



Strong African American Families Program: SAAF

Christina Grange, PhD



Blueprints Conference
San Antonio, Texas
April 2010



Overview of Rural African Americans in the South

- African American Population: 49%
- Living in poverty: 29% compared to 17% of general population
- Mean weekly wage: \$471
- Median annual household income: \$21,245
- Adults with < high school education: 45%
- Single woman headed families: 48%
- Unemployment: men, 34%; women, 41%

Community Partnerships

- Focus groups
- Community liaisons
- Family ambassadors



The goal of SAAF is to build on the strengths of African American families that make their children less likely to get involved in problems, particularly alcohol and substance use, that face today's youth.

The Strong African American Families Program (SAAF)

- **Based on over a decade of research**
 - rural African American children
 - longitudinal pathways
 - competence
 - psychological adjustment
 - use of alcohol and other substances

A Randomized Prevention Trial of The Strong African American Families Program (SAAF)

The Strong African American Families Program (SAAF)

- **Using data from this research**
 - prevention targets identified
 - program designed
 - efficacy evaluated using culturally sensitive measures

More About SAAF

- Builds on other programs
- family centered
- enhances competence
 - Caregivers
 - Youth
- designed to prevent use of alcohol and other substances

SAAF Intervention: Implementation and Fidelity

- **Weekly meetings**
 - 7 consecutive weeks
 - at community facilities
 - two separate, concurrent, 1-hr sessions
 - Caregiver
 - Youth
 - joint parent-youth session, 1 hr
 - 14 hrs of prevention training provided

Randomized Prevention Trial

- **667 African American families**
 - mothers
 - 11-year-olds
- **from rural Georgia**
- **369 participant families**
- **298 control families**

Randomized Prevention Trial

- **Assessments**
 - Pretest
 - Posttest
 - 3 months after intervention ends
 - Follow-up
 - 24 months after intervention ends
 - Data collection
 - in-home using laptop computers

How is SAAF Unique?

- Highlights strengths of African American families and communities
- Celebrates the diversity of African American families
- Builds Black Pride
- Grounded in 10 years of research with African American families

Elements of SAAF Implementation

- Funding
- Facilitators
- Location
- Recruitment
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Incentives
- Meals or Snacks
- Scheduling
- Registration and Fees
- Equipment
- Certificates

Youth Creed



We are strong, young African
Americans.



We are making good decisions so we
reach our goals.

Youth Session Goals (1-4)

1. Visualize dreams for the future
2. Understand the importance of avoiding drug use
3. Understand normal development and learn how to deal with temptation for early sex
4. Identify risky situations and how to deal with pressures and temptations

Youth Session Goals (5-7)

5. Learn specific steps for handling peer pressure and understand concerns of parents/caregivers
6. Learn skills for acting assertively in difficult situations
7. Understand the qualities of good friends and SAAF Session review

Youth Activity Demonstration

Session 5 – Peer Pressure Resistance

Road Signs and Situation Cards

Session 5 – Family Communication &
Relationship Quality

**Why Parents/Caregivers Do the
Things They Do**

Parent Creed



African American parents and caregivers
are strong and caring.

We show love and set limits.

We are helping our children become
responsible young adults.

Parent Session Goals (1-3)

1. Identify goals for youth and how best to support them as they become more independent
2. Understand the value of consistently enforcing household rules according to severity of behavior
3. Clarify the importance of everyday routines and encouragement of good behavior

Parent Session Goals (4-7)

4. Learn ways to help youth succeed in school
5. Understand the prevalence of risk and how to protect against risk involvement
6. Discuss ways to handle discrimination and build positive racial pride
7. Focus on
 - a. Maintaining closeness as youth grow
 - b. Using community resources to raise strong youth

Parent Activity Demonstration

Session 5 – Family Communication

Who, What, When and Where

Session 6 – Racial Socialization

Matching Views to Actions

Who? What?
When? Where?



Family Creed

African-American families care about each other and have fun together.

We are making a difference in the world.



Family Session Goals (1-3)

1. Focus on building positive relationships and enhancing parental involvement
2. Develop a shared understanding of family rules and values
3. Understand how to increase communication about sex and understand stress that family members face

Family Session Goals (4-7)

4. Identify ways to cope with stress and work toward goals
5. Develop a family plan for handling temptation and peer pressure
6. Discuss potential situations involving racism and identify strengths of African American families
7. Work to understand family strengths by creating a family tree

Family Activity Demonstration

Session 6 – Racial Socialization

**Family Discussion on Difficult
Situations**

Who Can Implement SAAF?

- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Youth groups
- ✓ Family agencies
- ✓ Community groups that work with families

Who Can Implement SAAF?

Primary Qualifications

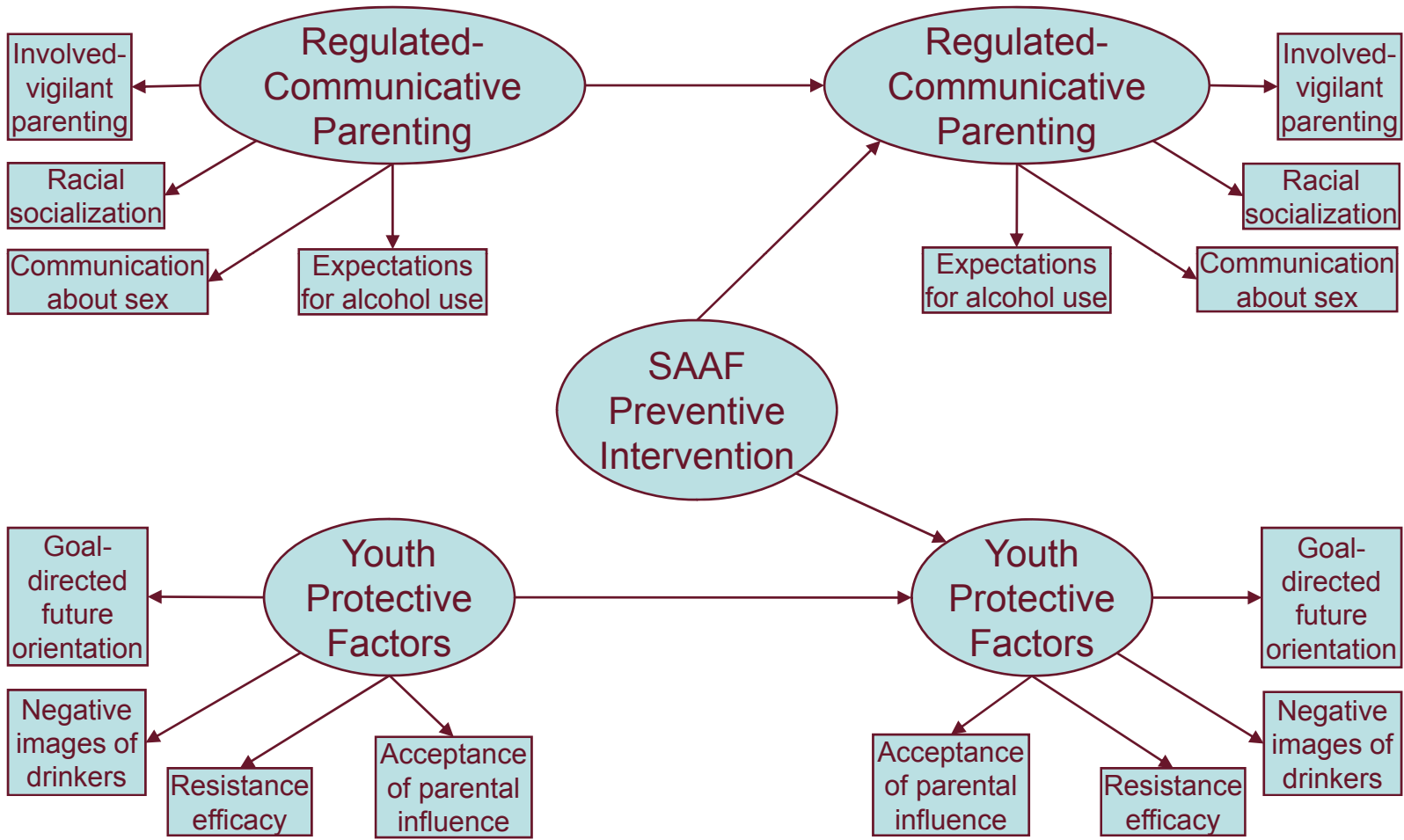
- Experience working with youth & families
- Completed post-secondary education (Associate's or Bachelor's degree, or technical training)
- Ability to adopt a strength-based orientation
- Comfort discussing race-related issues and ability to help others feel comfortable

Who Can Benefit From SAAF?

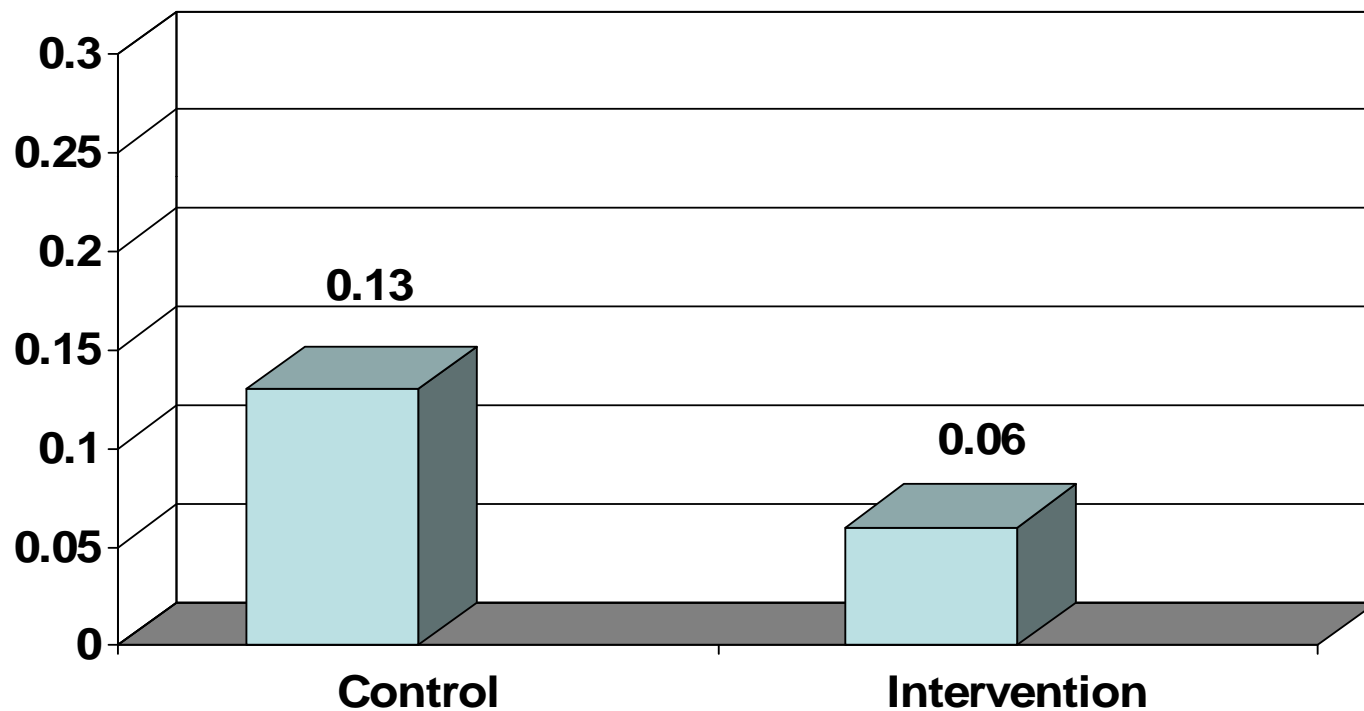
- Families with African American or mixed-ethnicity children
- Single-parent families
- Two-parent families
- Blended families
- Foster families
- Families with grandparents as caregivers

Pretest

Posttest

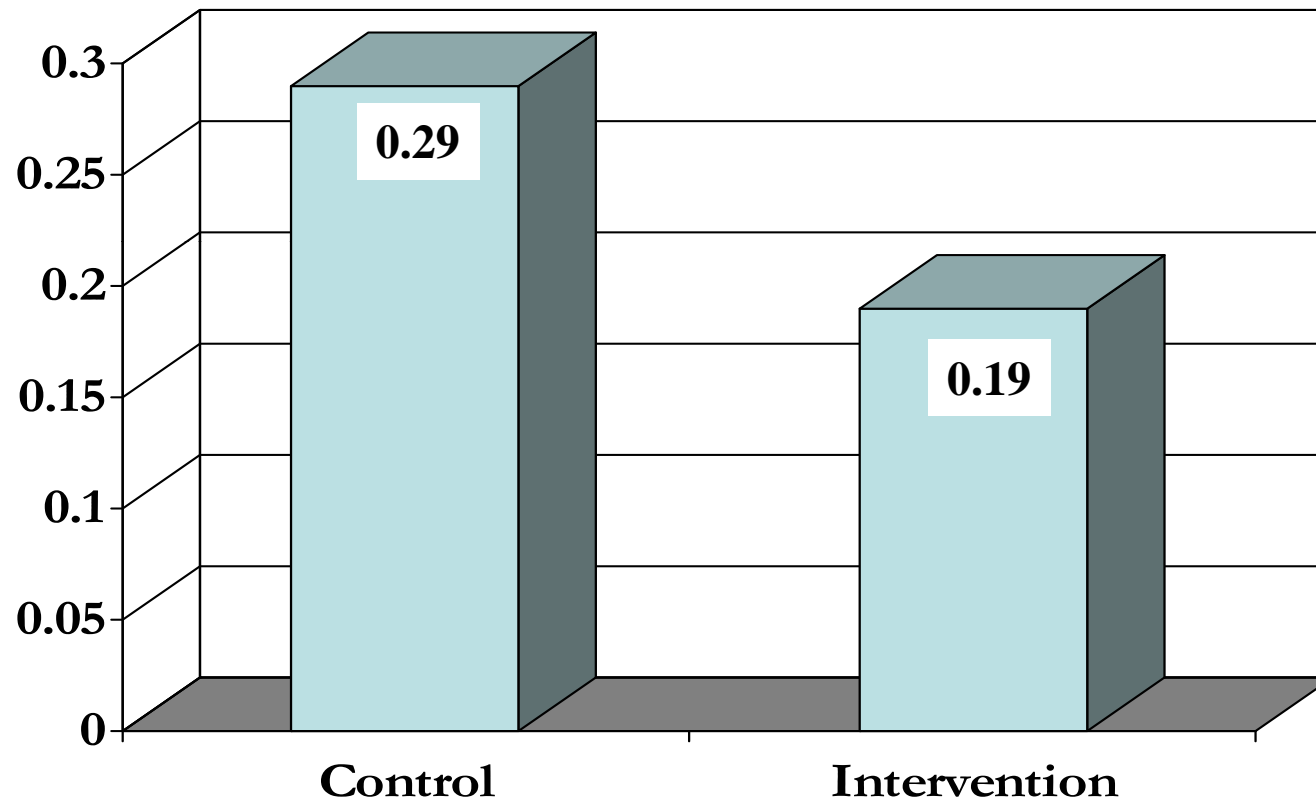


New User Proportions for Alcohol Use at Posttest by Experimental Condition



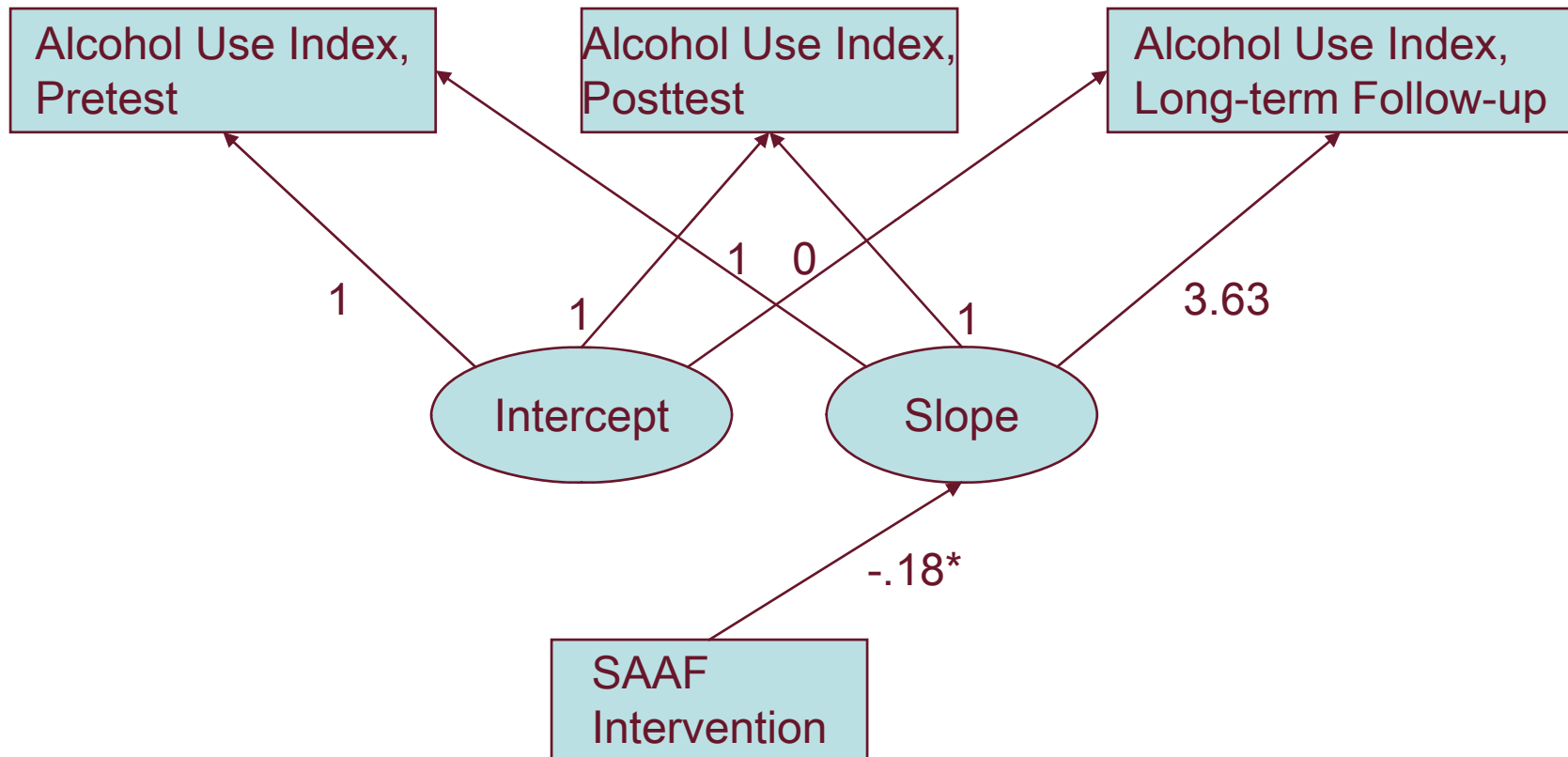
Z-score for testing proportions: 2.23 with $p < .05$. Relative reduction rate: 56.41

New User Proportions for Alcohol Use at Long-term Follow-up by Experimental Condition



Z-score for testing proportions: 2.16 with $p < .05$. Relative reduction rate: 36.93

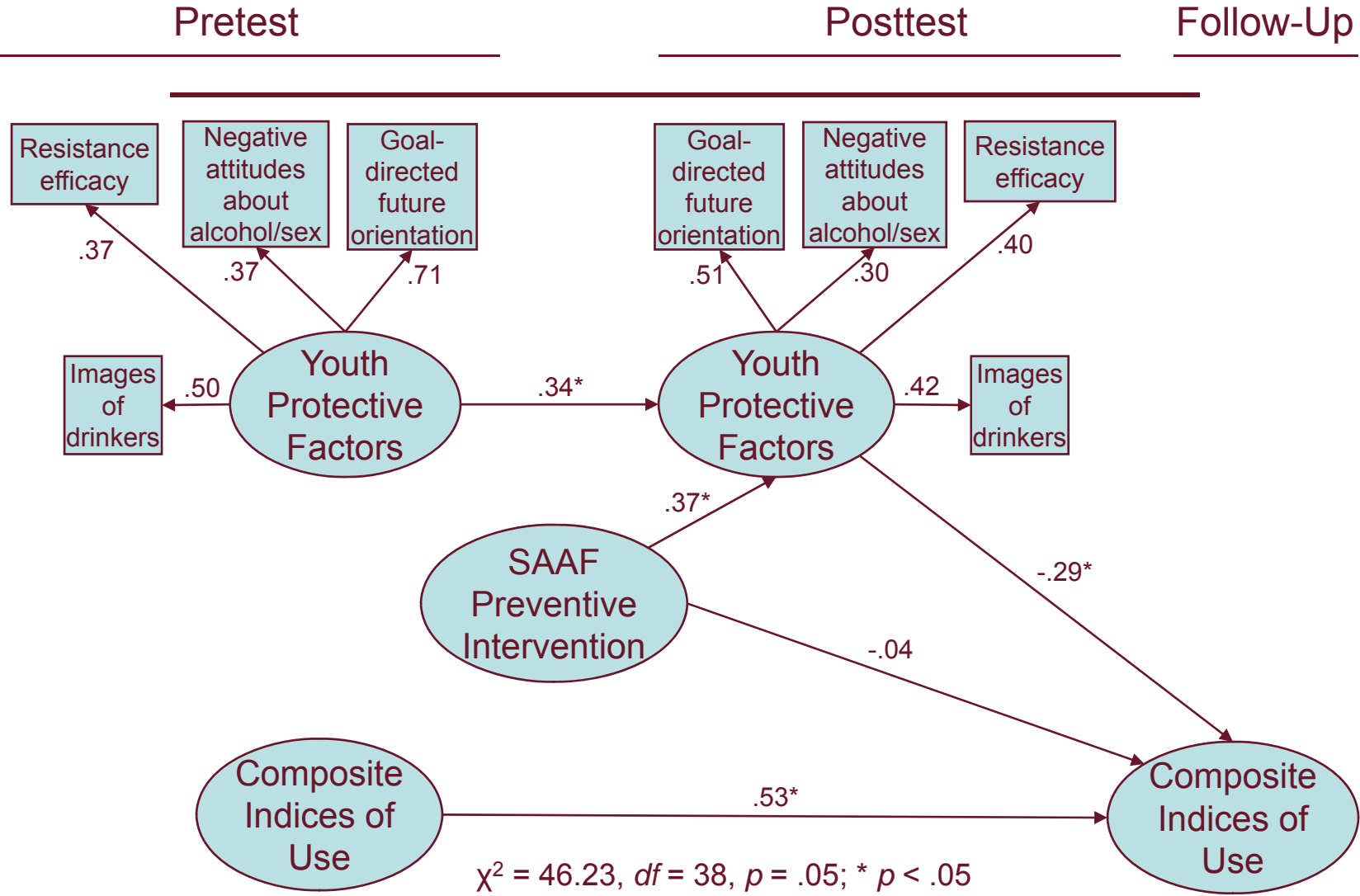
Conditional Growth Curve Models, Alcohol Use

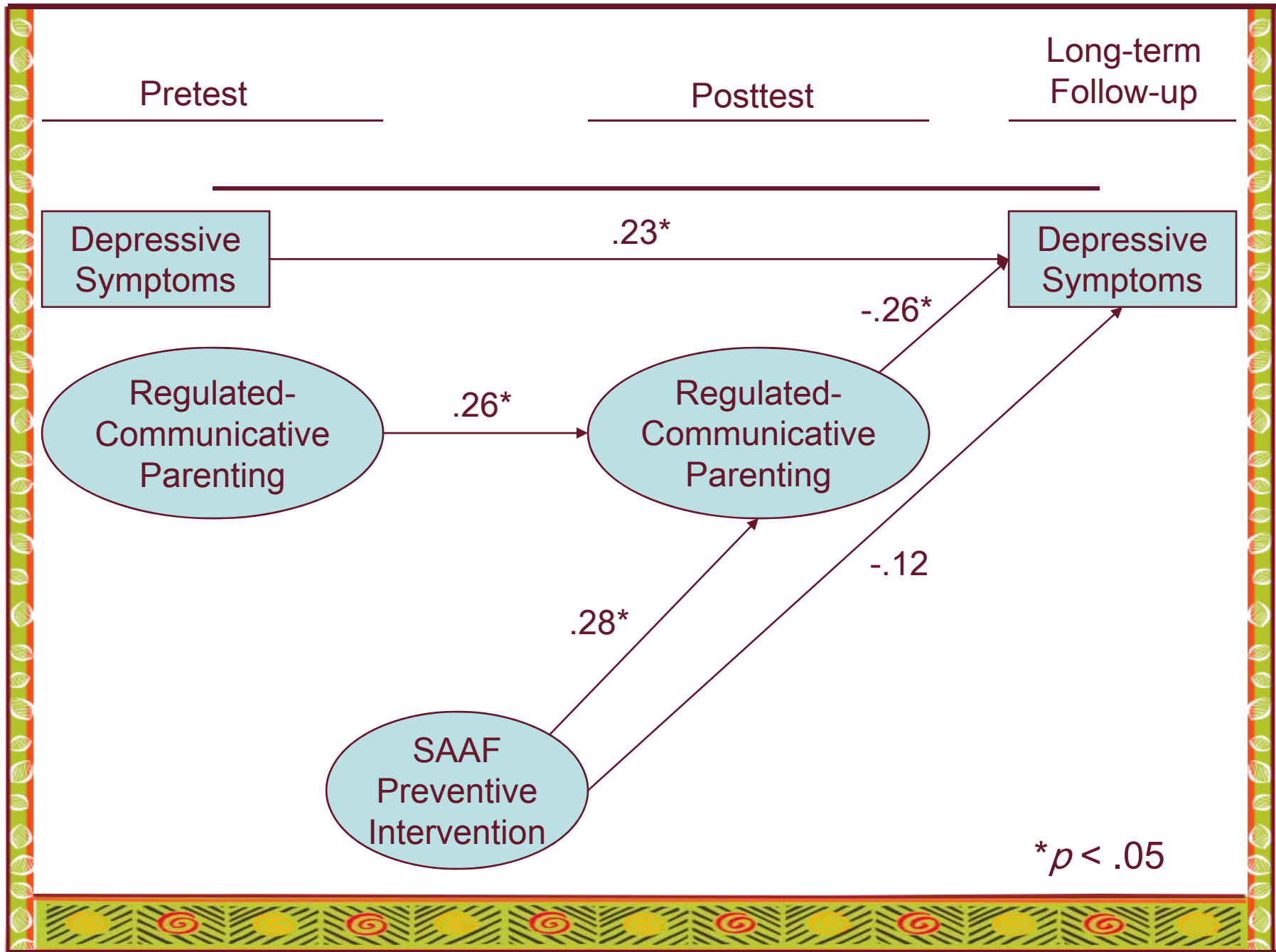


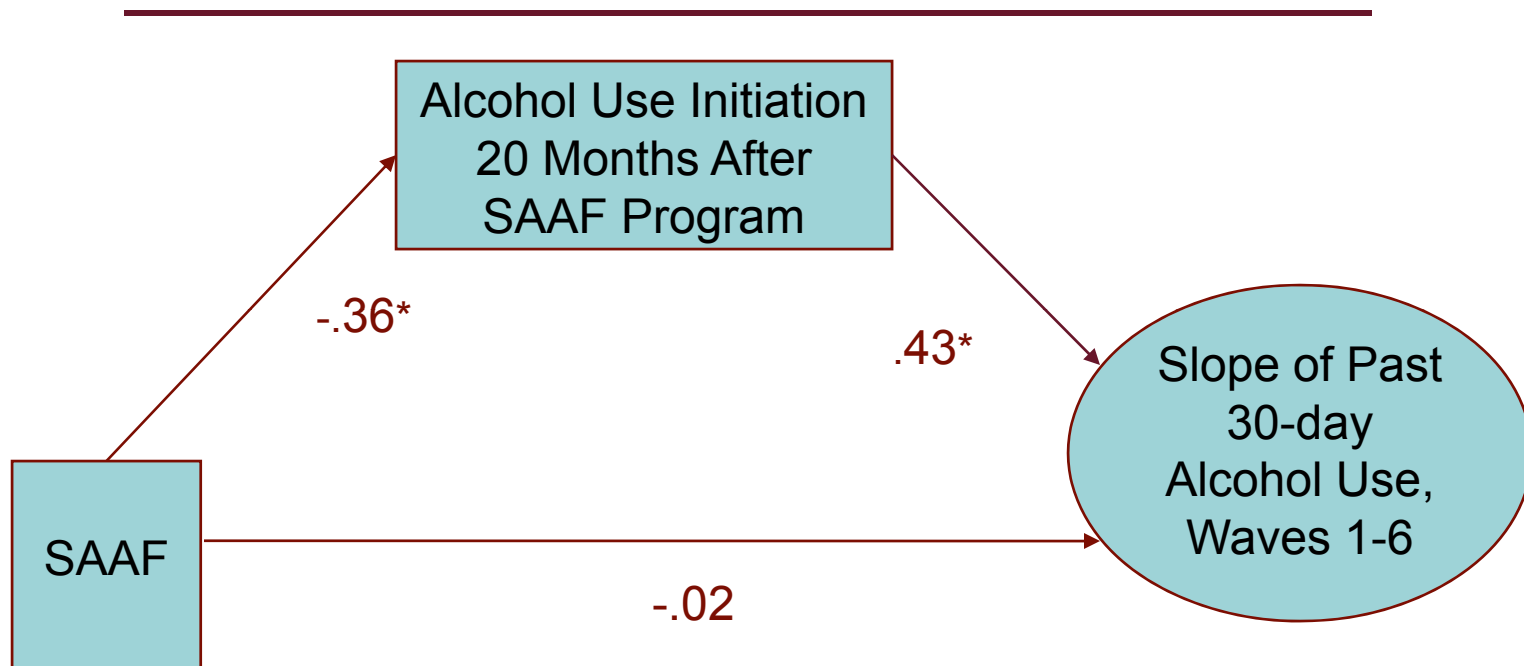
* $p < .05$

SEM Analysis

Long-Term Follow-Up







Closing

- Next steps in SAAF research
- CFR's commitment to dissemination
- Q/A