

# Family-Centered Practices in Early Intervention with Young Children with Disabilities or Delays

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# Purpose

- Describe and illustrate the key characteristics of capacity-building family-centered practices
- Summarize findings from different types of studies of the relationships between family-centered practices and parent and child behavior and functioning
- Illustrate how family-centered checklists can be used to promote early childhood practitioners' use of this approach to capacity-building help giving

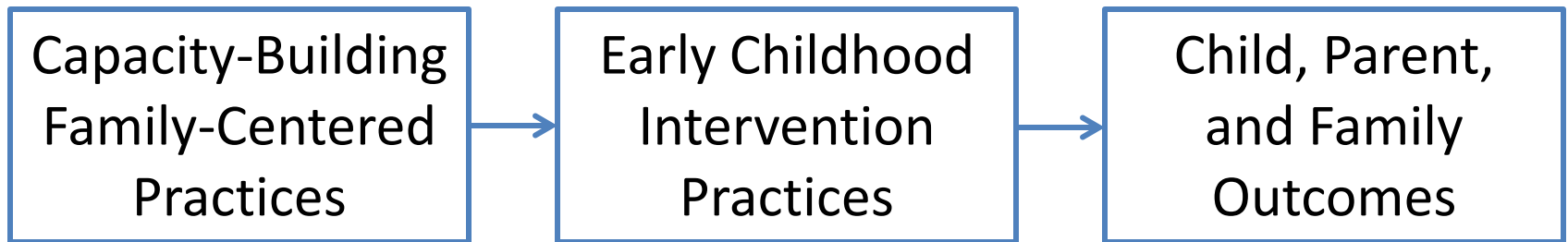
# Description of Family-Centered Practices

- 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.
- 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 and Early Childhood Intervention

- Any type of intervention practice (early intervention, education, therapy, medicine, etc.) can be delivered in a family-centered manner.
- Family-centered practices are not a substitute for other types of interventions, but rather are how other types of interventions are delivered.

# Influences of Family-Centered Practices on Child, Parent, and Family Outcomes



# Opportunities to Use Family-Centered Practices

- Any and all opportunities to interact with parents, whether face-to-face or by phone calls, e-mails, or other means, are opportunities to use family-centered practices.
- My colleagues and I have used family-centered practices in home, classroom, and clinic settings and have found that it is possible to use this approach to help giving in any type of setting.

## Two Types of Family-Centered Practices

Research that my colleagues and I have conducted has consistently found that there are two distinct types of practices that constitute subcategories of capacity-building 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.



# Family-Centered and Non-Family-Centered Relational Practices

- ***Family-Centered Practices***

Taking the time to explain a child's disability in language that parents can understand and providing the parents opportunities to ask questions to clarify their understanding.

- ***Non-Family-Centered Practices***

Explaining a child's disability using professional jargon and not asking if the parents understand their child's condition.

# Participatory Family-Centered Practices

- Participatory practices include behavior that actively involves 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, and services.
- Participatory practices also include practitioner responsiveness to and flexibility in how help is provided to children and their families.

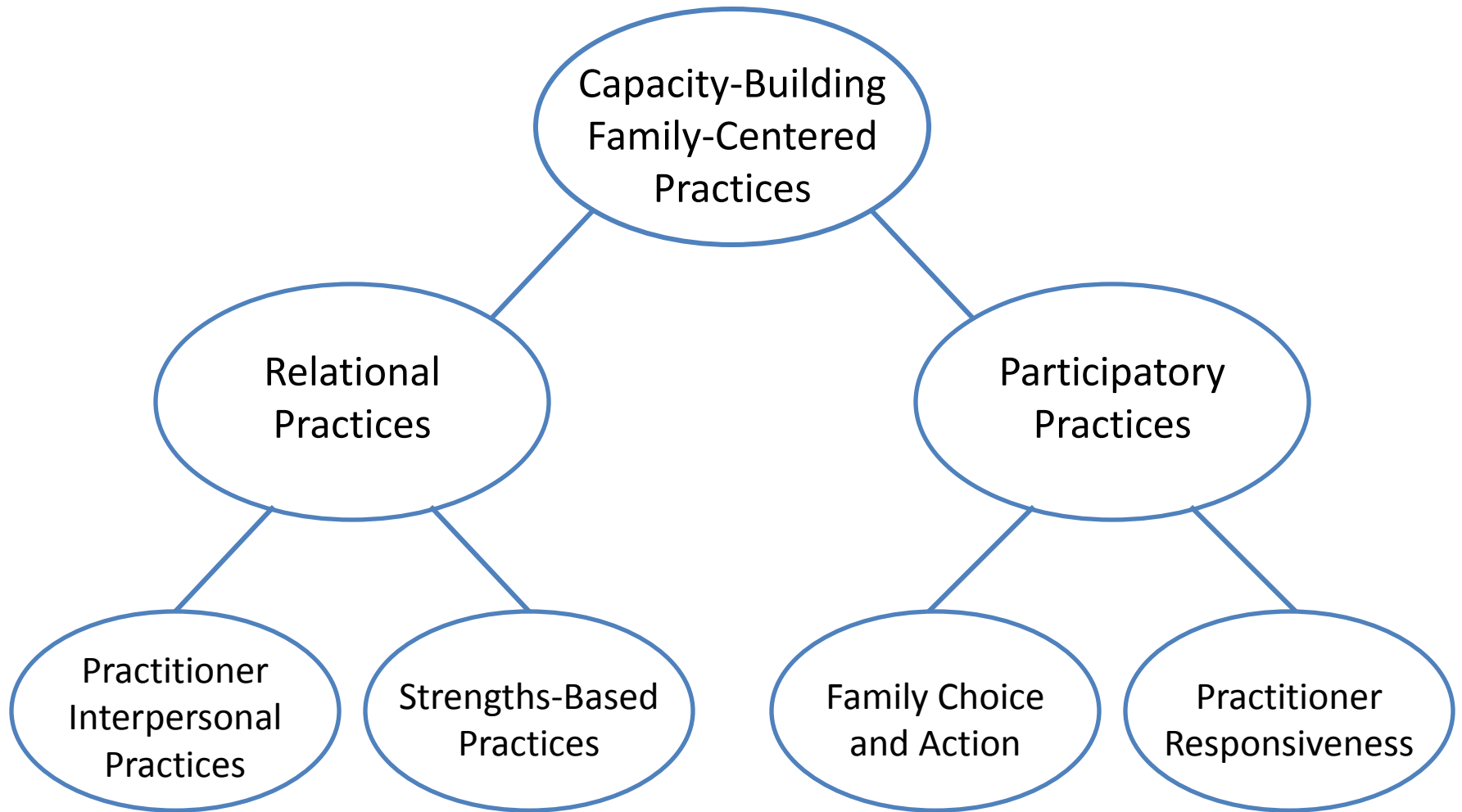
# Family-Centered and Non-Family-Centered Participatory Practices

- ***Family-Centered Practices***

Providing parents options for obtaining additional information about their child's disability and supporting choices that make the most sense to the family.

- ***Non-Family-Centered Practices***

Prescribing solutions to the parents' concerns without evaluating whether the solutions make sense to the family.



## Types and Clusters of Capacity-Building Family-Centered Practices

# 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

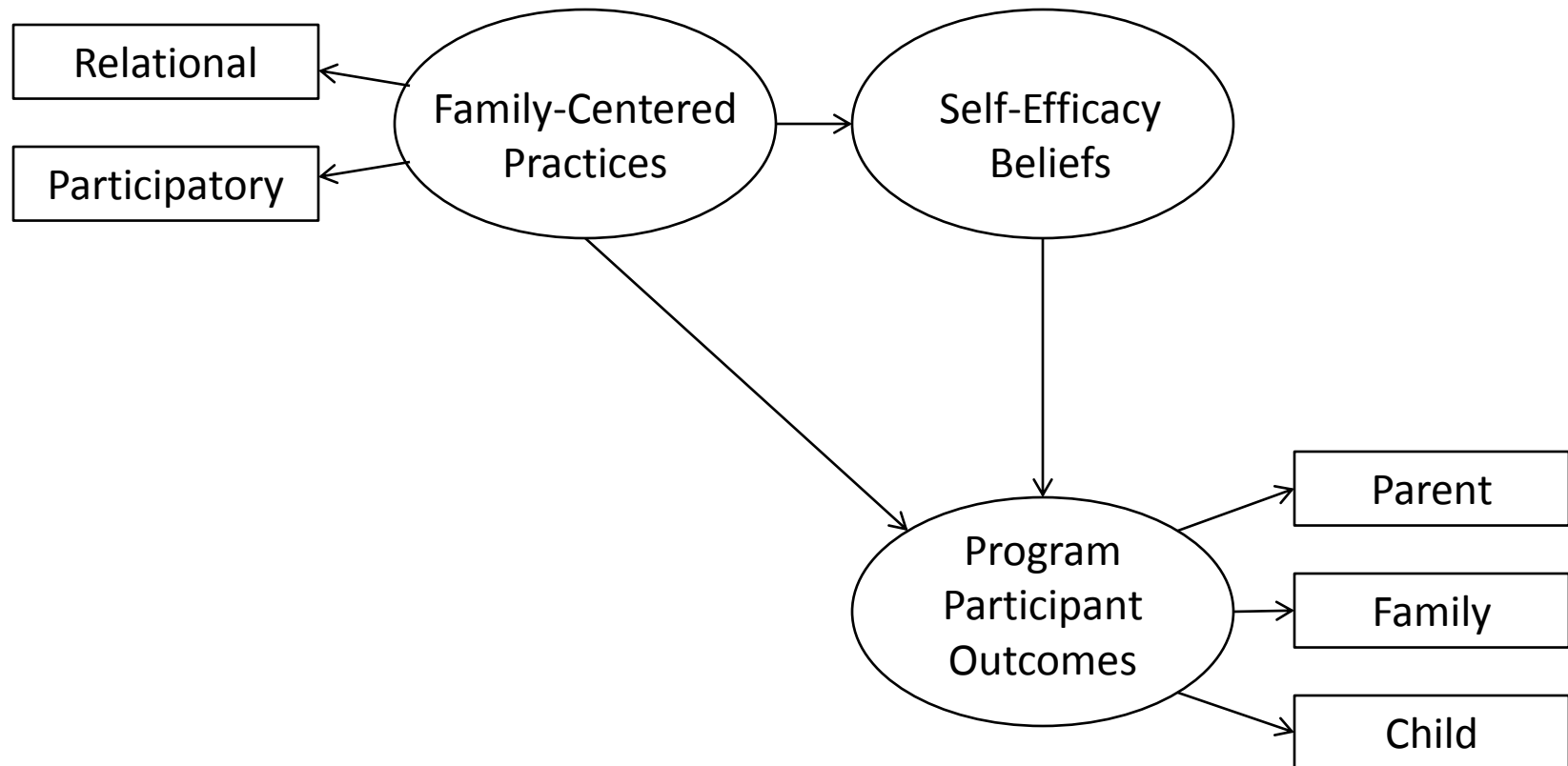
Assess the extent to and manner in which the use of family-centered practices is directly and indirectly related to (a) parent involvement in their children's learning and early education, (b) parenting confidence and competence, (c) parent and family well-being, and (d) child behavior and development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

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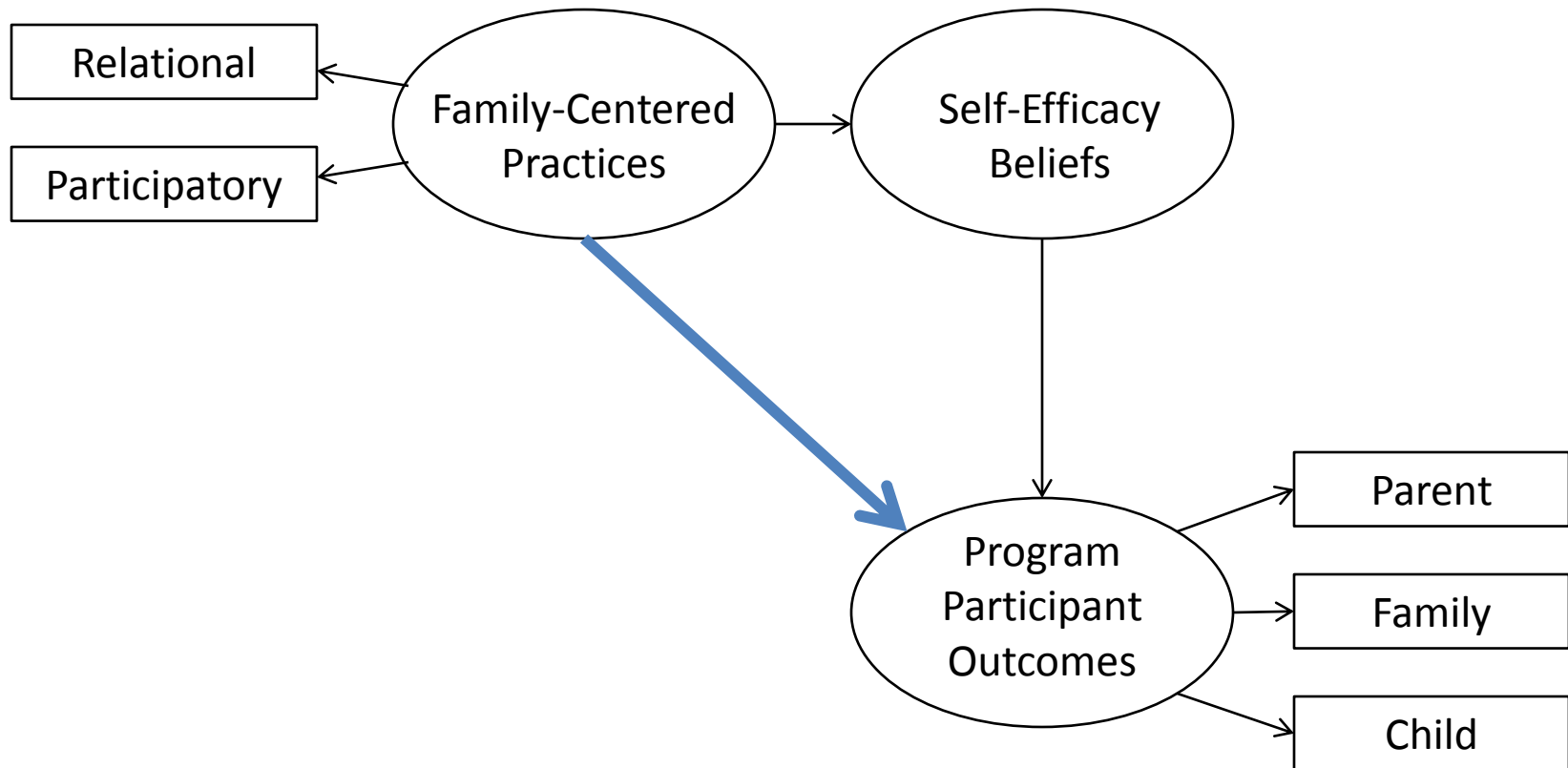
Dunst, C.J., Trivette, C.M., & Hamby, D.W. (2007). Meta-analysis of family-centered helping practices research. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 13, 370-378.

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

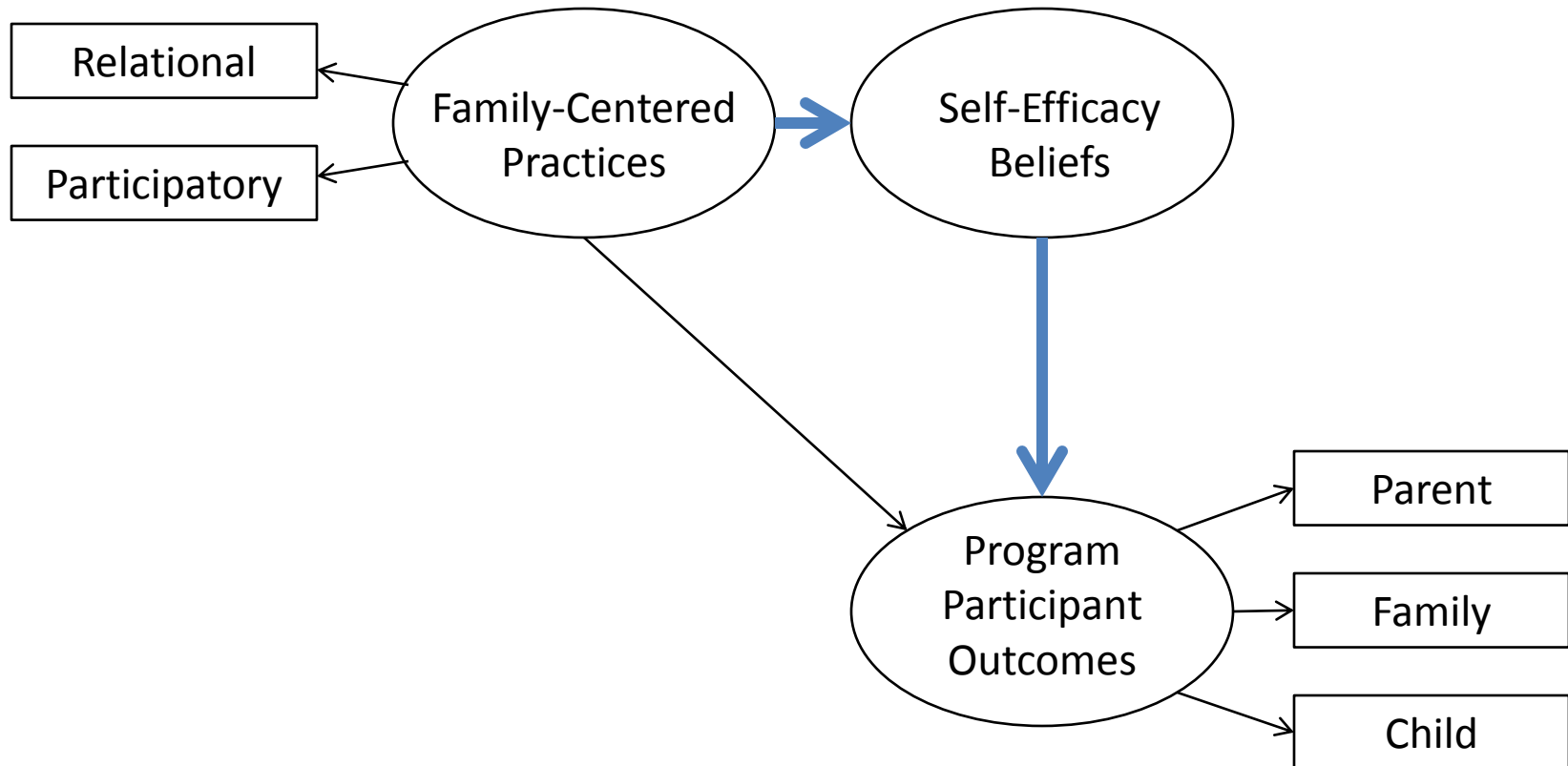


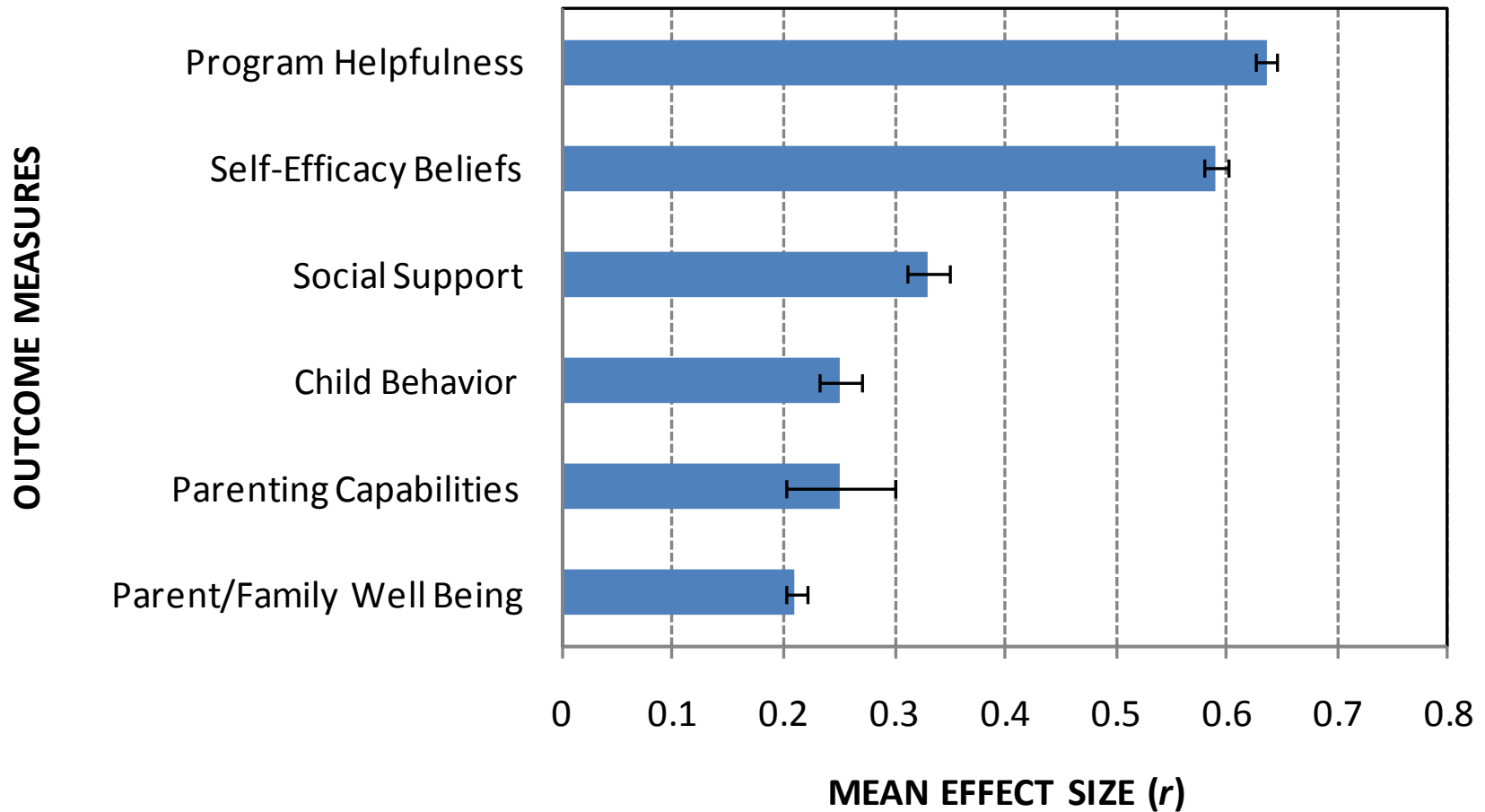
## Direct Effects of Family-Centered Practices On Parent, Family, and Child Outcomes



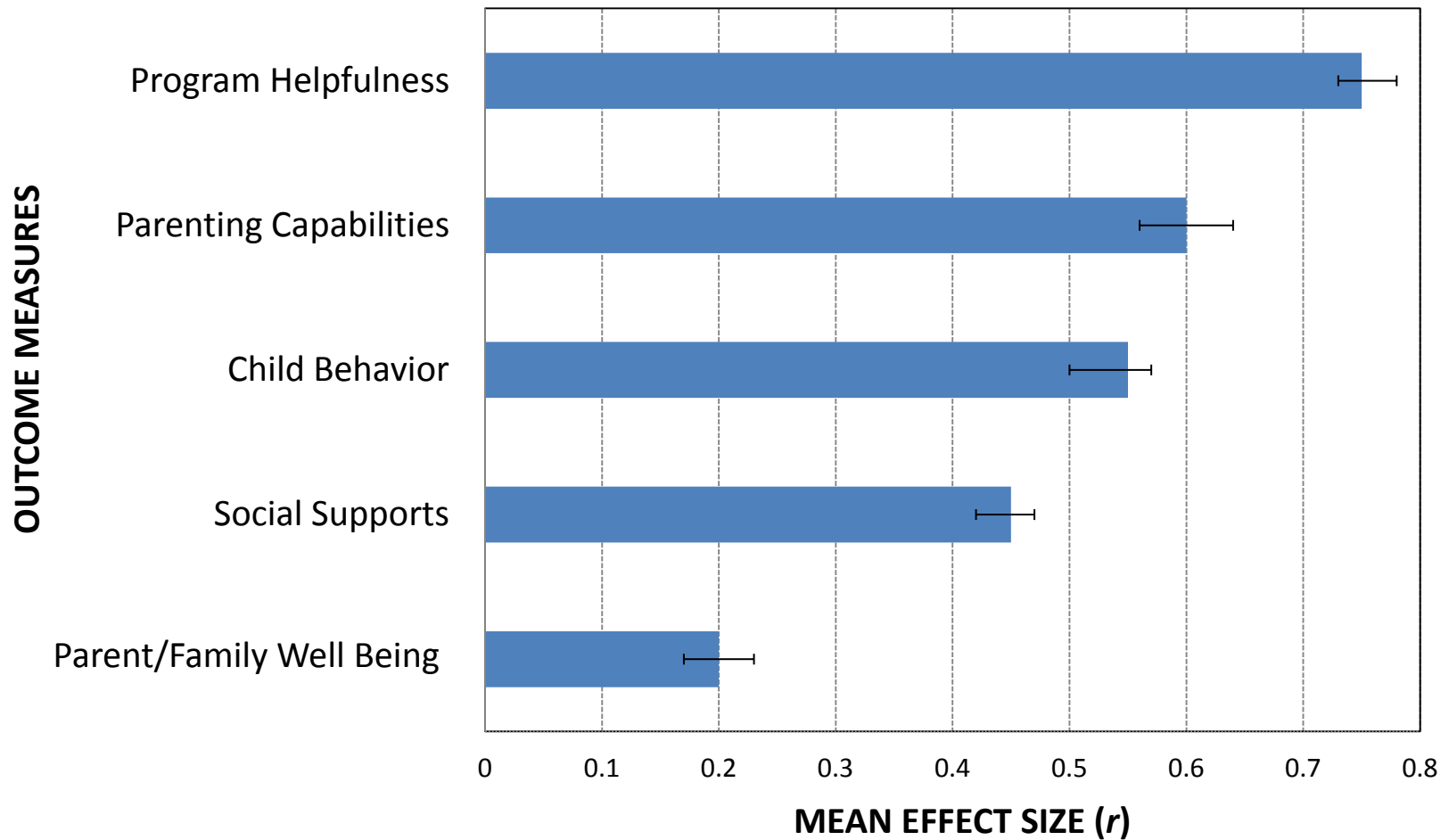


# Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices On Parent, Family, and Child Outcomes





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

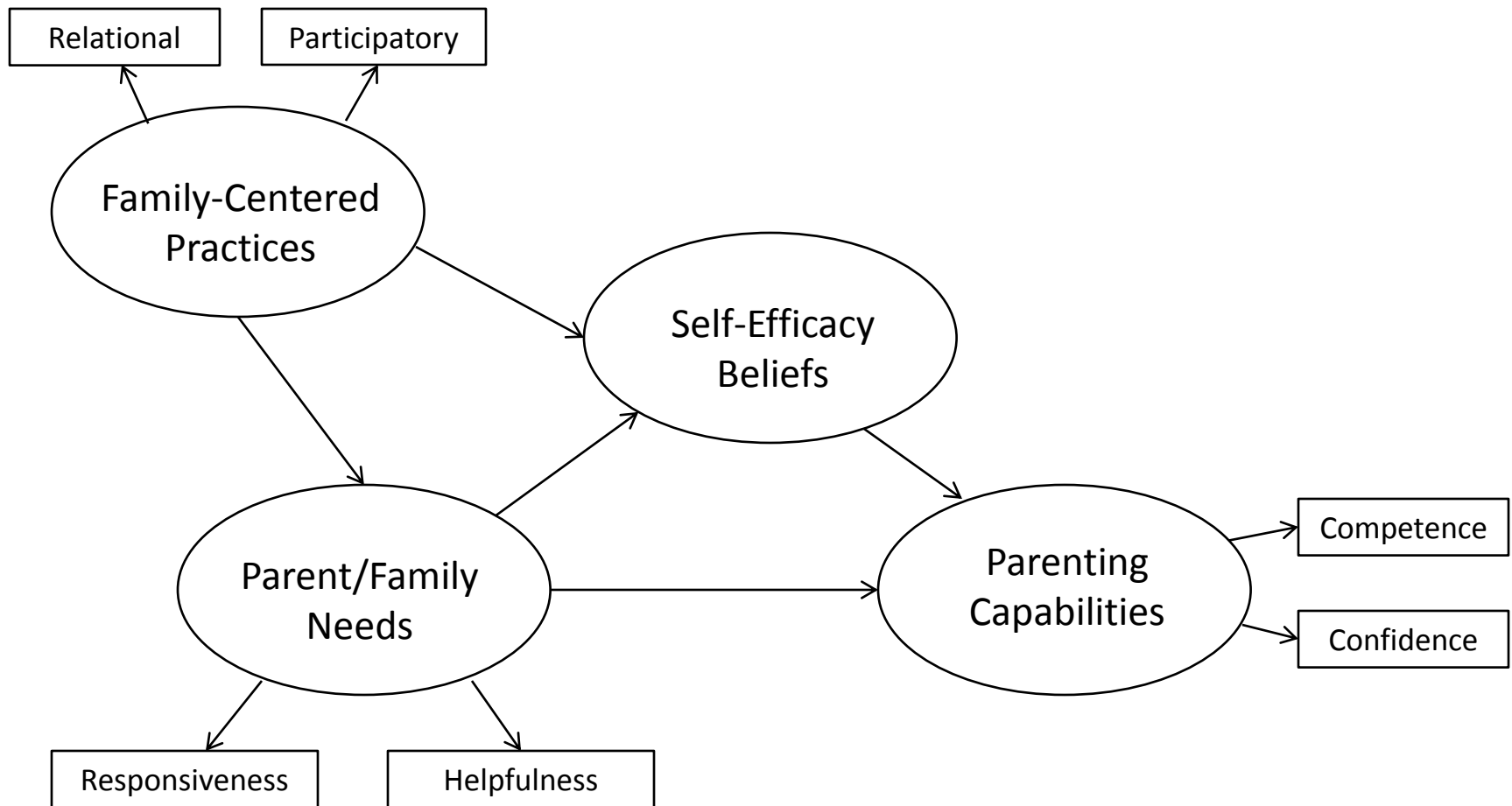


## Direct Effects of Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Parent, Family, and Child Behavior and Functioning

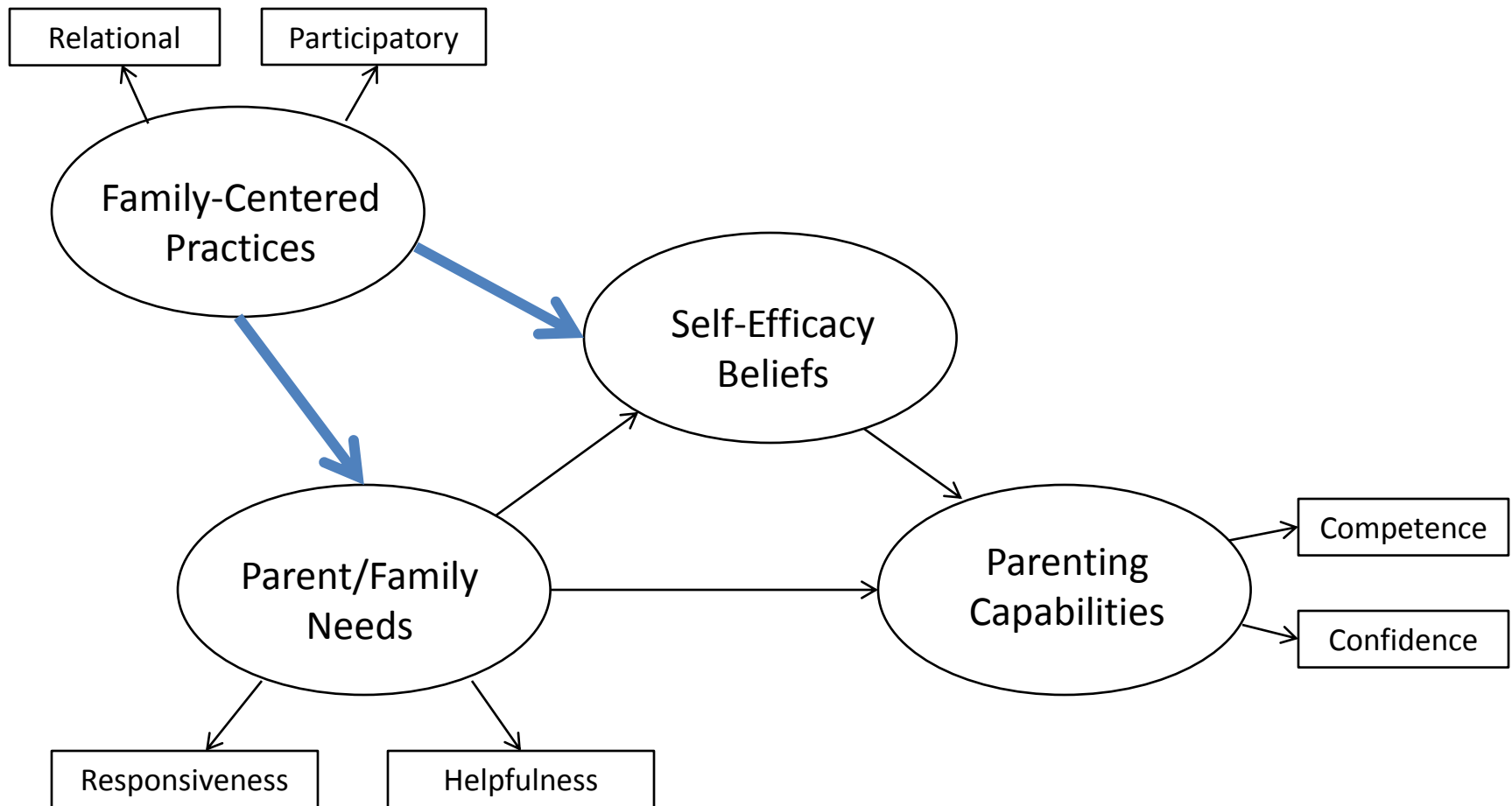
## Mediated Effects of Family-Centered Practices

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.

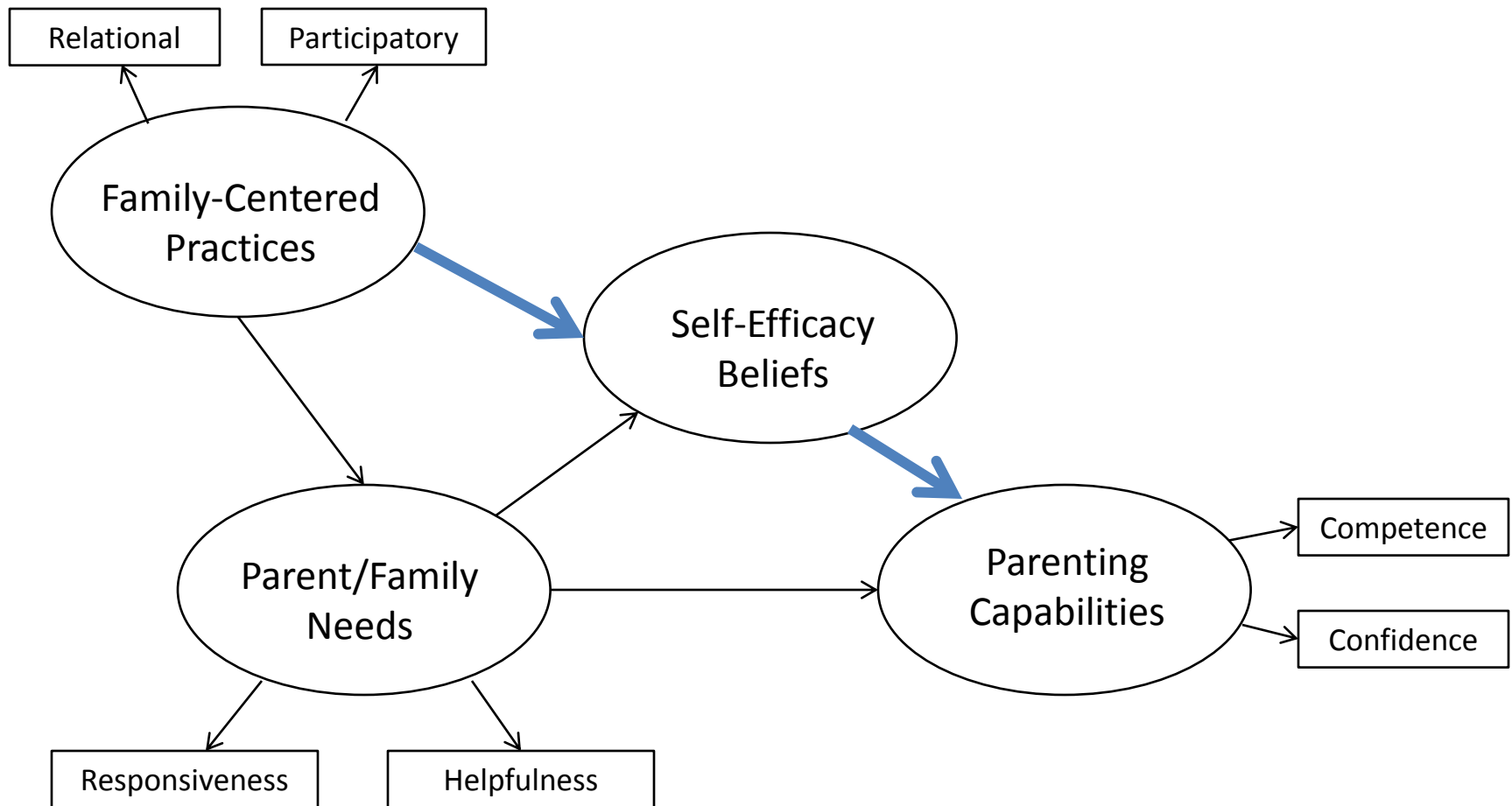
# Direct and Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parenting Competence and Confidence



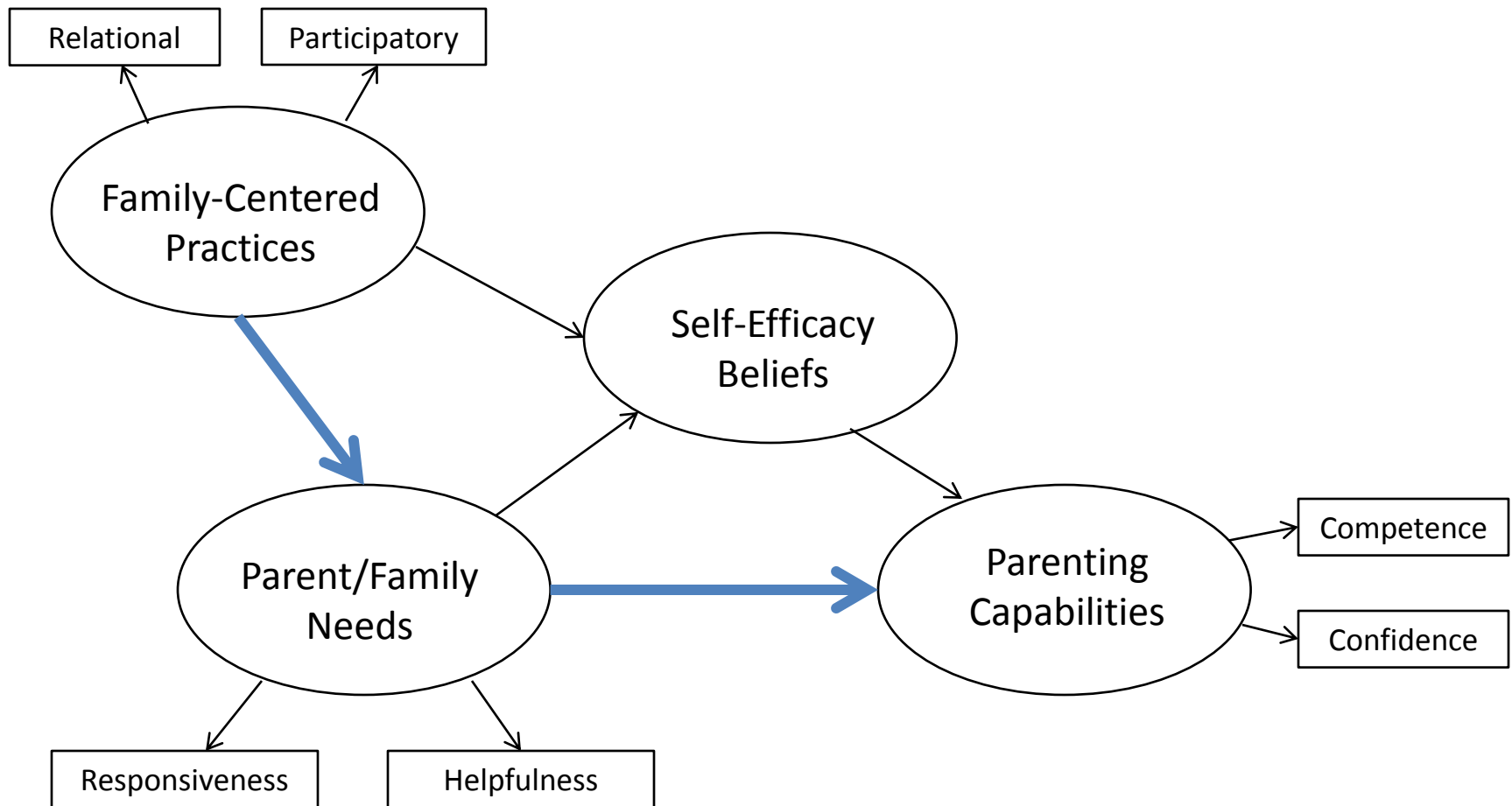
# Direct Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parents' Judgment of Practitioners' Responsiveness and Parents' Self-Efficacy Beliefs



# Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parenting Capabilities Mediated by Parents' Self-Efficacy Beliefs

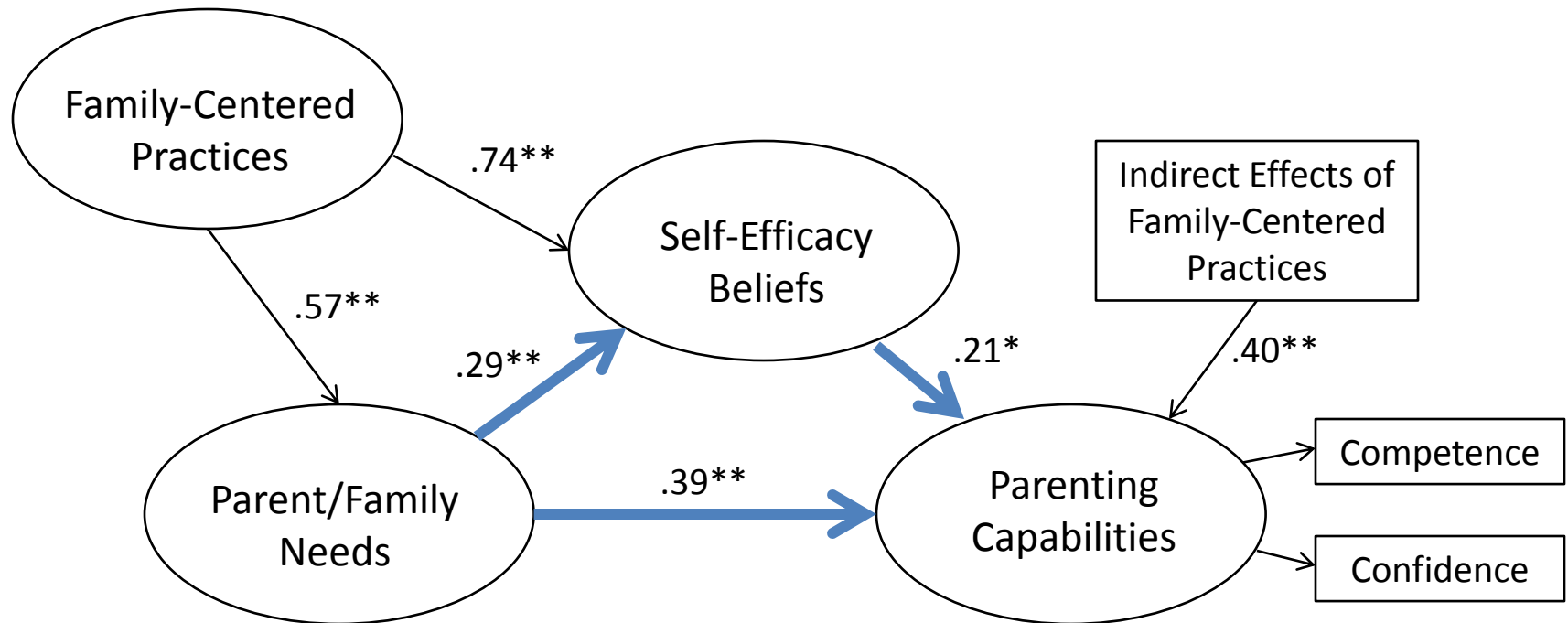


# Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parenting Capabilities Mediated by Practitioners' Responsiveness





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



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

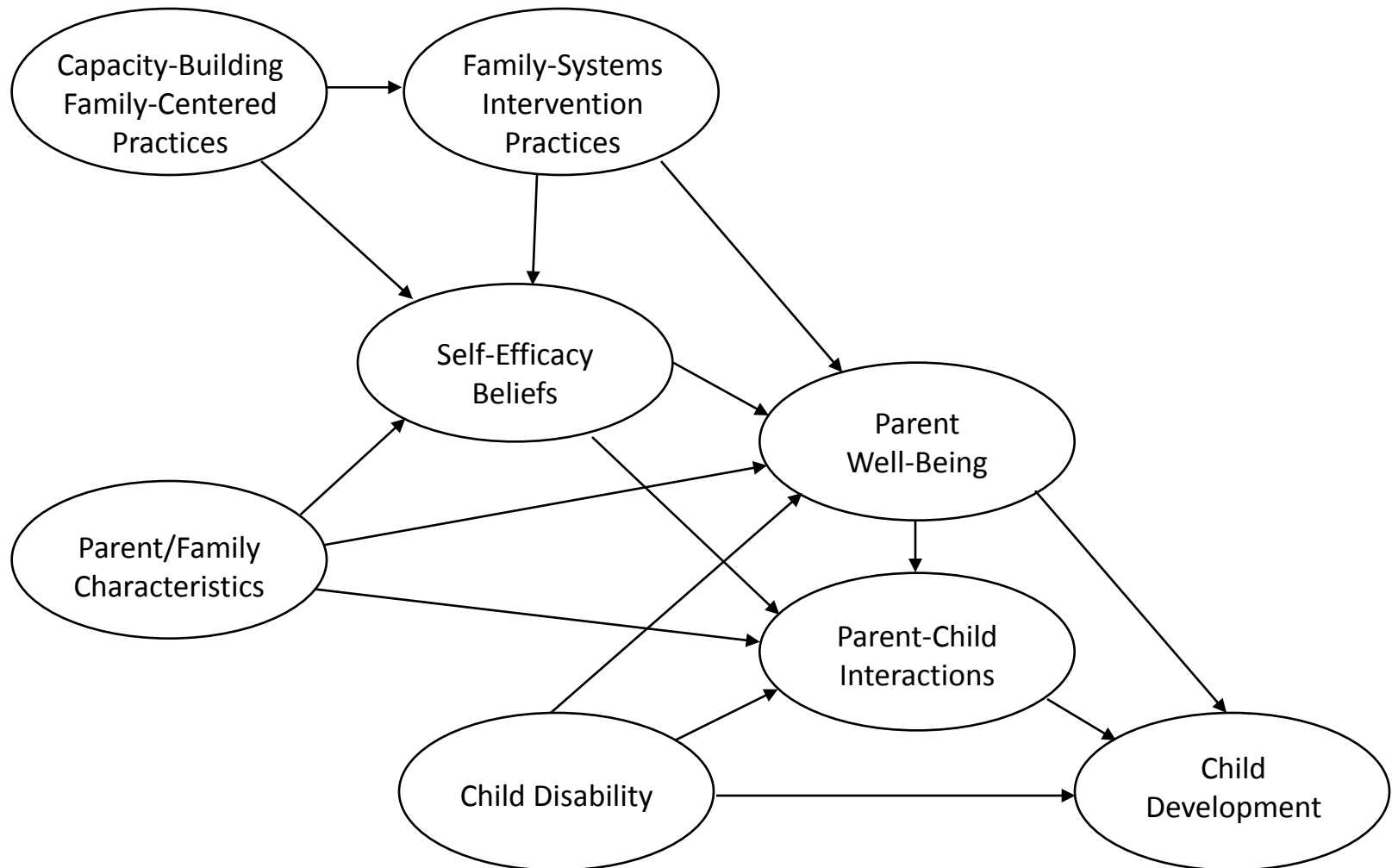
# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Research Synthesis

- 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

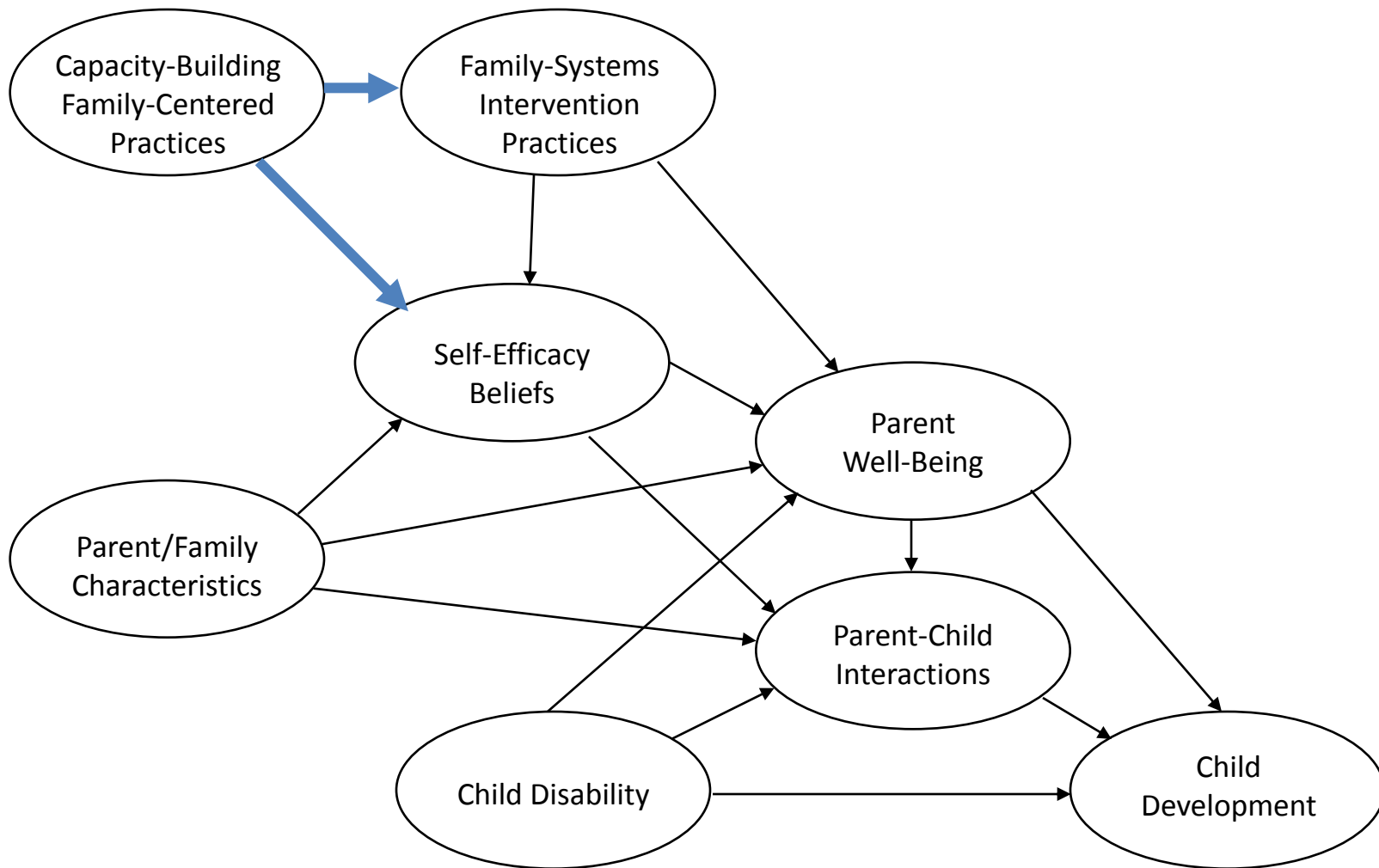
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Trivette, C.M., Dunst, C.J., & Hamby, D.W. (2010). Influences of family-systems intervention practices on parent-child interactions and child development. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 2010, 30, 3-19.

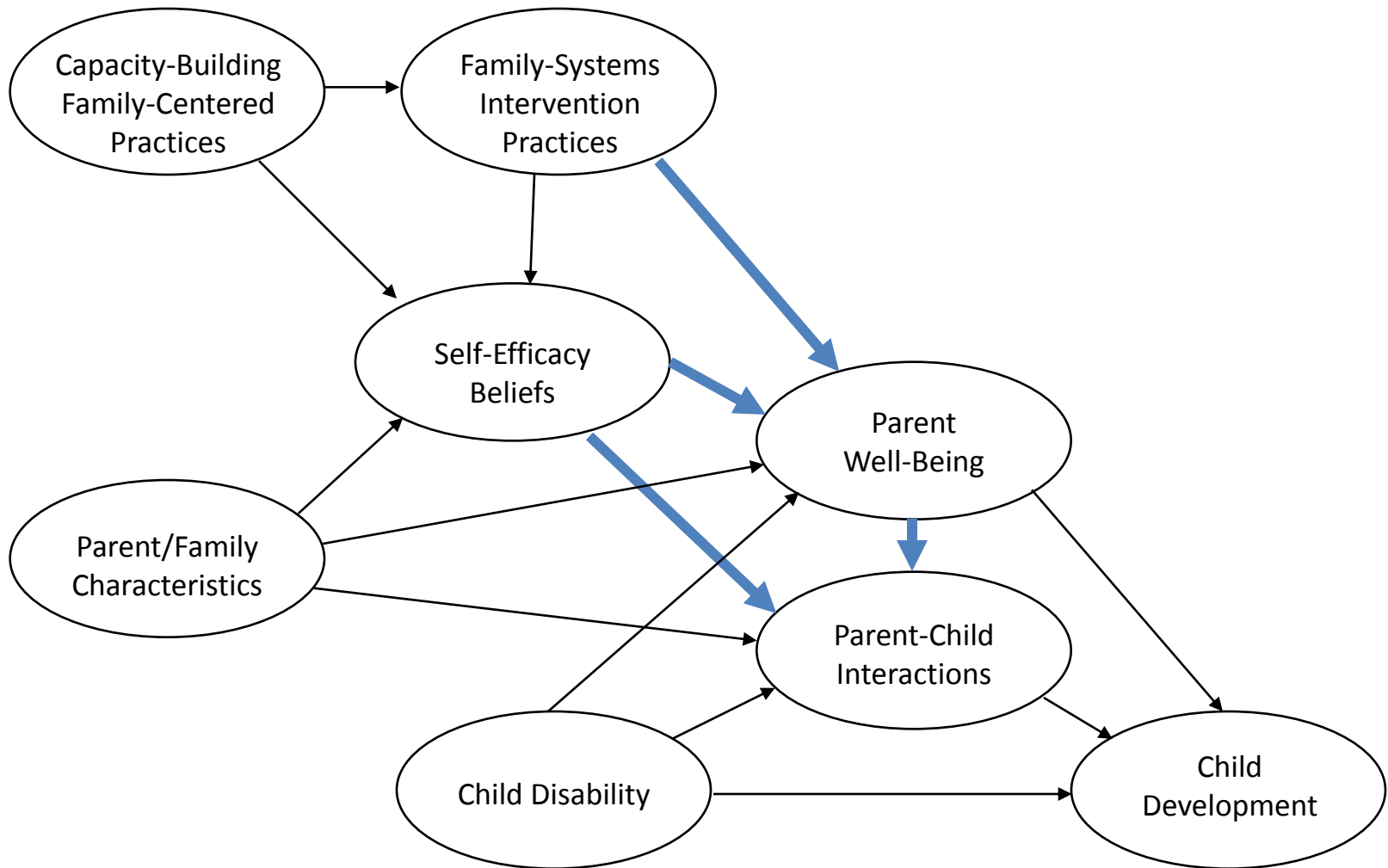
# Model for Assessing the Direct and Indirect Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parent, Parent-Child Interactions, and Child Behavior and Development



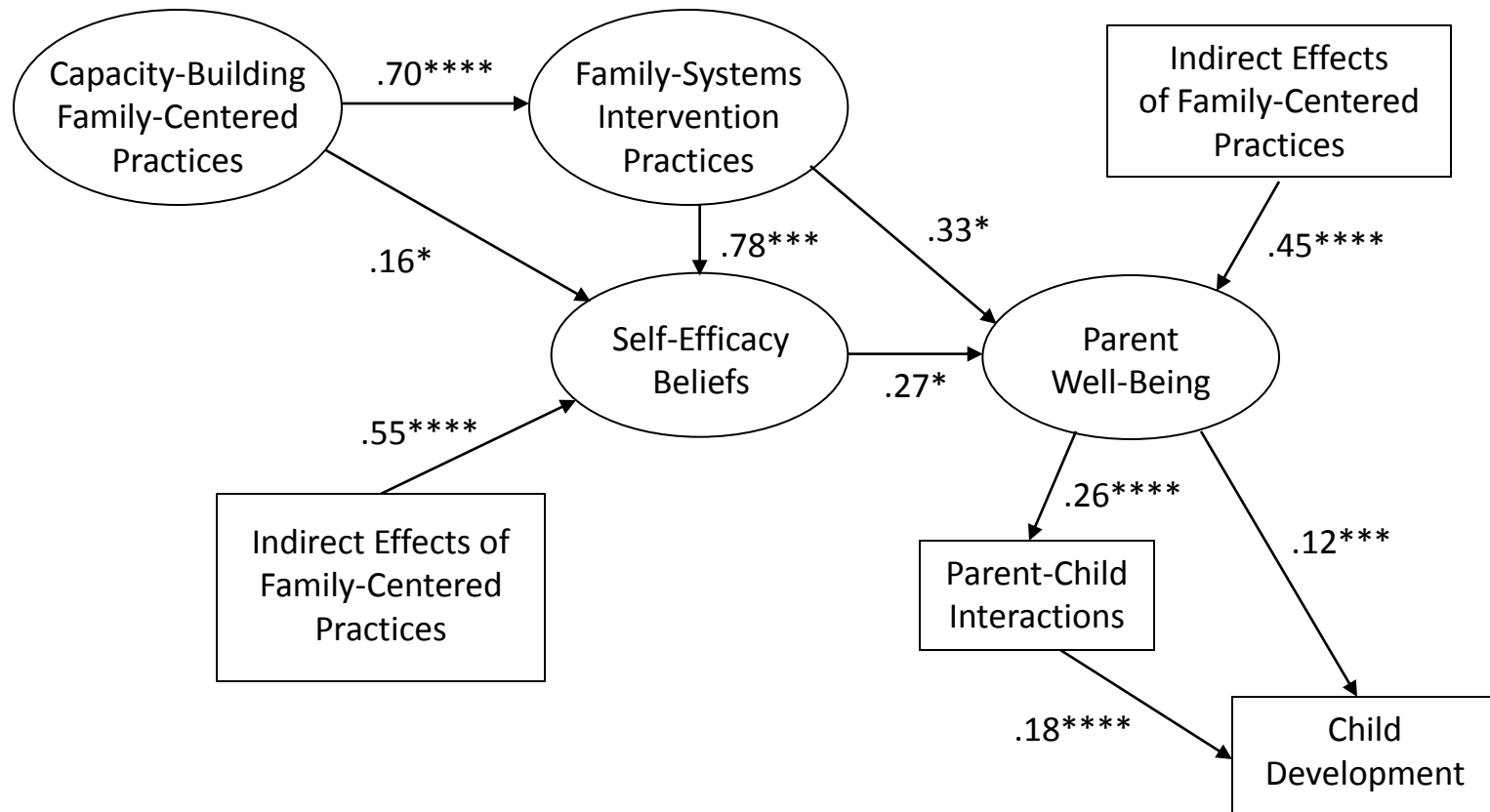
# Direct Effects of Family-Centered Practices on Parent, Parent-Child Interactions, and Child Behavior and Development



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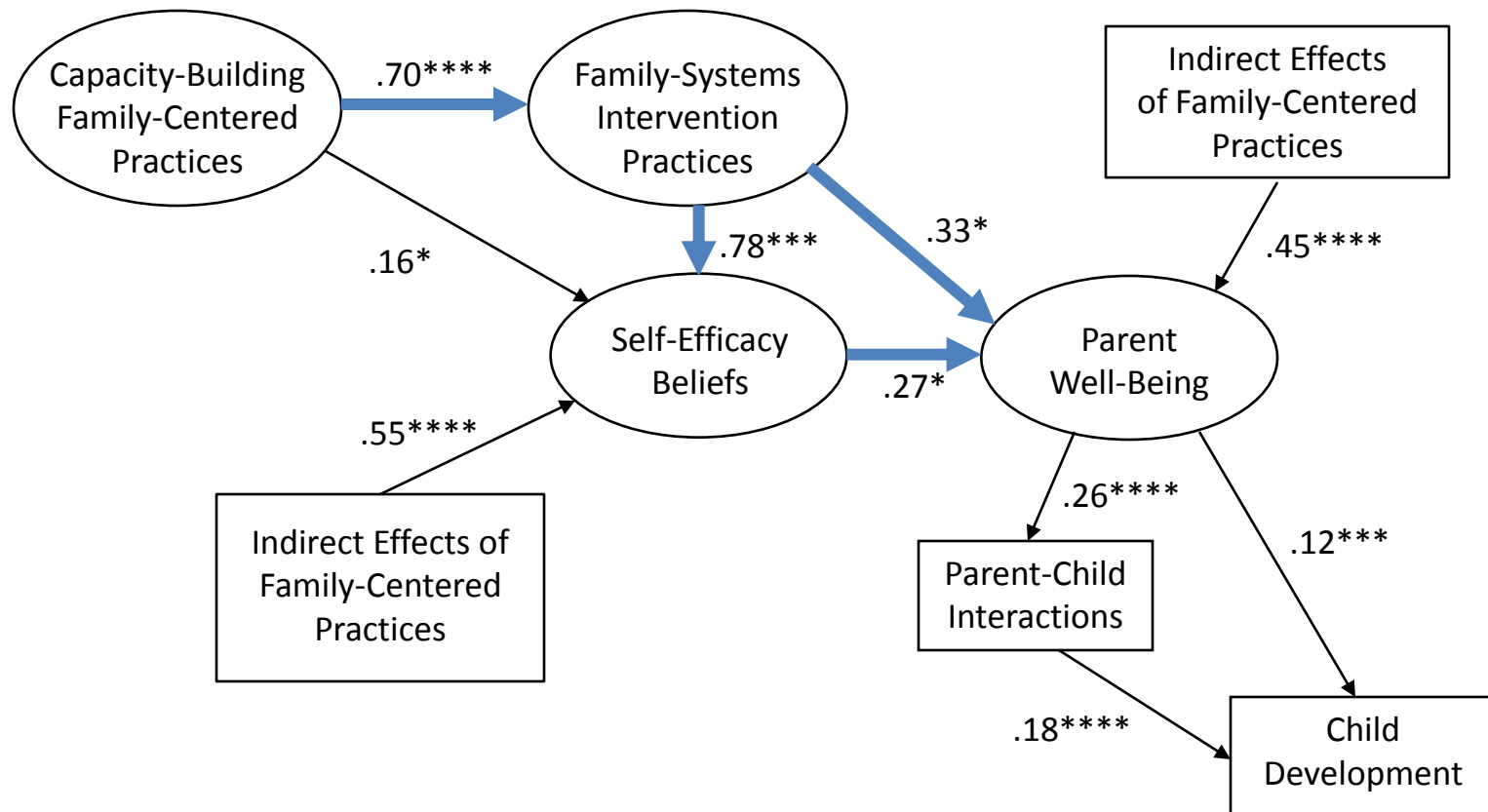


# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Results



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

# Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Results



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

# Promoting Practitioner Use of Family-Centered Practices

Promoting practitioner use of family-centered practices requires attention to:

- An understanding of the characteristics of capacity-building family-centered practices
- Methods used to support practitioners' use of family-centered practices



## Family-Centered Practices Checklists

- Checklists that include the indicators of family-centered practices are useful tools for promoting use of this type of help giving.
- Checklists can be used to provide practitioners with opportunities to assess and reflect on how they work with parents.

# Family-Centered Practices Checklist

Staff Member \_\_\_\_\_

Context \_\_\_\_\_

Observer/Coach \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Rating Scale		Please indicate whether or not you used any of the family-centered practices in your interactions with a child's parents and provide an example or comment on your practices.			
In what way was each practice used?		Yes	No	Example/Comment/Reflection	
<b>PRACTICES</b>	Interpersonal Skills	Communicate clear and complete information in a manner that matched the family's style and level of understanding.			
		Interact with the family in a warm, caring, and empathetic manner.			
		Treat the family with dignity and respect and without judgment.			
	Strengths-Based Practices	Communicate to and about the family in a positive way.			
		Honor and respect the family's personal and cultural beliefs and values.			
		Focus on individual and family strengths and assets.			
		Acknowledge the family's ability to achieve desired outcomes.			
	Family Choice and Action	Work in partnership with parents/family members to identify and address family-identified desires.			
		Encourage and assist the family to make decisions about and evaluate the resources best suited for achieving desired outcomes.			
		Seek and promote ongoing parent/family input and active participation regarding desired outcomes			
		Encourage and assist the family to use existing strengths and assets as a way of achieving desired outcomes.			
		Provide family participatory opportunities to learn and develop new skills.			
	Practitioner Responsiveness	Assist the family to consider solutions for desired outcomes that include a broad range of family and community supports and resources.			
		Support and respect family members' decisions.			
		Work with the family in a flexible and individualized manner.			
		Offer help that was responsive to and matches the family's interests and priorities.			
		Assist the family to take a positive, playful approach to achieving desired outcomes.			

# Family-Centered Relational Practices

Rating Scale		Please indicate whether or not you used any of the family-centered practices in your interactions with a child's parents and provide an example or comment on your practices.			
In what way was each practice used?		Yes	No	Example/ Comment/ Reflection	
<b>PRACTICES</b>	Interpersonal Skills	Communicate clear and complete information in a manner that matched the family's style and level of understanding.			
		Interact with the family in a warm, caring, and empathetic manner.			
		Treat the family with dignity and respect and without judgment.			
	Strengths-Based Practices	Communicate to and about the family in a positive way.			
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# Family-Centered Relational Practices

Rating Scale		Please indicate whether or not you used any of the family-centered practices in your interactions with a child's parents and provide an example or comment on your practices.			
In what way was each practice used?		Yes	No	Example/Comment/Reflection	
<b>PRACTICES</b>	Interpersonal Skills	Communicate clear and complete information in a manner that matched the family's style and level of understanding.		✓	<p><b>Information about the child's disability and its consequences was not offered in a way that was understandable to the family.</b></p>
		Interact with the family in a warm, caring, and empathetic manner.	✓		
		Treat the family with dignity and respect and without judgment.	✓		
	Strengths-Based Practices	Communicate to and about the family in a positive way.		✓	
		Honor and respect the family's personal and cultural beliefs and values.	✓		
		Focus on individual and family strengths and assets.	✓		
		Acknowledge the family's ability to achieve desired outcomes.	✓		

# Family-Centered Participatory Practices

Rating Scale	Please indicate whether or not you used any of the family-centered practices in your interactions with a child's parents and provide an example or comment on your practices.				
In what way was each practice used?		Yes	No	Example/ Comment/ Reflection	
<b>PRACTICES</b>	<b>Family Choice and Action</b>	Work in partnership with parents/family members to identify and address family-identified desires.			
		Encourage and assist the family to make decisions about and evaluate the resources best suited for achieving desired outcomes.			
		Seek and promote ongoing parent/family input and active participation regarding desired outcomes			
		Encourage and assist the family to use existing strengths and assets as a way of achieving desired outcomes.			
		Provide family participatory opportunities to learn and develop new skills.			
	<b>Practitioner Responsiveness</b>	Assist the family to consider solutions for desired outcomes that include a broad range of family and community supports and resources.			
		Support and respect family members' decisions.			
		Work with the family in a flexible and individualized manner.			
		Offer help that was responsive to and matches the family's interests and priorities.			
		Assist the family to take a positive, planful approach to achieving desired outcomes.			

# Family-Centered Participatory Practices

Rating Scale	Please indicate whether or not you used any of the family-centered practices in your interactions with a child's parents and provide an example or comment on your practices.				
In what way was each practice used?	Yes	No	Example/Comment/Reflection		
<b>PRACTICES</b>	<b>Family Choice and Action</b>	Work in partnership with parents/family members to identify and address family-identified desires.	✓		
		Encourage and assist the family to make decisions about and evaluate the resources best suited for achieving desired outcomes.	✓		
		Seek and promote ongoing parent/family input and active participation regarding desired outcomes		✓	Practitioner provided few opportunities to involve the family actively in obtaining information about the child's disability.
		Encourage and assist the family to use existing strengths and assets as a way of achieving desired outcomes.		✓	
		Provide family participatory opportunities to learn and develop new skills.		✓	
	<b>Practitioner Responsiveness</b>	Assist the family to consider solutions for desired outcomes that include a broad range of family and community supports and resources.	✓		
		Support and respect family members' decisions.	✓		
		Work with the family in a flexible and individualized manner.	✓		
		Offer help that was responsive to and matches the family's interests and priorities.	✓		
		Assist the family to take a positive, planful approach to achieving desired outcomes.		✓	

# Steps for Promoting Improvements in the Use of Family-Centered Practices

1. Describe the key characteristics of family-centered practices.
2. Use a family-centered checklist to illustrate the key characteristics of this approach to help giving.
3. Engage the practitioner in using the key characteristics with a family.
4. Engage the practitioner in self-evaluation of his or her use of the key characteristics.
5. Use the family-centered practices checklist to have the practitioner self-evaluate his or her understanding and mastery of all the indicators of family-centered practices.
6. Engage the practitioner in new learning opportunities to improve his or her use of family-centered practices.

# Conclusions

- Capacity-building family-centered practices are an evidence-based approach to help giving that can meaningfully involve parents in their children's early learning and development.
- Research indicates that practitioner use of family-centered practices can have positive effects on child, parent, and family outcomes.
- Efforts to promote practitioner use of family-centered practices can be enhanced by using checklists to help promote understanding and mastery of this approach to help giving.



PowerPoint presentation available at:

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

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