



Caregiver Depression, Harsh Parenting, and Child Externalizing Problems: Testing the Cross-Lagged Developmental Processes Involved in the Intergenerational Impact of Child Abuse.



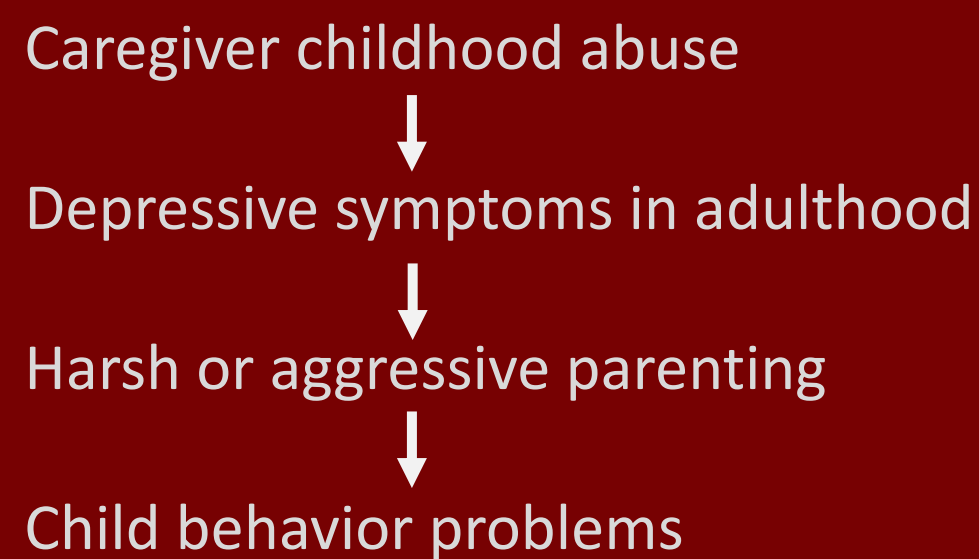
Nick M. Morelli, M.S., Kajung Hong, M.S., *San Diego State University*; Michaela S. Gusman, M.S., *Arizona State University*; Miguel T. Villodas, Ph.D., *San Diego State University*

INTRODUCTION:

- Impact of physical and sexual victimization in childhood can transmit across generations (Greene et al., 2020).
 - Children of child abuse survivors at increased risk for behavior problems (Russotti et al., 2020).
- Few studies have examined complete, intergenerational, cascading processes within a single model.
 - Relevant work frequently fails to consider bidirectional/transaction influences.

STUDY AIMS:

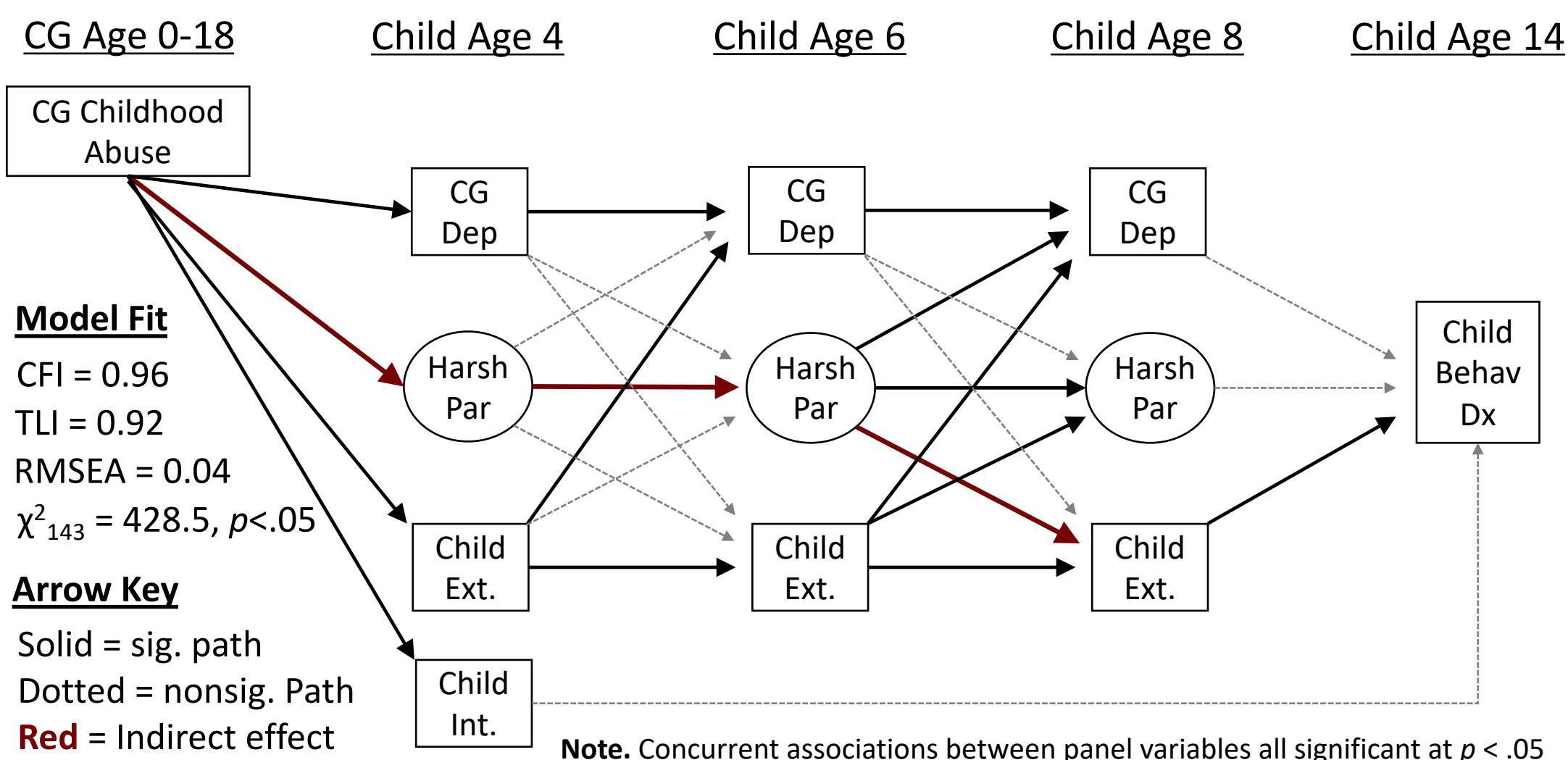
Examine cascading and cross-lagged pathways from:



METHODS:

- Participants: N=1,353 caregiver-child dyads at-risk for family violence recruited at child age 4
- Caregivers (CGs) reported their childhood physical/sexual abuse at baseline (Mother's History of Loss and Harm Questionnaire).
- Data on CG depression (CES-D), harsh parenting (CTSPC), and children's externalizing problems (CBCL) were collected at ages 4, 6, and 8 years.
- Cross-lagged panel model tested reciprocal/transactional associations over time.
- Diagnostic interviews at child age 14 assessed presence of a disruptive behavior disorder.

RESULTS:



Sociodemographic/Descriptive Information

| N = 1,353 | N (%) |
|--|---------------|
| Child gender (% female) | 697 (51.5%) |
| Race/Ethnicity | |
| White | 441 (31.6%) |
| African American | 739 (54.6%) |
| Latino or Hispanic | 101 (7.5%) |
| Other | 72 (5.3%) |
| Families below poverty line | 1,068 (78.9%) |
| CG married at baseline | 480 (35.5%) |
| CG years of education; M (SD) | 11.76 (2.19) |
| Number of CG childhood abuse exposures; M (SD) | 1.56 (2.09) |

DISCUSSION:

- Findings emphasize potential impact of child behavior problems on CG mental health.
- Children's externalizing problems consistently associated with increases in CG depression.
 - Parenting interventions may require adaptation to include greater emphasis on CG mental health.
 - Adult survivors of childhood abuse may need continued support in parenthood.
- Findings highlight harsh parenting as crucial mediator in intergenerational impact of abuse.
- Future studies should examine day-to-day / minute-to-minute CG-child interactions (e.g., via EMA).

Author Info

