

# BUT WHAT DO PARENTS HAVE ON THEIR MIND ?

## PARENTAL COGNITIONS AND PARENTING

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# PARENTAL COGNITIONS AND PARENTING

2 studies on parental self-efficacy

1 study on parental attributions





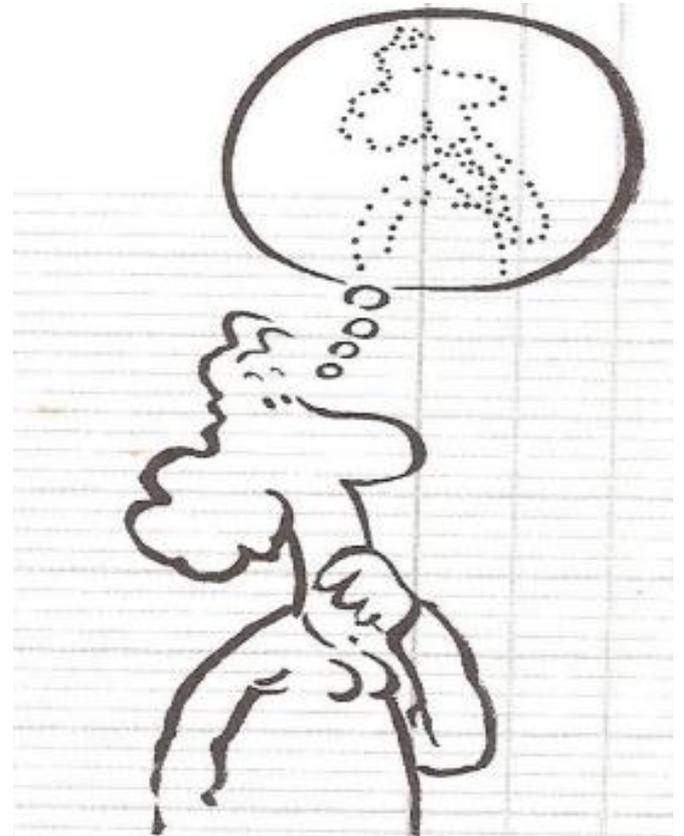
# PARENTAL SELF-EFFICACY

Parents' beliefs on their capacity to positively influence the behavior and development of their child  
(Coleman & Karraker, 1998)

Social learning theory  
(Bandura, 1997)

Reinforced by

- Mastery experience
- Vicarious experience
- Verbal persuasion
- Emotional states



# Confident Mothers experimental study

*Confident Mothers, Easier Children: A Quasi-experimental Manipulation of Mothers' Self-efficacy*

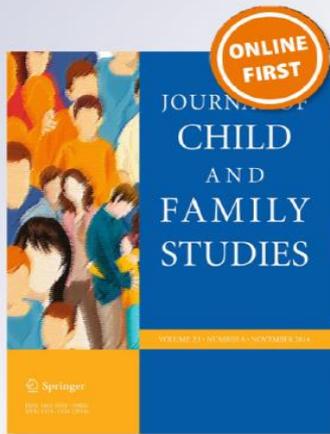
**Benedicte Mouton & Isabelle Roskam**

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Mouton, B., & Roskam, I. (2015). Confident Mothers, Easier Children: A Quasi-experimental Manipulation of Mothers' Self-efficacy. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, 24(8), 2485-2495.

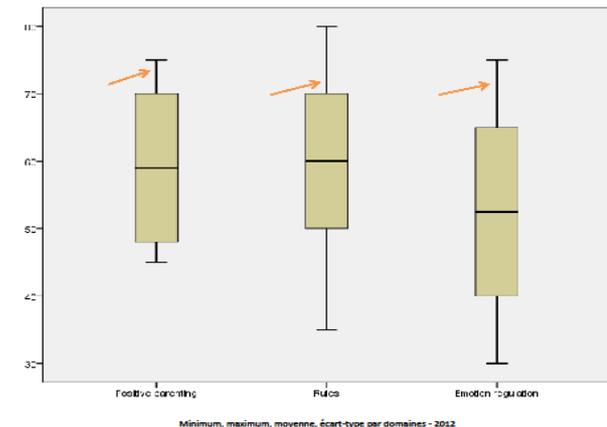
# Procedure and manipulation

1. 42 Mothers completed a **questionnaire at home** on child rearing, PSE and child behavior
2. Mother came to the **lab with her child**
3. Randomly allocated to **control vs experimental group**
4. Mother alone (without the child) receives a positive **feed-back or no feed-back** (according to condition)
5. A **positive feed -back** on :
  - her child
  - her parenting practices
  - By comparison to others
6. **Free play / frustration / recovery tasks**



## Recherche expérimentale « Mon enfant et moi »

### Pratiques parentales



# 2 hypotheses



When mother's **self-efficacy** is reinforced

1. Mother would have more **positive parenting**
2. The child would also have more **positive behavior**

# Confident Mothers - Results

Reinforced mother's  
self-efficacy

Mother positive  
parenting  
ES = .63

Child positive  
behavior  
ES=.64

# Intervention study



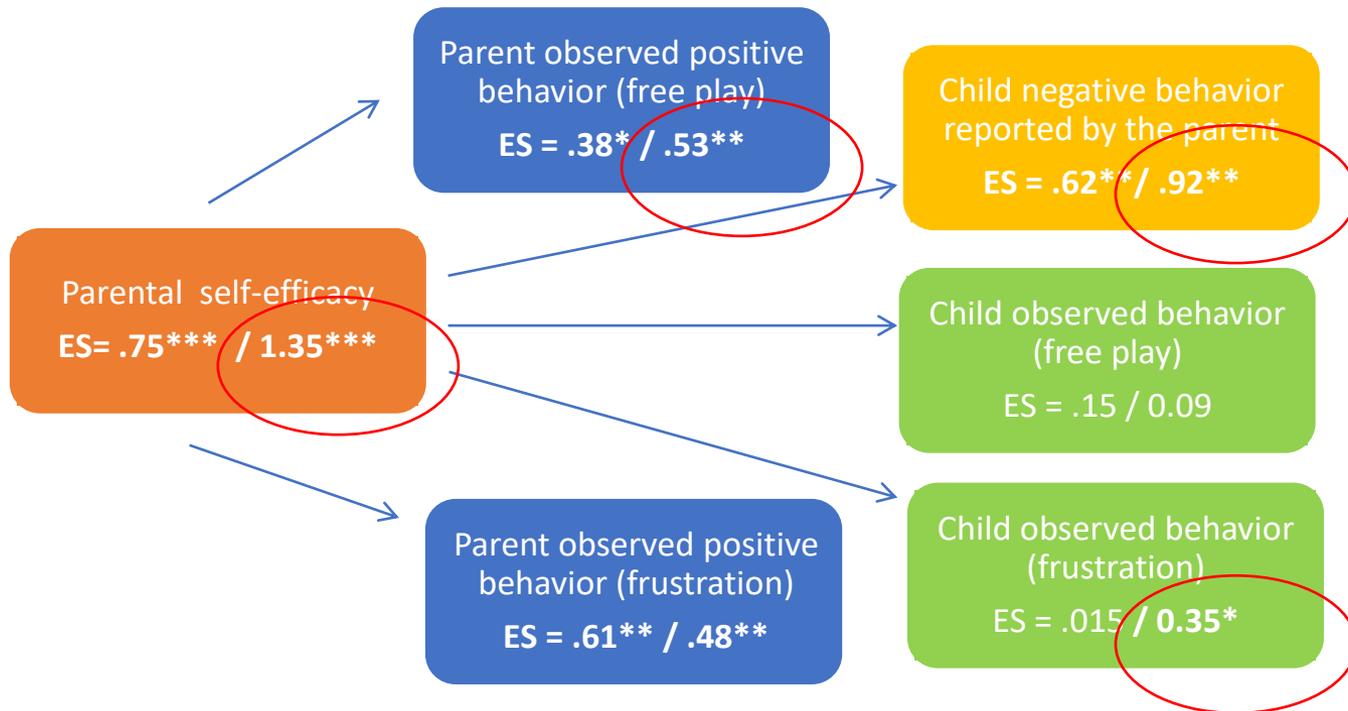
Article

## Confident Parents for Easier Children: A Parental Self-Efficacy Program to Improve Young Children's Behavior

Bénédicte Mouton <sup>1,\*</sup> , Laurie Loop <sup>1</sup>, Marie Stiévenart <sup>2</sup> and Isabelle Roskam <sup>1</sup>



# Intervention study - Results



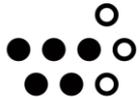
ES : *d* de Cohen' post test / follow up for the experimental group

\*\*\*  $p < .000$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*  $p < .01$

# When Parents Wear Dark Glasses



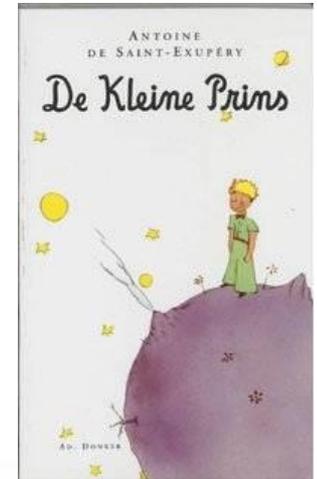
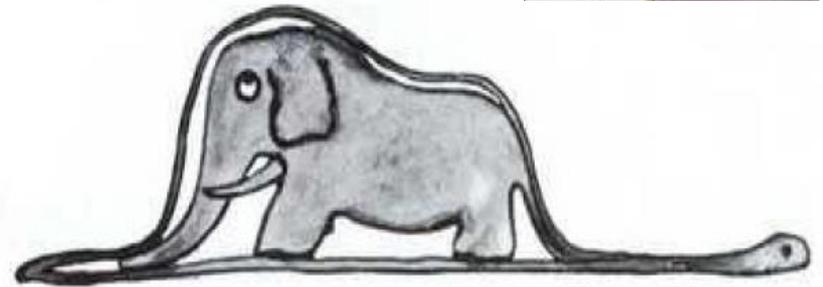
Bénédicte Mouton, Joyce Weeland, Patty Leijten & Geertjan Overbeek



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# Interpretations of negative child behavior

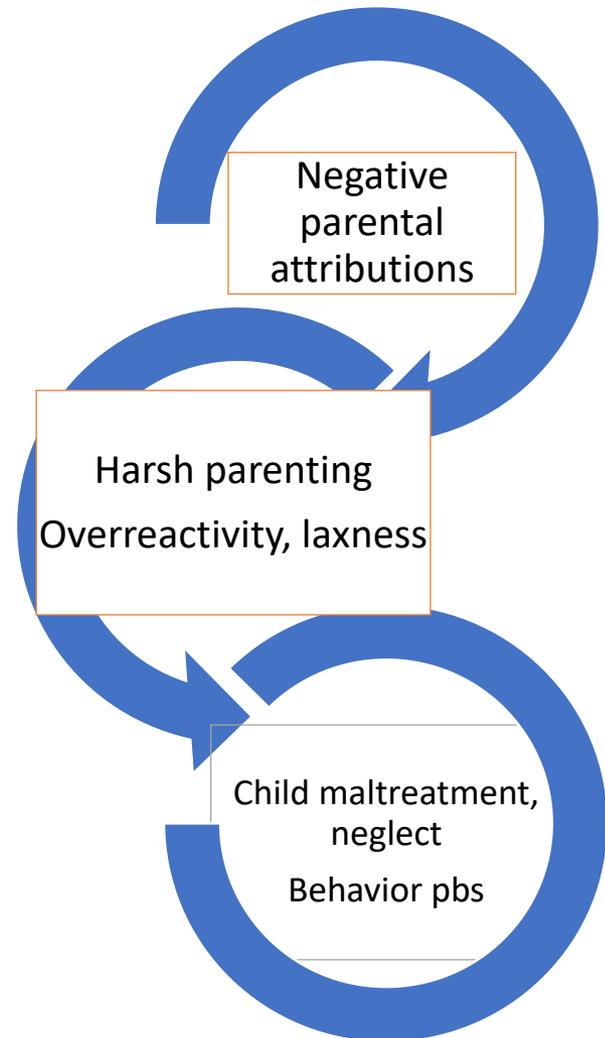


Naive causal explanations (Heider; 1958) - Interpretative filters (Bugental; 1998)

# Effects on parenting and child development

## Dysfunctional ?

- global and stable (cause)  
« with him, it's *always* like that»
- hostile and intentional (responsability and blame)  
« she does that *to me* all the time»



# Gaps

## **Cross-sectional studies**

correlate, outcome or causal predictor of parenting and child behavior?

## **Pioneer experimental study** (Slep & O'Leary, 1998)

2 conditions: *child-responsible*

*vs child-not-responsible* attributions

↑ child-responsible attributions

=> mothers more overreactive

## **Measurement and types** (Snarr et al. 2009)

*parent-causal / child-responsible*

Self-report, speech sample, specific vs global

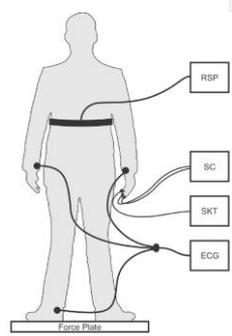
## **Stress** (Beckerman et al. (2020))



**How Parental Negative Attributions relate to parental characteristics?**

**How reducing Parental Negative Attributions affects parenting?**

# Data collection (n=78)



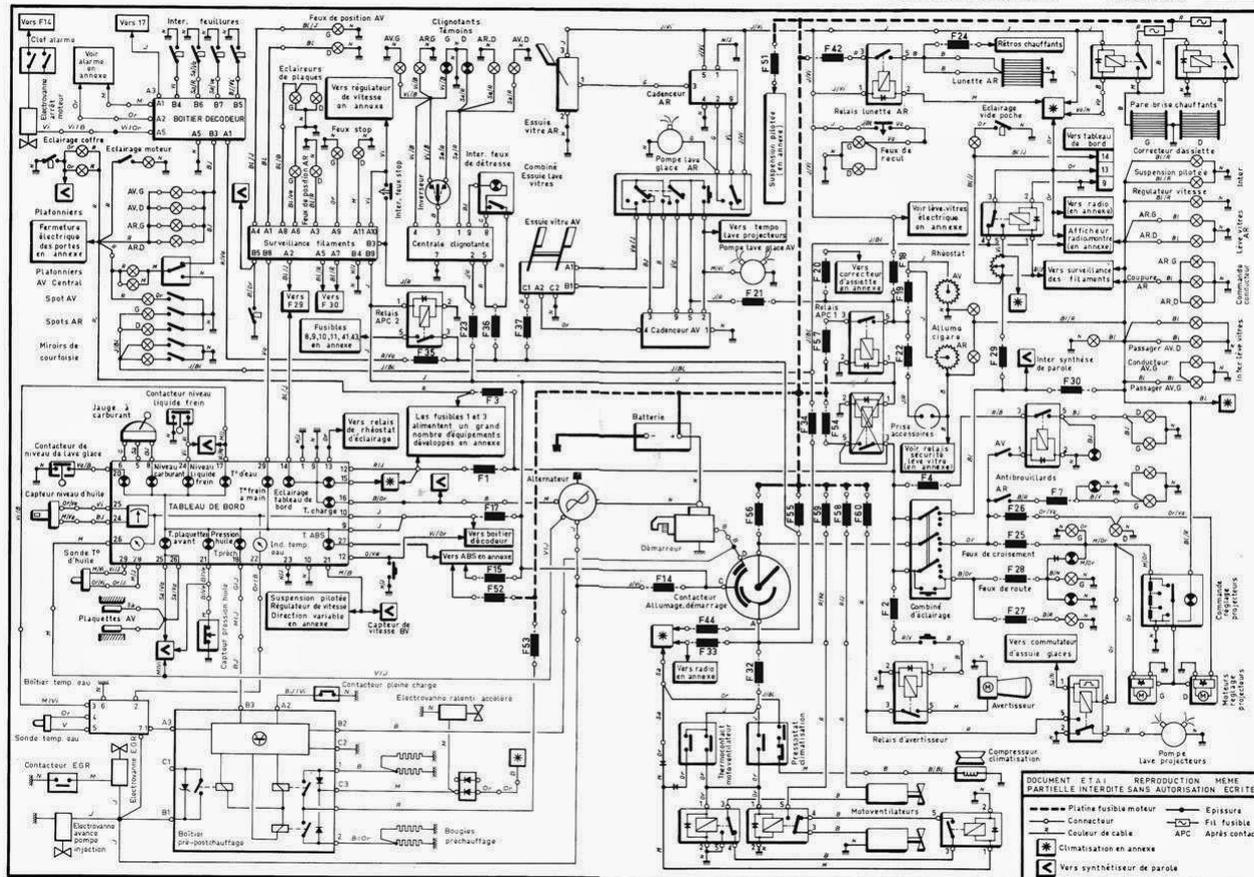
28% fathers, 72% **mothers** (Mage= 38,69 years, SD=.48 [30-48]); 50% **boys/girls** (Mage=51.67 months, SD=8.56 [36-71])  
83 % **Dutch**, 88% **2-parent family**, 50% has **WO or higher education**; 54% work **part-time**, 36% full time, 8% no work;  
1.9 children in the family, 57% **2 children**  
+ Selected on **negative attributions on child negative behavior** at prescreening (above average in at least one type)

# Full model (seriously?)

SCHEMA ÉLECTRIQUE GÉNÉRAL DES SAFRANE 2.5 dt ( finition RXE )

— ÉQUIPEMENT ÉLECTRIQUE —

RENAULT - Safrane - moteurs Diesel

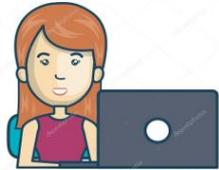


## Pre-screening

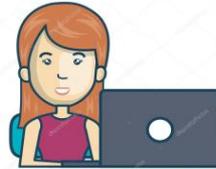
## Pre-test quest+interview

## Lab visit (Pretest + post test)

## Follow-up



Questionnaire 1: General parental attributions on child's behavior

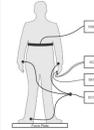


Questionnaire 2 (pretest):

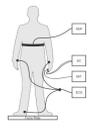
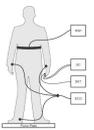
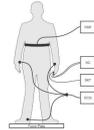
General attributions  
Parental self-efficacy  
Parenting behavior  
Child behavior  
Temperament child+parent  
Parenting stress  
Socio-demographics

+ FMSS:

General attributions  
Critics / relational quality / positive comments



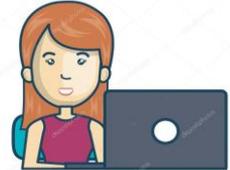
FEEDBACK



Pre-test  
Observed child behavior  
Observed parent behavior  
+  
Physiological reactivity (child and parent)

Post-test  
observed child behavior  
Observed parent behavior  
+  
Physiological reactivity (child and parent)  
+  
FMSS:  
General attributions  
Critics / relational quality / positive comments

+  
questionnaire 3:  
General attributions  
Parental Self-efficacy  
Parenting behavior  
Child behavior



Questionnaire 4:  
General Attributions  
Parental Self-efficacy  
Parenting behavior  
Child behavior  
Parenting stress

Selection of parents with above average negative attributions



on-line questionnaire



speech sample



physiological measures



Manipulation



# Manipulation



To **reduce negative attributions** based on a **video feedback** on short **video segments from 1<sup>st</sup> interaction task**

with a **child negative behavior or affect** (non-compliance, cheating, irritability, agitation, etc.).

feedback according to **condition**



## Child-responsible

*"The reason why we expected the situation to be complicated is because your **child's** self-regulation skills are not fully developed yet. We designed this task to be difficult for kids this age. Young children don't have much self-control yet and misbehave here even though they don't mean to."*

## Parent-Causal

*"The reason why we expected the situation to be complicated is because being a **parent** of kids that age in such situation is not easy. In fact, most parents we see here experience difficulty in such situation. It is not your fault, you are not the cause of this difficulty. We designed this task to be difficult for parents of kids this age. You probably did your best."*

## Neutral

*"Here is a video abstract illustrating what happened"*

# Results

## 1. PNA and other parental characteristics?

**Yes, in complementary ways**

*Global* PNA associated with parental temperamental trait of negative affect, laxness, less positive discipline

Stronger for *Parent-causal* PNA than child-responsible PNA

Global and specific PNA not related

2 types of PNA (Parent and Child) related positively

Importance of measurement  
“Blaming” PNA style ?



**Table 1***Correlations between parental negative attributions, parenting practices and predictors at pre-test*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Global child-responsible	3.17	.70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Global parent-causal	2.51	.56	.44**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Specific child-responsible	2.80	1.40	-.11	-.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Specific parent-causal	3.03	1.42	-.15	-.07	.32**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Criticism on child	2.43	1.88	.48**	.28 <sup>a</sup>	-.03	-.27 <sup>a</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Self-reported positive discipline	4.91	.76	-.01	-.40**	.16	.22	.02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Self-reported harsh parenting	2.03	.33	.39**	.52**	-.01	-.10	.32**	-.38**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Self-reported laxness	2.45	.51	.33**	.60**	.05	-.13	.32**	-.45**	.54**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Self-reported support	4.85	.67	-.14	-.40**	.10	.15	-.14	.04	-.29*	-.43*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Observed positive affect	4.77	.66	-.06	.07	-.07	.08	.03	.10	-.07	-.12	.13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Observed autonomy support	4.76	.73	.01	-.08	.34**	.06	-.19	.12	-.08	-.26	.20	.56**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Observed negative affect	1.32	.38	.01	.03	.01	-.16	-.01	-.15	.20	.15	-.20	-.34**	-.35**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Observed withdrawal	2.09	.21	-.05	-.03	.06	-.15	.03	-.04	-.06	.13	-.09	-.64**	-.61**	.29*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14. Observed controlling behavior	2.22	.80	.01	.08	.15	-.17	.10	-.14	.26 <sup>a</sup>	.22	-.06	-.36**	-.53**	.61**	.38**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Observed parent laxness	1.07	.13	.04	.00	-.04	.06	-.01	-.03	.22	.06	-.08	-.38**	-.36**	.32**	.27*	.39*	-	-	-	-	-	-
16. Parental self-efficacy	65.14	6.81	-.26	-.54**	.01	.07	-.17	.50**	-.35**	-.61**	.79**	.01	.18	-.15	-.04	-.05	.00	-	-	-	-	-
17. Parenting stress	35.42	5.92	.11	.38**	-.05	-.11	.07	-.39**	.15	.33**	-.58**	-.07	-.16	.03	.01	.05	.02	-.51**	-	-	-	-
18. Cortisol	.17	.13	.14	.37**	-.17	-.15	.10	-.14	.28	.07	-.20	.13	-.17	-.09	.01	.11	.05	-.23	.33*	-	-	-
19. Temperament negative affect	3.45	.73	.04	.38**	.06	.06	.07	-.15	.27*	.21	-.14	.10	-.04	.00	-.11	-.08	-.04	-.16	.41**	-.29**	-	-
20. Temperament effortful control	4.64	.76	-.12	-.29*	-.17	-.00	-.10	.33	-.26*	-.46**	.30**	.14	.12	.03	-.16	-.12	-.15	.32**	-.30**	-.04	-.40**	-

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; <sup>a</sup> No longer significant after FDR adjustment of p-values; Global parent-causal and child responsible attributions measured by PCS; Criticism measured by FMSS; Parental Self-Efficacy measured by MaaP; Parenting stress measured by OBVL; Self-reported positive discipline, harsh parenting, laxness and support measured by CECPAQ; Observed positive affect, autonomy support, negative affect, withdrawal, controlling behavior, and laxness measured by Crowell; Parent temperamental negative affect and effortful control measured by ATQ; cortisol measured in saliva ( $n=47$ ).

# Results

## 2. Effects of experimental manipulation of PNA?

**Reduction of situation-specific PNA**  
not global PNA  
not parental self efficacy (↗ for all)  
not parenting behavior (observed and self-reported)

**Situation-specific attributions are malleable but no spill-over effect on global PNA, PSE, parenting behavior**



	Wilks' $\lambda$	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>dferror</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial $\eta^2$	$\beta$ -1
<b>Parental Self-Efficacy</b>							
Time	.91	6.74	1	68	.01	.09	.73
Condition-by-time	.97	.89	2	68	.41	.03	.20
<b>Self-reported parenting</b>							
Time	.88	2.15	4	65	.09	.12	.61
Condition-by-time	.87	1.17	8	130	.32	.07	.53
<b>Observed parenting</b>							
Time	.85	1.90	6	65	.09	.15	.66
Condition-by-time	.86	.88	12	130	.57	.08	.50

# CONCLUSION

Limitations of such experimental studies

Convenience sample of modest size

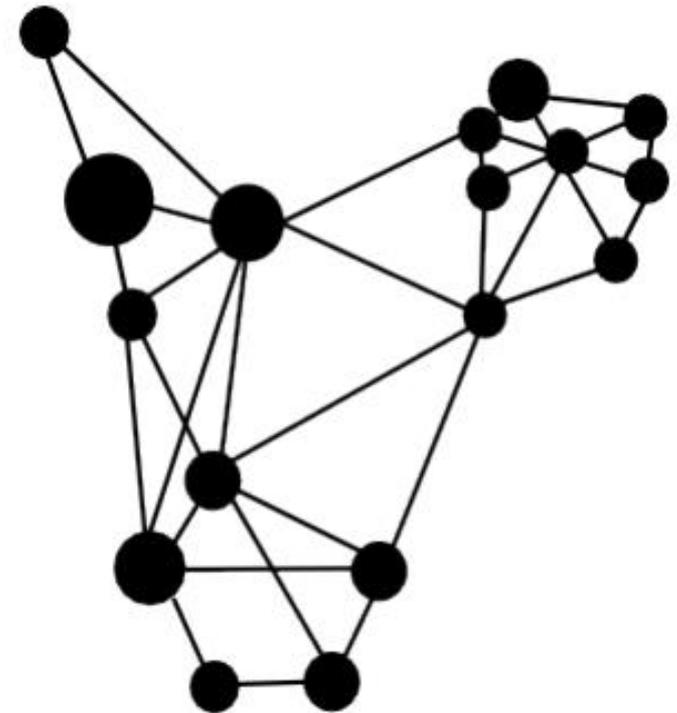
Under-representation of fathers

Difficulty to manipulate one specific aspect of parenting

Parental self-efficacy easier to manipulate?

Parental cognitions

Nodes in complex parenting processes



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