



Fatherhood, Resilience, and Other Protective Factors

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Agenda

- Impact of Childhood Maltreatment
- Building Resilience to Childhood Trauma: A strengths-based approach
- Fathers: A key Protective Factor in Child Welfare



Child Welfare Goals

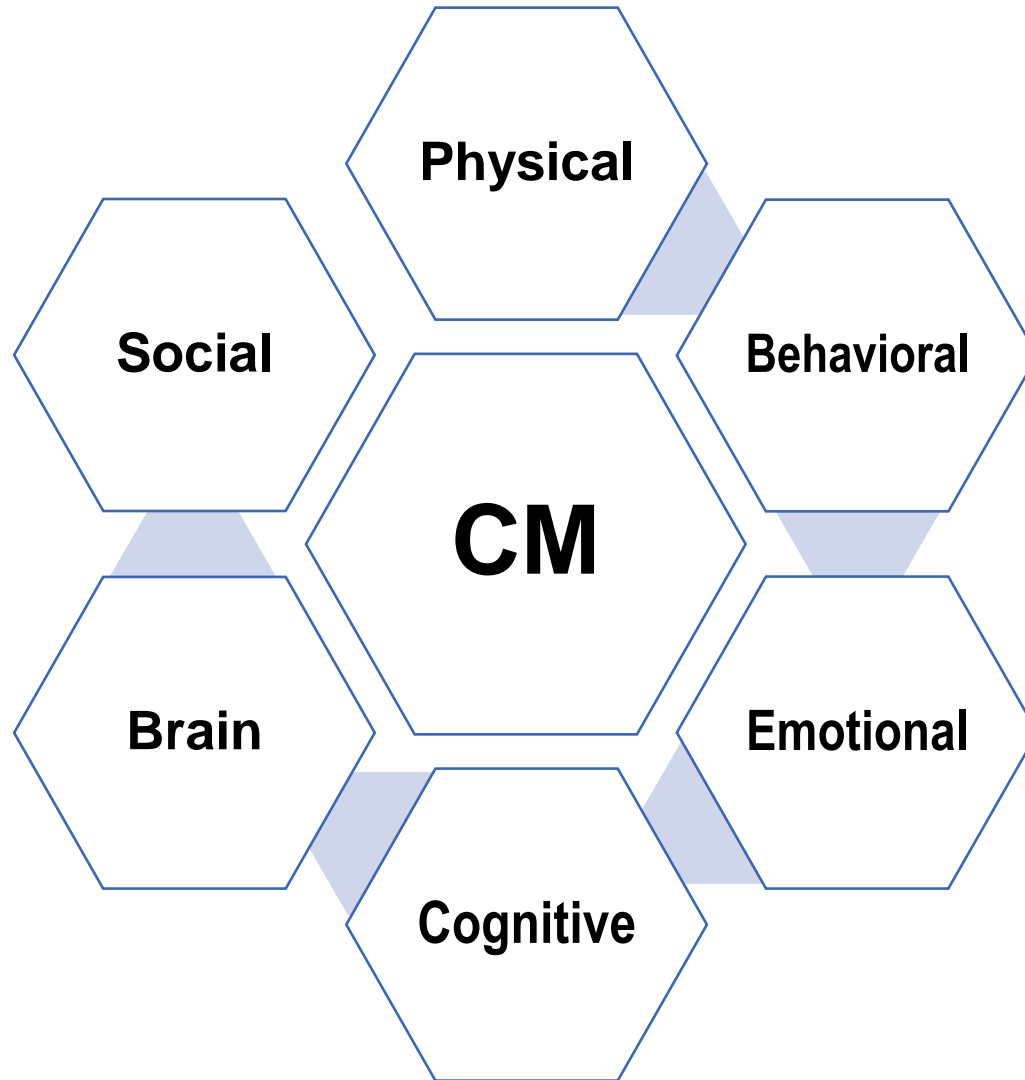


Impact of Child Maltreatment

- ❑ Serious and common form of childhood trauma
- ❑ Child maltreatment is associated with a host of negative outcomes
- ❑ Child maltreatment has long-lasting effects across the lifespan



Impact of Child Maltreatment



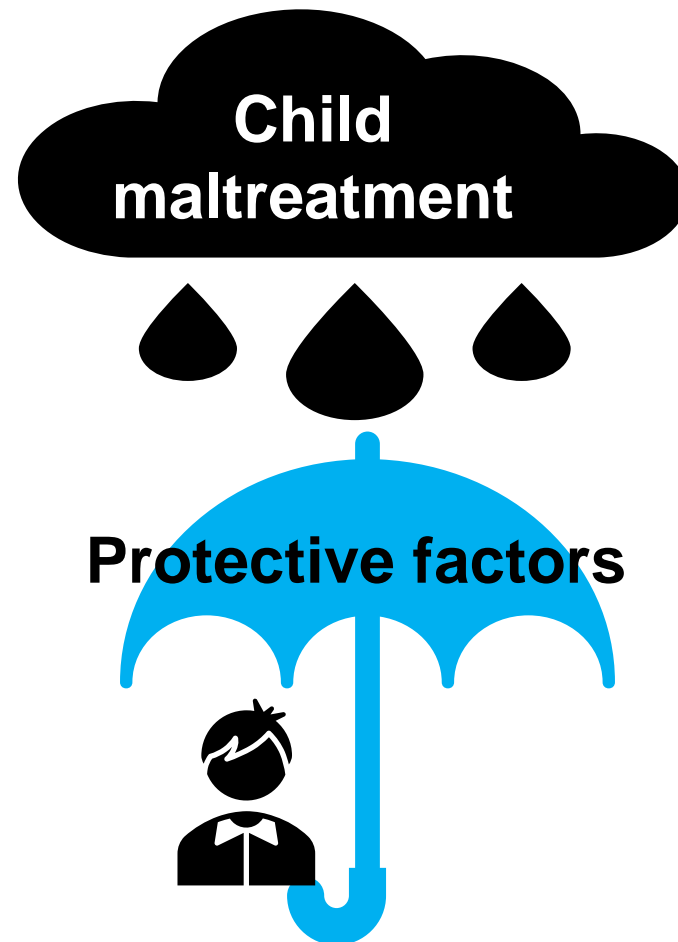


Resilience

- Some children exhibit resilience following child maltreatment
- Resilience is defined as a process of adaptation despite exposure to adversity (Cicchetti, 2013; Masten & Barnes, 2018).
- Resilience is mutable and can be built over time
- New and innovative approach for child welfare research and practice



Strengths-based Approaches to Promote Child Well-being following Child Maltreatment



(Children's Bureau, 2020)

Multi-level Protective Factors



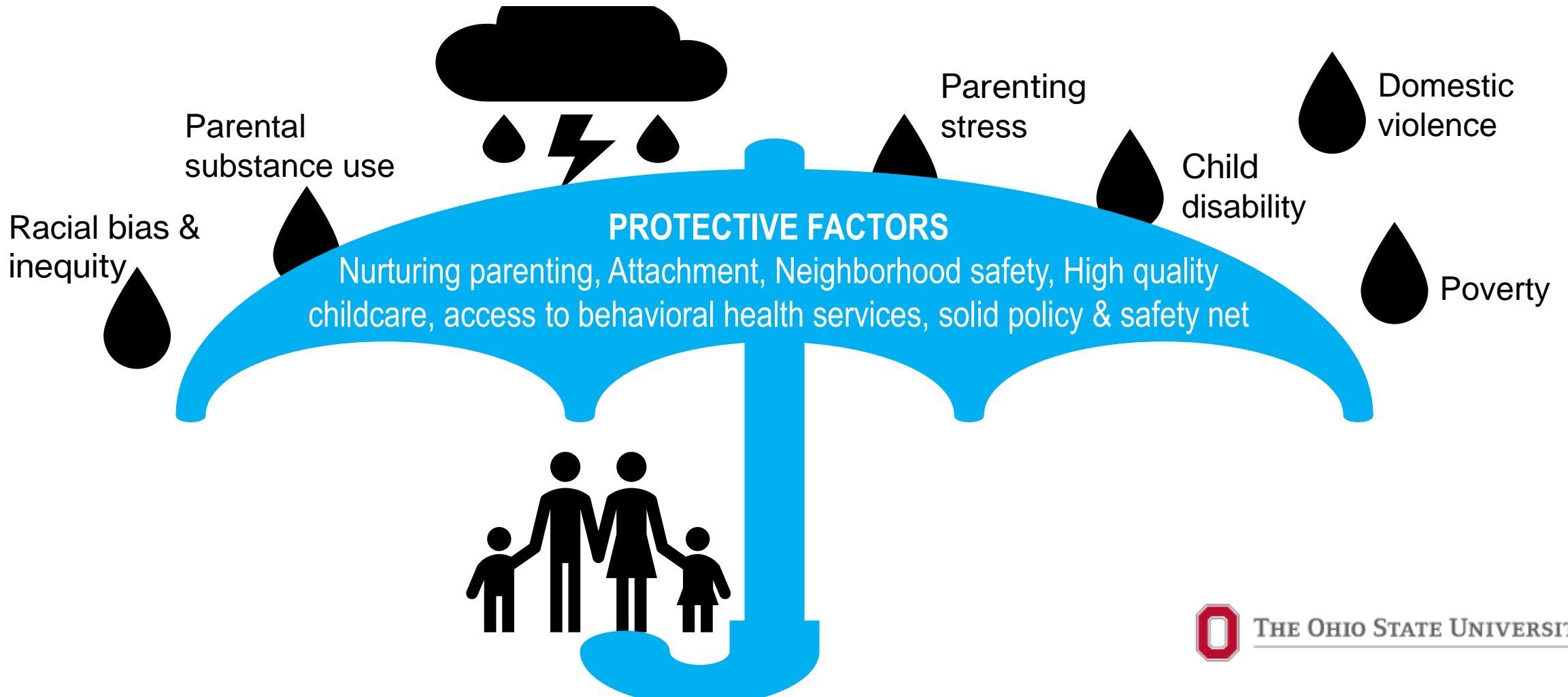
Society/Culture: positive social norms, cultural connectedness, effective laws/polices/regulations

Community: neighborhood safety, collective efficacy, access to services, positive peer relations, safe school environment

Family: supporting parenting, high quality parent-child relationships, father involvement,

Individual: easy temperament, prosocial skills, humor, spirituality, optimistic coping style, high IQ

Strengths-based Approaches for Child Maltreatment Prevention



Fathers:
**A Key
Protective
Factor in Child
Welfare**

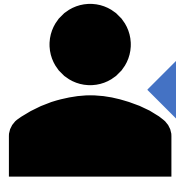


Fathers & Child Welfare

- Fathers have been left out of the equation in child welfare practice, policy, and research
- Of cases that involve parents as perpetrators, over 20% of victims experience maltreatment perpetrated by fathers alone (US DHHS, 2021)
- Having a non-biological father in the home is associated with a higher risk for child maltreatment (Radhakrishna et al., 2001, Yoon et al., 2021a)
- Non-offending fathers can serve as valuable resources and protective factors for children (Yoon et al., 2021b).



Barriers to Engaging Fathers



Financial matters, substance use, mental health problems, incarceration, reluctance to be involved with the child welfare system (Coady et al., 2013; Coakley, 2013; Waller & Swisher, 2006)



Intimate partner violence, maternal gatekeeping, coparenting issues (Maxwell et al., 2012)



Bias towards BIPOC fathers, Caseworker & CW systems' prejudice and stigma against fathers, non-father friendly practices (Campbell et al., 2015; Coakley, 2013; Maxwell et al., 2012)



Why Fathers Matter



Safety: lower risk of child abuse and neglect, lower likelihood of revictimization



Permanency: more reunifications, shorter lengths of stay in out-of-home care, and increased permanency



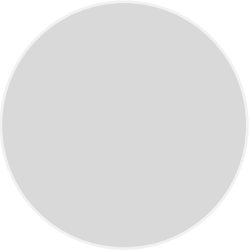
Well-being: higher cognitive functioning, fewer behavioral problems, better social-emotional development




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Fathers and Child Well-being: *Empirical Evidence*

Data: Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN)

Sample: 14-year-old high-risk youth (N = 661)

Check for updates

Original Research

The Interaction Effects Between Father-Child Relationship Quality and Parent-perpetrated Maltreatment on Adolescent Behavior Problems

Susan Yoon,¹  Dalhee Yoon,² Anika Latelle,¹ and Julia M. Kobulsky³ 

Journal of Interpersonal Violence
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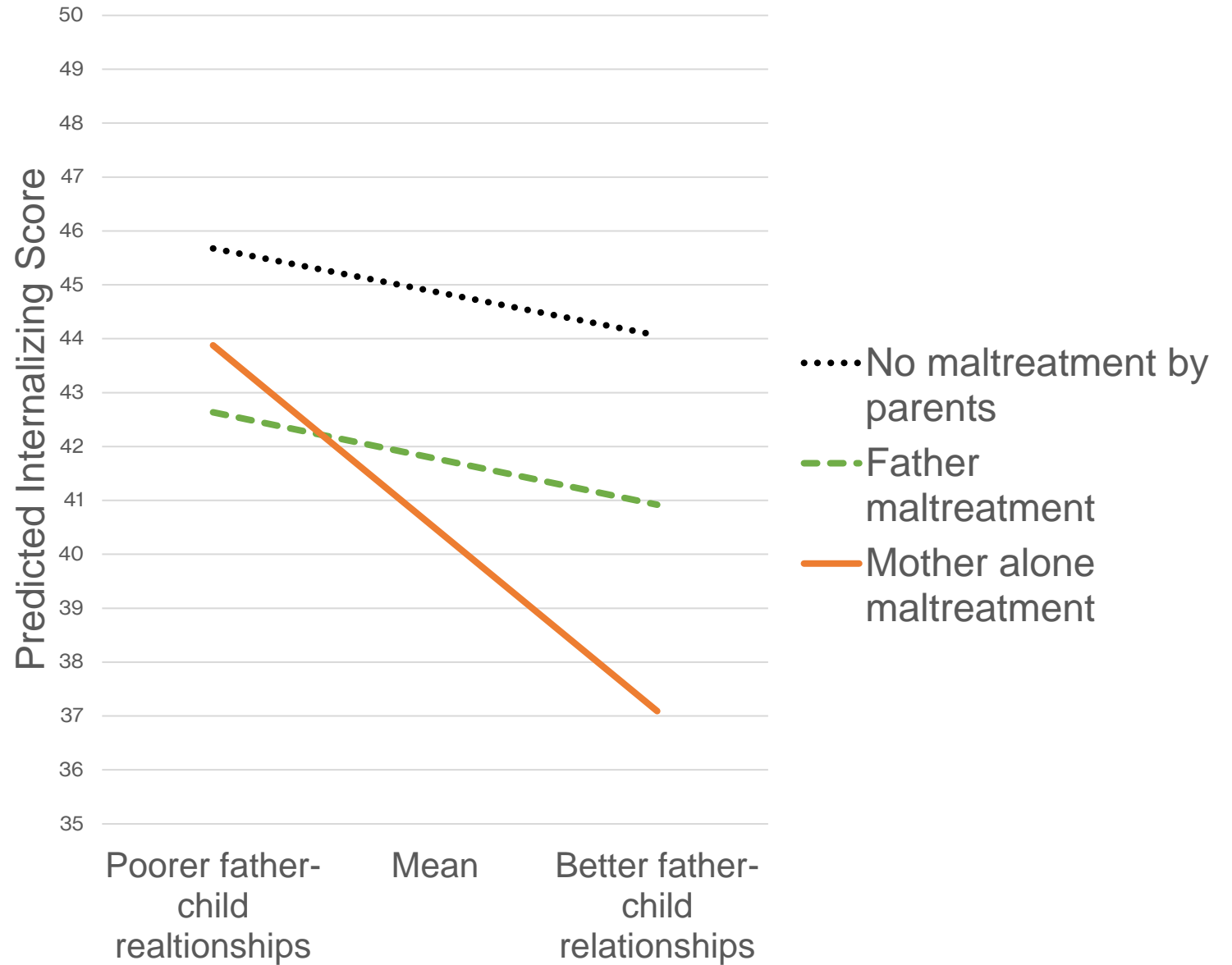

Fathers and Child Well-being: *Empirical Evidence*

Results:

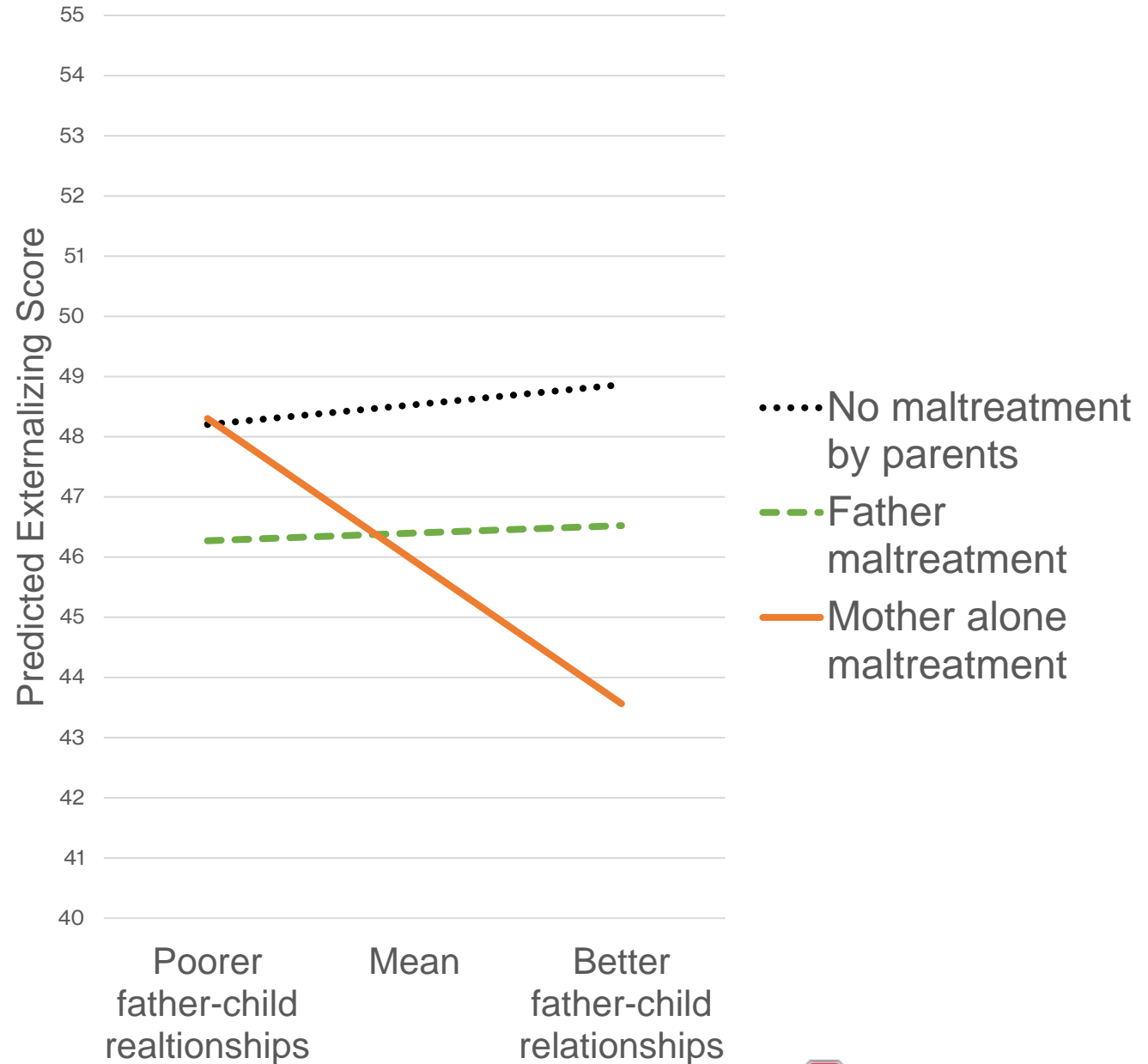
- Father perpetrated maltreatment was linked to greater internalizing and externalizing problems.
- Higher quality father-child relationships had a buffering impact against adolescent internalizing and externalizing problems when adolescents were maltreated by mothers alone



Father-Child Relationship Quality and Perpetrator Identity on Youth Internalizing Problems



Father-Child Relationship Quality and Perpetrator Identity on Youth Externalizing Problems



Fathers and Child Well-being: *Empirical Evidence*

Key findings from other studies:

- The presence of father in the home during early childhood was protective against increasing alcohol use in adolescence (Yoon et al., 2019)
- Higher quality of father involvement was associated with lower levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms (Yoon, Bellamy, et al., 2018)
- Regardless of child sex, higher quality of father involvement was found to be a protective factor for early substance use (quantity of father involvement was not significant). (Yoon, Pei, et al., 2018)
- Father cognitive stimulation was associated with higher levels of cognitive functioning, fewer behavior problems, and better social functioning (Yoon, Schoppe-Sullivan, 2021)



Engaging Fathers in Child Welfare Practices and Services

- Apply a **strengths-based approach** and empower fathers
- Engage fathers across **the full spectrum of child welfare**, from maltreatment prevention to entering/exiting the CW system
- **Involve (non-custodial, non-resident) fathers**
- Cultivate **father-inclusive practice environments** and provide father-specific supports/services
- Promote **racial equity for BIPOC fathers** in the CW system



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Thank you!

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