Turning Developmental Relational Science into Practice

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Ross   + Add Child

Save Account

ANYTIME ANYWHERE

Again! Again!

When singing songs with Ross, choose ones that encourage singing and moving along (like "Itsy Bitsy Spider" or "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"). Encourage him to repeat what you do and say, going back and forth. When he knows the song, stop in the middle and see if he can fill in the blank.

Ross

1 year old

✏ Edit Profile

WELCOME

Welcome to your child's journal

Each day you'll find a new activity waiting for you. If you don't like that one, browse Discover to find something just right.

How do we enlist the yield of developmental relational science to improve the well-being of children today?

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the study of relational processes, influences and outcomes as they change with development and vary by context

THE SCIENTIST IN THE CRIB

WHAT EARLY LEARNING TELLS US ABOUT THE MIND

"The authors' descriptions of flirtatious, learning babies will make you laugh, but the seriousness of their project, and its implications, are breathtaking." — *Seattle Times*

Alison Gopnik, Ph.D.
Andrew N. Meltzoff, Ph.D.
Patricia K. Kuhl, Ph.D.

The Philosophical Baby

What Children's Minds Tell Us About Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life
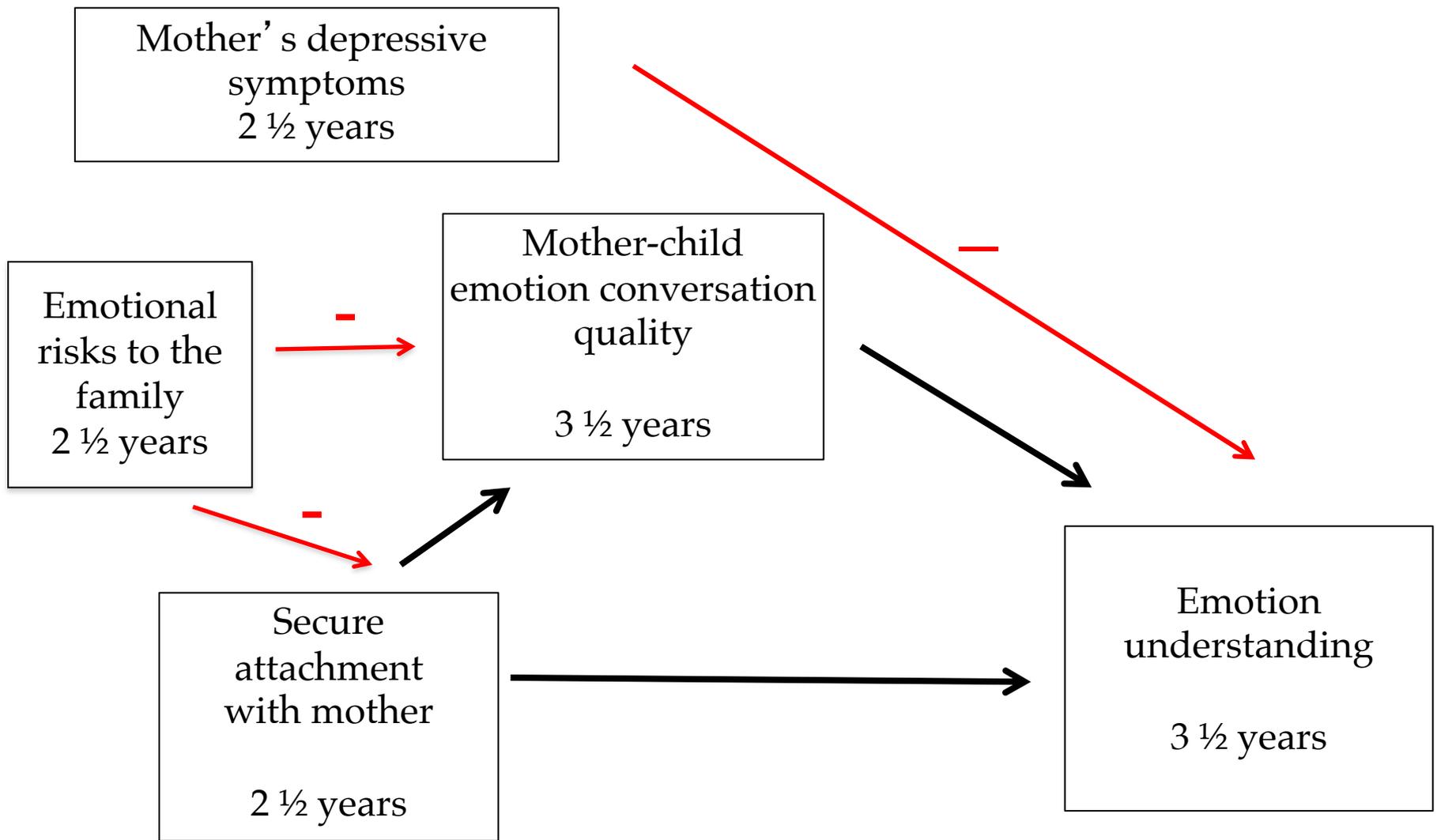
Alison Gopnik

There is no such thing
as a baby . . .

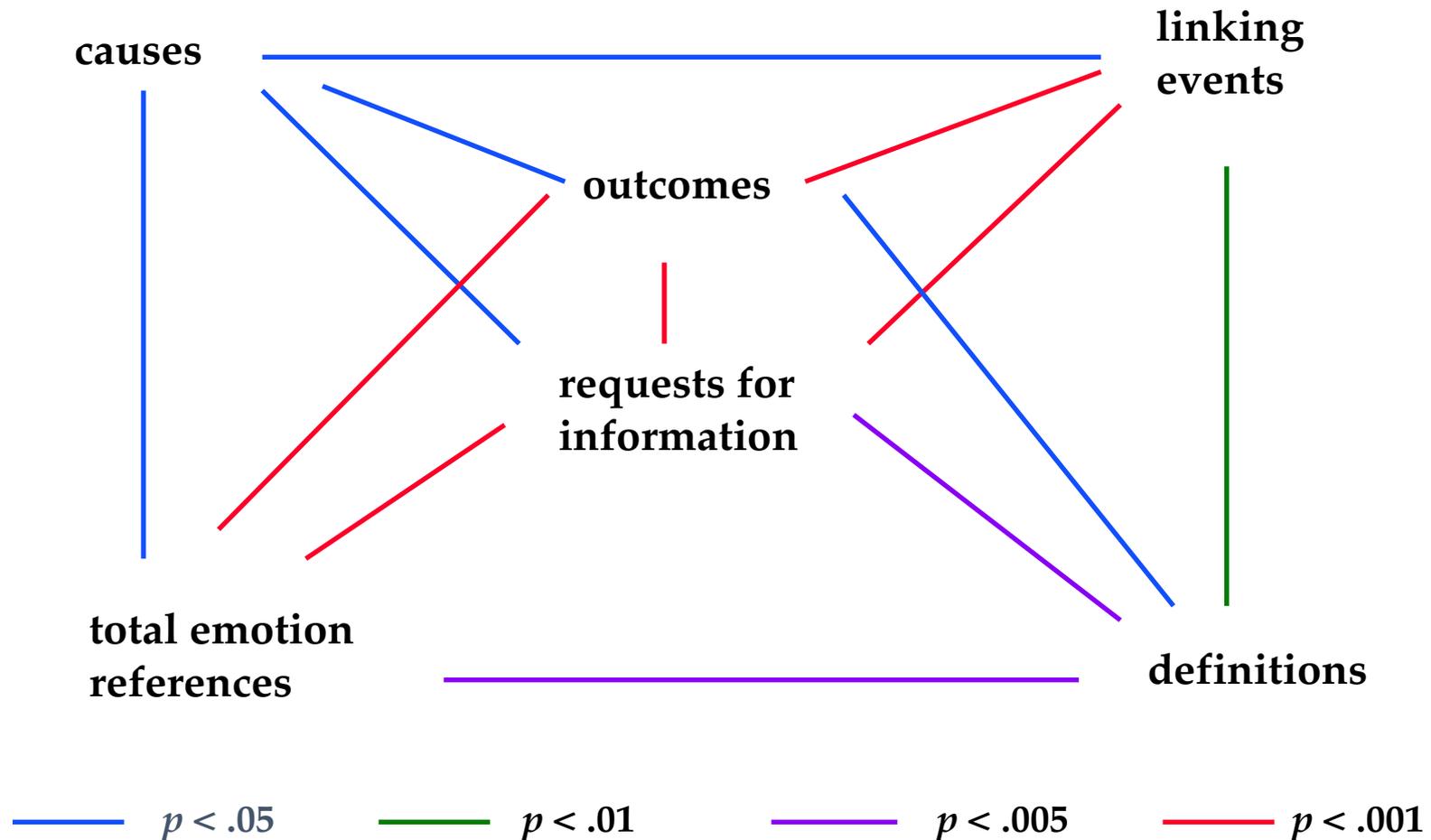. . . you are describing
a baby and someone.

D. W. Winnicott

emotionate (i-ˈmō-sh(ə-)nət):

1. characterized by emotional apperception, sensitivity, and/or insight (*an emotionate side to his nature*)

2. behaviors reflecting emotional insight or understanding *(her emotionate response provided support to her friend)*

from Raikes, H. A., & Thompson, R. A. (2006). Family emotional climate, attachment security, and young children's emotion understanding in a high-risk sample. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 24(1),* 89-104, and Raikes, H. A., & Thompson, R. A. (2008). Conversations about emotion in high-risk dyads. *Attachment & Human Development, 10(4),* 359-377.

Elements of mother-child emotion conversation:

causes — linking events — outcomes — requests for information — total emotion references — definitions

p < .05   p < .01   p < .005   p < .001

Ontai, L. L., & Thompson, R. A. (2002). Patterns of attachment and maternal discourse effects on children's emotion understanding from 3- to 5-years of age. *Social Development, 11(4),* 433-450.
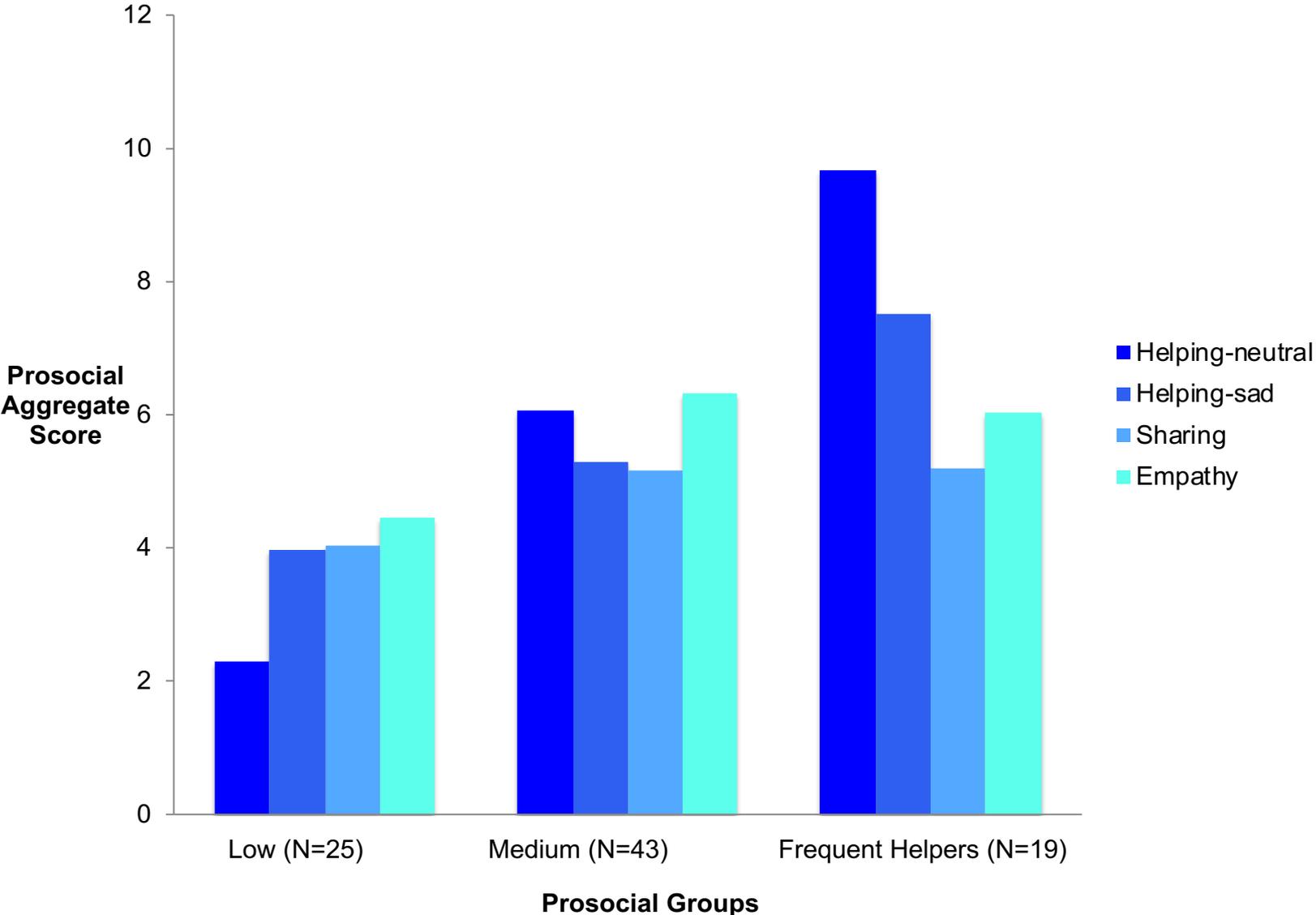
- It's hard when you feel so angry. You're going "AAAH, he's bouncing my guy off there!" Right?

- How did the other kids feel when you shut off the game?

- It makes you sad thinking about it, doesn't it?

- After you stopped the game, the other guys said, "You know, Joey wasn't really doing so bad." You thought you were losing, but you weren't.

- What do you think you could do next time if this happens again?
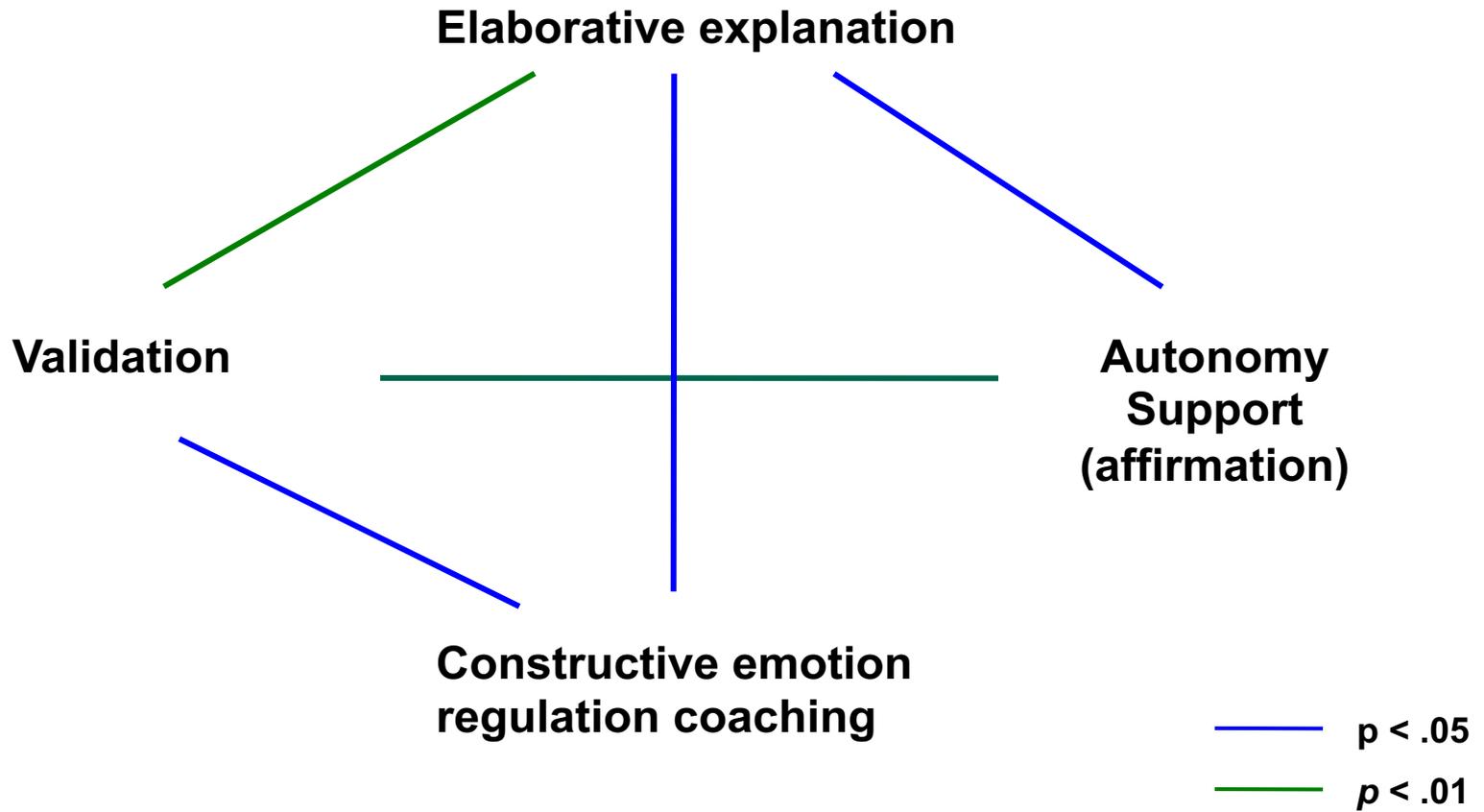
Security of attachment is significantly associated with these measures of conversation quality

Waters, S., Virmani, E., Thompson, R. A., Meyer, S., Raikes, A., & Jochem, R. (2010). Emotion regulation and attachment: Unpacking two constructs and their association. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment, 32(1),* 37-47.

How is prosocial behavior associated with children's sympathetic concern and personal distress?
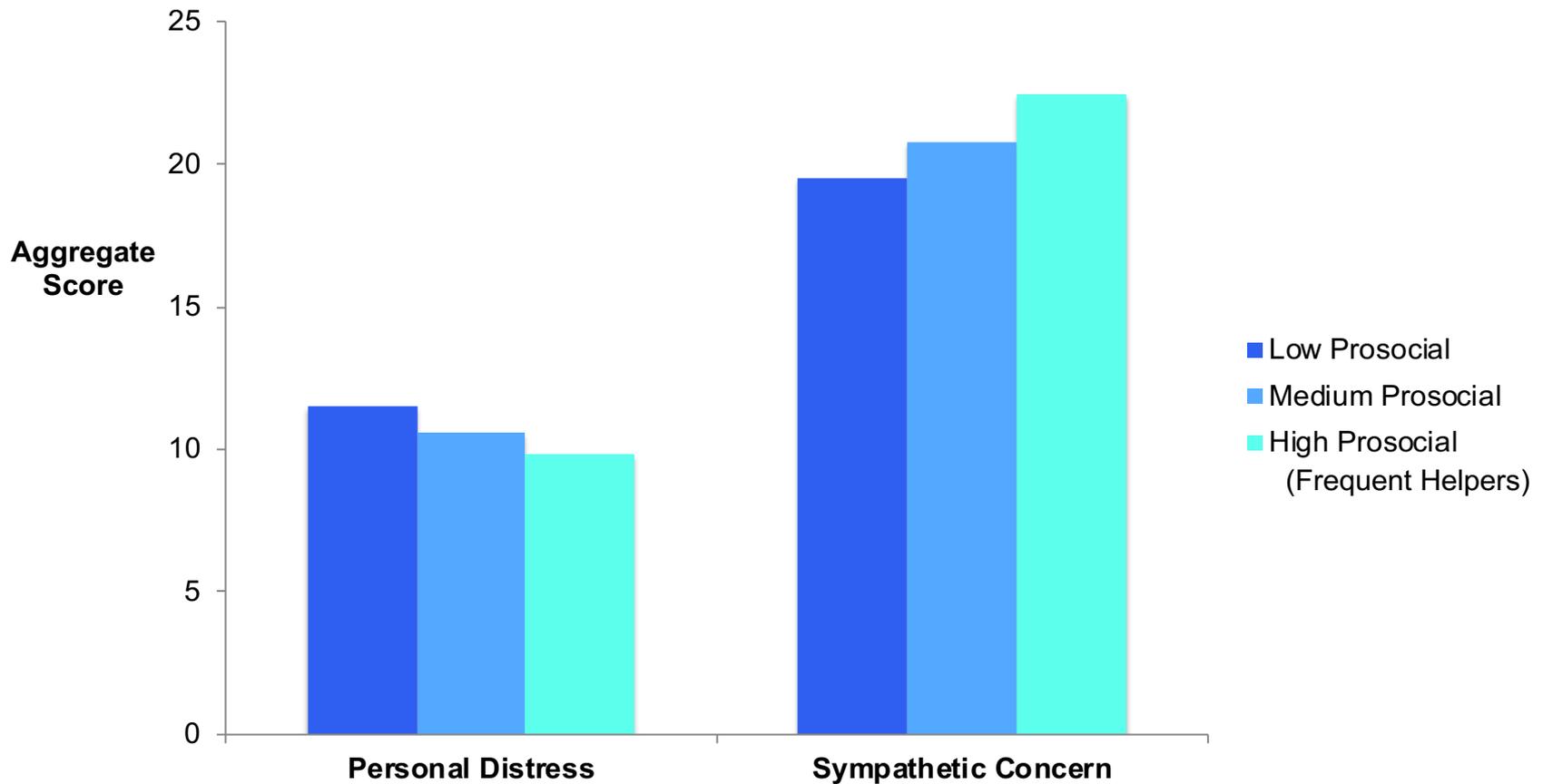
for Personal Distress: $F_{(2,80)} = 4.78$, $p < .05$ for Sympathic Concern: $F_{(2,75)} = 8.08$, $p < .001$

How are individual differences in prosocial behavior associated with mother-child interaction?
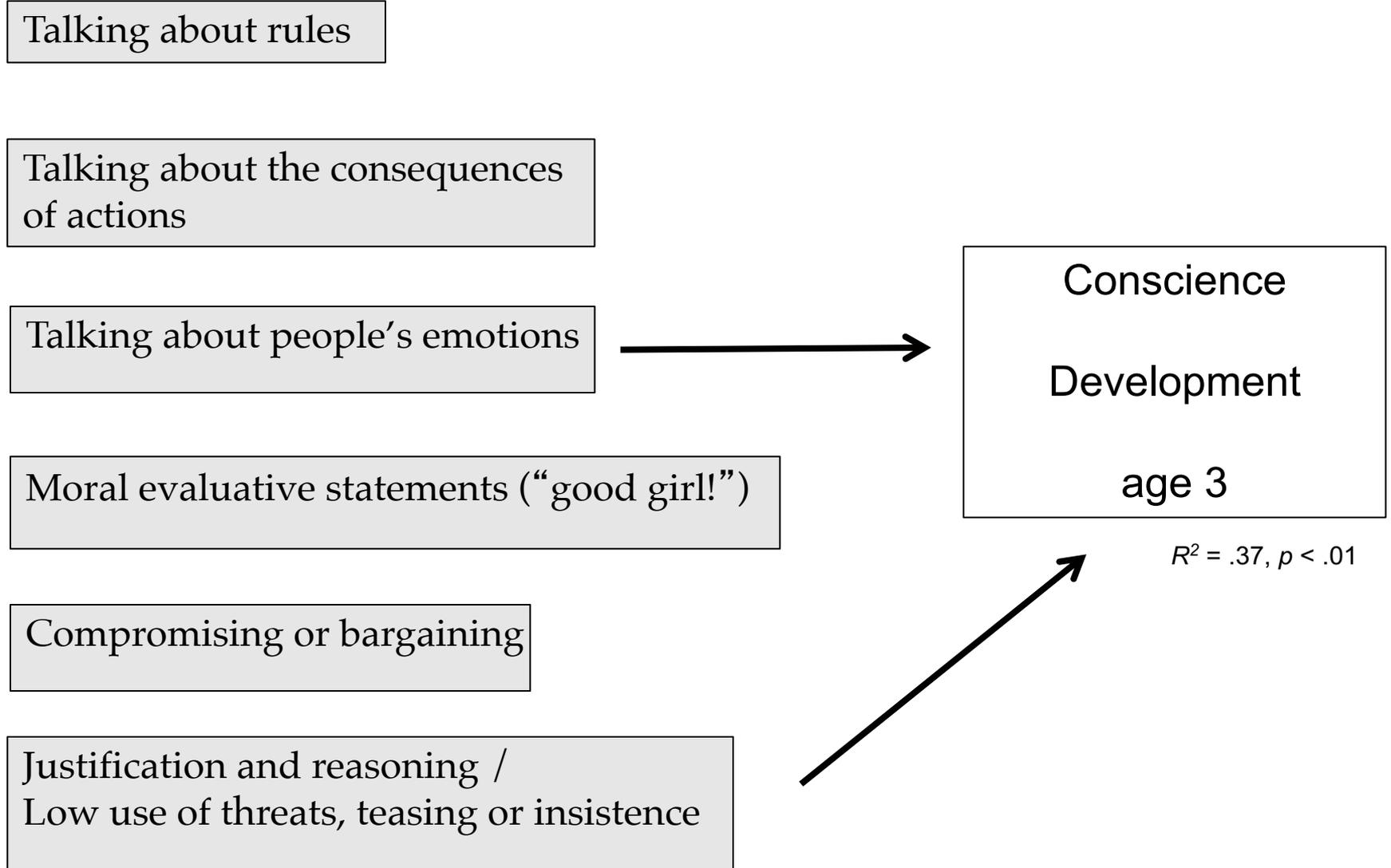
Logistic Class Regression Analysis

Variables	Class 1 vs. Class 2 OR (95% CI)	Class 2 vs. Class 3 OR (95% CI)	Class 1 vs. Class 3 OR (95% CI)
Child Sex	0.58 (0.20-1.68)	1.77 (0.50-6.22)	1.03 (0.27-3.93)
Child Age	1.02 (0.99-1.05)	0.99 (0.95-1.02)	1.01 (0.97-1.05)
Maternal Sensitivity	1.39 (0.85-2.27)	**2.49 (1.17-5.31)***	**3.45 (1.63-7.33)***
Maternal Mental State Language	0.95 (0.86-1.03)	**1.17 (1.02-1.33)***	1.10 (0.96-1.27)
Sensitivity x Language	0.99 (0.92-1.05)	0.91 (0.81-1.01)	**0.89 (0.80-1.00)***

*$p < .05$, ***$p < .001$

Class 1 = Not Prosocial, Class 2 = Moderately Prosocial, Class 3 = Frequent Helpers; OR = odds ratio

Newton, E. K., Thompson, R. A., & Goodman, M. (2016). Individual differences in toddlers' prosociality: Experiences in early relationships explain variability in prosocial behavior. *Child Development, 87,* 1715-1726.

2 ½ years: Mother-child conversation elements
during conflict episodes in the lab

Talking about rules

Talking about the consequences
of actions

Talking about people's emotions

Moral evaluative statements ("good girl!")

Compromising or bargaining

Justification and reasoning /
Low use of threats, teasing or insistence

Conscience

Development

age 3

$R^2 = .37, p < .01$

Laible, D. J., & Thompson, R. A. (2002). Mother-child conflict in the toddler years: Lessons in emotion, morality, and relationships. *Child Development, 73(4)*, 1187-1203.

Psychological health
is constructed, maintained, and restored
in the context of
emotionally supportive relationships.

Thompson, R. A. (2018). *Social-emotional development in the first three years: Establishing the foundations.* Policy brief commissioned by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through the Edna Bennet Pierce Prevention Research Center, Pennsylvania State University. https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2018/04/social-emotional-development-in-the-first-three-years.html
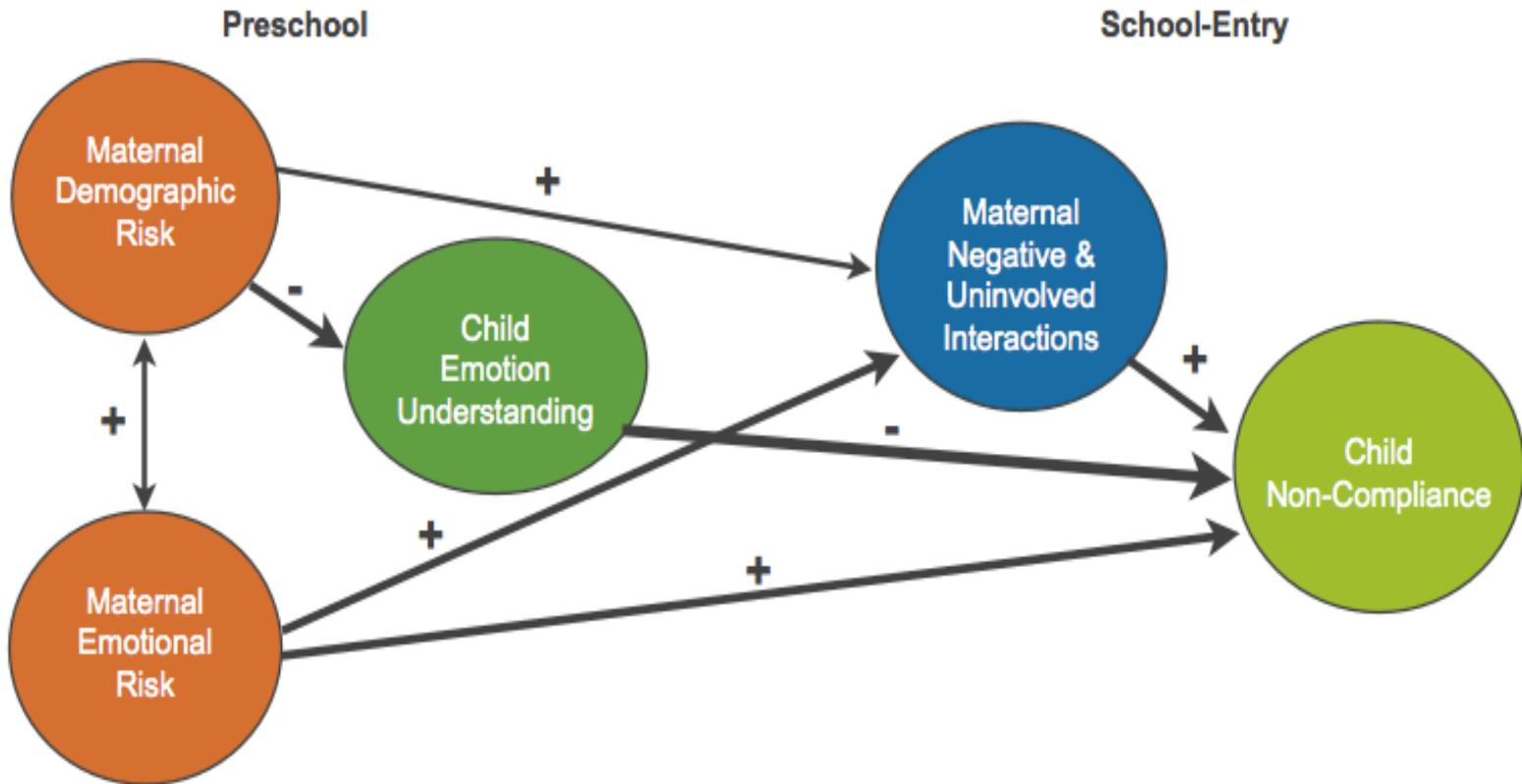
Cultivating supportive relationships

Parental divorce, custody, visitation, and "parenting time"

Grandparent visitation rights

Economic stress and family relationships
    demographic risk and emotional risk

Preschool

School-Entry

Maternal Demographic Risk

Child Emotion Understanding

Maternal Negative & Uninvolved Interactions

Child Non-Compliance

Maternal Emotional Risk

$R^2 = .59$, $p < .01$

Winer, A. C., & Thompson, R. A. (2013). *The impact of poverty on a child's social and emotional competence.* Policy brief written for the UC Davis Center for Poverty Research (published online at http://poverty.ucdavis.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/policy_brief_thompson_risk.pdf).

Strengthening supportive systems

Toward a child-oriented child protection system

Social support and the prevention of child maltreatment

Safe Babies Court Teams: an initiative of ZERO TO THREE

Community Court Team
Des Moines, Iowa

Emerging bridges between developmental relational science and public policy

- early learning and school readiness
- child poverty
- trauma-informed care and education
- infant / early childhood mental health
- ethics of parenting

"Social policy needs science [and] science needs social policy . . . to provide . . . vitality and validity."

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974). Developmental research, public policy, and the ecology of childhood. *Child Development, 45,* 1-5.

Importance of a multilevel orientation
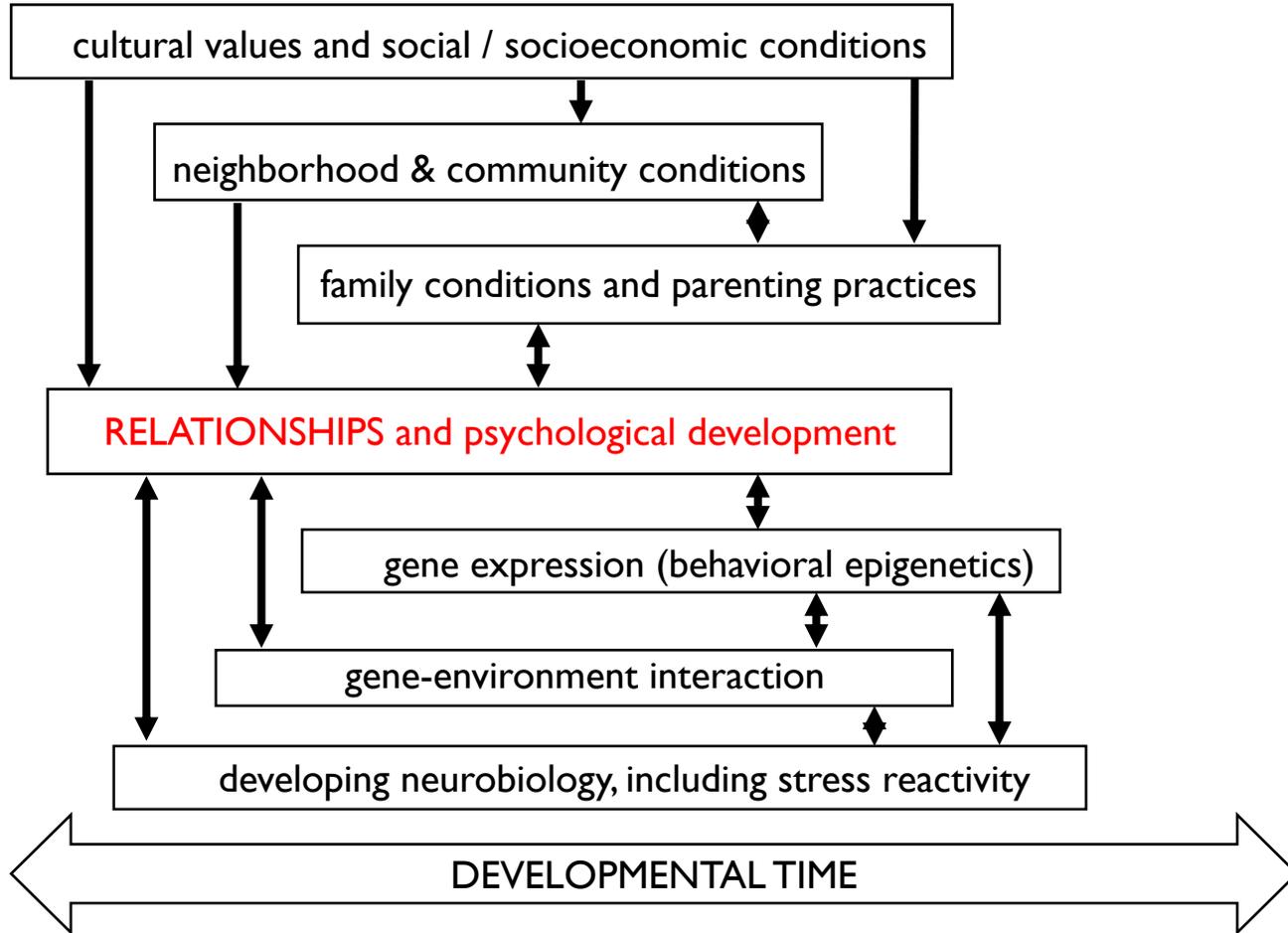
Thanks!

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