



BUILDING EARLY LINKS FOR LEARNING: PROTECTING EARLY DEVELOPMENT

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OVERVIEW

- Family homelessness and young children
- Homelessness as risk
- Resilience and protective factors
- Main goals of BELL



FAMILY HOMELESSNESS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

- Most children in Philadelphia Emergency Housing are under age 6

- ~2,500 children (60% of all children) each year

- Served by 21 programs funded in the city

- Emergency housing
- Transitional programs
- Facility based
- Scattered site



HOMELESSNESS: ACUTE AND CHRONIC RISKS

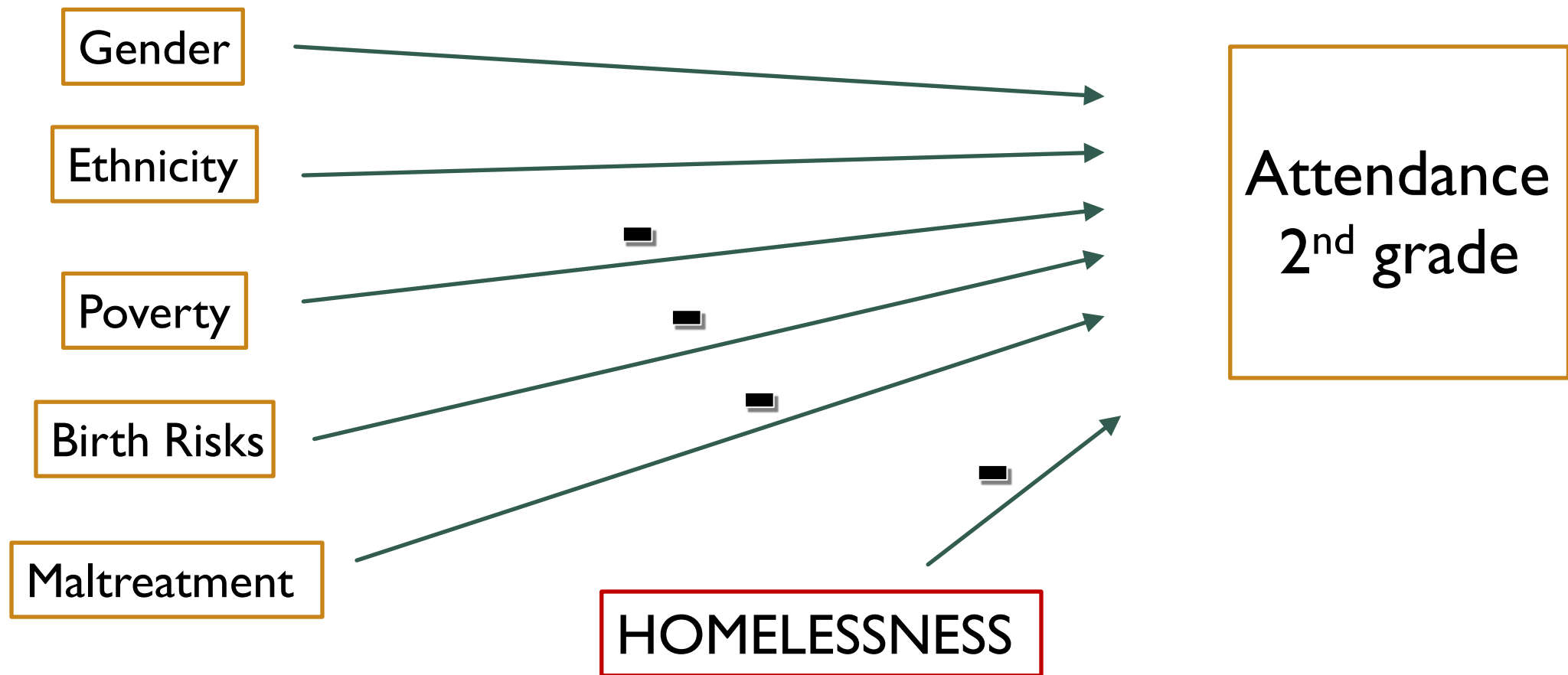
CHRONIC:

- Extreme poverty
- Challenges for parents
 - Limited educational backgrounds
 - Unemployment
 - Disability, mental illness
- Lack of social support
- History of stressful events/trauma
- Residential instability

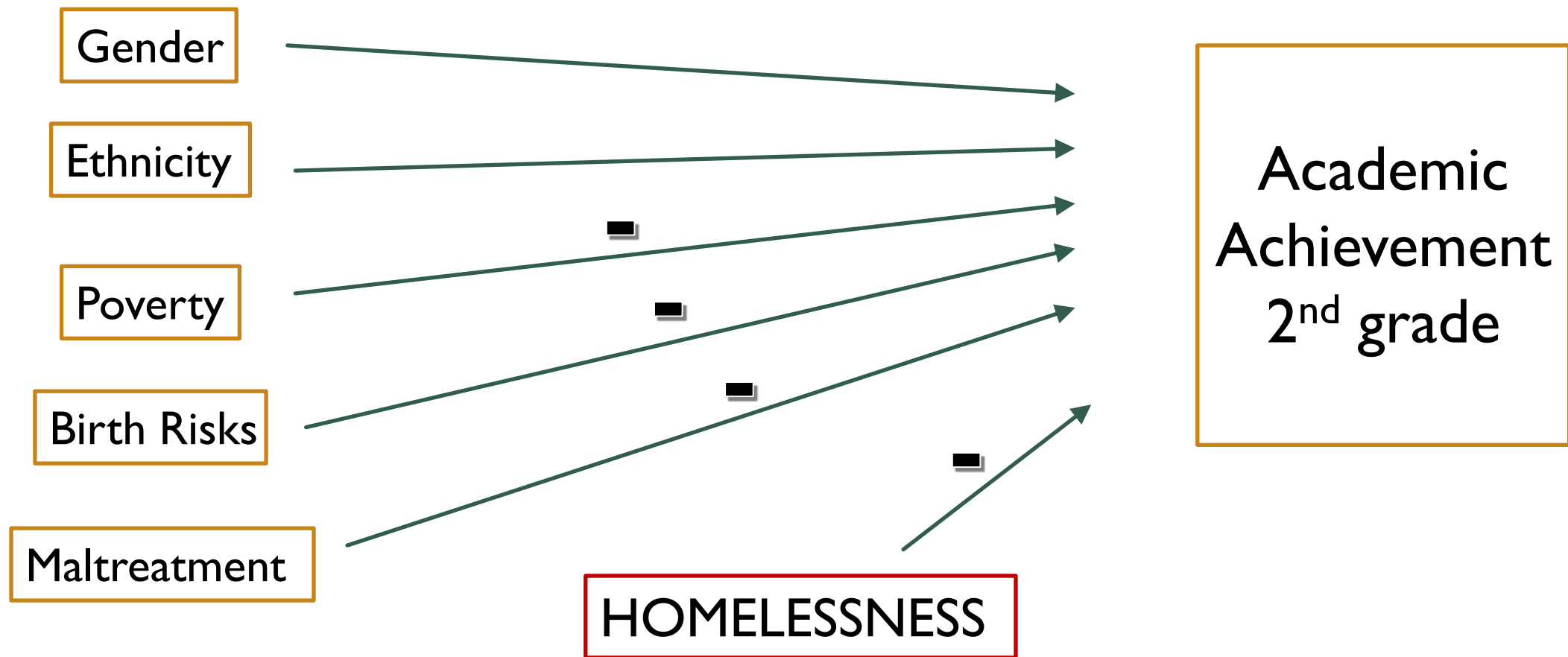
ACUTE:

- Loss of housing, possessions
- Disconnected from family, friends, community
- Domestic violence or other serious relationship problems
- Ongoing stress or trauma
- Crowded living spaces
- Shelter settings/institutional living

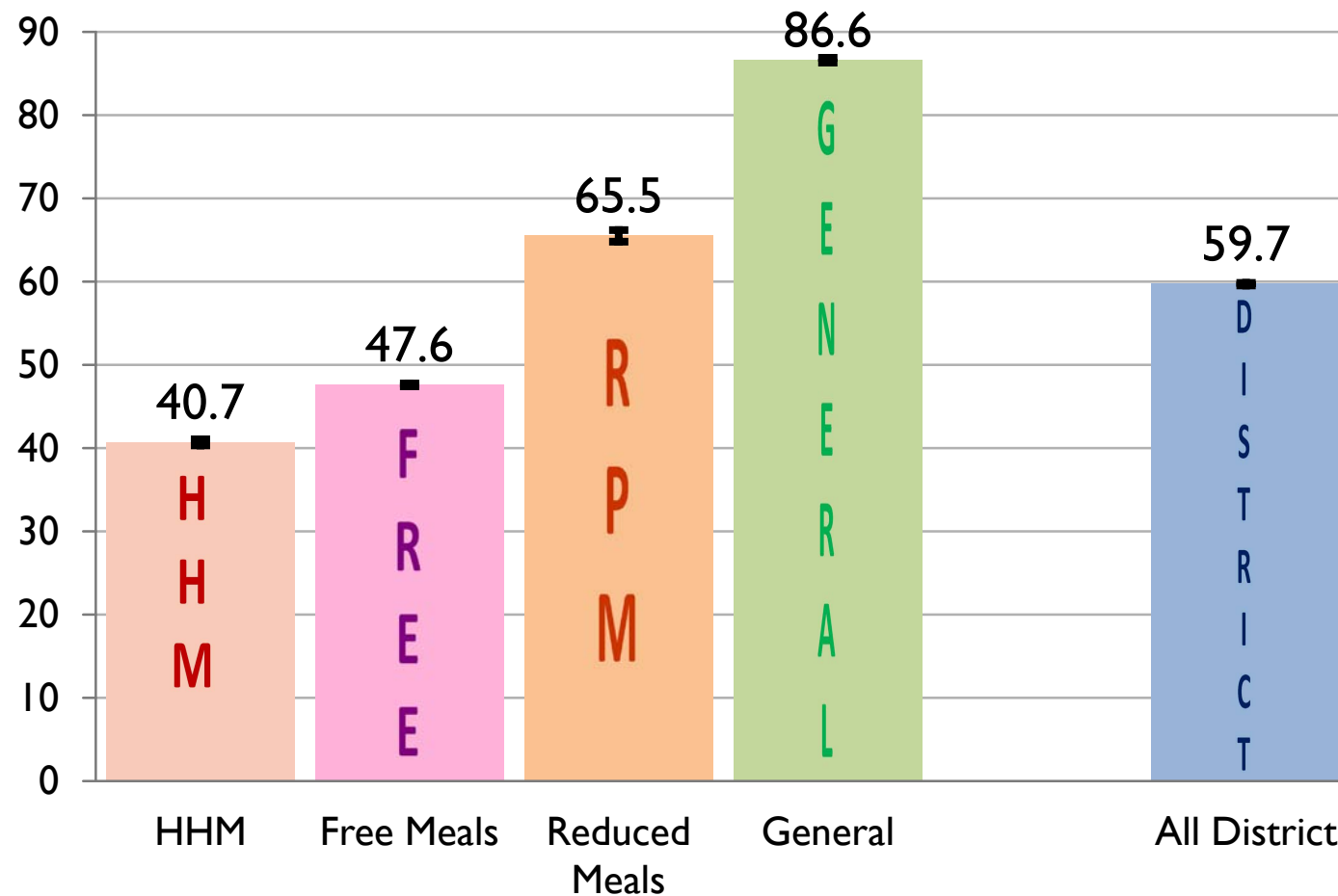
EARLY AND PERSISTENT ACHIEVEMENT GAPS



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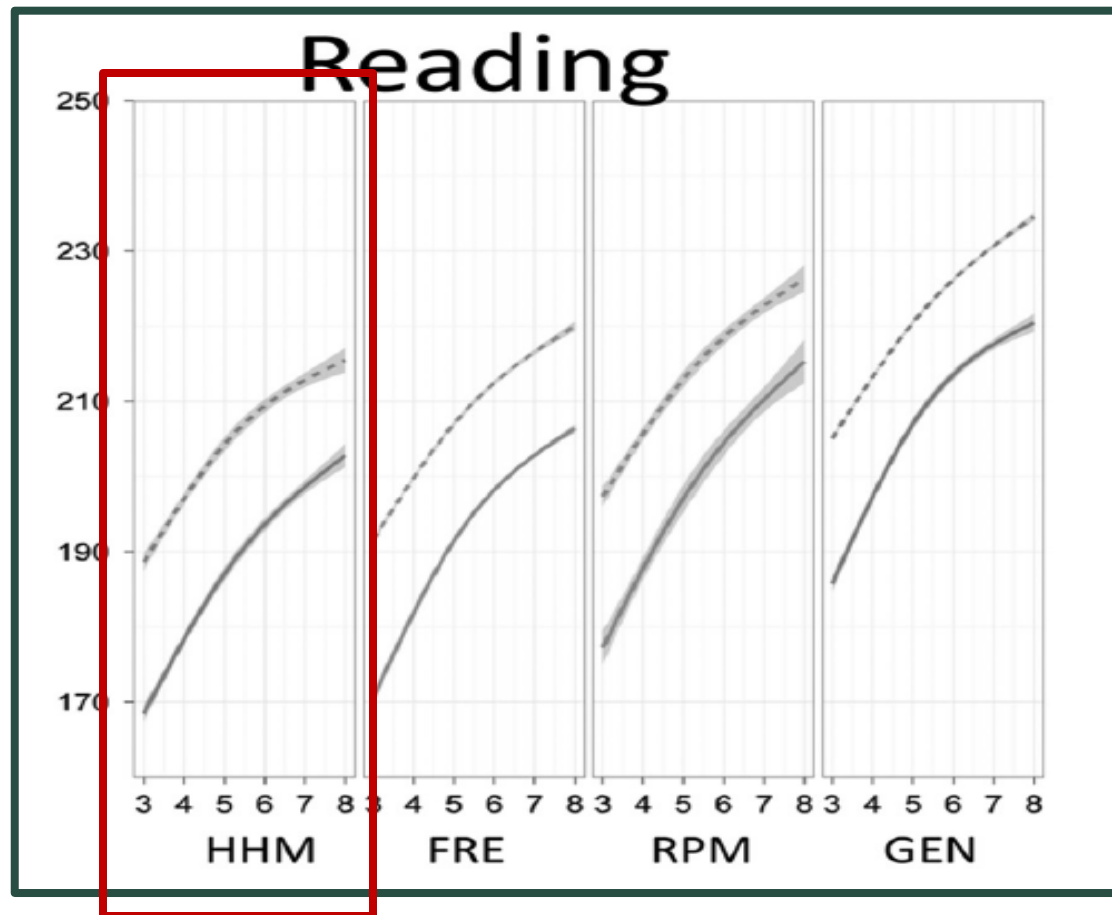


EARLY AND PERSISTENT ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

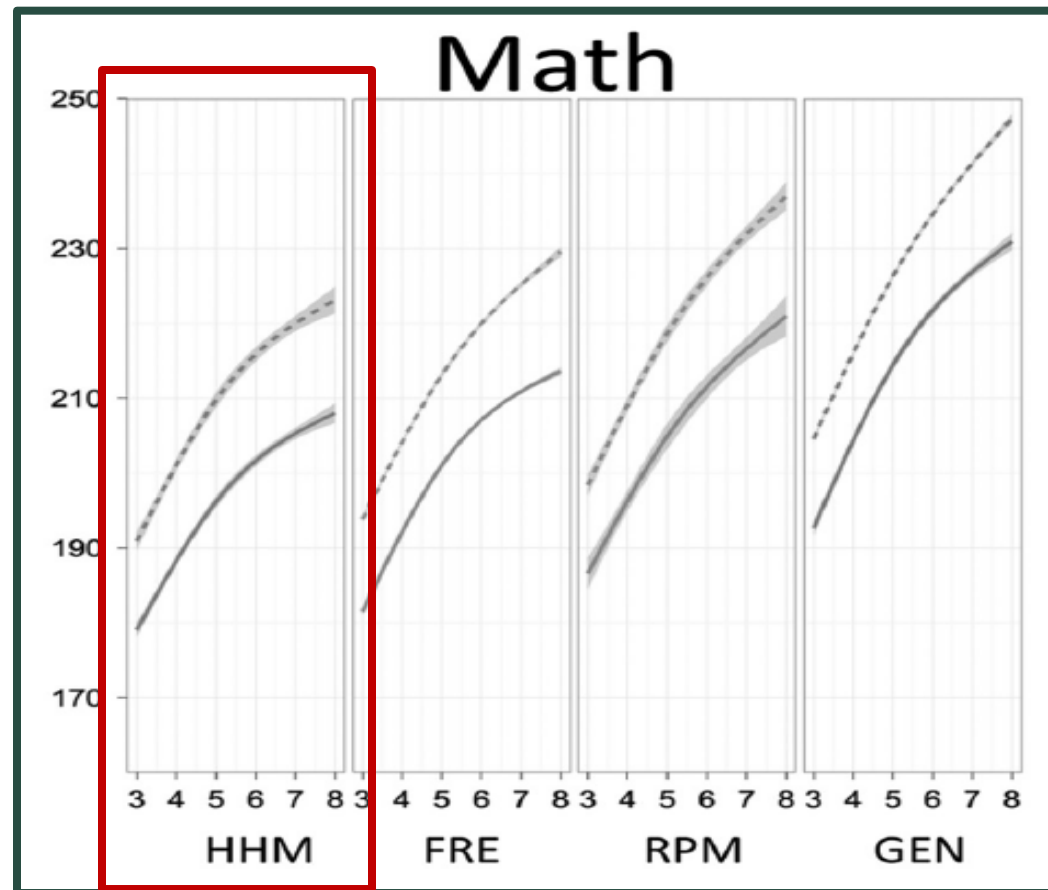


Reading scores
in 1st grade

EARLY AND PERSISTENT ACHIEVEMENT GAPS



EARLY AND PERSISTENT ACHIEVEMENT GAPS



RESILIENCE AND PROTECTION

- Many children function well despite experiencing homelessness
- Protective factors across levels:
 - Child
 - Family
 - Neighborhood
 - Broader context (e.g. City)





PROTECTION ACROSS LEVELS



Child – cognition and self-regulation



Neighborhood – safety and support

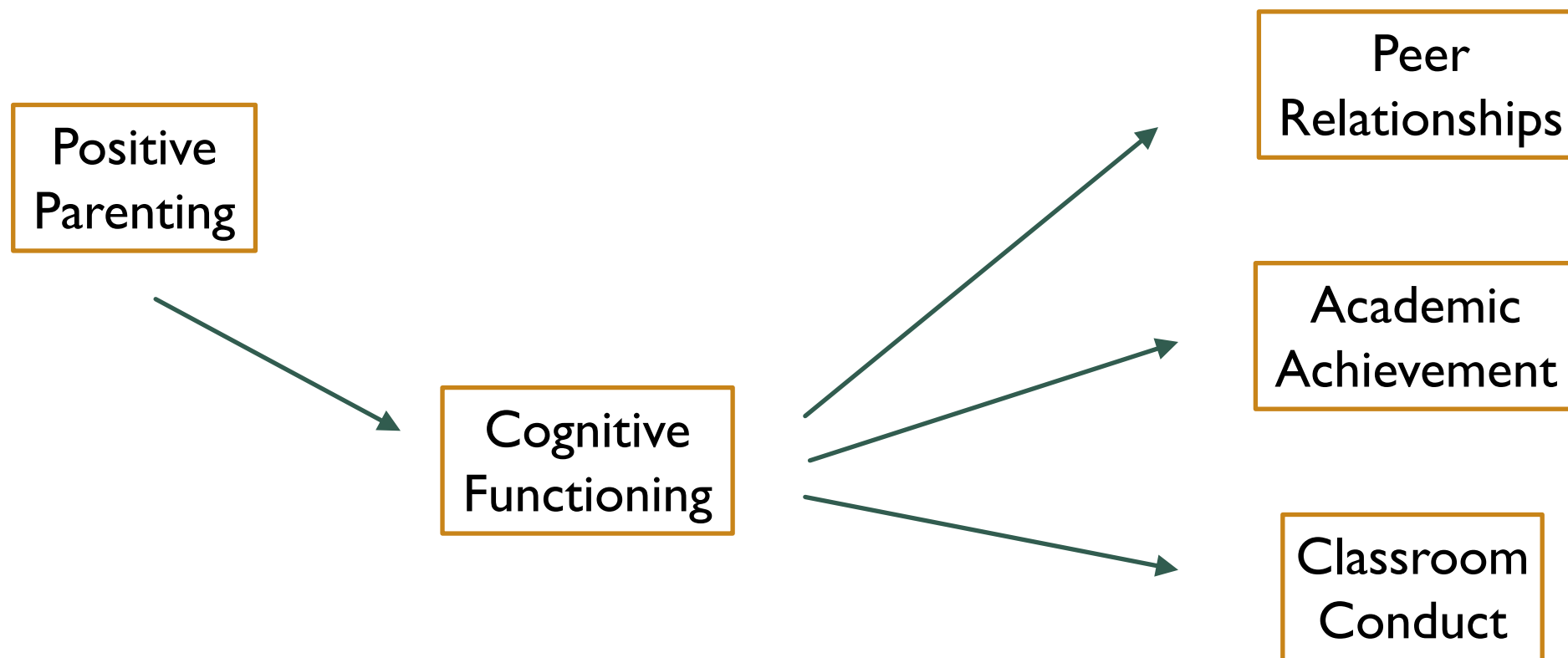


Family – positive parenting



Broader context – social services

PROTECTION: CHILD AND FAMILY





HOW CAN WE BUILD PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND RESILIENCE?



EMERGENCY HOUSING

- Emergency housing as a temporary home for young children
 - Safe places to play and explore
 - Family routines and relationships
 - Connections to community
 - Model of developmental appropriateness for the family's next residence



BUILDING EARLY LINKS FOR LEARNING

MAIN GOALS for the BELL Project:

- 1) Enhance the developmental friendliness of emergency and transitional housing
- 2) Increase enrollment in quality early childhood education for children experiencing homelessness

