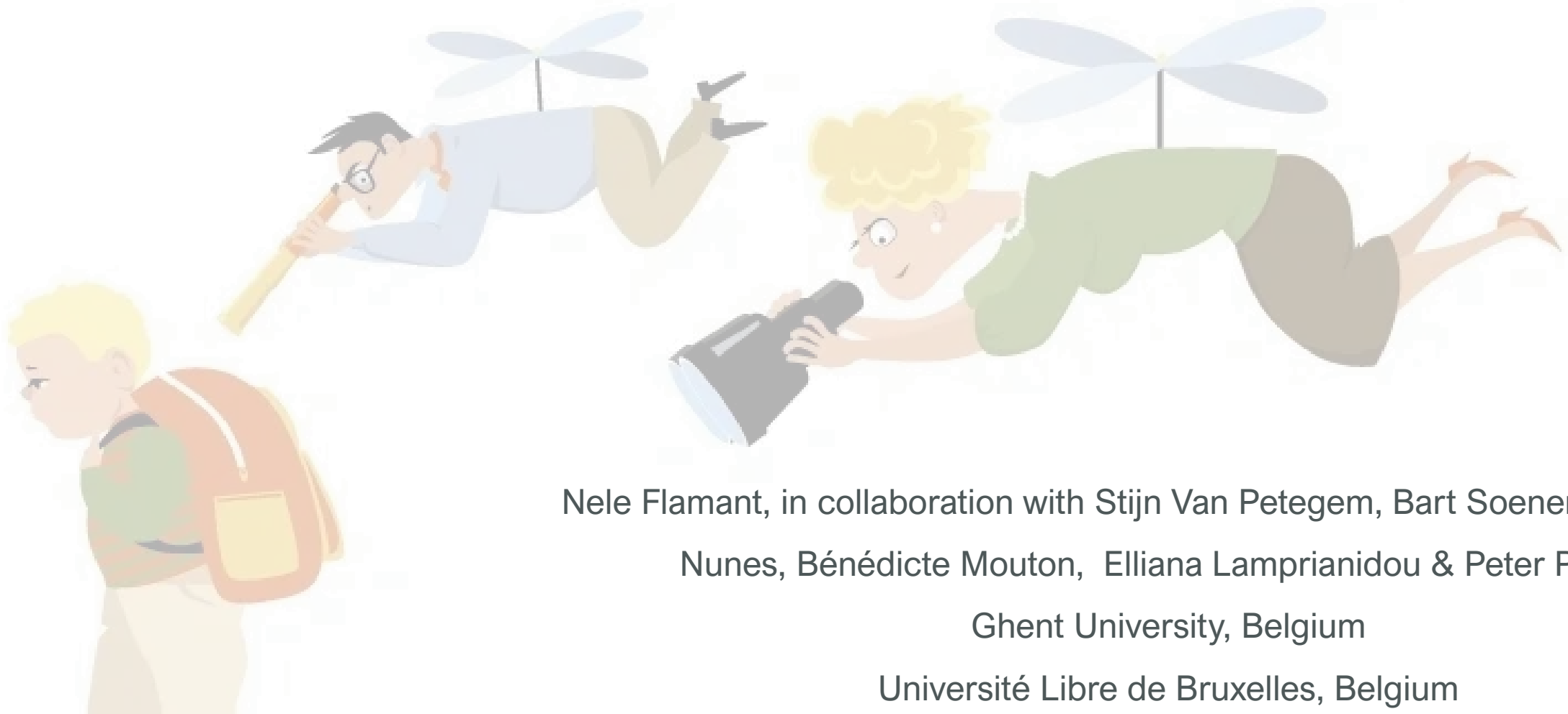


From Neuroticism to Overprotection? How Stressful External Cues Activate Parental Neuroticism



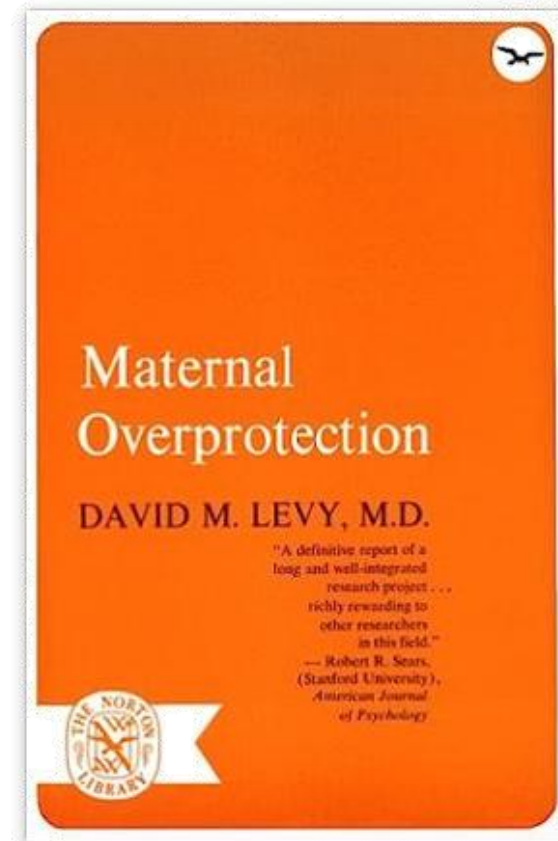
Nele Flamant, in collaboration with Stijn Van Petegem, Bart Soenens, Cindy Eira Nunes, Bénédicte Mouton, Elliana Lamprianidou & Peter Prinzie

Ghent University, Belgium

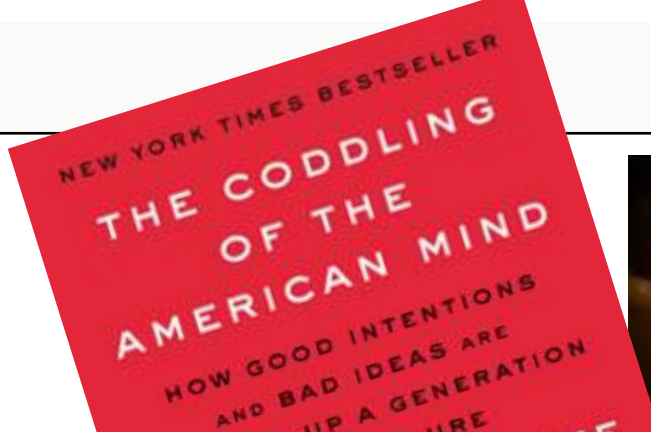
Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

WHAT IS OVERPROTECTIVE PARENTING?

- Excessive degrees of parental involvement and protection that are **not attuned to the child's developmental level**
- Although well-intentioned, overprotective parenting would ultimately hinder children's ability for problem solving and coping skills
- First time described in 1931, but gained a lot of attention in popular media in the last decade



OVERPROTECTIVE PARENTS IN THE MEDIA



The New York Times

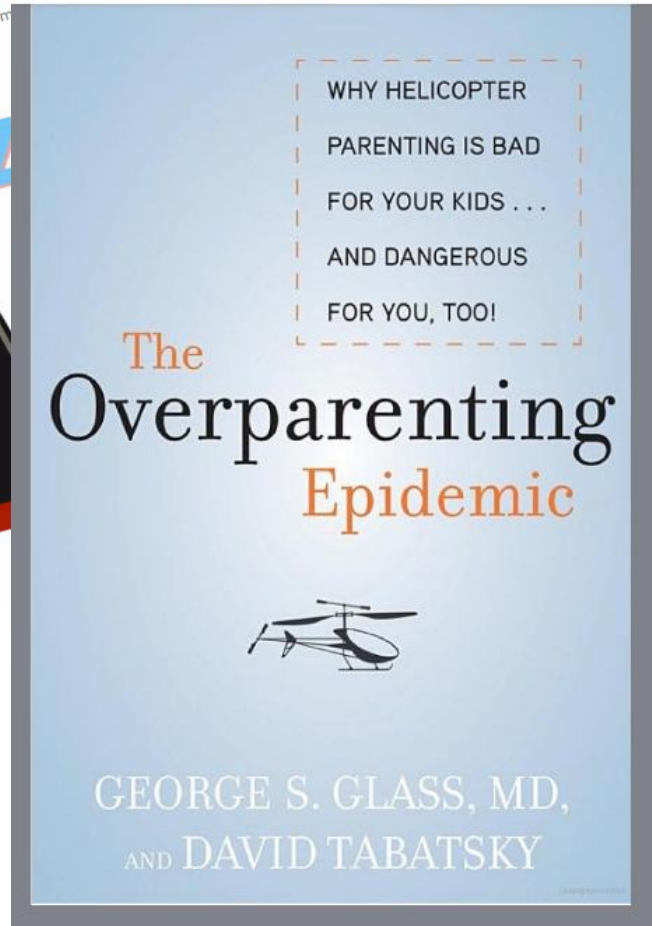


Dozer Parenting?



How Parents Are Robbing Their Children of Adulthood

Today's "snowplow parents" keep their children's futures obstacle-free — even when it means crossing ethical and legal boundaries.



→ Reinforcing the current trends towards "parent-blaming"

OVERPROTECTIVE PARENTING: CONSEQUENCES

➤ Meta-analyses and numerous studies show that overprotective parenting relates positively to

- ✓ Internalizing problems
- ✓ Externalizing problems
- ✓ Small to moderate effect sizes
- ✓ Predominantly cross-sectional research

Development and Psychopathology (2023), 1–16
doi:10.1017/S095457942300055X



Regular Article

Overparenting and offspring depression, anxiety, and internalizing symptoms: A meta-analysis

Qi Zhang¹ and Wongeun Ji²

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Abstract

Overparenting has been considered to contribute to offspring internalizing mental disorders from theoretical perspectives, which some empirical evidence has supported. However, existing findings are inconsistent. To facilitate the understanding of the association between overparenting and depression, anxiety, and internalizing symptoms, an examination of effect sizes is required. By employing the PRISMA method, a meta-analysis was conducted. Fifty-two articles were identified, with 38 studies examining depression, 30 studies examining anxiety,

de Roo, M., Veenstra, R., & Kretschmer, T. (2022). Internalizing and externalizing correlates of parental overprotection as measured by the EMBU: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Social Development*, 31(4), 962–983. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sode.12590>
Zhang, Q., & Ji, W. (2023). Overparenting and offspring depression, anxiety, and internalizing symptoms: A meta-analysis. *Development and Psychopathology*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S095457942300055X>

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DOI: 10.1111/sode.12590

REVIEW ARTICLE

WILEY

Internalizing and externalizing correlates of parental overprotection as measured by the EMBU: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Marthe de Roo¹ | René Veenstra¹ | Tina Kretschmer¹

University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands

Correspondence

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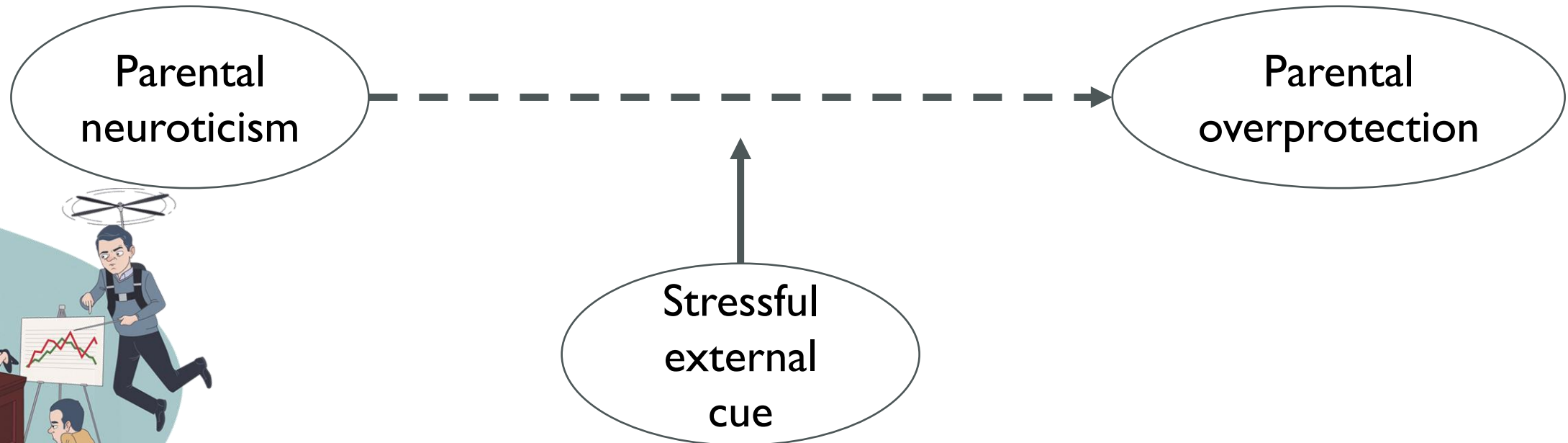
Abstract

Aspects of parenting including overprotection explain individual differences in child adjustment. **This review and meta-analysis summarizes studies on parental overprotection and internalizing and externalizing problems.** To ensure that find-

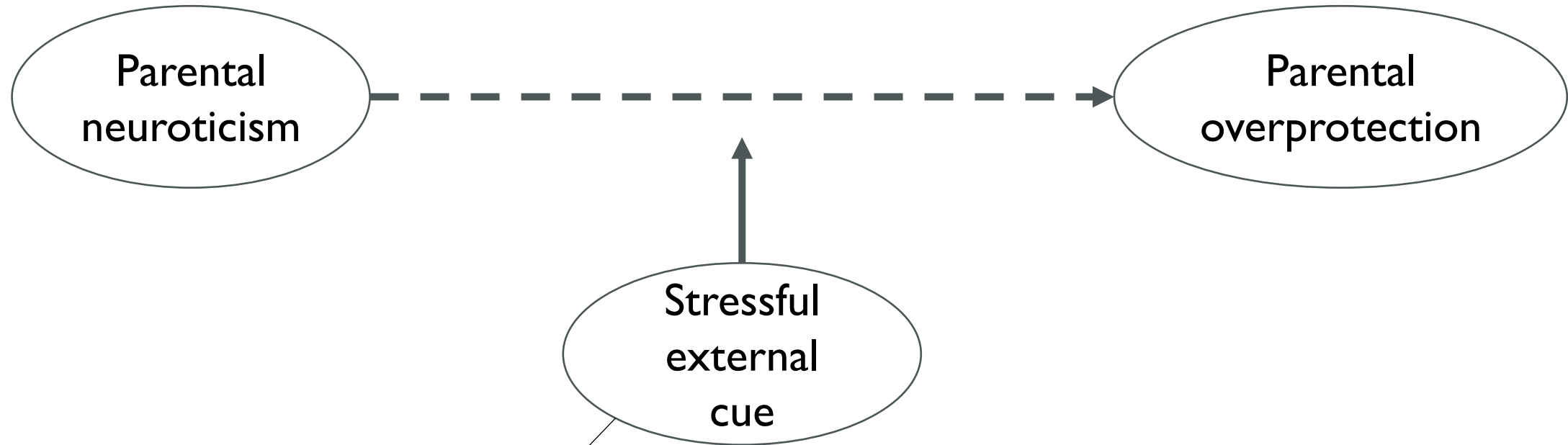
ings could be compared as systematically as possible, the focus was on studies that used the overprotection scale of the Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran ("Memories of my Parents—Upbringing") (EMBU) questionnaire, a popular

WHY DO PARENTS RELY ON OVERPROTECTIVE PRACTICES?

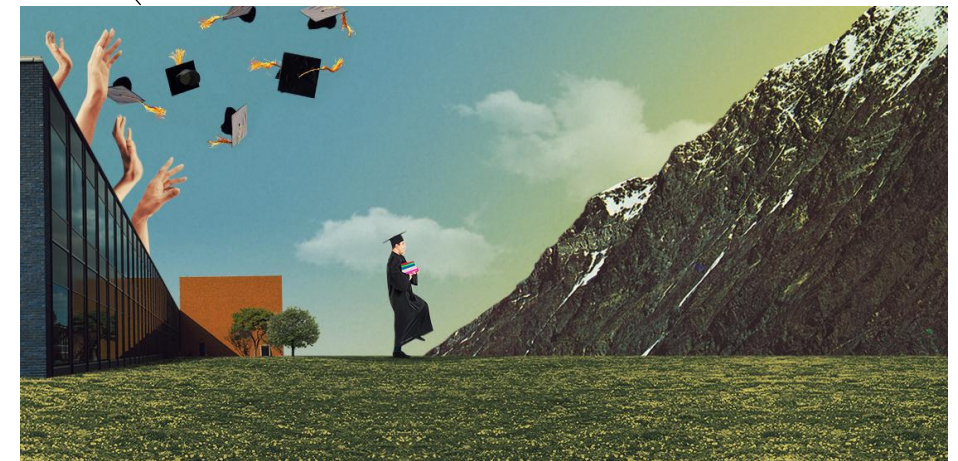
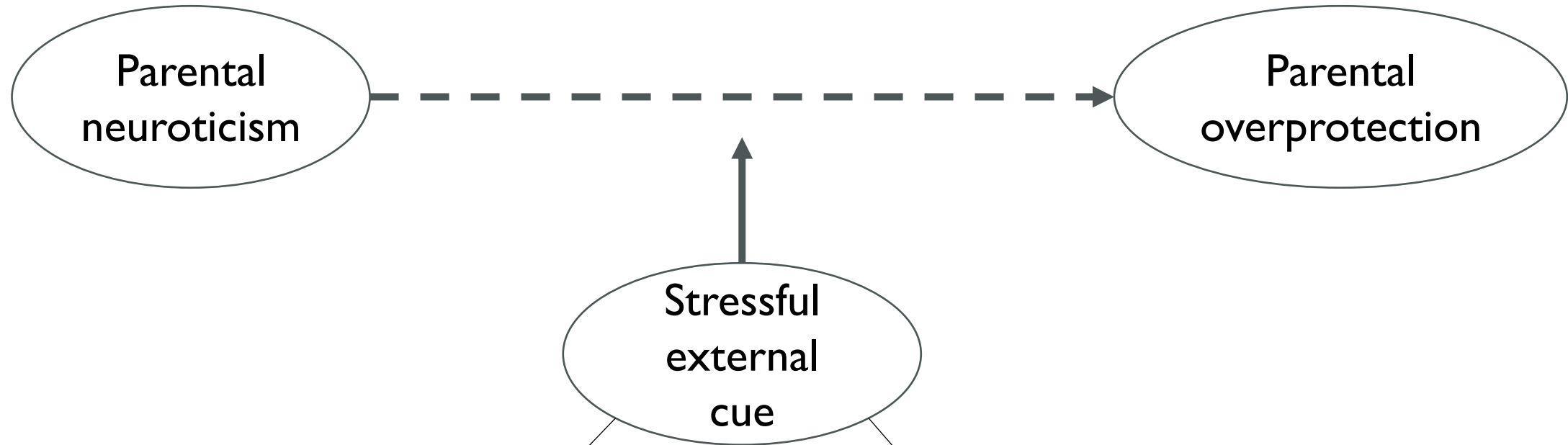
- The role of parents' personality: parental neuroticism
 - ✓ Parents who are easily distressed, anxious, tense, and nervous, and tend to lack emotional stability
 - ✓ Linked to more controlling parenting and less autonomy-supportive parenting (McCabe, 2014; Prinzie et al., 2009)
- Trait activation Theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003)
 - ✓ Individual personality traits are activated in response to environmental cues
 - ✓ Personality traits particularly manifest when triggered by relevant environmental cues



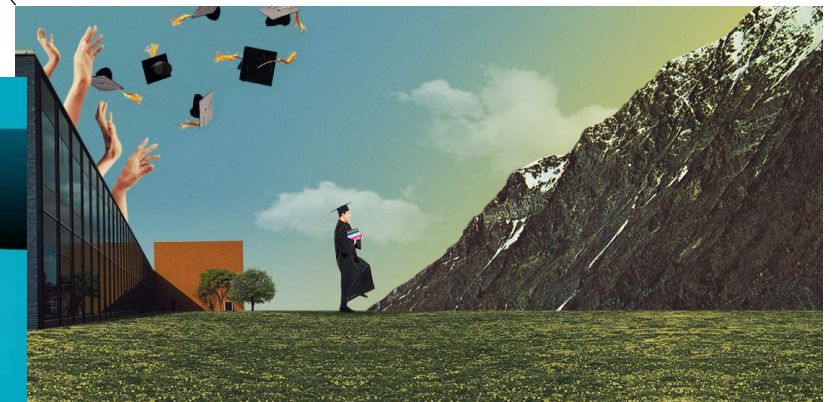
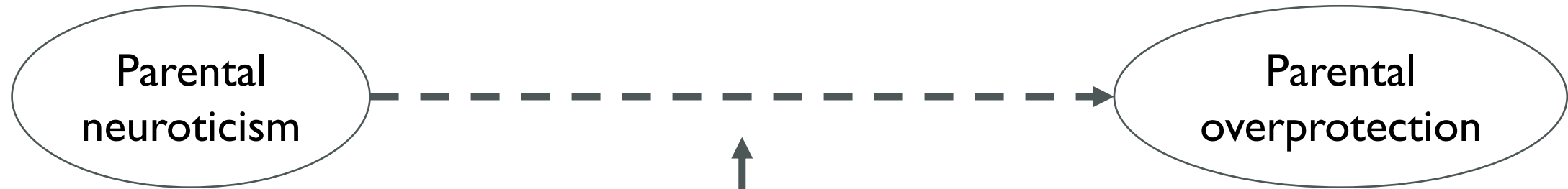
WHY DO PARENTS RELY ON OVERPROTECTIVE PRACTICES?



WHY DO PARENTS RELY ON OVERPROTECTIVE PRACTICES?



WHY DO PARENTS RELY ON OVERPROTECTIVE PRACTICES?



Research questions

1. Does neuroticism predict overprotective parenting?
2. Is the effect of neuroticism on parental overprotection triggered or worsened by
 - a. Perceived child problems
 - b. Perceived environmental threats
 - c. Post-secondary transition

Design: 2 longitudinal studies

Study 1: two-wave study without a transition moment (middle adolescents)

Study 2: four-wave study including post-secondary transition (late adolescents)

- Two waves (2007 & 2009) of the I I-wave Flemish study on Parenting, Personality and Development (Prinzle et al., 2003)

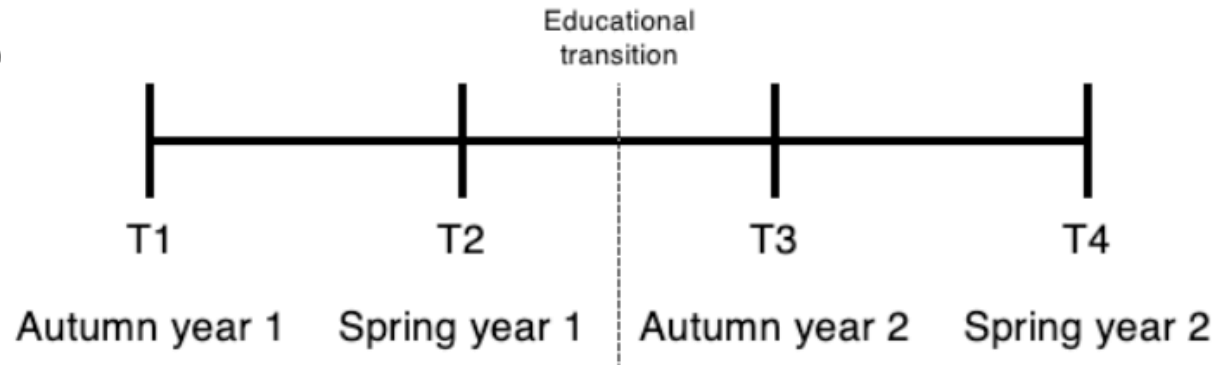
- N = 589 mothers and fathers
 - ✓ Mean age mothers = 42.8 years (range = 33-58)
 - ✓ Mean age fathers = 44.9 years (range = 34-68)
 - ✓ Mean age adolescents at T1 = 13.8 years (range = 11-16), 48.5% boys

- Measures
 - ✓ T1: Neuroticism: Five-Pattern Personality Inventory (FFPI)
 - ✓ T1: Child problems: Child behavior Checklist (CBCL)
 - ✓ T1 & T2: Overprotection: Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran (“Memories of my Parents’ Upbringing”) (EMBU)

➤ N = 345 parents

- ✓ Mean age mothers = 49 years (range = 37-60)
- ✓ Mean age fathers = 51 years (range = 28-60)
- ✓ Mean age adolescents at T1 = 16.8 years (range = 15-19), 44.9% boys

➤ 4 waves (6-month intervals)



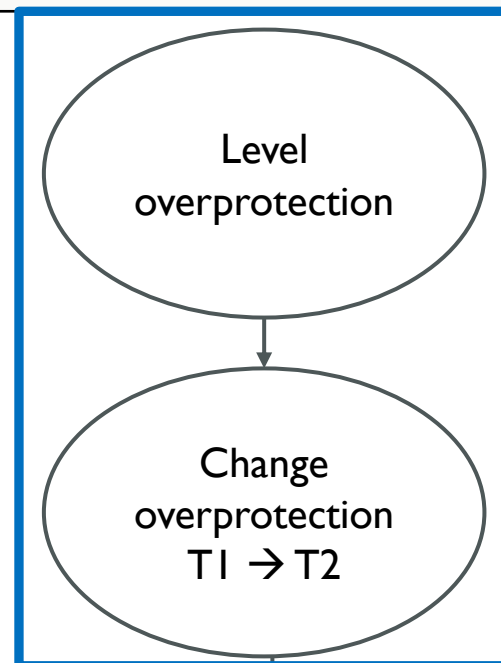
➤ Measures

- ✓ T1: Neuroticism: Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2)
- ✓ T1-T4: Perceived threat: World out There
- ✓ T1-T4: Overprotection: Short Multidimensional Overprotective Parenting Scale (S-MOPS)

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: LATENT CHANGE MODELING

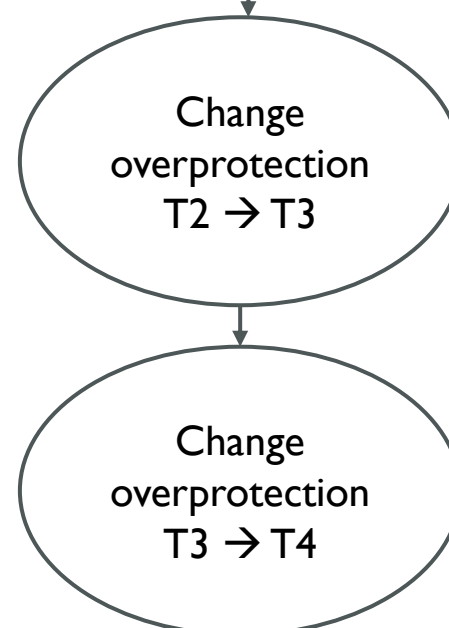
STEP I:

STUDY 1



Score of overprotective parenting at T1

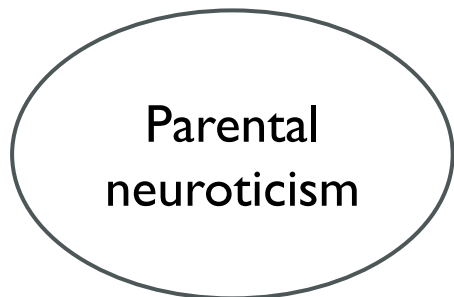
STUDY 2



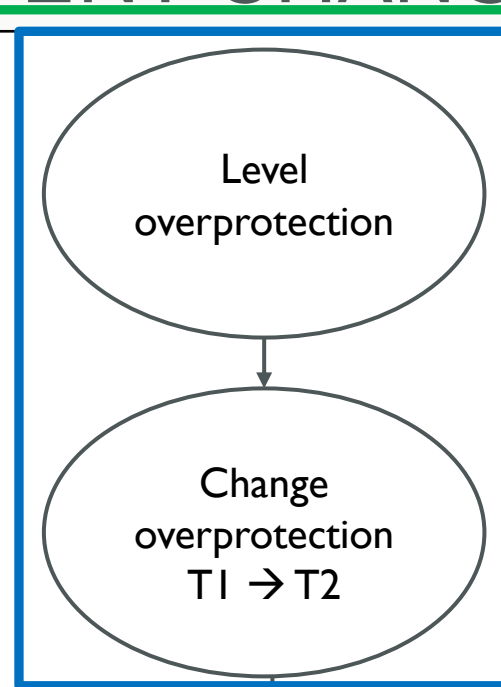
Post-secondary transition

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: LATENT CHANGE MODELING

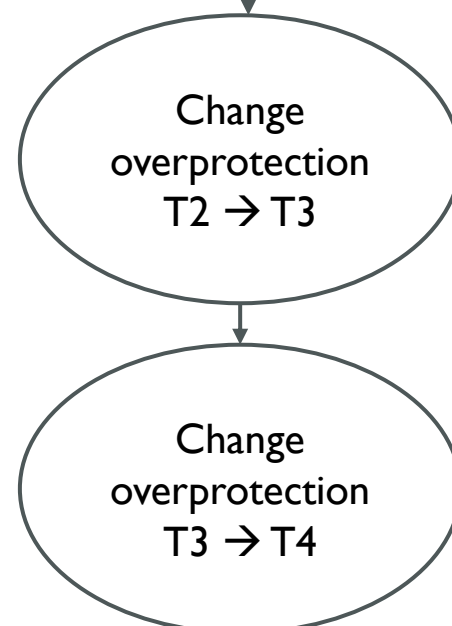
STEP 2:



STUDY 1



STUDY 2

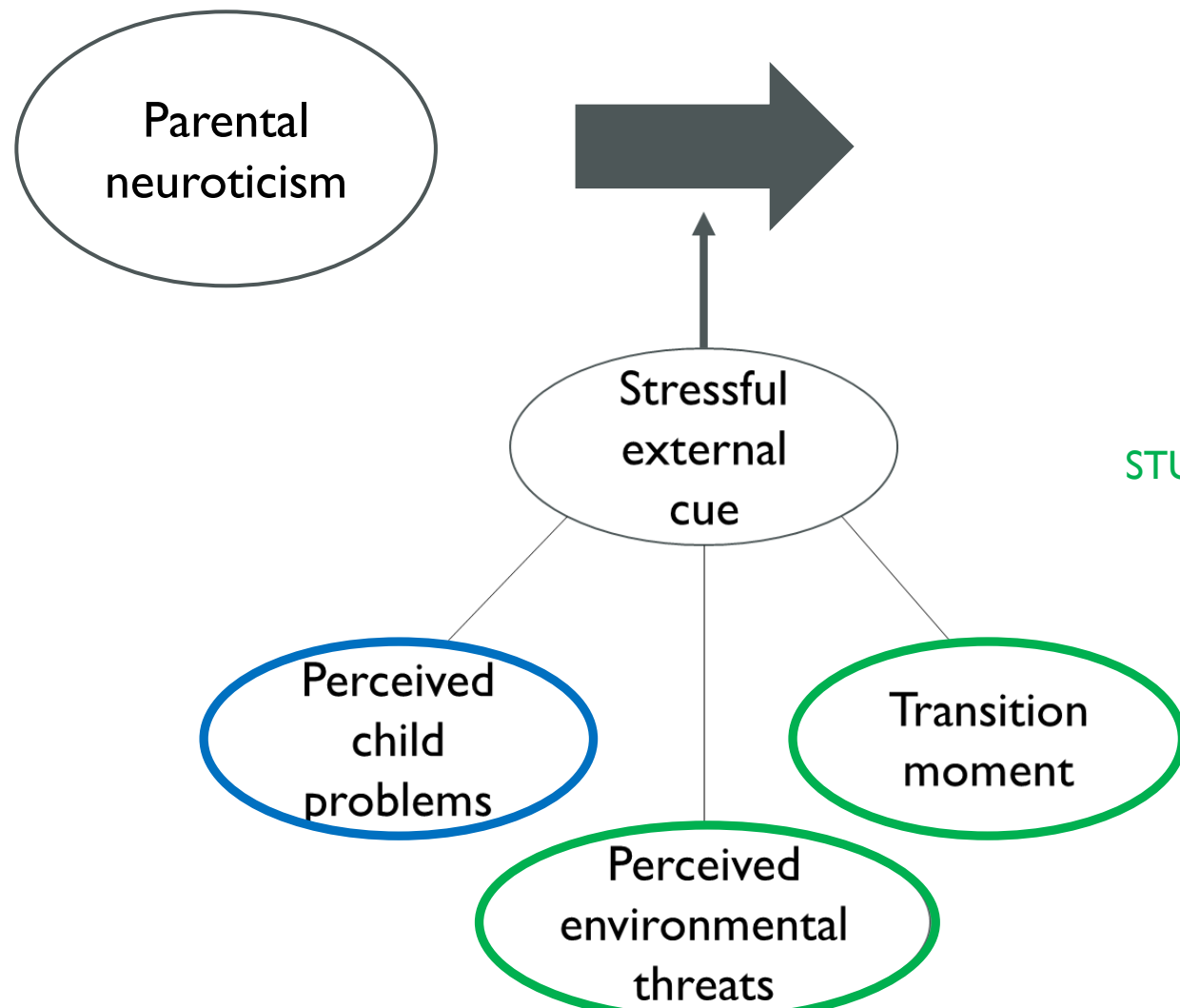


Score of overprotective parenting at T1

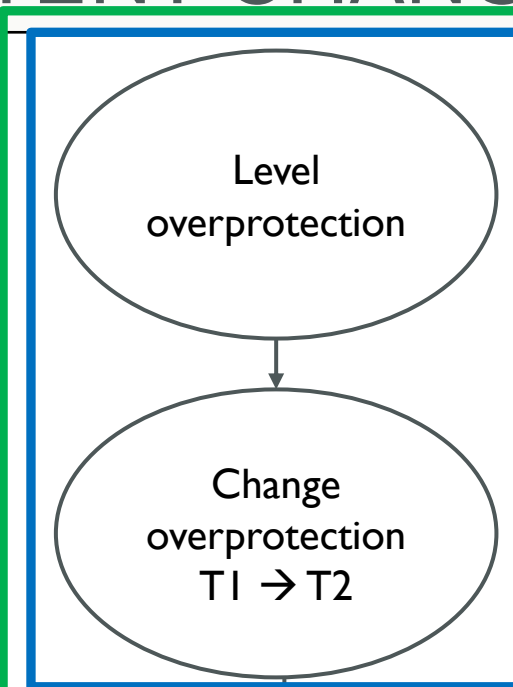
Post-secondary transition

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: LATENT CHANGE MODELING

STEP 3:

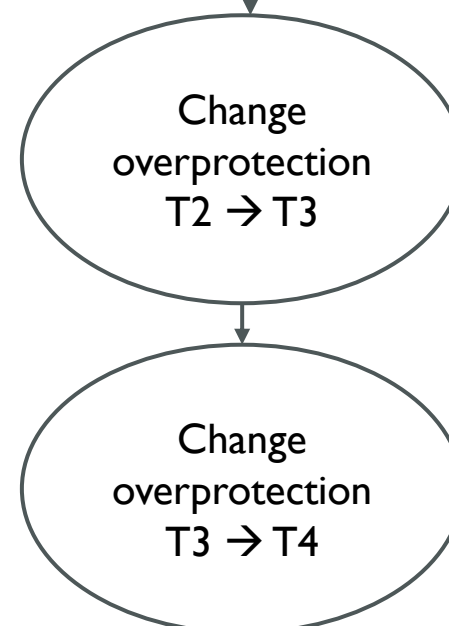


STUDY 1



Score of overprotective parenting at T1

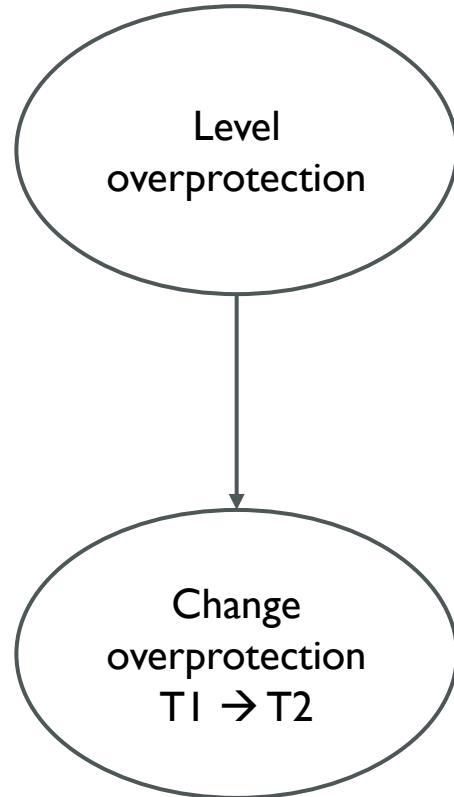
STUDY 2



Post-secondary transition

PRELIMINARY QUESTION: DOES
AMOUNT OF OVERPROTECTION
CHANGE OVER TIME?

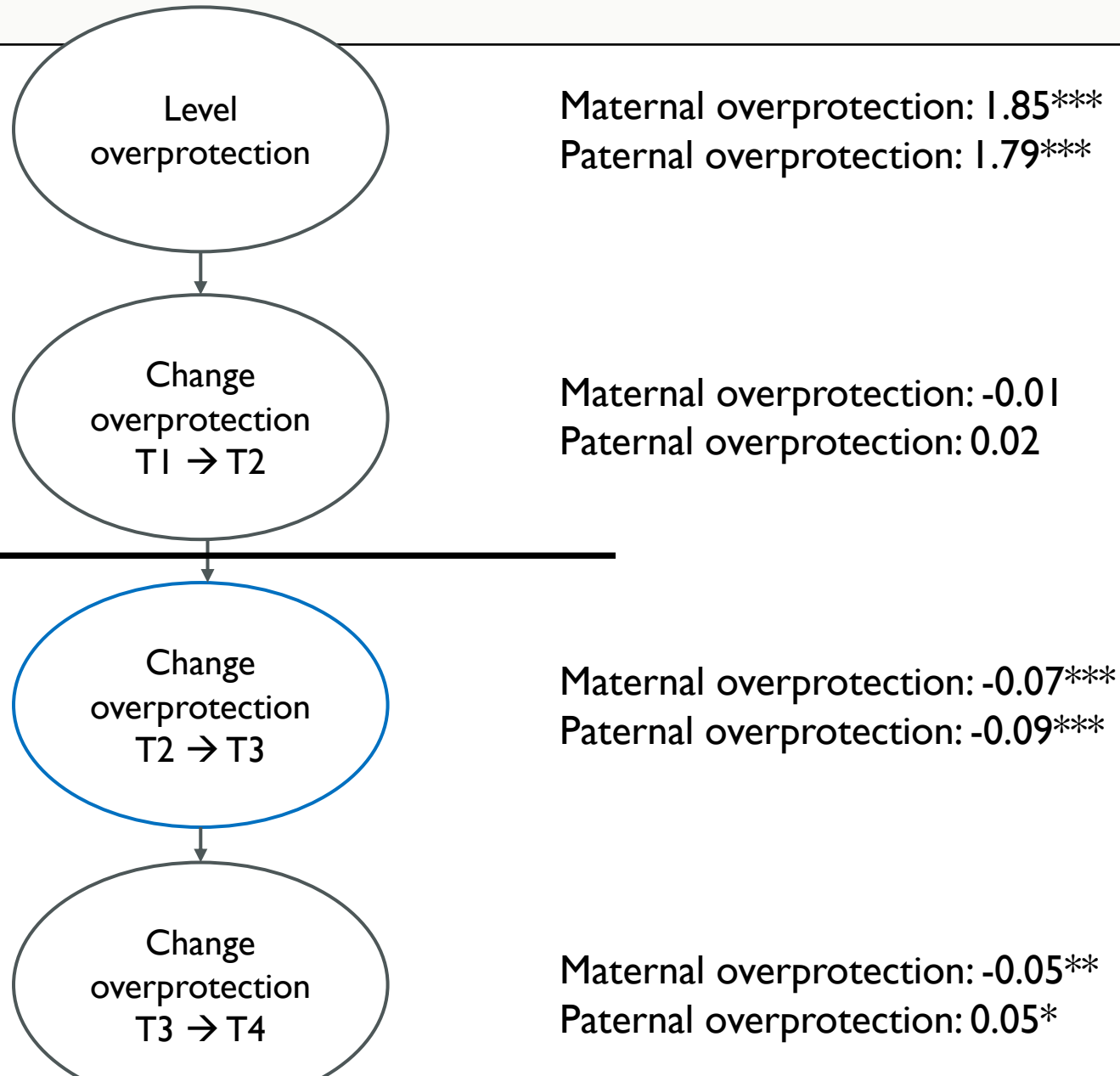
RESULTS STEP 1: DOES AMOUNT OF OVERPROTECTION CHANGE OVER TIME?



Maternal overprotection: 1.94***
Paternal overprotection: 1.85***

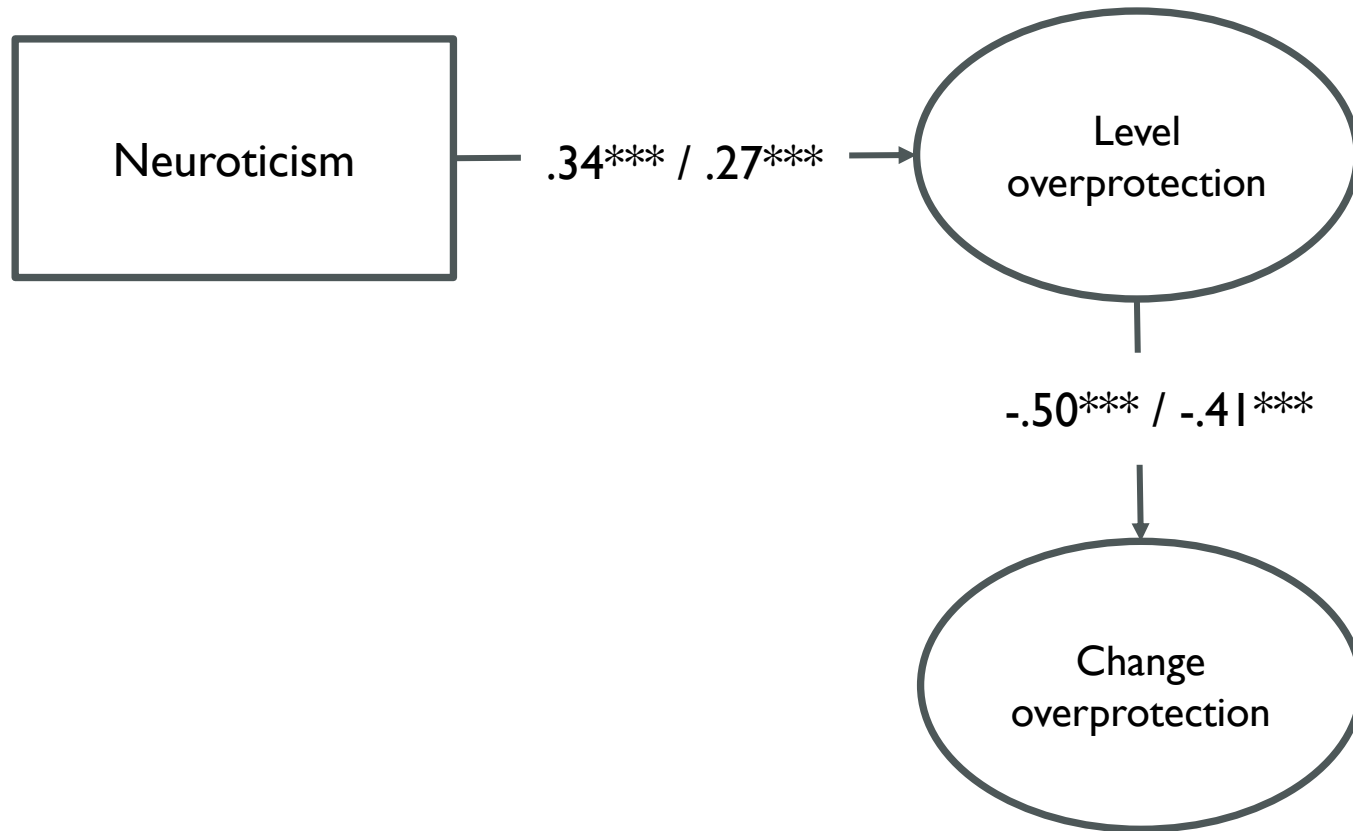
Maternal overprotection: -0.10***
Paternal overprotection: -0.03***

RESULTS STEP 1: DOES AMOUNT OF OVERPROTECTION CHANGE OVER TIME?



RESEARCH QUESTION 1: DOES
NEUROTICISM PREDICT
OVERPROTECTIVE PARENTING?

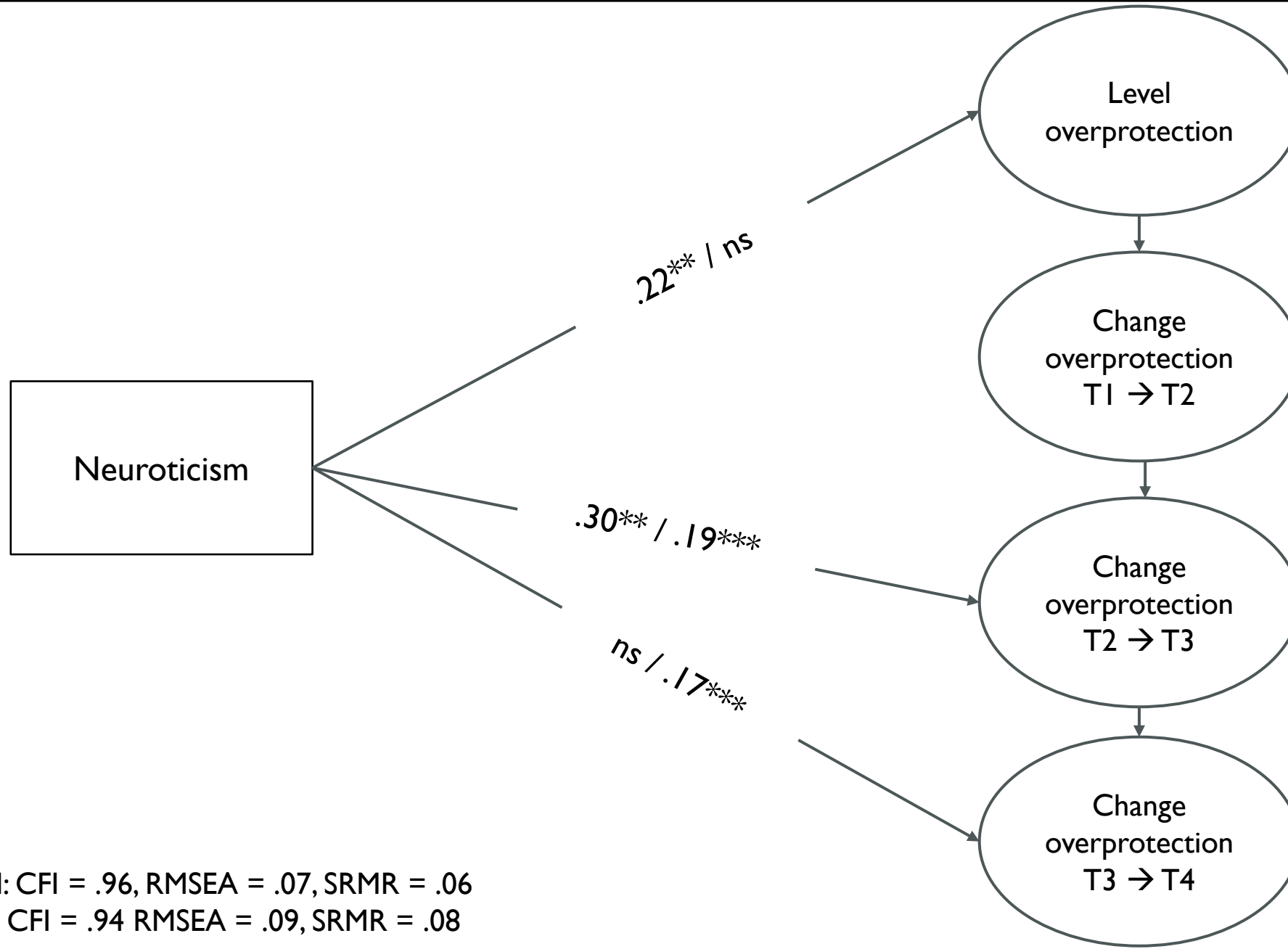
RESULTS STUDY 1:



Maternal model: CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .08

Paternal model: CFI = .97, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .11

RESULTS: STUDY 2

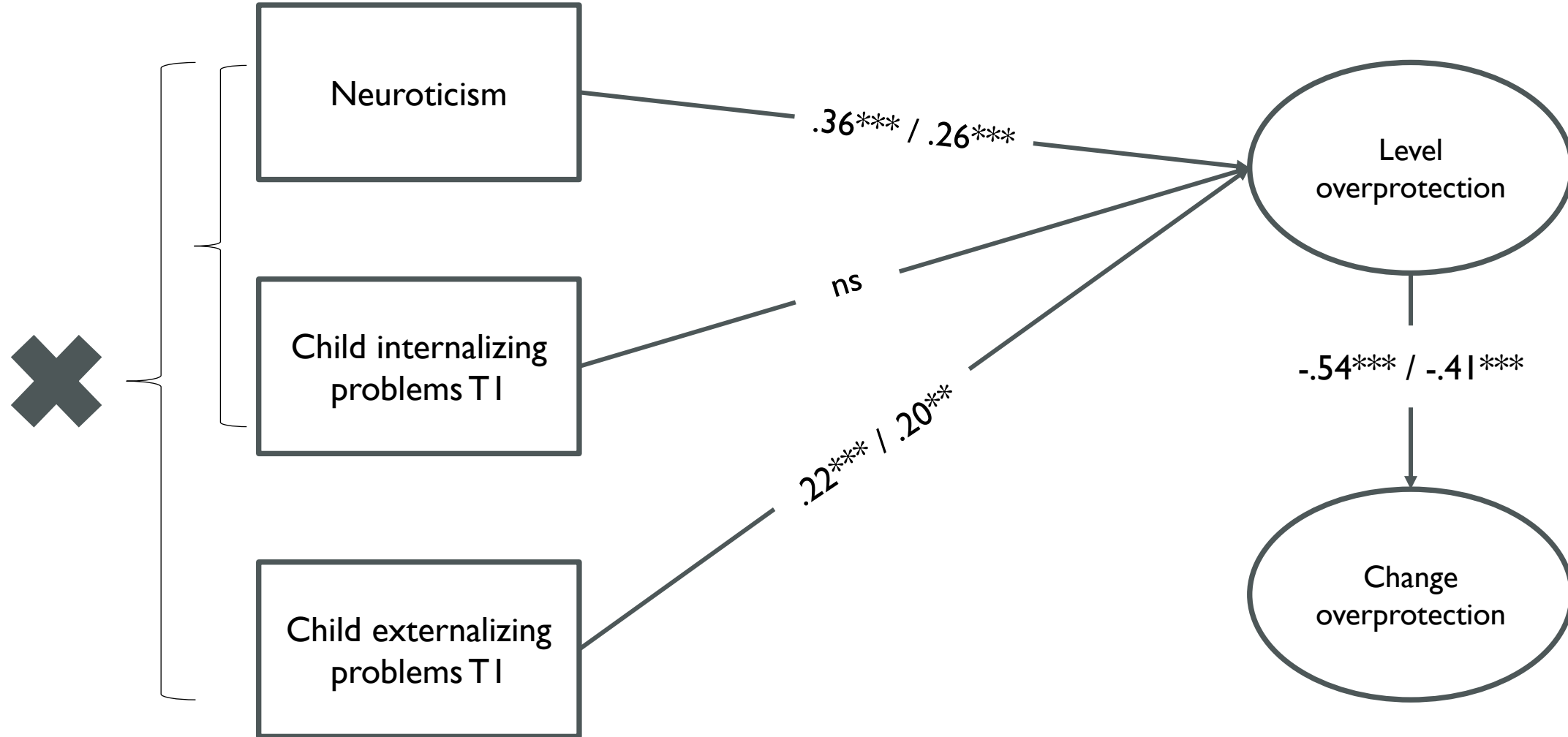


Maternal model: CFI = .96, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06

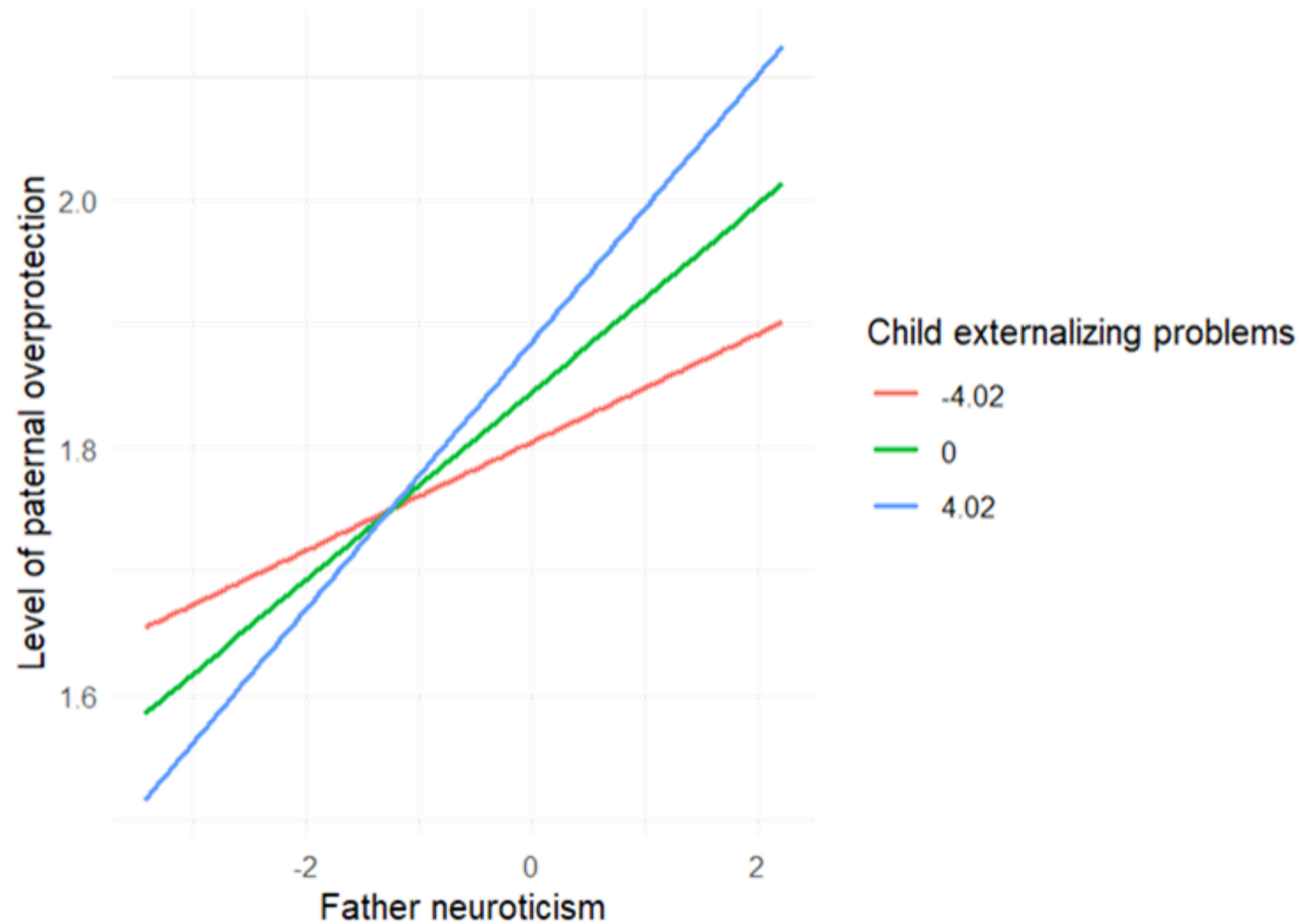
Paternal model: CFI = .94, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .08

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: DOES
NEUROTISICM GET ACTIVATED BY
STRESSFUL EXTERNAL CUES?

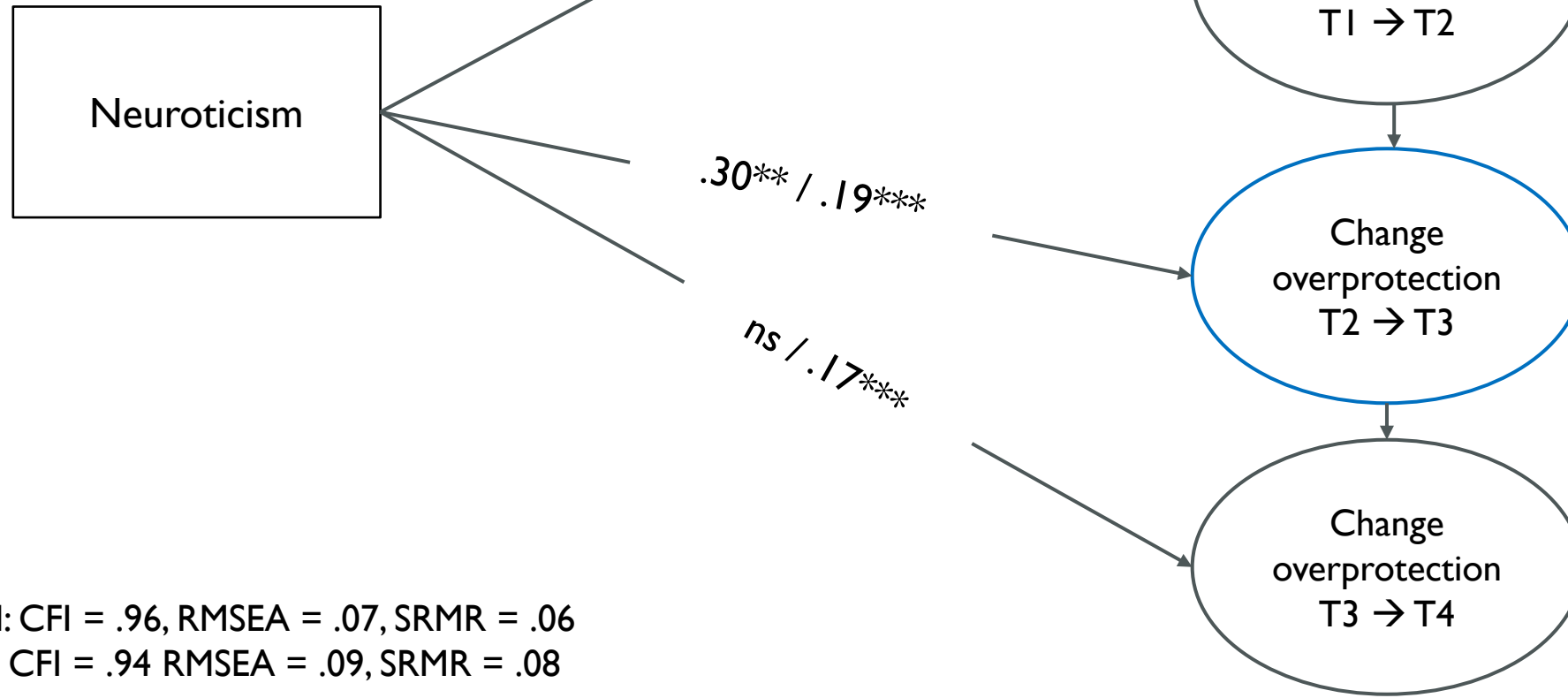
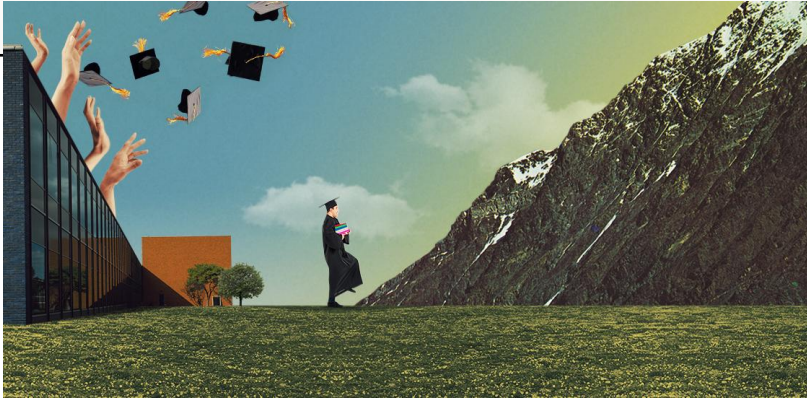
A. CHILD PROBLEM BEHAVIOR



A. CHILD PROBLEM BEHAVIOR



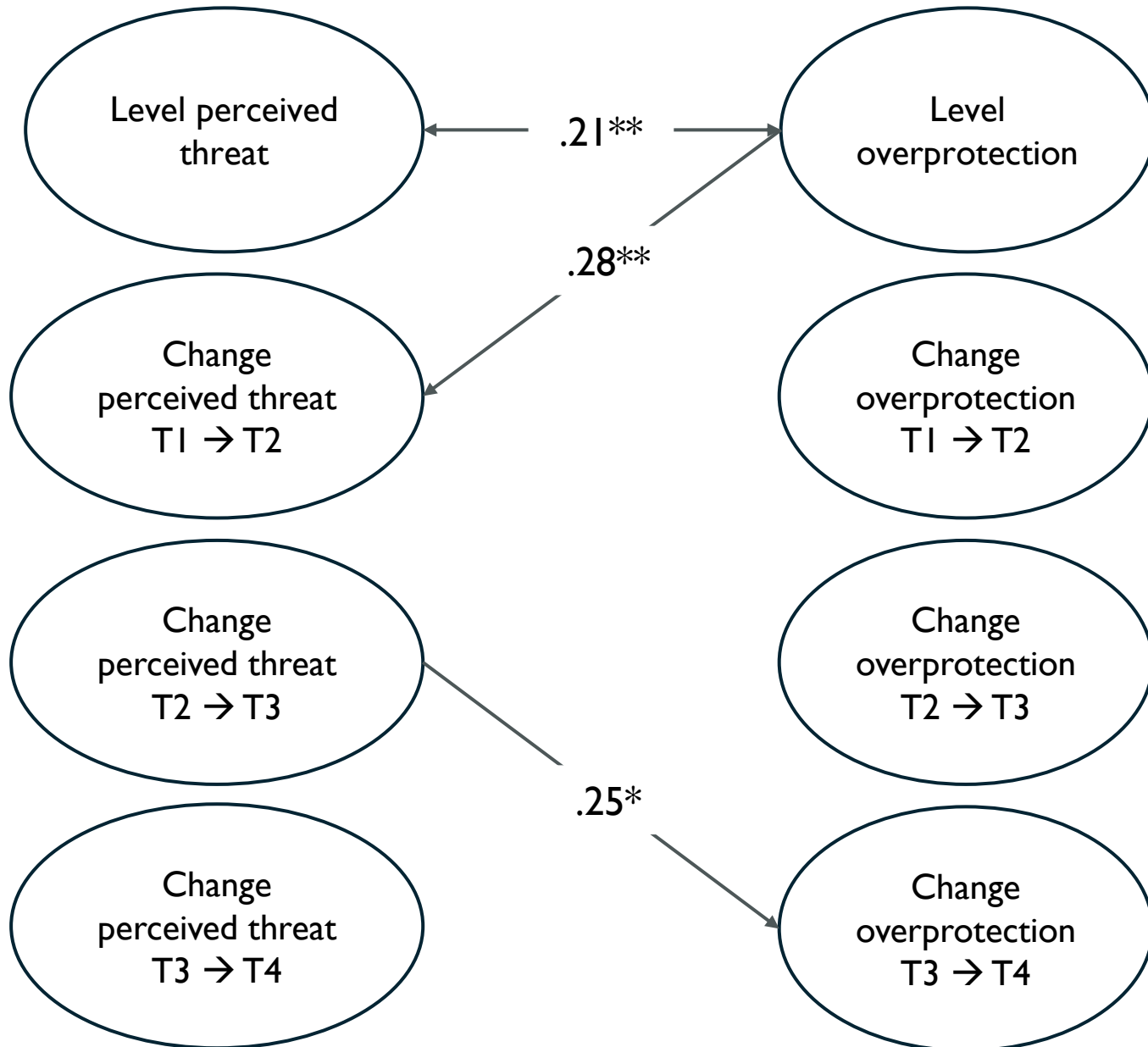
B. POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION



Maternal model: CFI = .96, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06

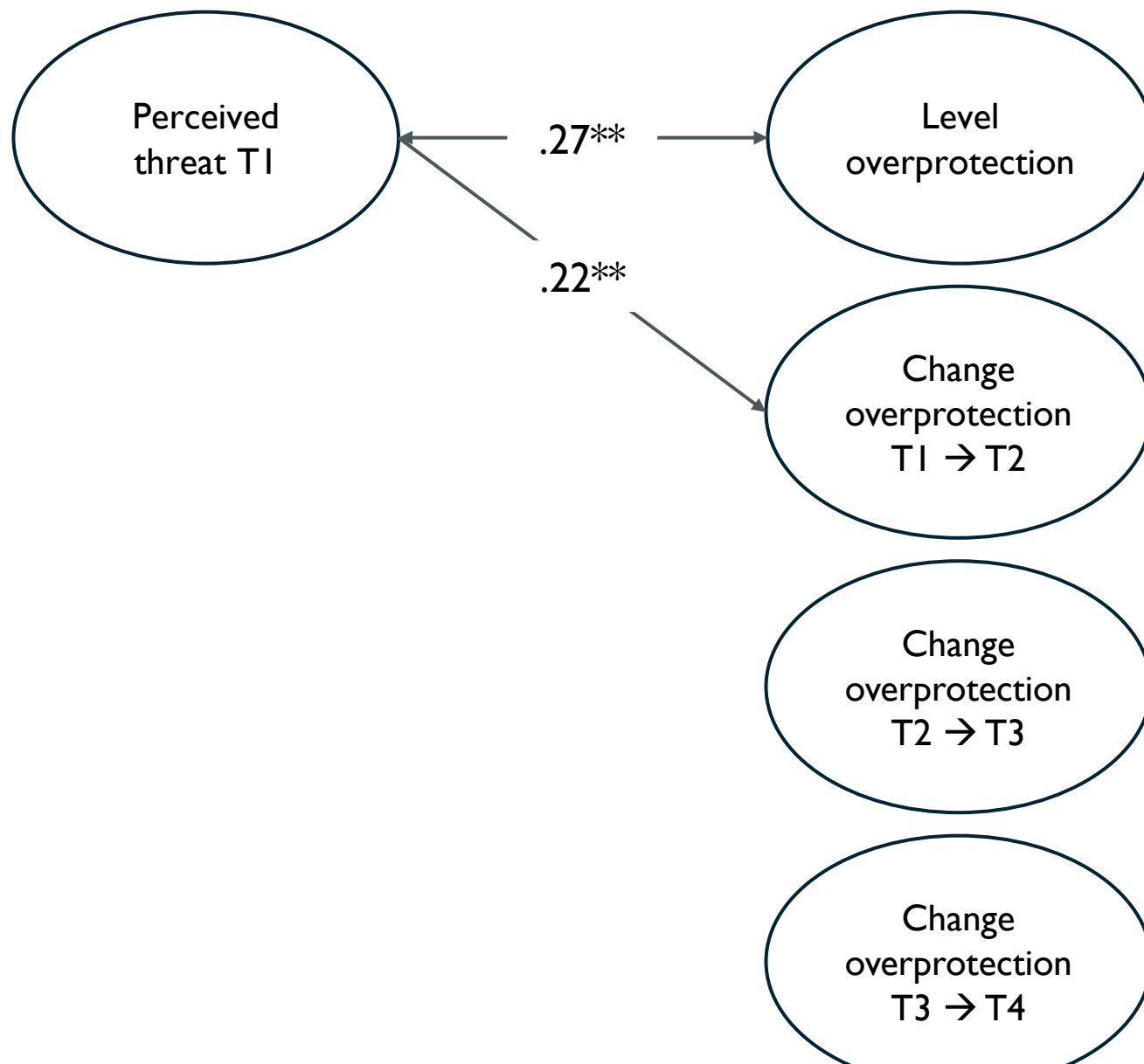
Paternal model: CFI = .94, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .08

C. PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT



Maternal model: CFI = .94, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06

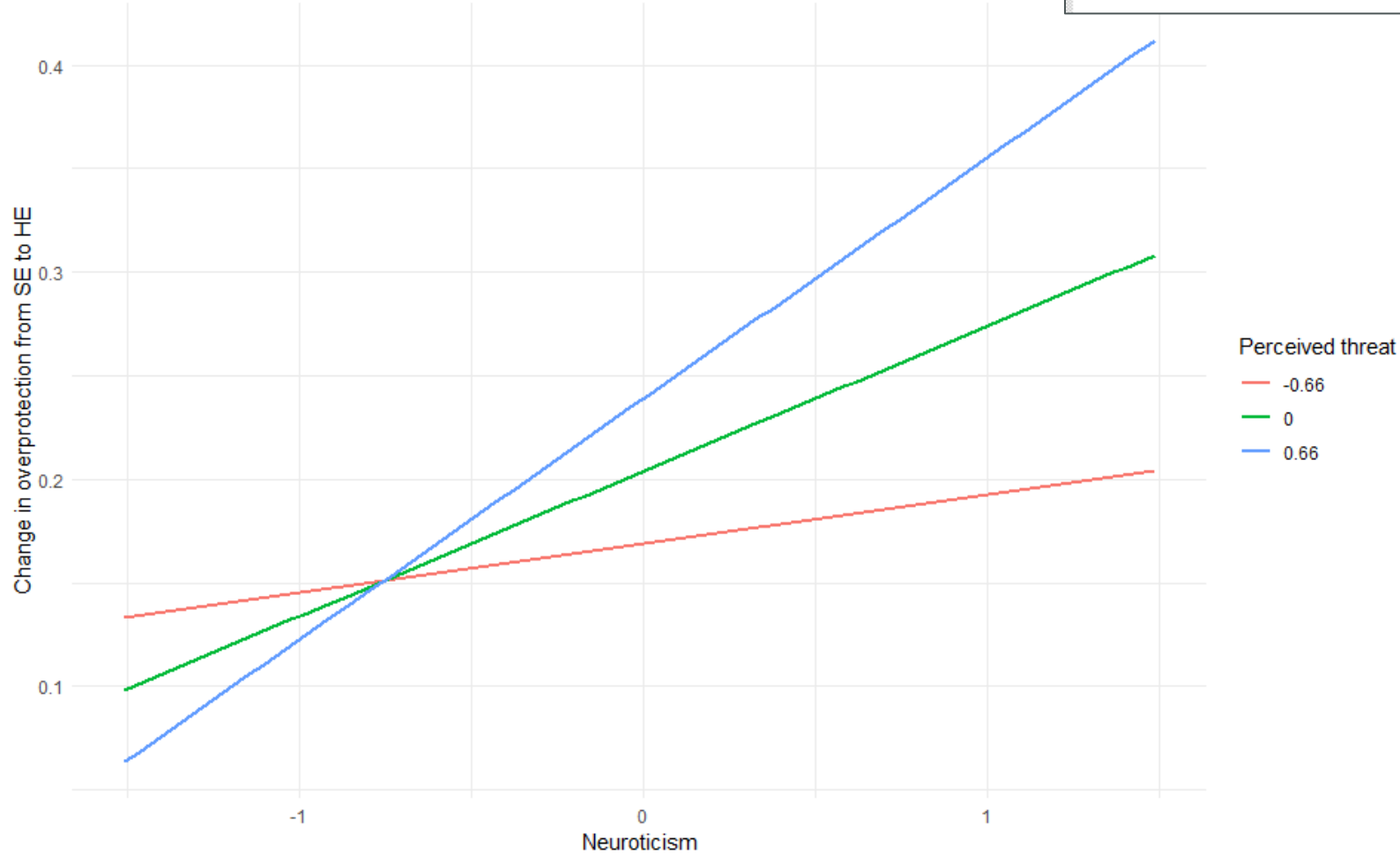
C. PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT



C. PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

New/Additional Parameters				
SLP_LO	0.010	0.035	0.298	0.766
SLP_ME	0.053	0.031	1.704	0.088
SLP_HI	0.096	0.037	2.589	0.010

Interaction Plot





Parents high on neuroticism tend to be more overprotective



Some limited evidence for trait activation theory: interactions between neuroticism and external cues

- A. Externalizing problems worsened associations between paternal neuroticism and overprotection
- B. Neuroticism especially played a role during transition moment
- C. Perceived threat worsened effect of neuroticism during transition moment



Interaction effects only occurred for fathers, is the relation between neuroticism and overprotection less uniform for fathers?



Parents do not live in a vacuum, but rely on strategies that are attempts to respond or adapt to a changing reality.