

# Family-Centered Practices, Parent Engagement, and Parent and Family Functioning

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## Overview

- Illustrate the manner in which family-centered practices, parent self-efficacy beliefs, and practitioner responsiveness to parents' requests are related to family involvement in their children's learning and parenting confidence and confidence
- Summarize findings from both primary studies and meta-analyses of the relationships between family-centered practices and parent and child behavior and functioning
- Share lessons learned from both research and practice on family-practitioner relationships and parent engagement

## Types of Child and Parenting Programs

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Programs	Settings
Family, Infant and Preschool Program	Home-Based
Family Resource Centers	Center-Based
Early Head Start	Home & Center Based
Parent Involvement in their Children's Education	Elementary Schools
Early Childhood Follow-Through Institute	Elementary Schools

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## Definition 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; actively involve families in obtaining resources and supports; and practitioner responsiveness and flexibility to family requests and desires

## Two Types of Family-Centered Practices

Our research has consistently found that there are two discernable kinds of practices that “fall into” distinct subcategories of family-centered practices:

- Relational help-giving practices
- Participatory help-giving 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

## 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



## Major Practice and Research Measures

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Measures	Constructs
Family-Centered Practices	Relational and participatory practices
Program Helpfulness	Parent satisfaction, engagement, loyalty
Self-Efficacy Beliefs	Parents' judgments of their likelihood of success to obtaining needed supports and resources
Parent/Family Informational and Support Needs	Practitioner responsiveness to parents' requests for information and support
Parent/Family Well-Being	Affect, stress, family functioning
Parenting Capabilities	Parenting confidence and confidence

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# Practice-Based Research Syntheses of Family-Centered Practices

- Meta-analysis of 52 studies conducted by more than 20 researchers and research teams in seven countries<sup>a,b</sup>
- Meta-analysis of 18 studies conducted in one early childhood intervention and family support program<sup>c</sup>

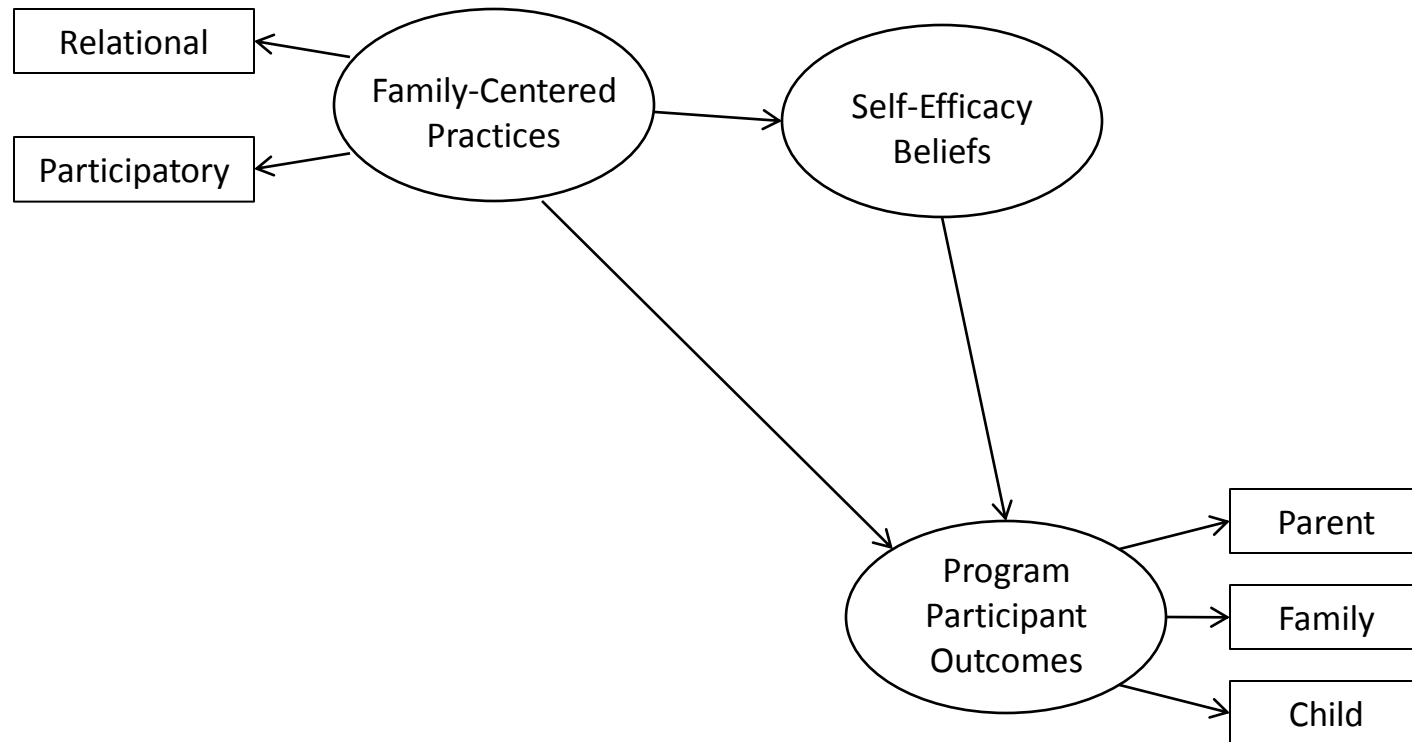
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<sup>a</sup> Dunst, C.J., Trivette, C.M., & Hamby, D.W. (2007). Meta-analysis of family-centered help-giving practices research. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 13, 370-378.

<sup>b</sup> 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.

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

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

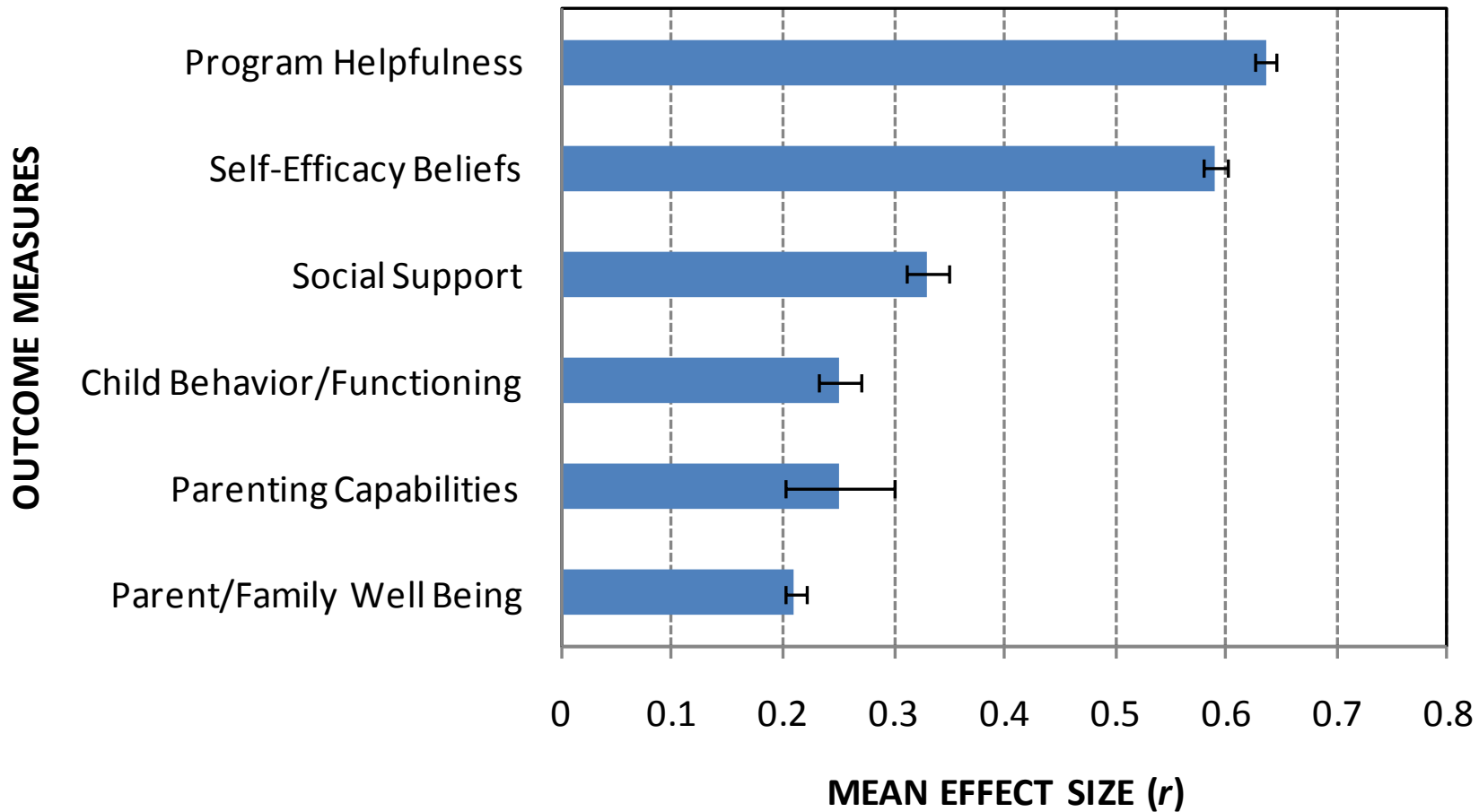


## Characteristics of the Meta-Analysis Study Participants

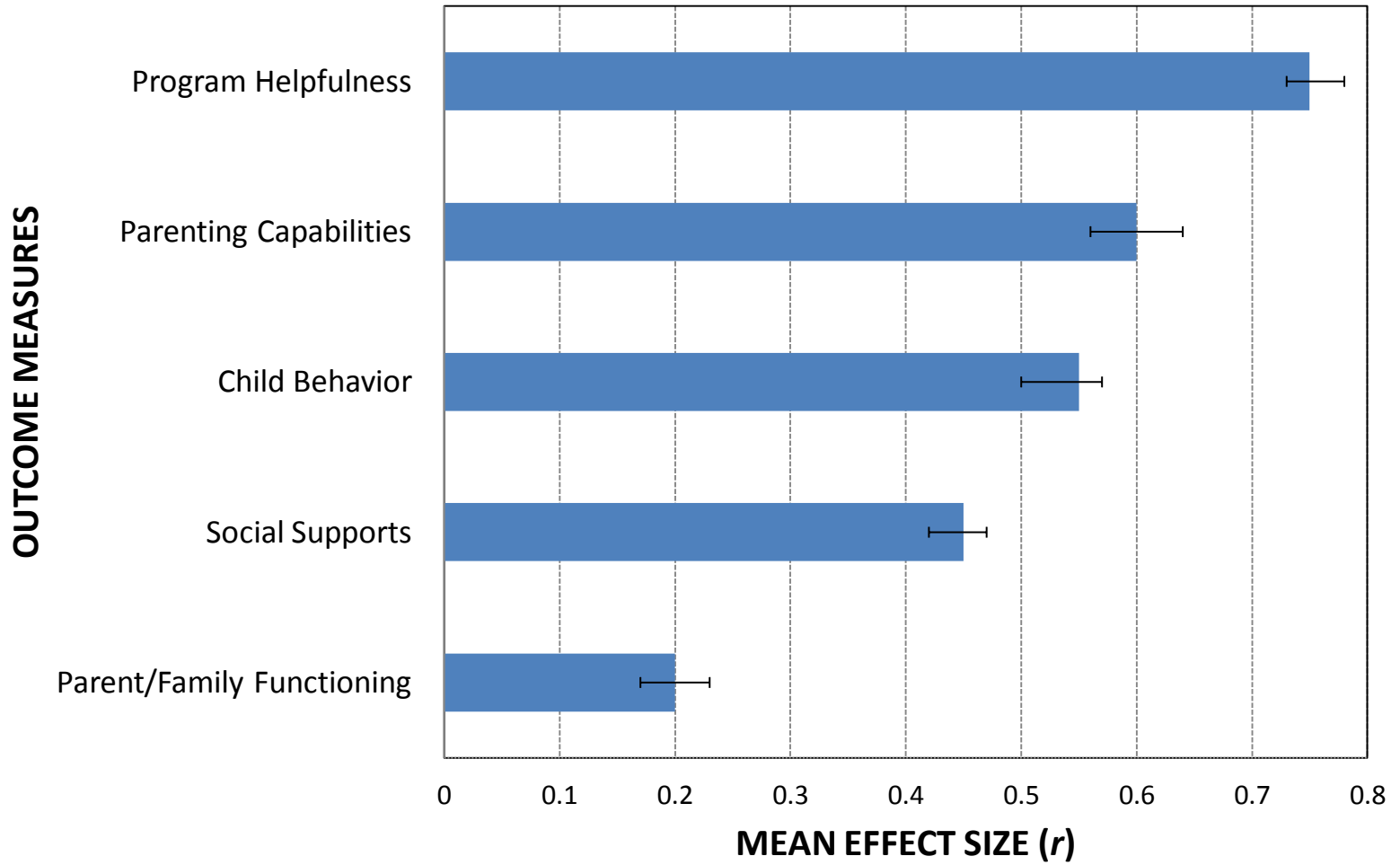
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	Number of Participants	Percent Mothers	Age Range (Years)	Formal Education (Years)
Synthesis 1	11,500+	63-100	15-60+	3-20+
Synthesis 2	1,100	95	16-50+	5-20+

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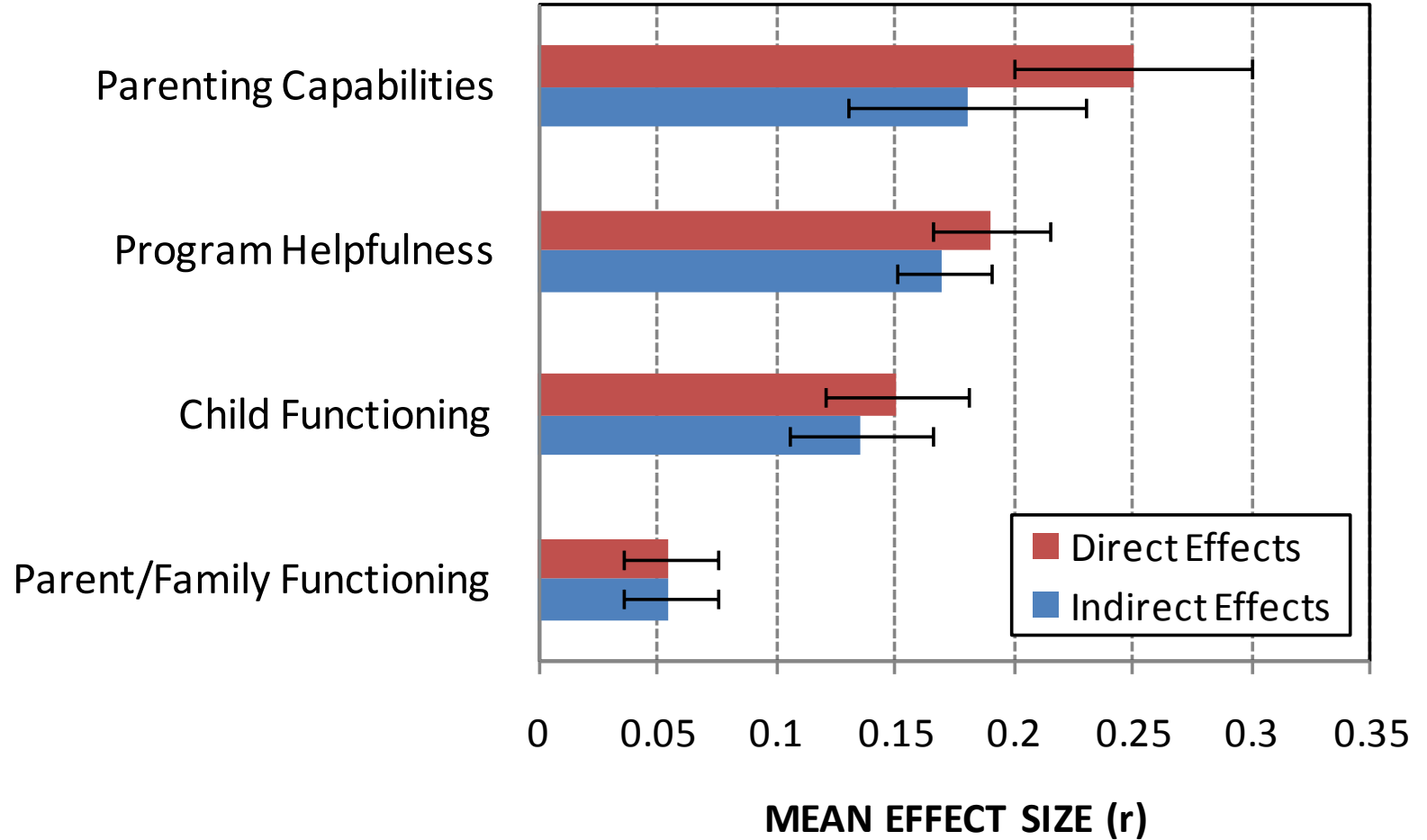


Direct Effects of Family-Centered Practices on  
Parent, Family, and Child Behavior and Functioning



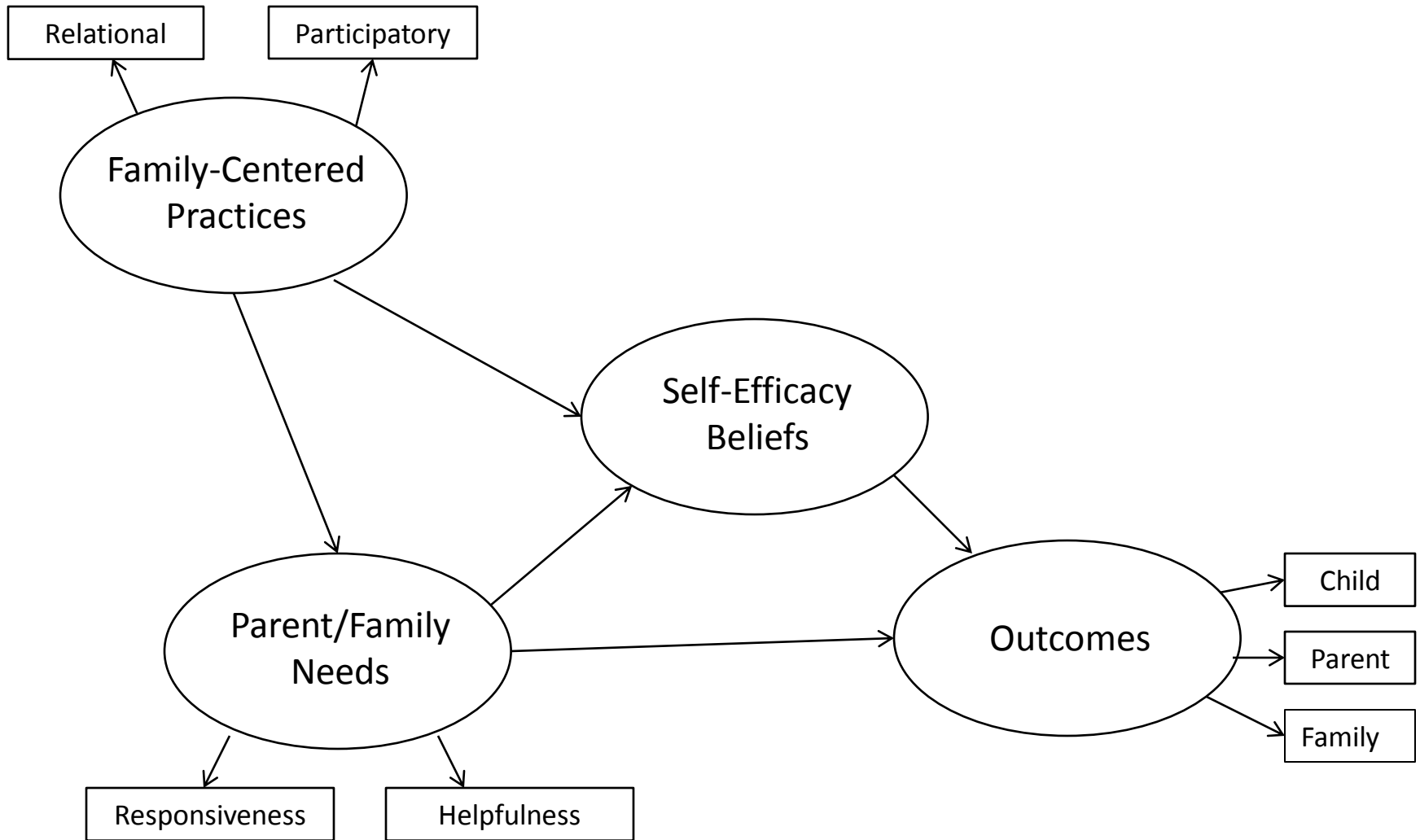
Direct Effects of Self-Efficacy Beliefs on  
Parent, Family, and Child Behavior and Functioning

**OUTCOME DOMAINS**



Direct and Indirect Effects of Family-Centred Practices on the Study Outcomes Mediated by Self-Efficacy Beliefs

# Framework for Investigating the Direct and Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parenting Competence and Confidence

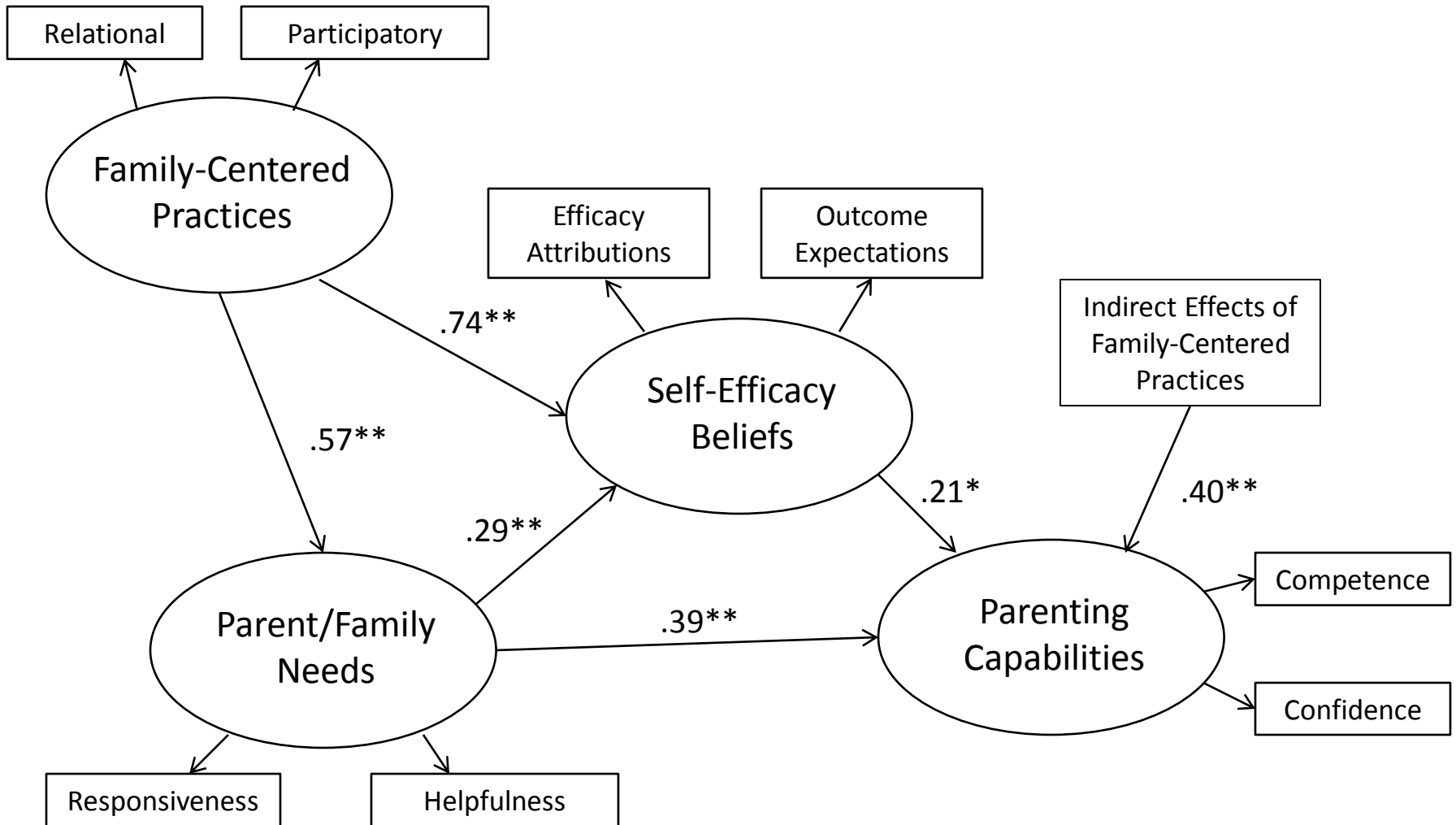




# Relationships Between Family-Centered Practices, Practitioner Responsiveness, Parenting Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Parenting Confidence and Confidence

- Parents of preschool aged children involved in five different family resource centers
- Structural equation modeling of the relationships among measures
- Focus on the extent to which family-centered practices was indirectly related to parenting capabilities mediated by practitioner responsiveness and self-efficacy beliefs

## Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Relationships Among Measures



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

## Influences of Family-Systems Intervention Practices on Parent-Child Interactions and Child Development<sup>a</sup>

*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

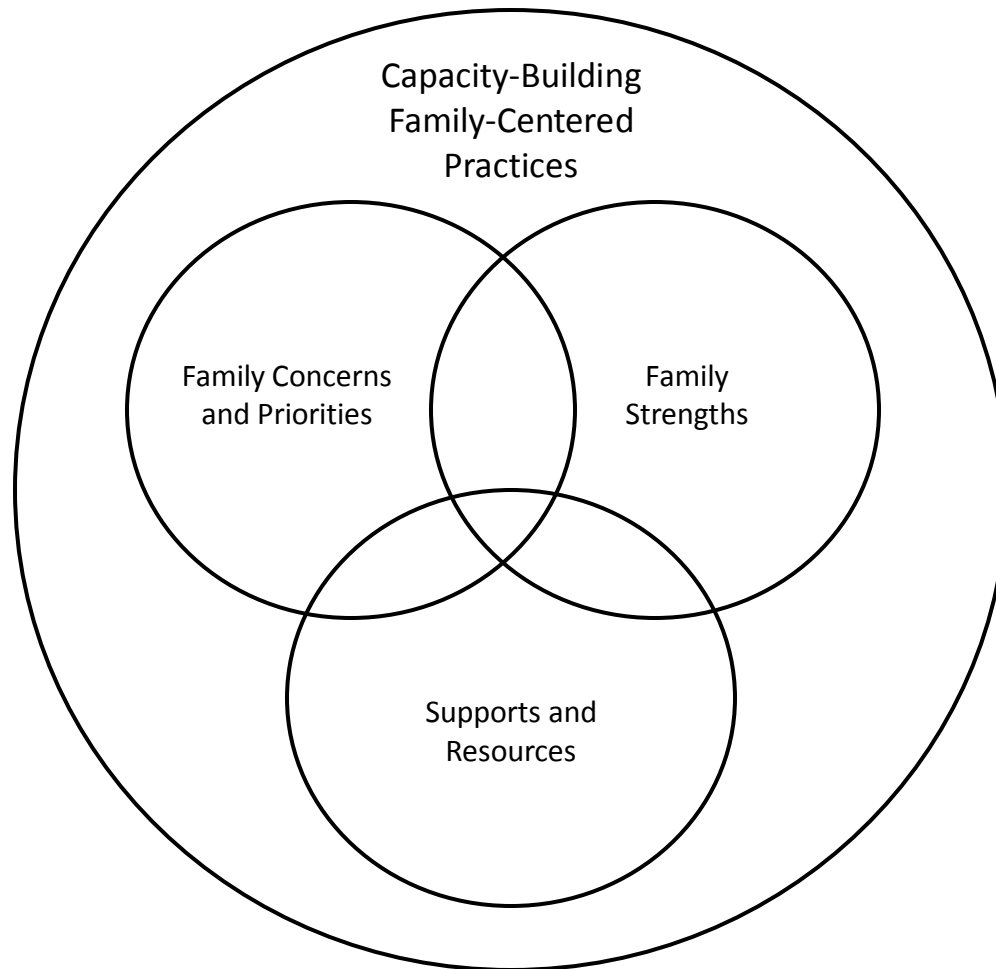
*Sample:* 910 preschoolers and their parents involved in different kinds of preschool and family support programs

*Predictions:* 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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<sup>a</sup> Trivette, C.M., Dunst, C.J., & Hamby, D.W. (2010) *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 2010, 30, 3-19.

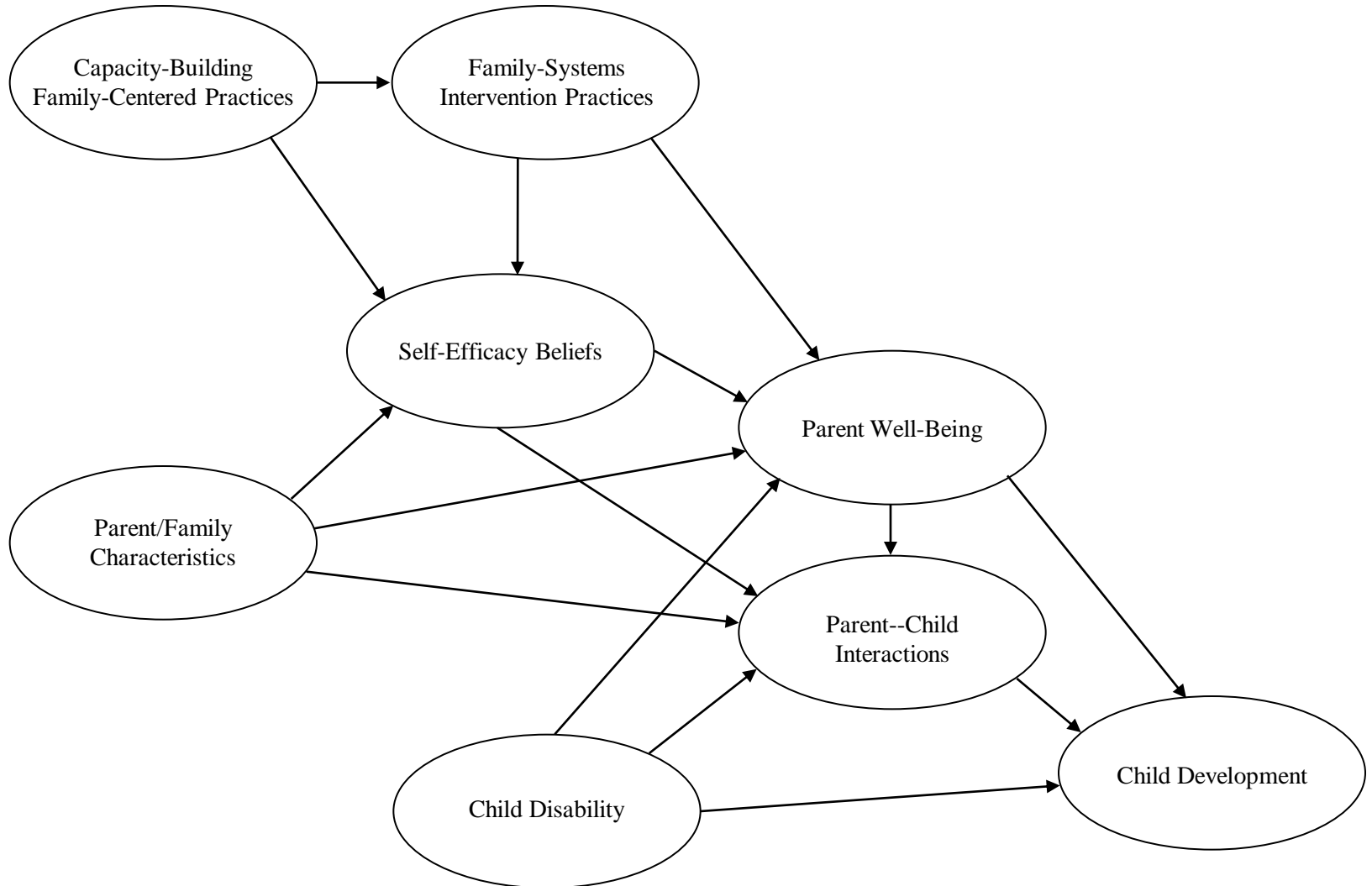
## Family-Systems Intervention Model<sup>a</sup>



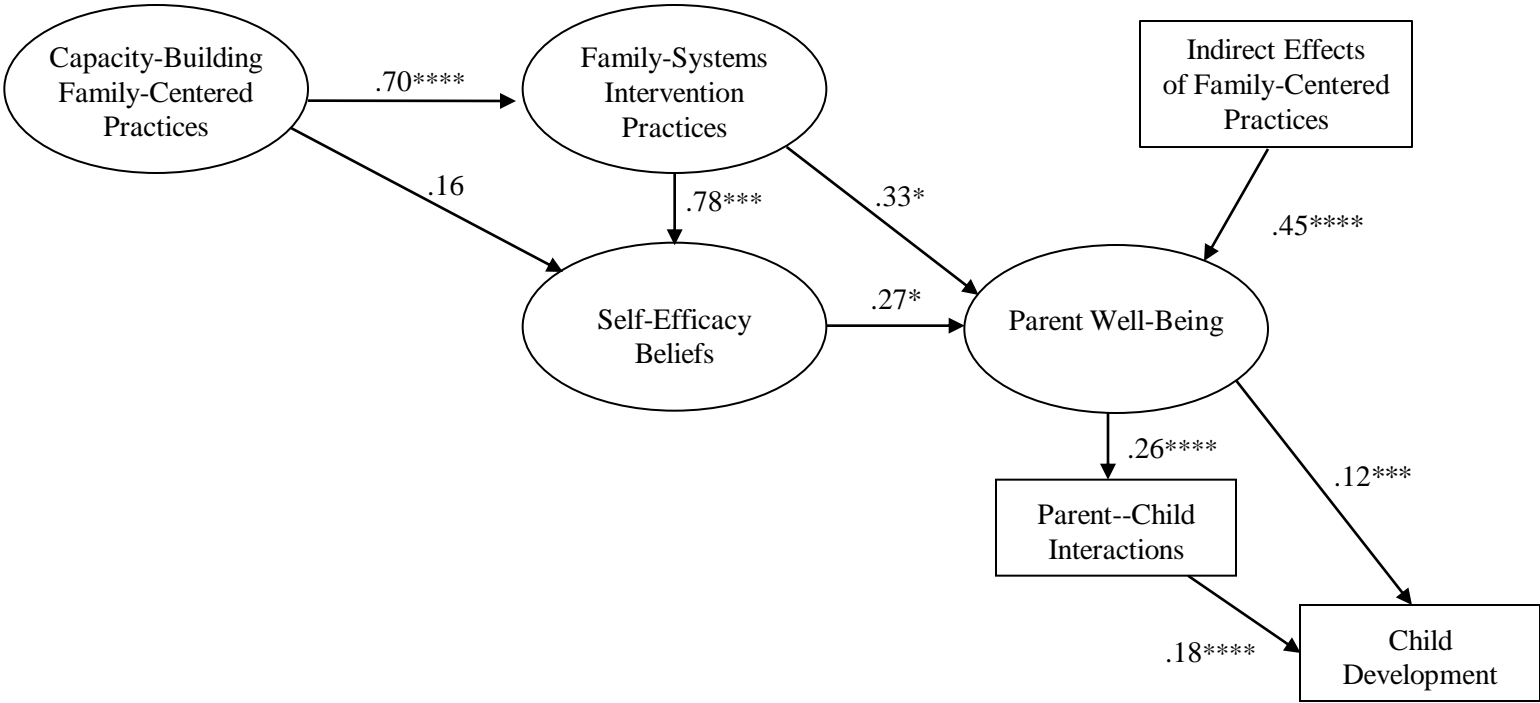
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<sup>a</sup> Dunst, C.J., & Trivette, C.M., (2009). Capacity-building family-systems intervention practices. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 12, 119-143.

# 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



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

## Lessons Learned from Family-Centered Research and Practice

- Family-centered practices provide a foundation for strengthening parent-professional relationships and engaging families in early childhood and family support programs
- Family involvement in their children's learning and education needs to be judged as meaningful (worthwhile) to sustain parent engagement
- Responsiveness to parents' informational, instrumental, and other types of needs is one factor contributing to parents' judgments of meaningful involvement
- Self-efficacy appraisals are one determinant of the likelihood of parent involvement and engagement having positive parent and child benefits