

PARENTAL PRACTICES IN CHILDHOOD AS LONGITUDINAL PREDICTORS OF SUBSTANCE USE LATER IN LIFE, THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-CONTROL

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Substance use as a global problem

- Substance use is a major international health concern. It is estimated that alcohol and drug use cause around 3,000,000 and 500,000 deaths every year, respectively (World Health Organization, 2021).
- Substance use usually starts in adolescence, a critical period for brain development, and it can have severe consequences.

Parenting and Substance use

- There are many studies on parenting and substance use, but their findings are contradictory. Most of these studies are cross-sectional.

Self-control and substance use

- According to the Self-Control Theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), low self-control is an important risk factor for criminal and other problem behaviours, such as substance use.
- According to this theory, inappropriate parental practices are related to low self-control in offspring.

The current study

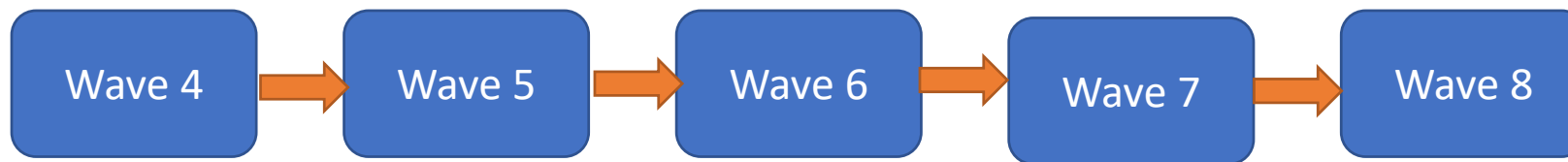
- Personal variables such as high self-management or self-control have been identified as protective factors against adolescent substance use (Leinberg & Lehmann, 2020; Rodríguez-Ruiz et al., 2021).
- Contextual factors such as positive parenting was also found to decrease adolescent substance use (Trucco, 2020).
- Nevertheless, little is known about the impact of parenting in childhood on self-control and its prospective impact on later substance use.

Aim

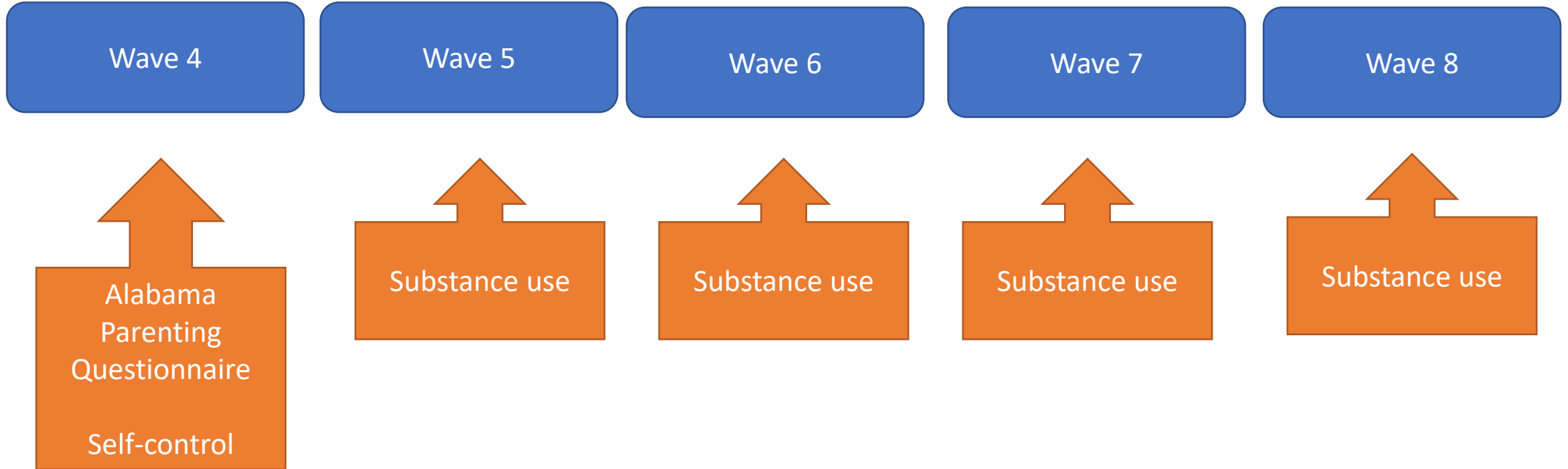
- This study aimed to investigate the relation of parenting and self-control in late childhood and their longitudinal link with substance use during adolescence and early adulthood.

Methods: participants

- Our sample includes those participants who answered more than 66% of the items of the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire at wave 4 (age 11) of data collection. Thus, the current study included 1,147 participants (49.1% female) with a mean age of 11.33 years (SD = 0.37), followed up for 9 years.



Methods: variables



Methods: Data analysis

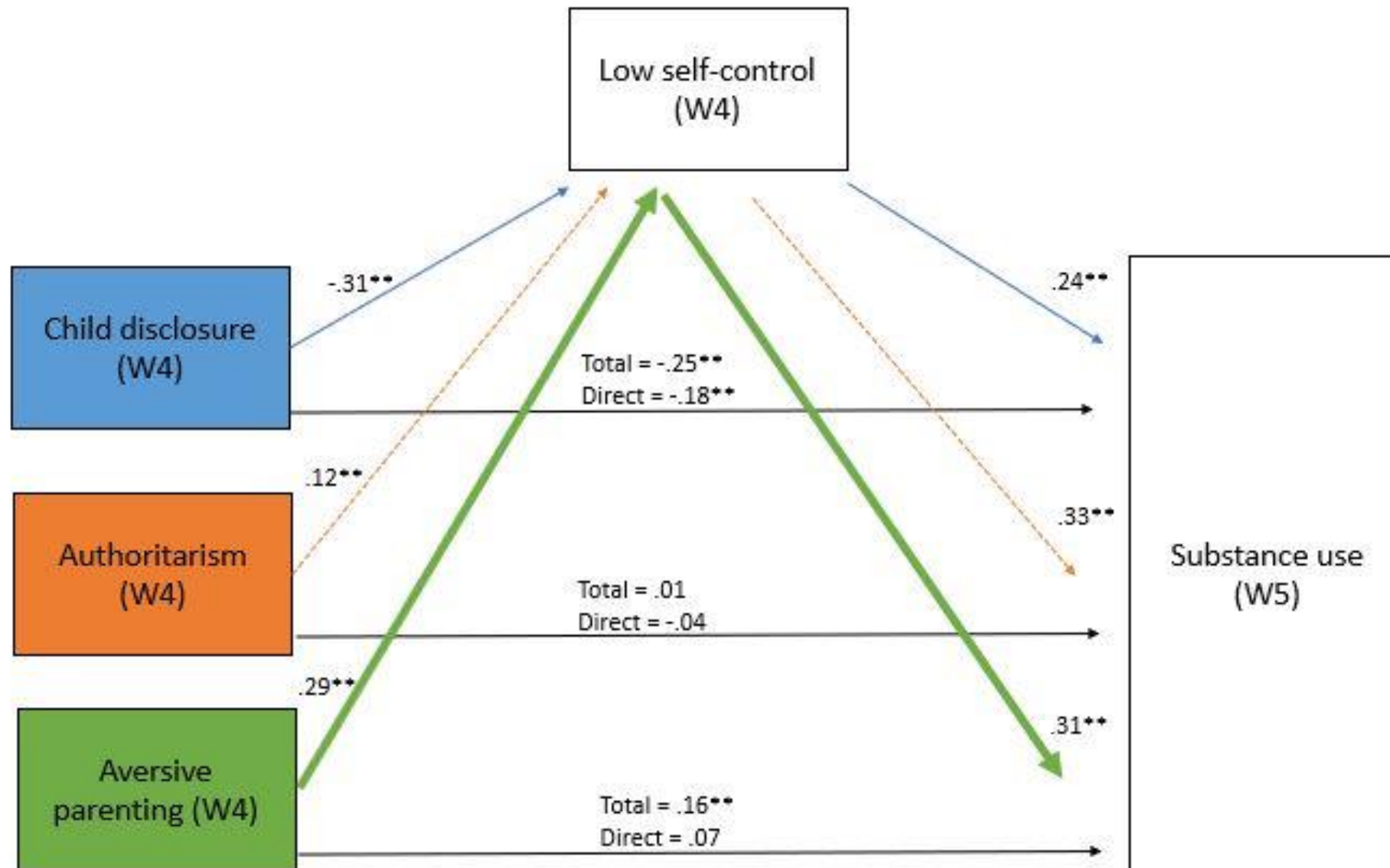
- Substance use calculated as a total score summing up the frequencies of use of different substances.
- Linear regression analyses were run to check if parenting and impulsivity at age 11 predicted substance use at ages 13, 15, 17 and 20.
- The independent variables were: Parental involvement, positive parenting, parental supervision, child disclosure, authoritarianism, aversive parenting, other sanctions and self-control at age 11; as well as sex, parental migration background and SES. The dependent variables were Substance Use at ages 13, 15, 17 and 20.

Methods: Data analysis

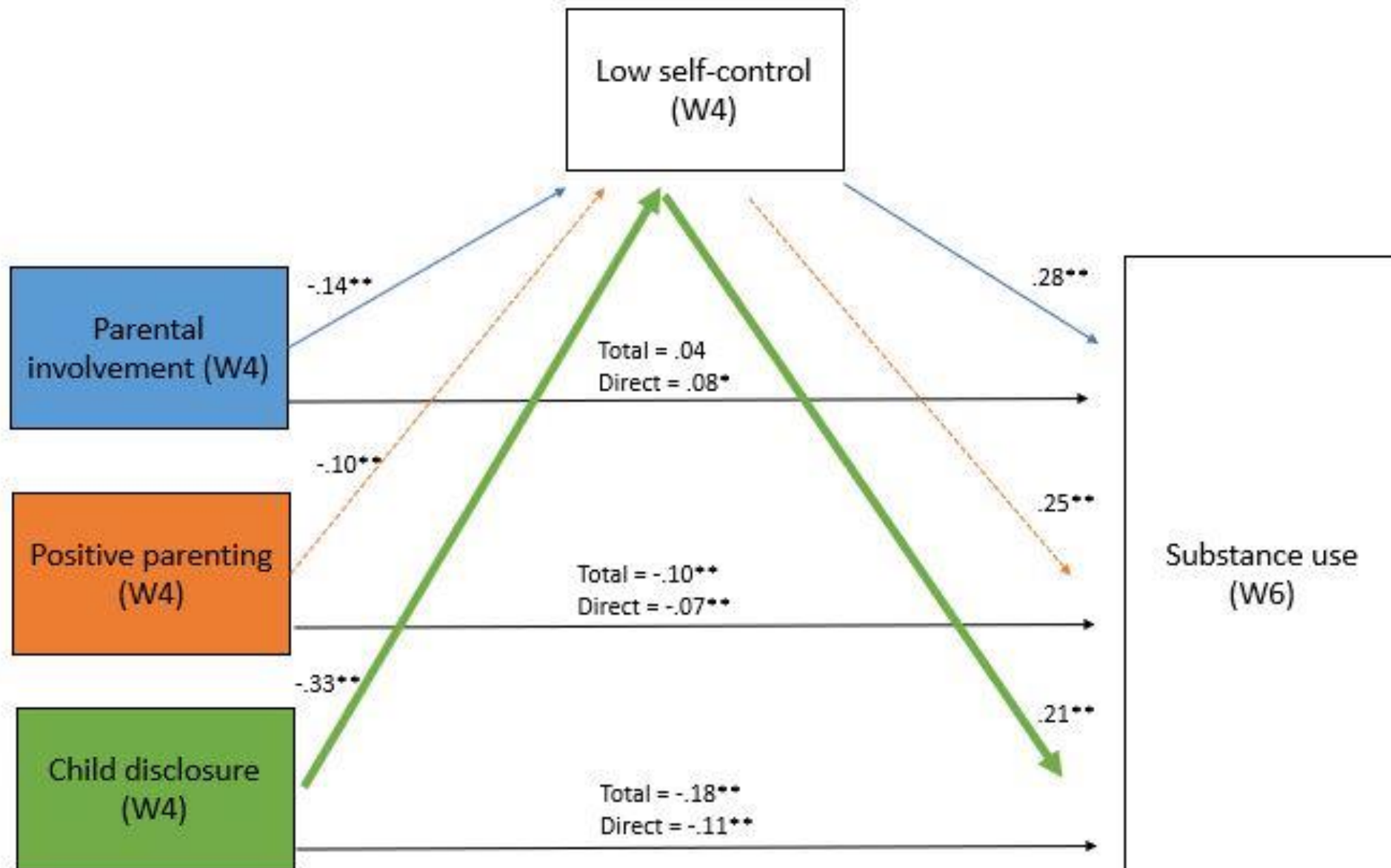
- To explore the mediating role of self-control in the link between parenting practices and substance use, mediation analyses were performed using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013).
- Independent variables (X) were parenting practices at age 11, the dependent variable (Y) was substance use at each wave, and the mediating variable (M) was self-control at age 11.

Results: predictors at age 11 of substance use later in life

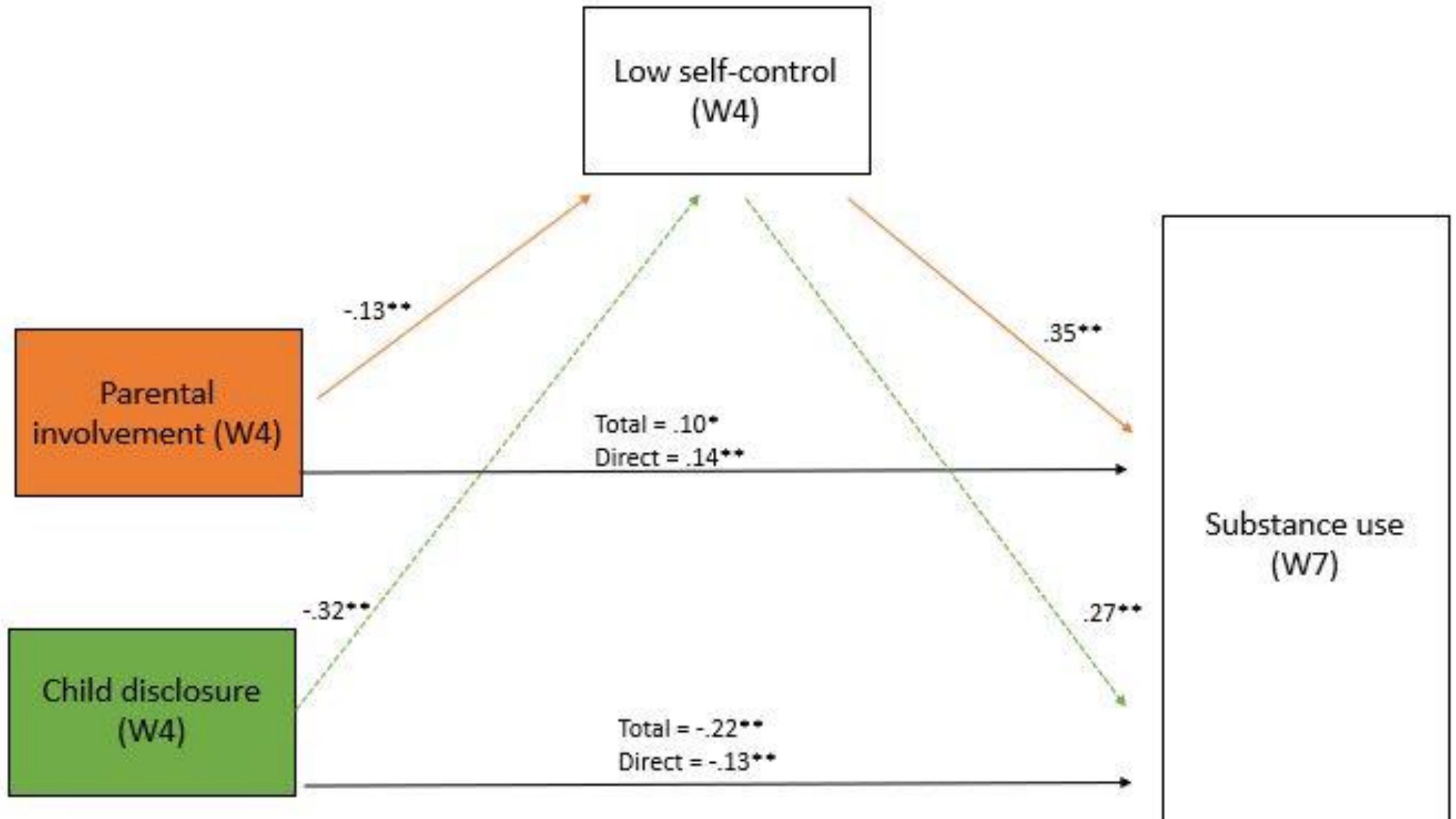
	Age 13		Age 15		Age 17		Age 20	
	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p
Parental involvement	.05	.16	.08	.02	.08	.04	.08	.04
Positive parenting	.01	.82	-.10	.01	-.02	.51	-.04	.23
Parental supervision	-.01	.91	-.02	.56	.02	.56	.04	.29
Child disclosure	-.16	.00	-.12	.00	-.11	.01	-.12	.01
Authoritarianism	-.08	.04	-.05	.20	-.03	.35	-.07	.07
Aversive parenting	.09	.03	-.01	.71	.02	.61	.05	.20
Other sanctions	.01	.95	.03	.34	.04	.23	.08	.05
Low self-control	.20	.00	.20	.00	.21	.00	.15	.00
Female	-.15	.00	-.05	.12	-.08	.02	-.12	.01
Parents' migrant background	-.03	.44	-.05	.14	-.16	.00	-.14	.00
SES	-.03	.35	.12	.01	.13	.00	.09	.01



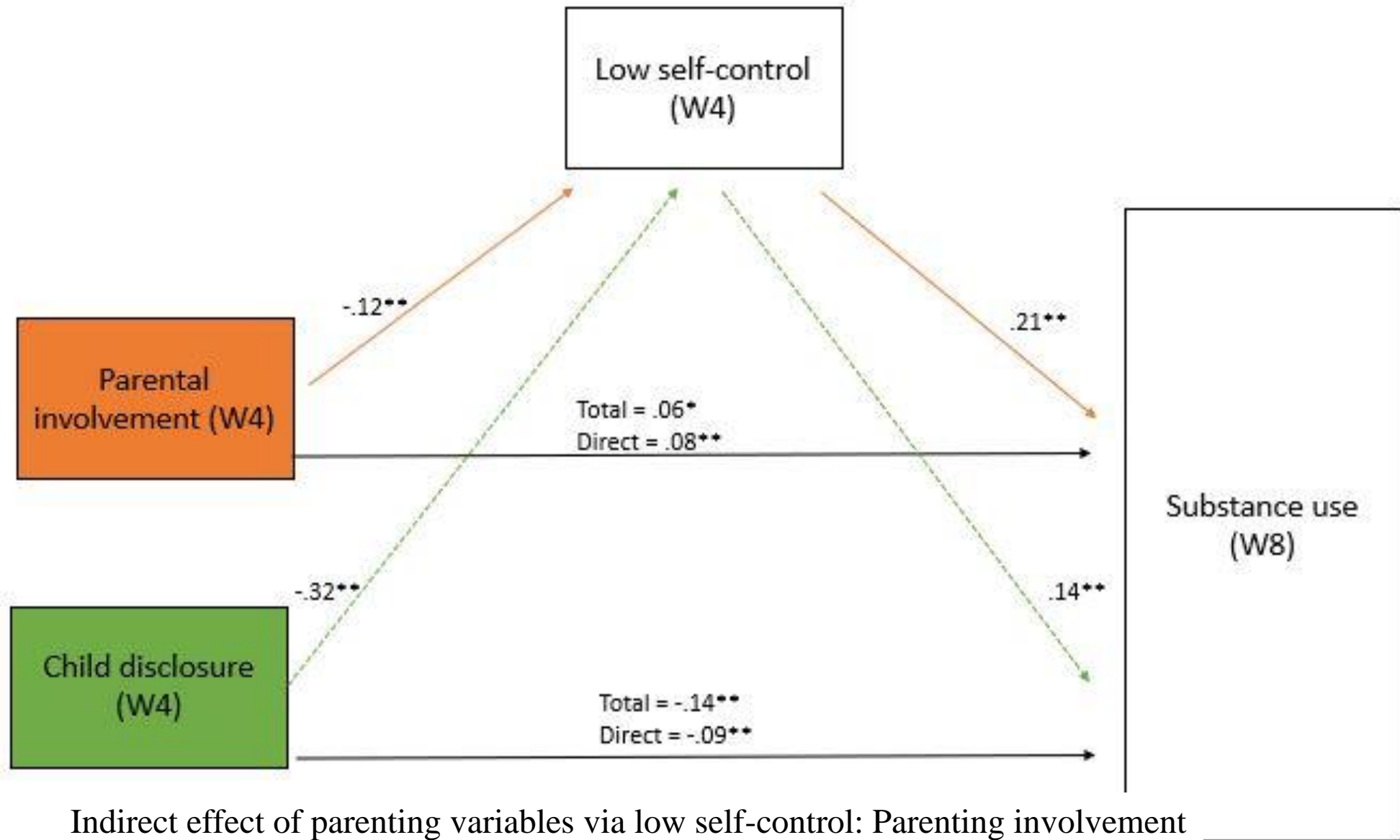
Indirect effect of parenting variables via low self-control: Child disclosure ($\beta = -.07$; $SE = .02$; 95% CI = $[-.10, -.04]$), Authoritarianism ($\beta = .04$; $SE = .01$; 95% CI = $[-.02, .06]$), Aversive parenting ($\beta = .09$; $SE = .02$; 95% CI = $[-.06, .13]$)



Indirect effect of parenting variables via low self-control: Parenting involvement ($\beta = -.04$; SE = .01; 95% CI = [-.06, -.02]), Positive parenting ($\beta = -.02$; SE = .01; 95% CI = [-.04, -.01]), Child disclosure ($\beta = -.09$; SE = .02; 95% CI = [-.12, -.06])



Indirect effect of parenting variables via low self-control: Parenting involvement ($\beta = -.04$; $SE = .01$; $95\% \text{ CI} = [-.07, -.02]$), Child disclosure ($\beta = -.19$; $SE = .02$; $95\% \text{ CI} = [-.12, -.06]$)



Indirect effect of parenting variables via low self-control: Parenting involvement ($\beta = -.02$; $SE = .01$; 95% $CI = [-.04, -.01]$), Child disclosure ($\beta = -.05$; $SE = .01$; 95% $CI = [-.07, -.03]$)

Key findings

- Low child disclosure and low-self control are the strongest predictors of substance use in this study
- Low self-control is a significant mediator between the inappropriate parenting practices and substance use

Practice/policy 'take away'

- Develop programmes to increase self-control, including prevention (e.g. in schools, embedded in the curriculum) and intervention (e.g. clinical psychology)
- Improve parenting practices, invest in specific prevention/promotion programmes and design targeted interventions for the families where these practices are inappropriate
- Understand mechanisms through which parenting predicts future behaviour, they are not necessarily straightforward (e.g. parenting → self control → substance use)

Thank you for your attention

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