

Mentoring Program Practices Matter

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Perach 40th Anniversary Conference
December, 2015





CONGRATULATIONS to PERACH

Indicators of success

- Longevity
 - 40 years!
- Scope
 - Children (Thousands)
 - Mentors (Thousands)
 - Schools (Thousands)
 - Colleges (Hundreds)
- Replication
 - Over 20 countries
- Research
 - Process and outcome

Distinctions

Perach/Peraj

- National
- Centralized pyramid management structure
- Clear purpose
- University student mentors
- Compensated mentors
- Long history
- Large

US mentoring

- Localized
- Decentralized
- Many goals
- Multiple models
- Reliance on volunteers
- Start-up mentality
- Small

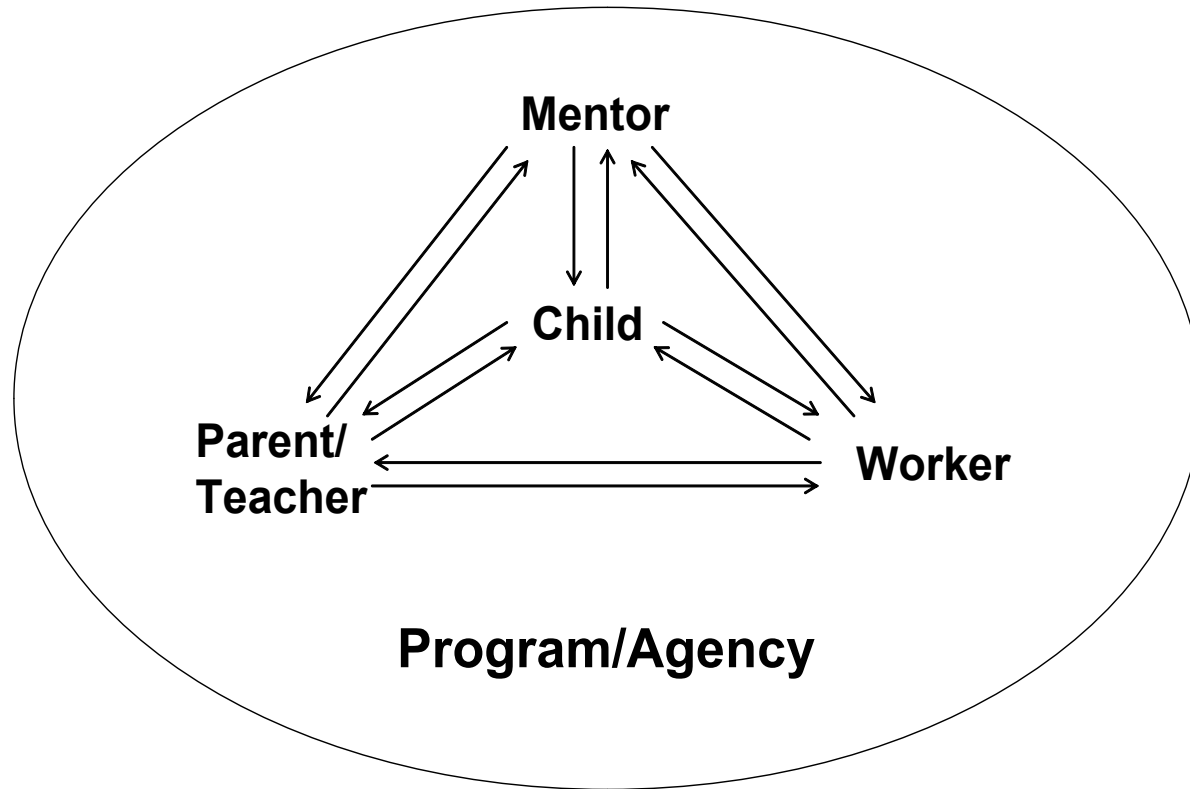
Looking back

Big Brothers Big Sisters

- Long history
- Widespread
- National standards for practice (screening, monitoring, etc.)
- Federation model with local implementation

Systemic model (Keller, 2005)

Highlights important role of program staff (worker/coordinator)
Notes importance of program/agency context



Program infrastructure

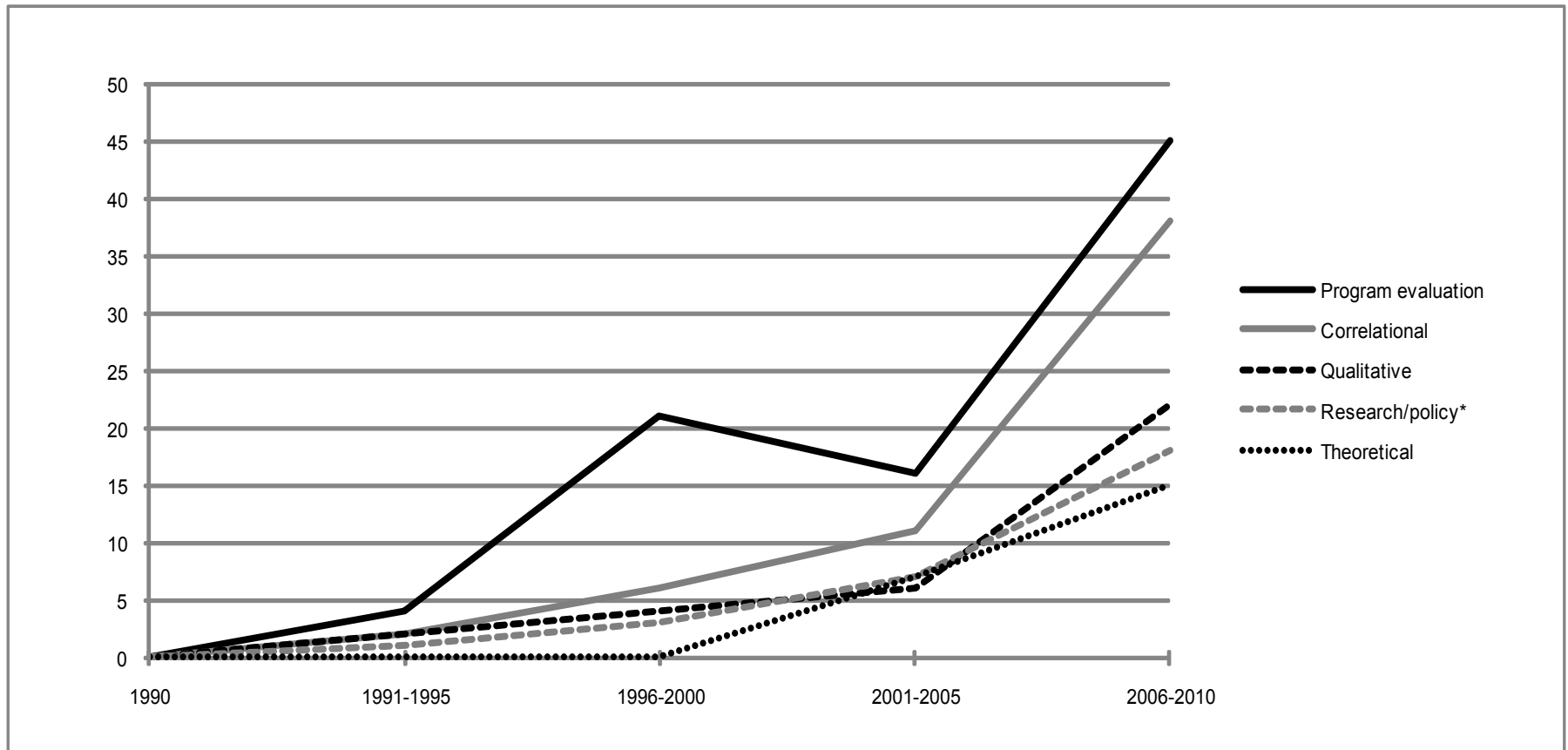
The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth, and the New Voluntarism (Marc Freedman, 1993)

- Growing popularity of mentoring movement
- Potential benefits vs panacea
- Warned of “Fervor without infrastructure”

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership

- Founded in 1990 to support the mentoring movement
- Advocacy, training, and technical assistance
- *Elements of Effective Practice, 1st Edition (1990)*
 - Heavy reliance on practice-based evidence
 - Wisdom/experience of practitioners
 - Minimal research

Growth of published research



Elements of Effective Practice

Elements of Effective Practice, 2nd Edition (2003)

Recommendations on program design and planning, management, operations, and evaluation

Elements of Effective Practice, 3rd Edition (2009)

Program design and planning, management, and evaluation

Standards, benchmarks, justifications, and enhancements

Recruitment

Matching

Screening

Monitoring and support

Training

Closure

Elements of Effective Practice

Justifications

Still incorporates practice-based evidence (especially for enhancements)

Infers practices from research findings

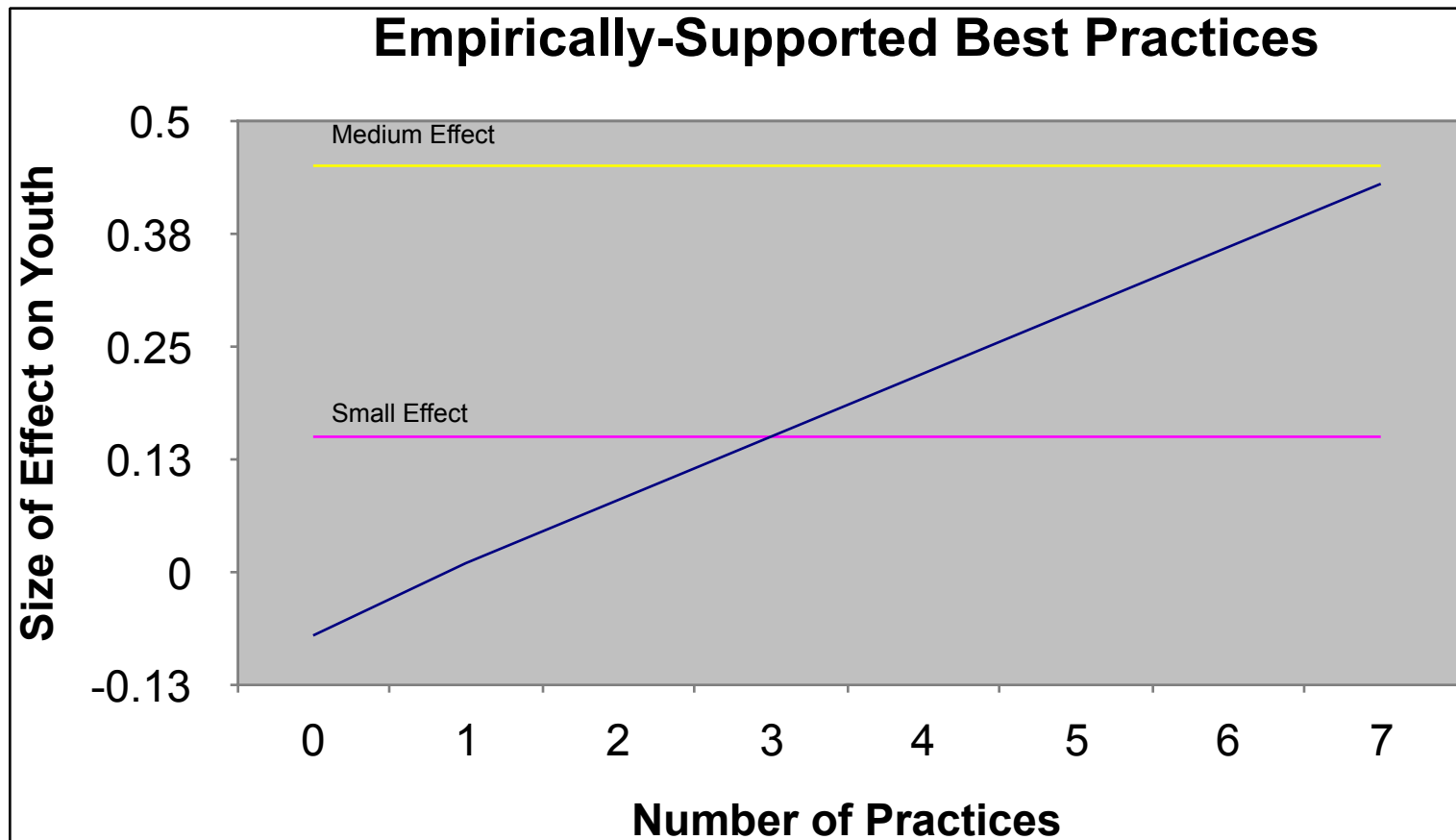
Research: Closures can occur due to unrealistic expectations

Practice: Orient mentors with realistic expectations

Some research on specific practices (e.g., training)

Results from meta-analysis

Evidence regarding practices



Evaluation of MENTOR's Quality Mentoring System (QMS) Initiative

Acknowledgements

Colleagues

- Renée Spencer, Carla Herrera, Bowen McBeath, Alison Drew, Jeffrey Asprocolas, Jamilee Jin Siahpush, Jennifer Lindwall

Collaboration with

- MENTOR
- Mentoring Partnerships
- Pilot mentoring programs

Funding

- William T. Grant Foundation

QMS Background

Origins

- Agencies wanted validation of quality mentoring programs
- Mentoring Partnerships wanted to promote continuous quality improvement
- MA Partnership developed Quality Based Mentoring (QBM)
- MN Partnership developed Quality Mentoring Assessment Path (QMAP)

Based on *Elements of Effective Practice, 3rd Edition*

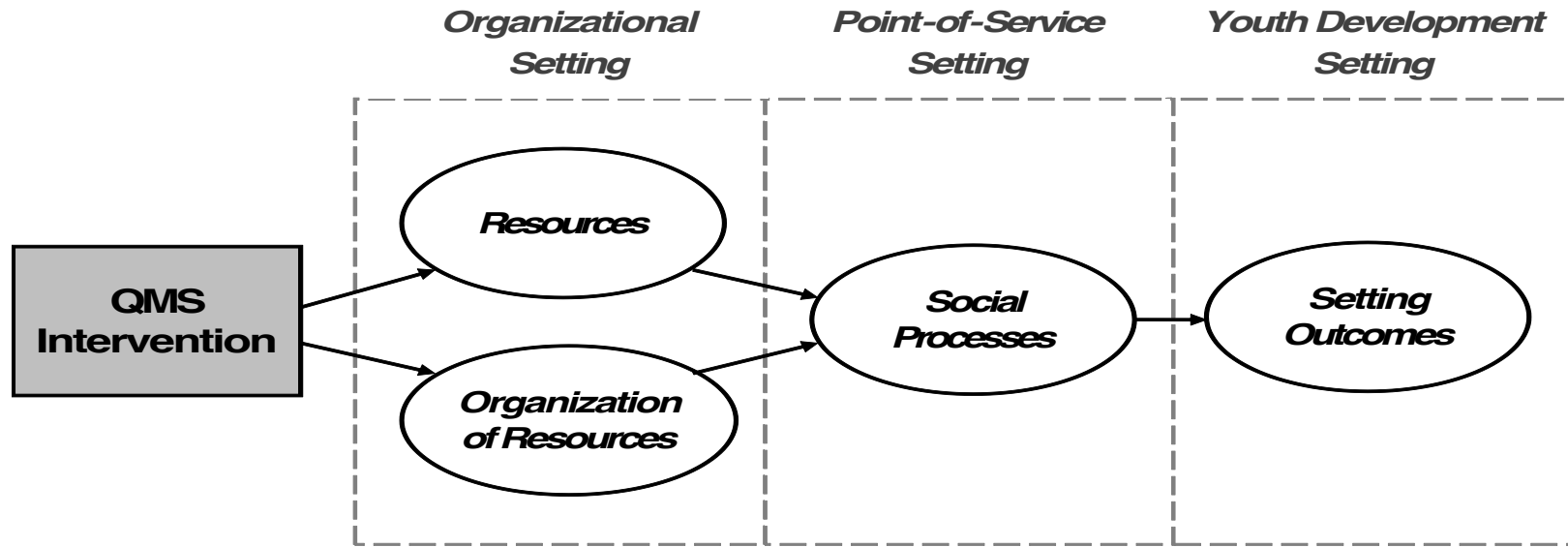
Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) approach

- Self-assessment with extensive checklist
- Training and technical assistance to adopt/improve practices
- Re-assessment to document progress

Initiative

- Eight new Mentoring Partnerships implement QMS (4 QBM, 4 QMAP)

QMS: Causal model



Resources: capacities of staff (human resources), finances of organization (economic resources), time allocation (temporal resources)

Organization of Resources: staffing plans, fiscal policies, and program models and practices

Social Processes: program staff interactions with mentors—support, guidance, “street-level” program implementation (service delivery)

Setting Outcomes: mentoring relationship as a context for youth development

Study design

Randomized controlled trial (RCT)

- Partnerships recruit eligible/willing programs
- Programs matched into similar pairs
- Randomly assigned to either intervention (tx) or waitlist (control)

Pre/Post assessments

- Agency survey
 - Program leader
- Staff survey
 - All current staff
- Mentor survey
 - Random sample of 15 active mentors in each program

Initial research questions

Goal

Test basic elements of conceptual model using baseline mentor data

Questions

Based on mentor perceptions, is implementation of recommended practices associated with mentor self-efficacy, mentoring relationship quality, and volunteer experience?

Does the nature of the mentor-staff interaction mediate the association between program practices and these outcomes?

Baseline surveys

Mentors

Goal: Recruit a random sample of 15 active mentors from each participating QMS program.

As of July, 2015:

- 53 programs

- 732 mentors invited to participate

- 564 mentors took the survey (77% response rate)

Program characteristics

Organizational Structure	Stand-alone NGO	33%
	Part of larger NGO	41%
	Operated by school/ district	16%
	Other (e.g., run by college)	10%
Nationally affiliated (e.g., BBBSA, YMCA)		25%
Years providing mentoring	0-5	41%
	6-10	26%
	Over 10	33%

Program characteristics

Youth served last year	≤ 50	36%
	51-100	32%
	101-200	15%
	201+	17%
Paid staff devoted primarily to mentoring program	< 1	30%
	1 to < 3	42%
	3 to < 5	15%
	5+	12%
	Range	Median
Budget - mentoring	\$450- \$2,597,187	\$60,009

Mentor sample

Gender

- 67% Female/ 33% Male

Ethnicity

- 4% Hispanic/Latino

Race

- 64% European American
- 22% African American
- 7% Asian American
- 7% Other

Marital status

- 51% Married/Living with partner
- 41% Single
- 8% Divorced/Widowed

Education

- 9% HS/GED
- 18% Post-secondary
- 39% BA/BS
- 33% Graduate degree

Income

- 26% Under \$40K
- 28% \$40-80K
- 21% \$80-120K
- 25% Over \$120K

Volunteer with other organization

- 43% Yes/ 57% No

Mentor programs

Setting

- 39% School-based
- 33% Community-based
- 17% Site-based
- 11% Other (hybrid, e-mentoring, detention)

Gender matching

- 55% Both female
- 32% Both male
- 12% Female mentor/male youth
- 1% Male mentor/female youth

Format

- 86% One-to-one
- 7% Group
- 7% Team

Match support descriptives

When agency staff called or met with you to see how your mentoring relationship was going, how long did these conversations typically last?	Percent
Agency staff did not contact me to check in on our relationship	12%
1-5 minutes	26%
6-10 minutes	30%
11-20 minutes	19%
More than 20 minutes	13%

Match support descriptives

When you interacted with your mentee, how often did you use tips or pointers that program staff had suggested to you?	Percent
Staff never gave me tips or pointers	8%
Staff gave me tips or pointers, but I never used them	1%
Very rarely	23%
Every few times we met	41%
Almost every time we met	21%
Every time we met	5%

Match support descriptives

To what extent were your contacts with agency staff helpful in strengthening your mentoring relationship?	Percent
Not at all helpful	6%
Somewhat helpful	23%
Fairly helpful	39%
Very helpful	33%

Measures

Program Practices ($\alpha=.95$)

- 23 items based on *Elements of Effective Practice, 3rd Edition*
- *To what extent did your mentoring program do the following:*
 - *oriented you to the mission, goals, and intended outcomes of the program*
 - *provided suggestions and ideas for activities*
 - *connected you with resources for you mentee (e.g., referrals to other services and programs)*
 - *collected data to measure the success of matches*

Mentor-Staff Working Alliance ($\alpha=.89$)

- 14 items based on Working Alliance Inventory (Horvath & Greenberg, 1989)
- *Sample items from bond and agreement subscales*
 - *(Agency worker) and I trust each other*
 - *(Agency worker) and I agree about the things I should do to help my mentee*

Measures

Mentor's perceived interpersonal efficacy ($\alpha=.93$)

- 14 items based on parenting efficacy scale (Teti & Gelfand, 1991)
- *How confident do you feel in:*
 - *Teaching my mentee*
 - *Setting limits with my mentee*
 - *Meeting my mentee's needs*
 - *Finding activities or projects that interest my mentee*

Measures

Relationship security ($\alpha=.80$)

- 6 items from safe haven/secure base subscales of Network of Relationships Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 2009)
- *Sample items:*
 - *How much does your mentee seek you out when s/he is upset?*
 - *How much do you encourage your mentee to try new things s/he wants to do but is nervous about?*

Relationship negativity ($\alpha=.88$)

- 9 items from conflict, criticism, antagonism subscales of Network of Relationships Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 2009)
- *Sample items:*
 - *How much do you and your mentee get upset or mad at each other?*
 - *How much do you and your mentee criticize each other?*
 - *How much do you and your mentee get annoyed with each other?*

Measures

Relationship Satisfaction ($\alpha=.85$)

- 5 items based on Satisfaction subscale of Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998)
- *Sample items:*
 - *I feel satisfied with my relationship with my mentee*
 - *My relationship with my mentee does a good job of meeting my expectations for the program*

Relationship Commitment ($\alpha=.83$)

- 4 items based on Commitment subscale of Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998)
- *Sample items:*
 - *I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my mentee*
 - *I want to make my relationship with my mentee work even when times get rough*

Measures

Volunteer Climate ($\alpha=.95$)

- 9 items based on Morale and Information Flow subscales of Organizational Climate Survey (Glaser, Zamanou, & Hacker, 1987)
- *Sample items:*
 - *My mentoring program motivates me to give my best efforts*
 - *I get the information I need to do a good job as a mentor*

Volunteer Engagement ($\alpha=.88$)

- 7 items based on Making a Difference subscale of the Inventory of Service Experience (Taylor & Pancer, 2007)
- *Sample items:*
 - *I feel that my mentoring work helps to make a difference*
 - *I feel appreciated for my work as a mentor*

Program-level variation

Mentors are clustered within programs

Should be within-program similarities and between-program differences in mentor experiences

Intraclass correlation (ICC) indicates degree of intra-program agreement (and between-program distinctions)

Relative values:

- ICC = .05 (Small)
- ICC = .10 (Medium)
- ICC = .20 (Large)

Intraclass correlations

Variable	ICC	Size
Program practices	.33	Huge
Working alliance	.05	Small
Mentor interpersonal efficacy	.07	Small
Relationship security	.09	Medium
Relationship negativity	.11	Medium
Relationship satisfaction	.10	Medium
Relationship commitment	.07	Small
Volunteer climate	.09	Medium
Volunteer engagement	.09	Medium

Path models

Mixed model regressions used to identify associations, accounting for program clustering

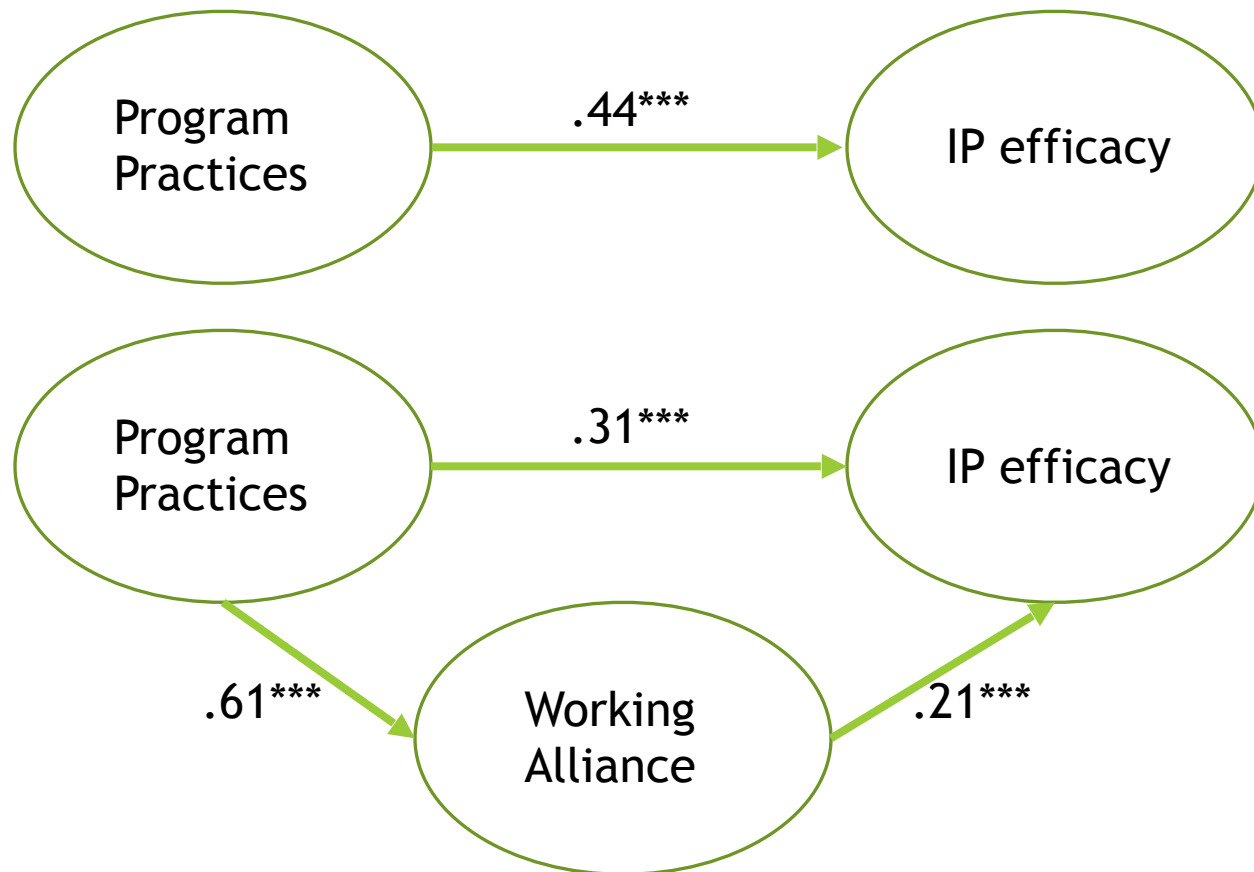
Steps:

1. Evaluate path from program practices to working alliance
2. Evaluate path from program practices to outcome
3. Evaluate paths with both program practices and working alliance predicting outcome

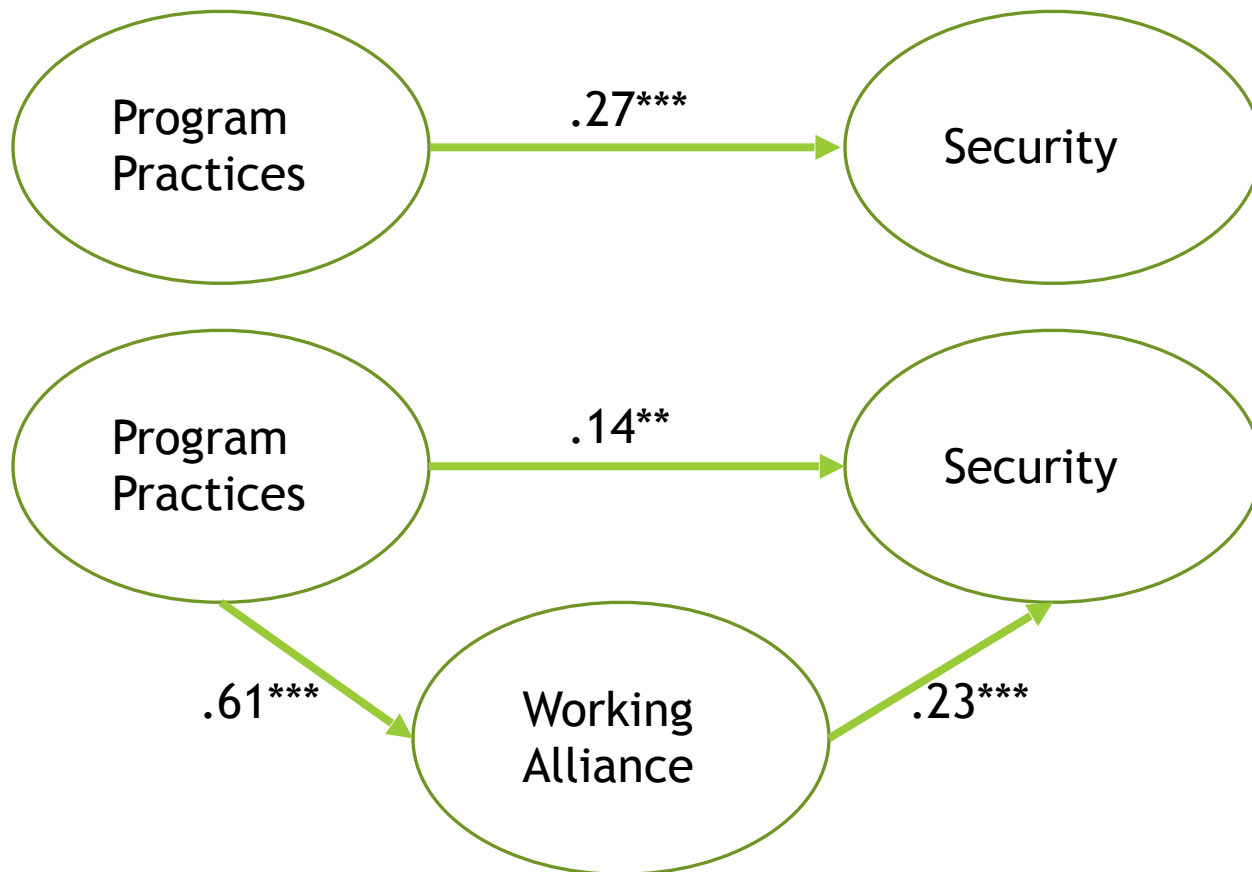
Working Alliance



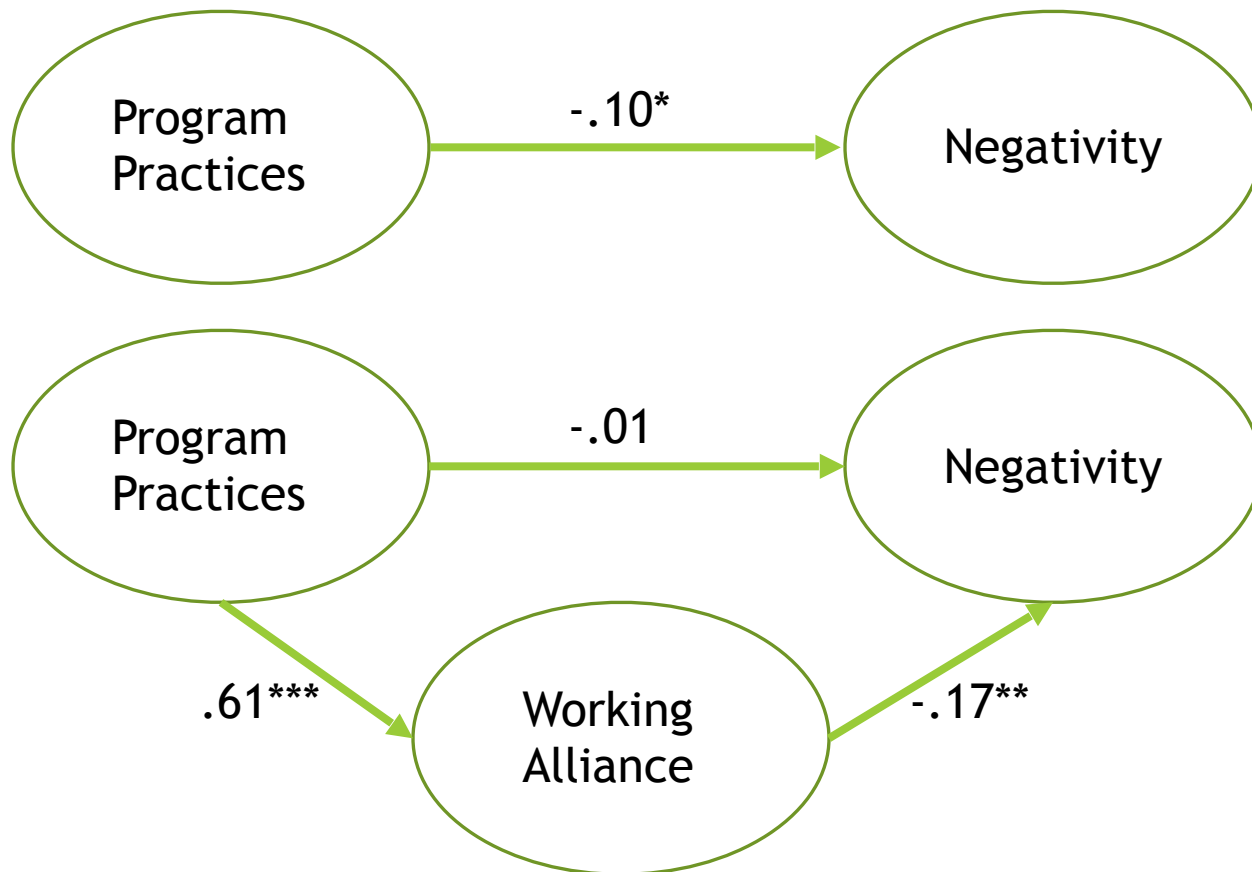
Mentor interpersonal efficacy



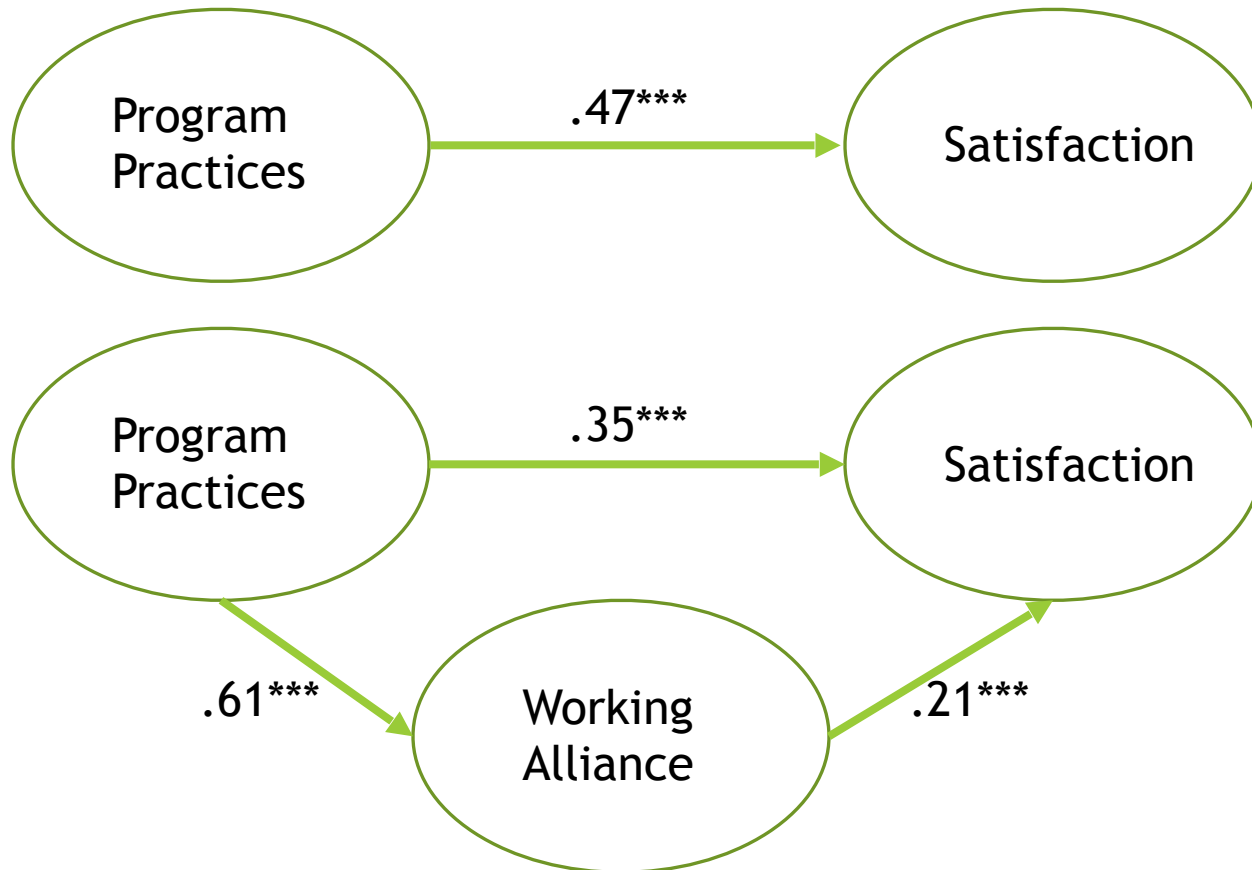
Relationship security



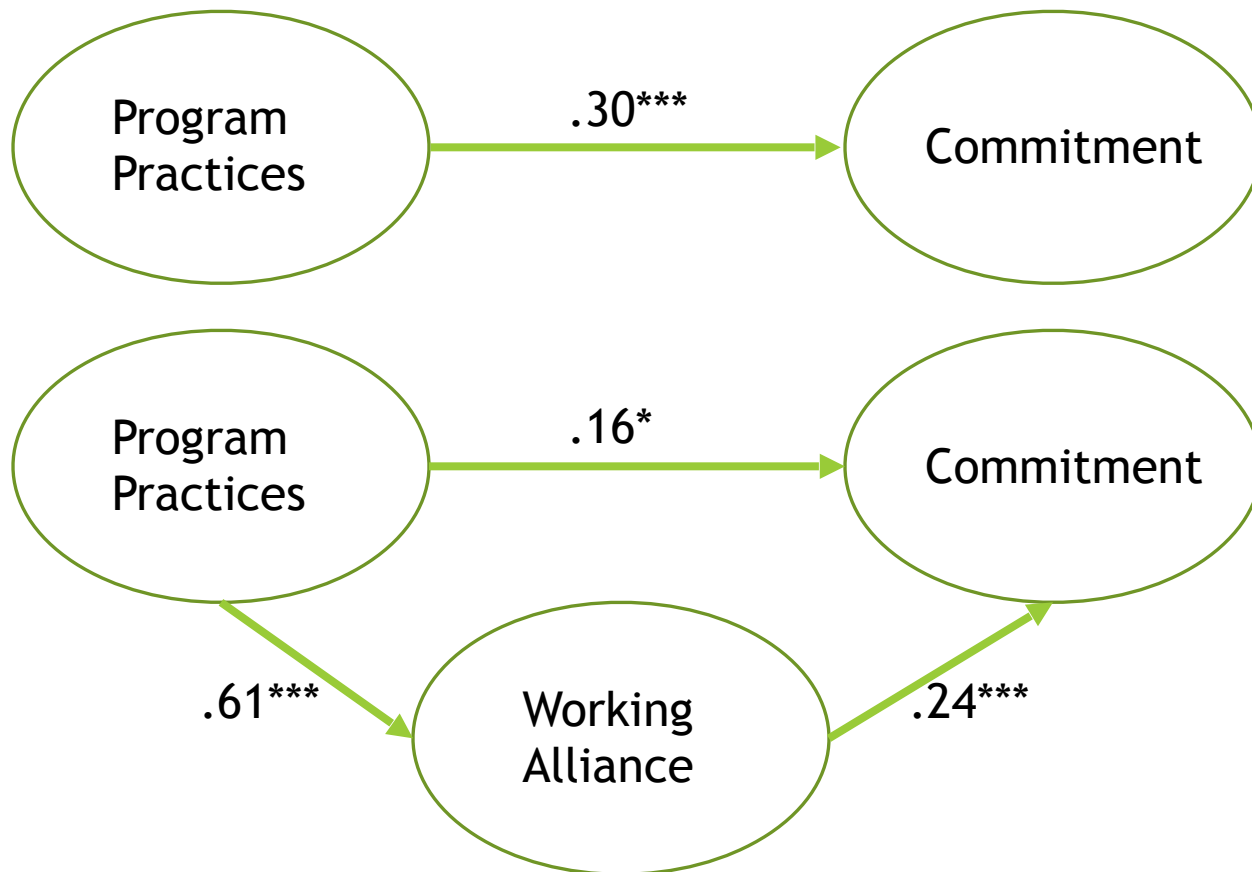
Relationship negativity



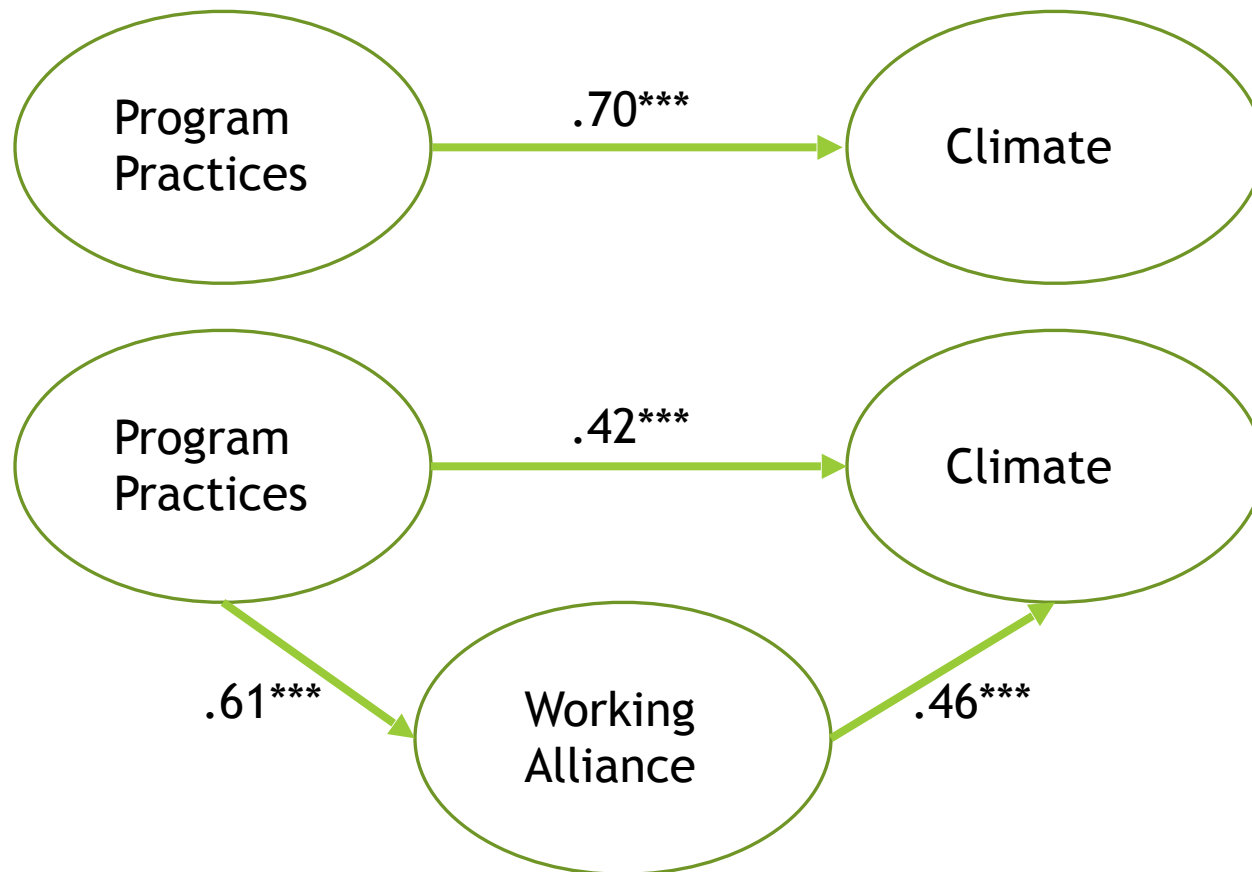
Relationship satisfaction



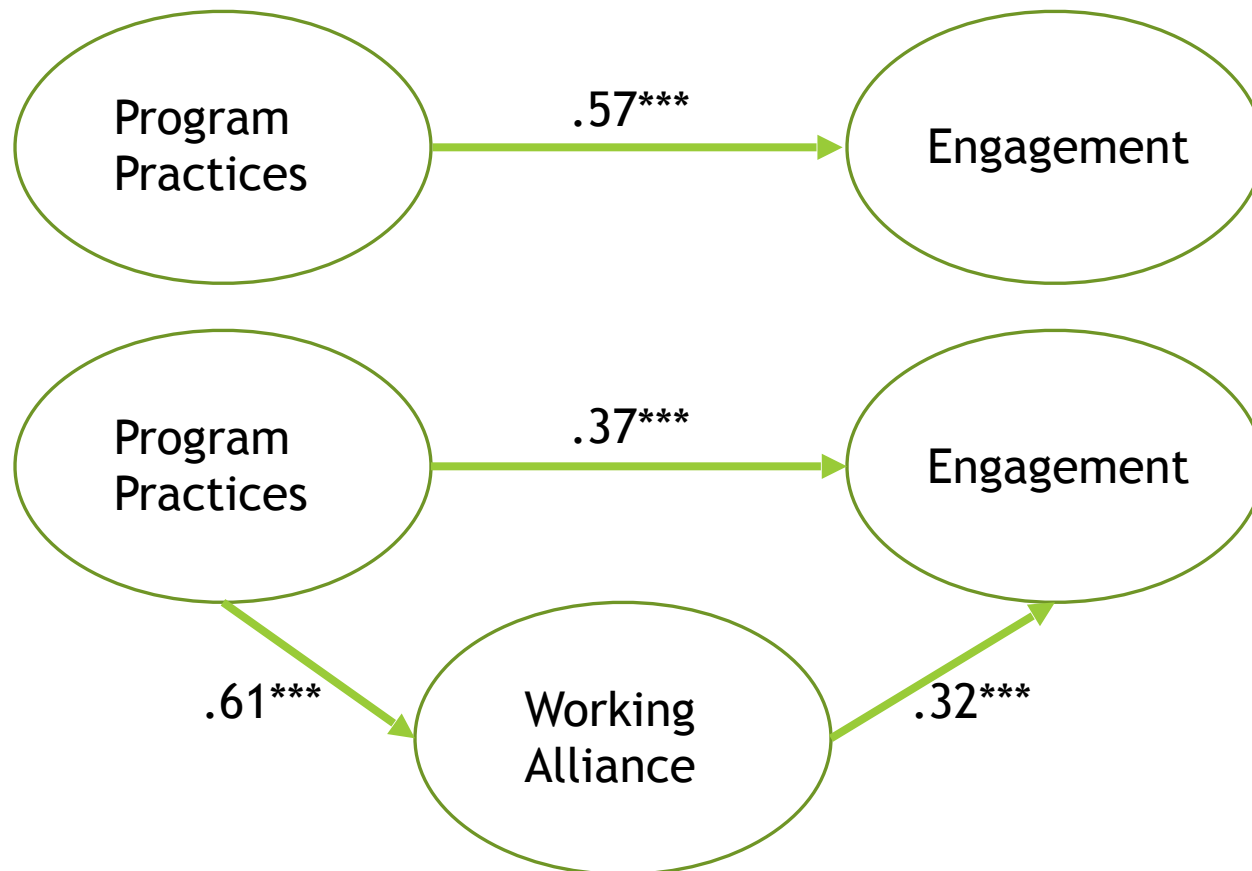
Relationship commitment



Volunteer climate



Volunteer engagement



Limitations/cautions

Very preliminary analyses

- Incomplete sample
- No control variables

Cross-sectional data—can't establish direction of influence

- Correlational not causal

Many possible interpretations

- Could be that mentors who have positive relationship rate program more favorably

Single reporter perspective

- (e.g., tend to rate all relationships positively)

Initial interpretations

Mentor responses indicate between-program differences in use of EEP practices and several aspects of mentor experience

Mentor exposure to EEP practices is consistently associated with important aspects of mentor experience—interpersonal efficacy, relationship quality, and volunteer connection.

Association of EEP practices with mentor experience is typically mediated by working alliance between staff and mentor

Key portions of conceptual model supported

Program practices may have direct, independent contribution

Next steps

Identify specific practices linked with mentor outcomes

Test whether QMS improves implementation of practices

Test whether improving practices results in better outcomes

Thank you!
Gracias!
