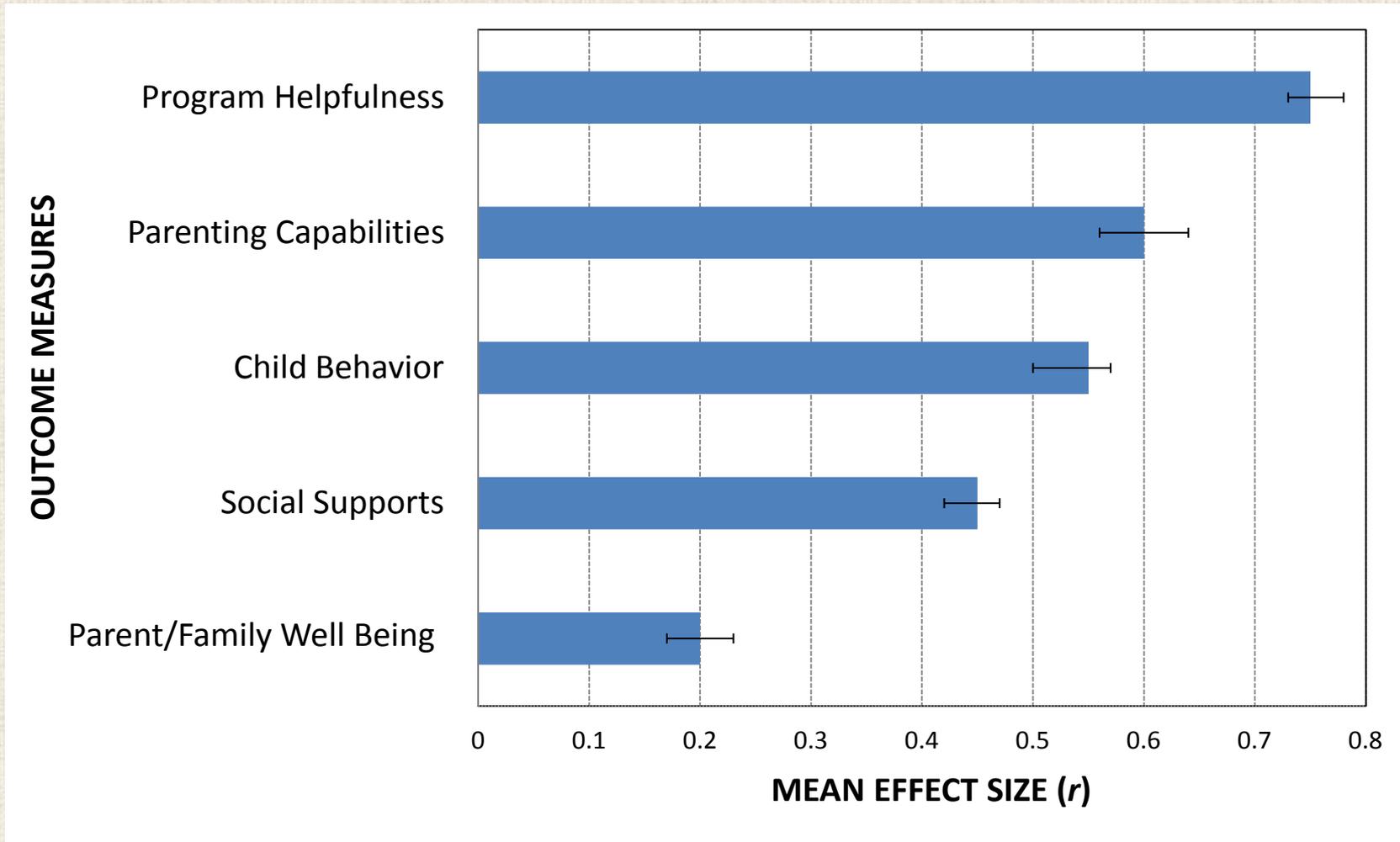
# Framework for Investigating the Influences of Family-Centered Practices on Parent, Family, and Child Outcomes





Direct Effects of Family-Centered Practices on  
Parent, Family, and Child Behavior and Functioning





Direct Effects of Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Parent, Family, and Child Behavior and Functioning

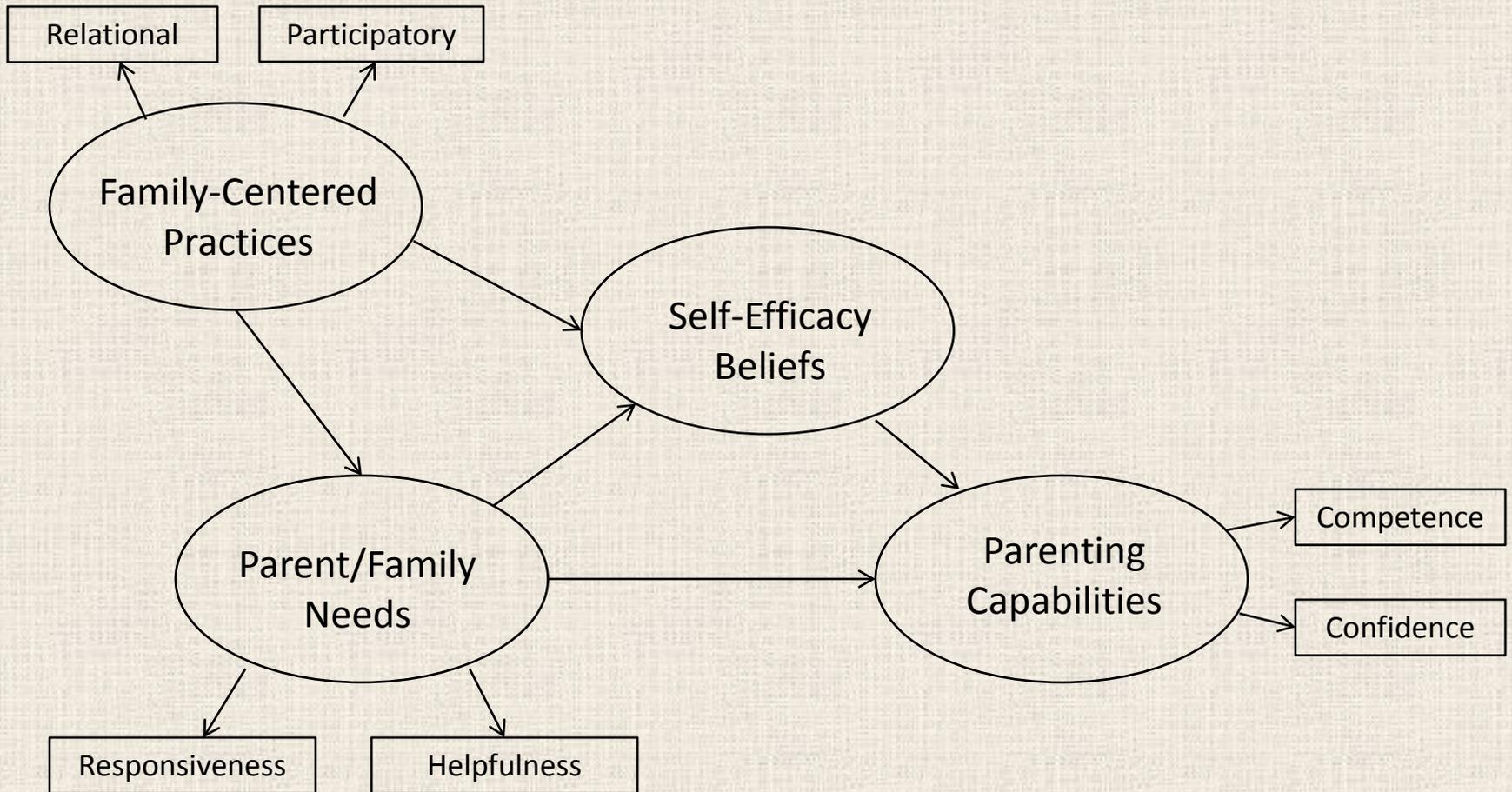


# Mediated Effects of Family-Centered Practices

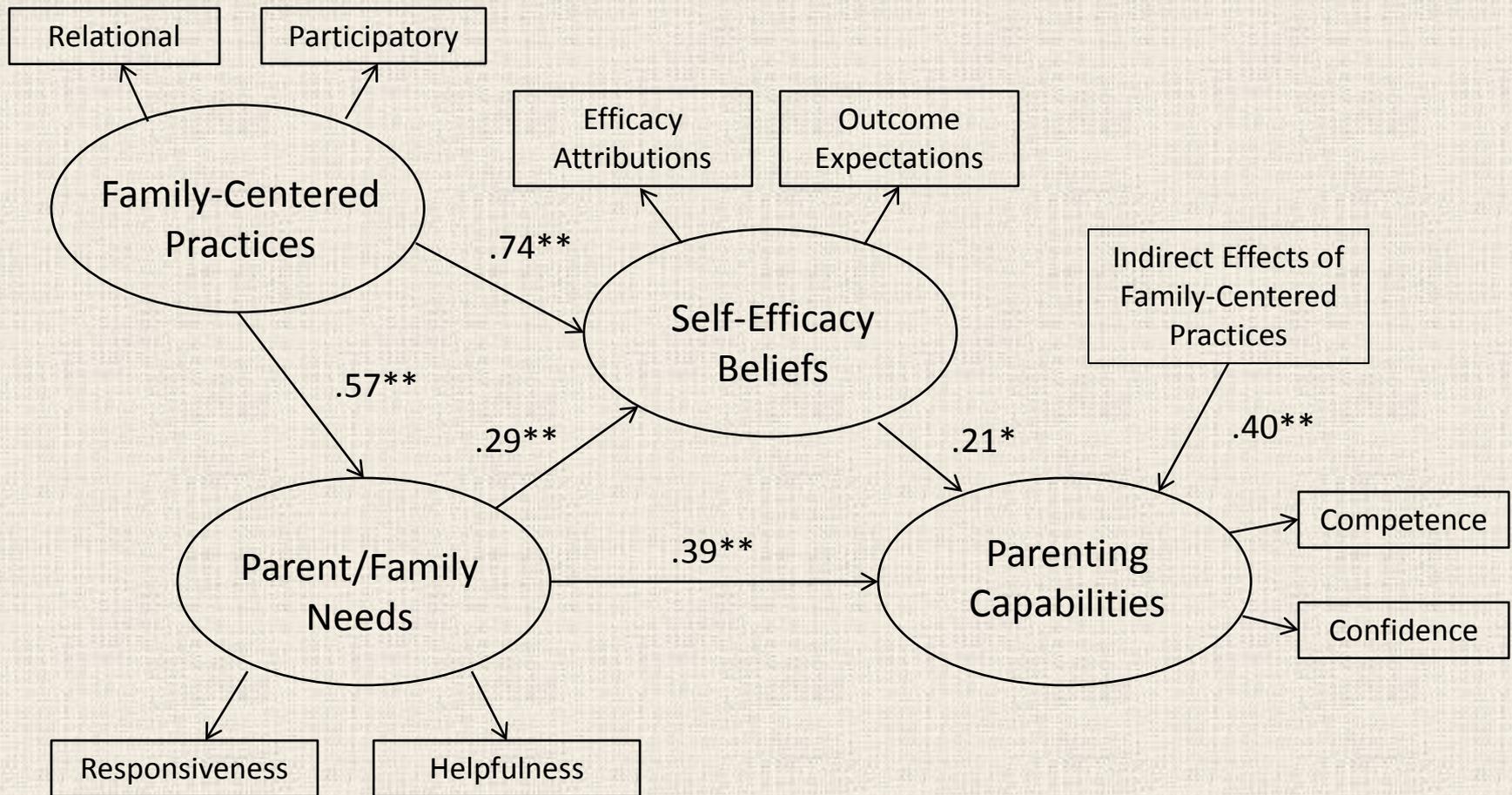
One result that has consistently been found in our family-centered research is that the effects of family-centered practices on parent, family, and child outcomes are mediated by self-efficacy beliefs. This is illustrated with the findings from a study of the influences of family-centered practices on parenting competence and confidence in a sample of preschoolers and their parents involved in family resource programs.



# Direct and Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parenting Competence and Confidence



# Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Relationships Among Measures in the Model



\*p < .05 \*\* p < .001.



# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Research Synthesis

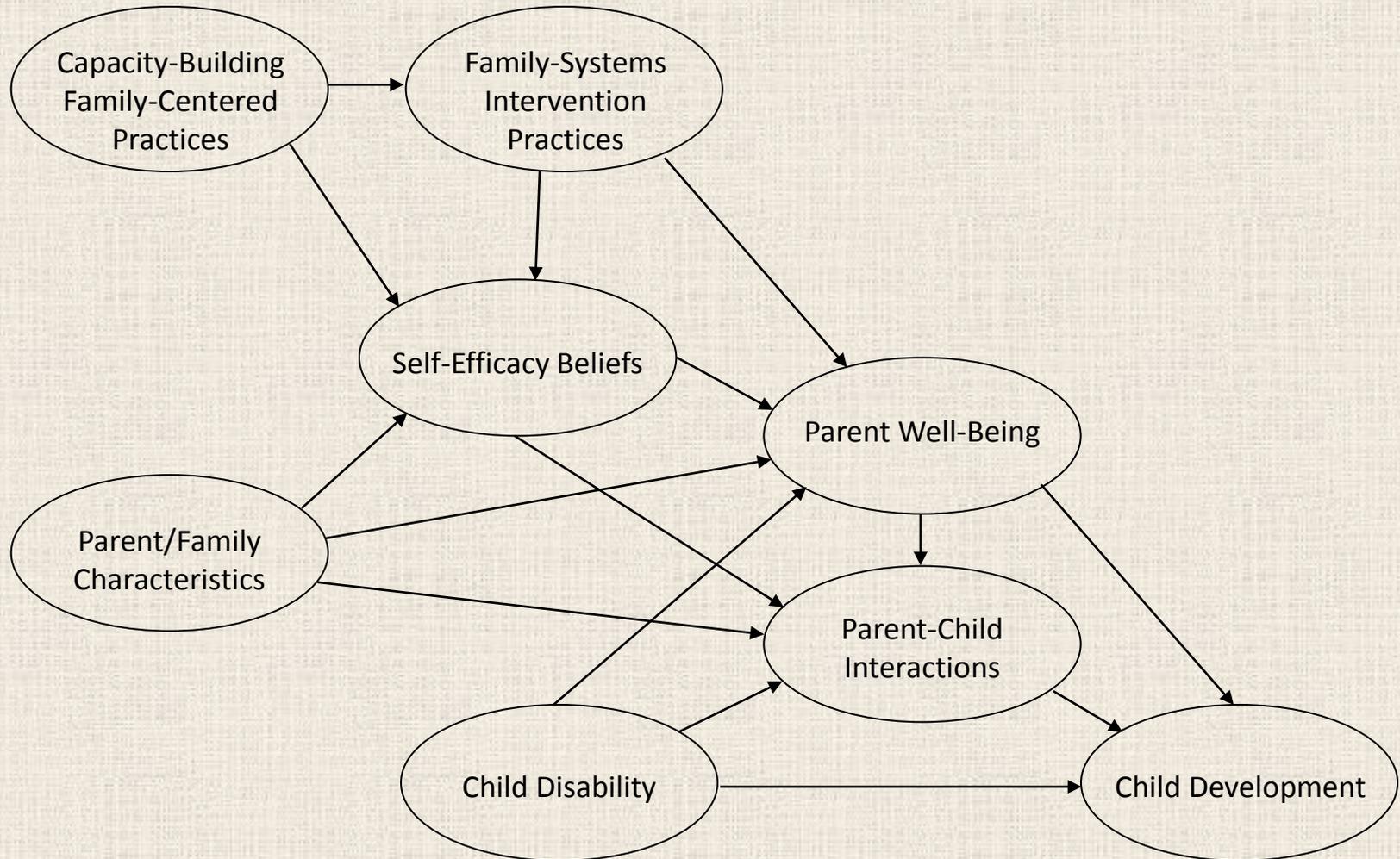
- Studies:* Eight studies that included measures allowing us to trace the effects of capacity-building family-centered practices and family-systems intervention practices on parent-child interactions and child development
- Sample:* 910 preschoolers and their parents involved in different kinds of early childhood intervention and family support programs
- Hypothesis:* The influences of family-centered and family-systems intervention practices on parent-child interactions and child development would be indirect and mediated by both self-efficacy beliefs and parent well-being

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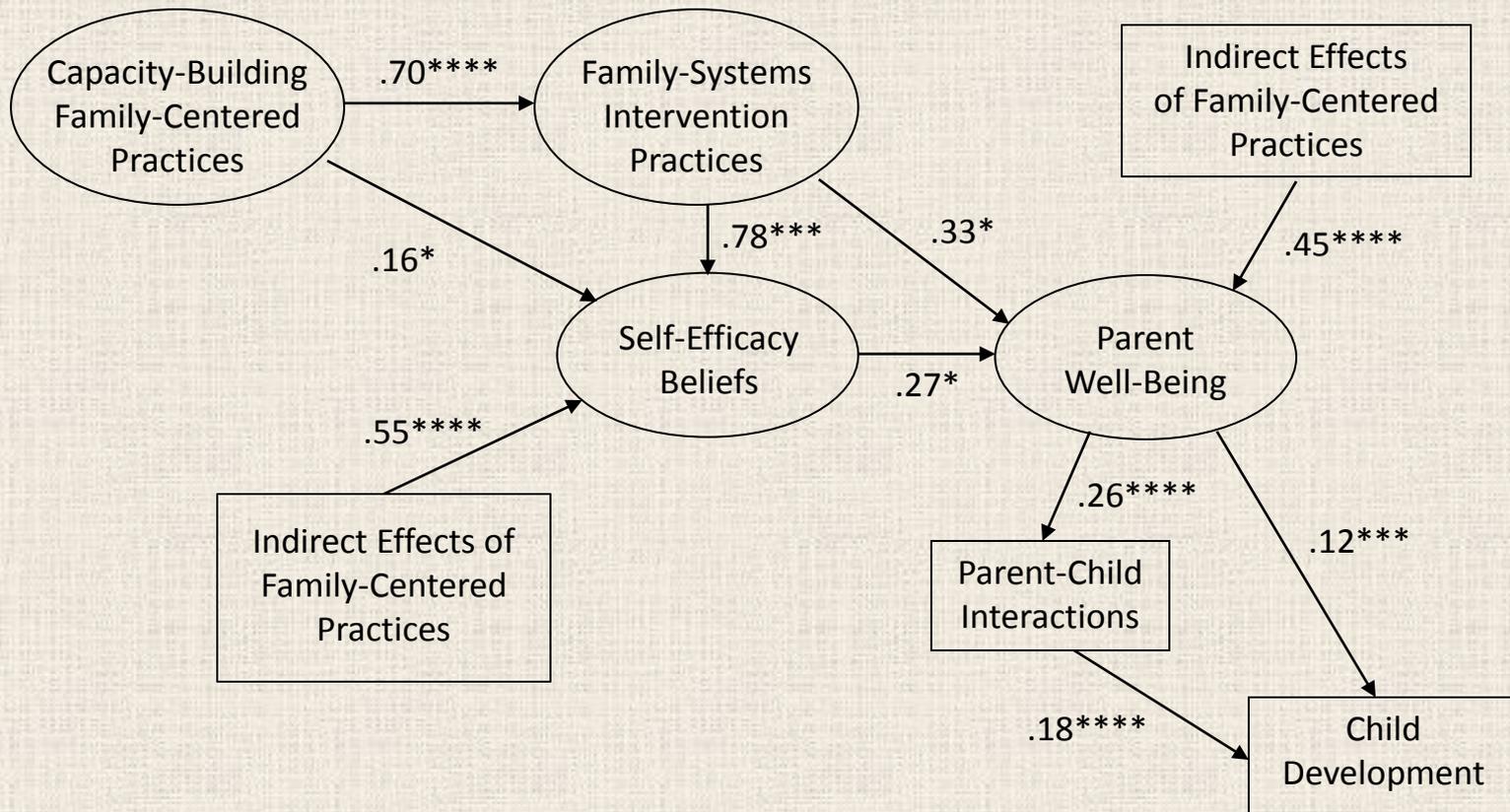
Trivette, C.M., Dunst, C.J., & Hamby, D.W. (2010). Influences of family-systems intervention practices on parent-child interactions and child development. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 2010, 30, 3-19.



# Model for Assessing the Direct and Indirect Effects of Different Predictor Variables on Parent-Child Interactions and Child Development



# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Results



\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . \*\*\*\*  $p < .0001$ .

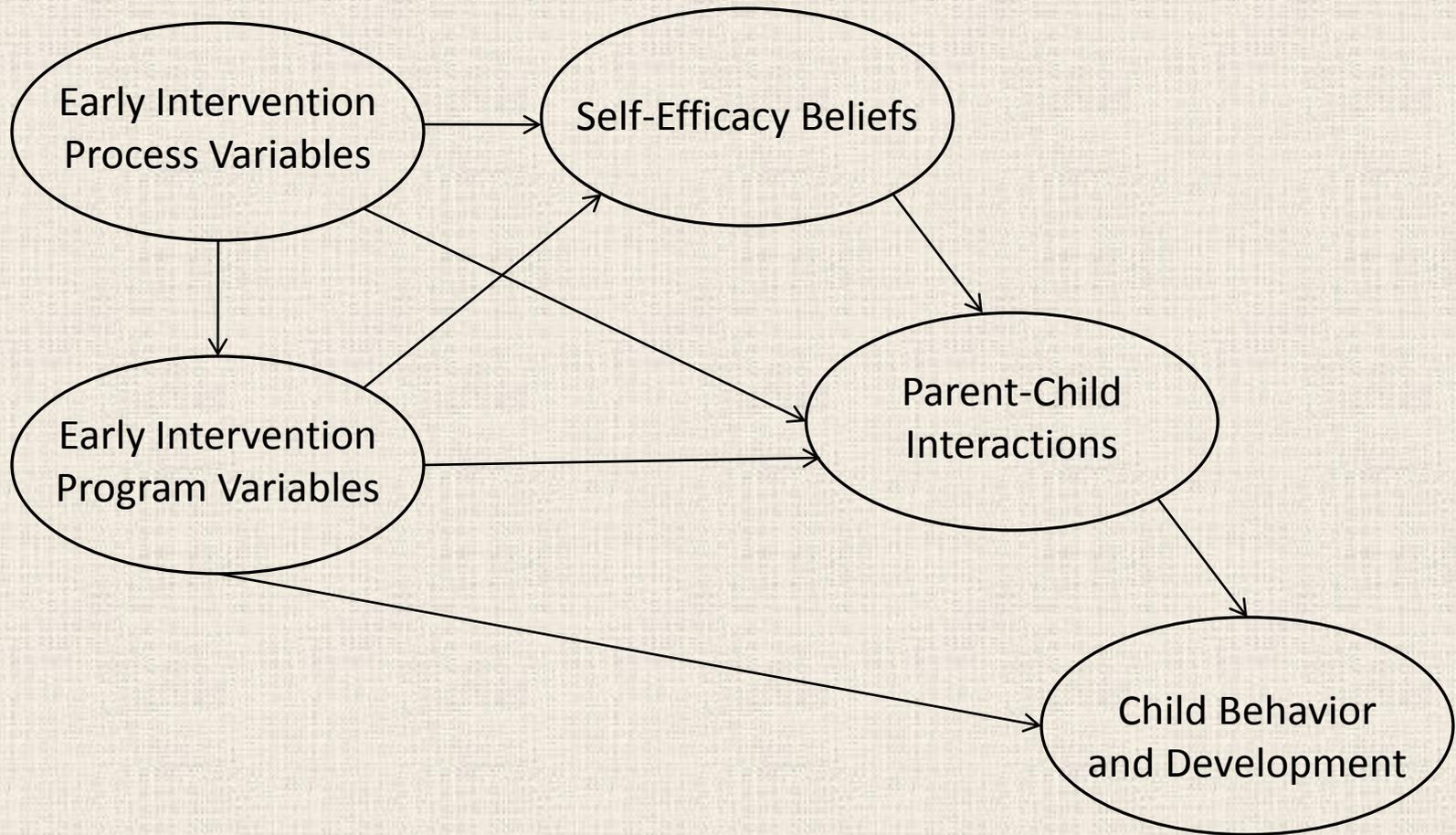


# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modelling of Family Capacity-Building Early Intervention Practices

- This *in progress* study is integrating research on different kinds of early childhood intervention practices and evaluating whether or not capacity-building family-centered practices and different program structural variables (dose, type of service, etc.) have the same direct and indirect effects on parent self-efficacy beliefs, parent-child interactions, and child outcomes as found in our other studies
- The planned analyses include tests of both moderators and mediators to identify the ***conditions under which*** family capacity-building practices have optimal positive effects



# Model for Evaluating the Influence of Process and Program Early Intervention Variables on Parenting and Child Outcomes



# Conclusions

- Research to-date indicates that the effects of family-centered practices on parent, family, and child behavior and functioning are primarily indirect mediated by self-efficacy beliefs
- Capacity-building family-centered practices are therefore an evidence-based approach for practitioners to work with families to support and strengthen parent, family, and child behavior and functioning



PowerPoint presentation available at:

[www.puckett.org](http://www.puckett.org)



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