

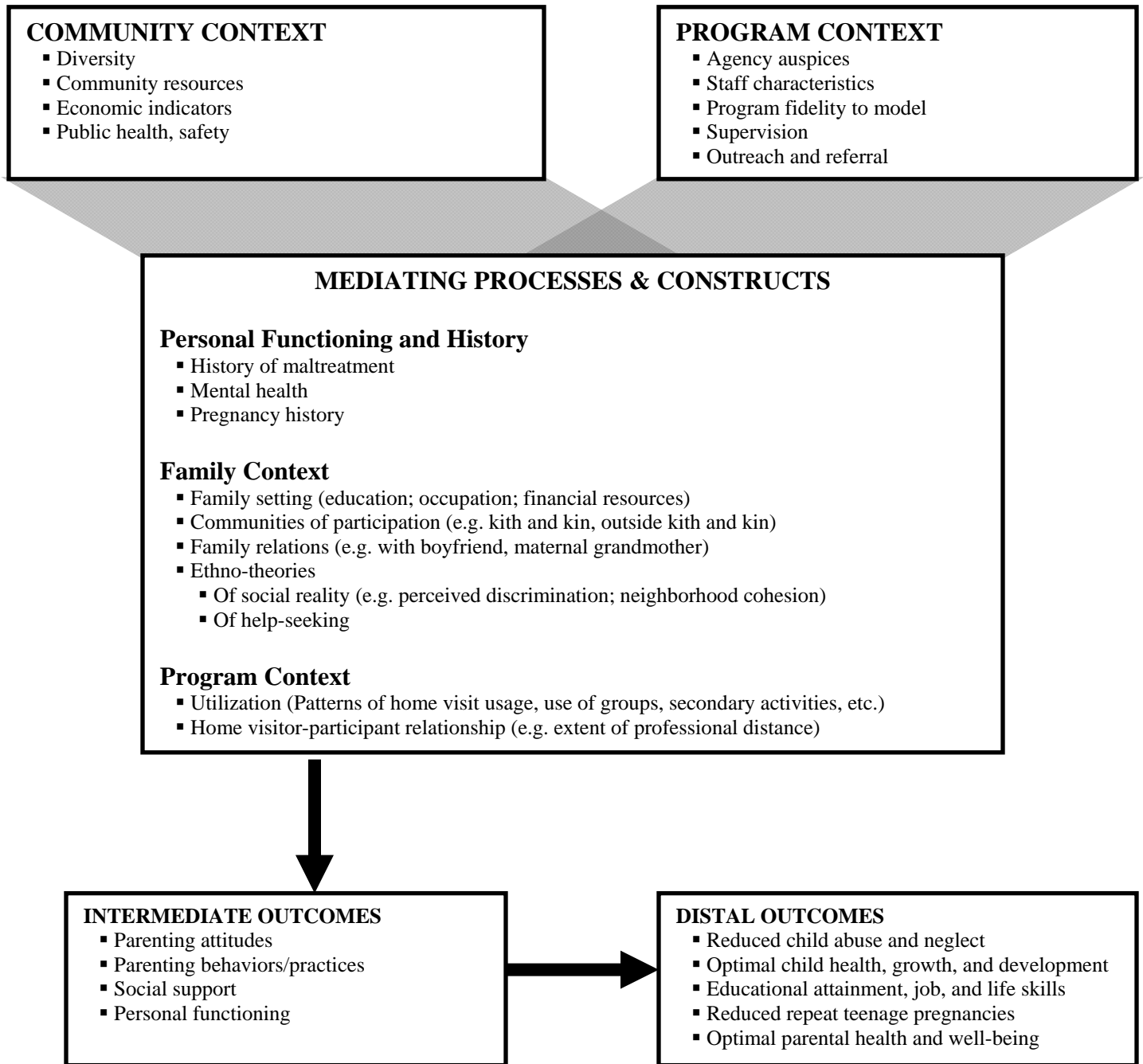
Integrative Study

We view the Integrative Study as an opportunity to pursue in greater depth those issues that emerged as particularly salient and/or provocative in MHFE-1. This study uses a mixed methodology to explore how personal-, family-, community-, and program-level characteristics affect HFM program utilization and program success. In MHFE-1, a range of program and participant characteristics was examined through the process, outcome, and ethnographic investigations, which were designed as separate, albeit intersecting, studies. Results of the evaluation and subsequent secondary analyses suggest the importance of viewing program utilization and intermediate outcomes (for example, improved social support and parenting competence) in the context of community and family. As noted in our final report,

The ecology of these mothers' lives is complex, with many people, institutions, and values exerting powerful influences on them. These influences include their families of origin, the smaller family units they have created with the birth of this child, the friends they had prior to giving birth and the friends that remain afterwards, the communities in which they live, and the institutions and organizations in which they are members. In noting these ecological contributions to parenting, we are raising the obvious point that HFM, in serving youth who are also parents, operates in a particularly complicated context.

The Integrative Study, then, has been designed to “unpack” this complexity through an integrated and simultaneous focus on families, communities, and local programs. The Study will examine the extent to which the specific characteristics of participants and their families, local programs, and communities moderate and/or mediate the utilization of HFM services and the attainment of the five main goals and shorter-term objectives .

Integrative Study Conceptual Model



Note: Shading between the community/program context and Mediating Processes represents the permeable nature of the connection implied in stating that family level resources, assets, and ethno-theories are “situated” in community level context