

Children of Incarcerated Parents in Spain: Key Findings from a Prison–University Collaboration

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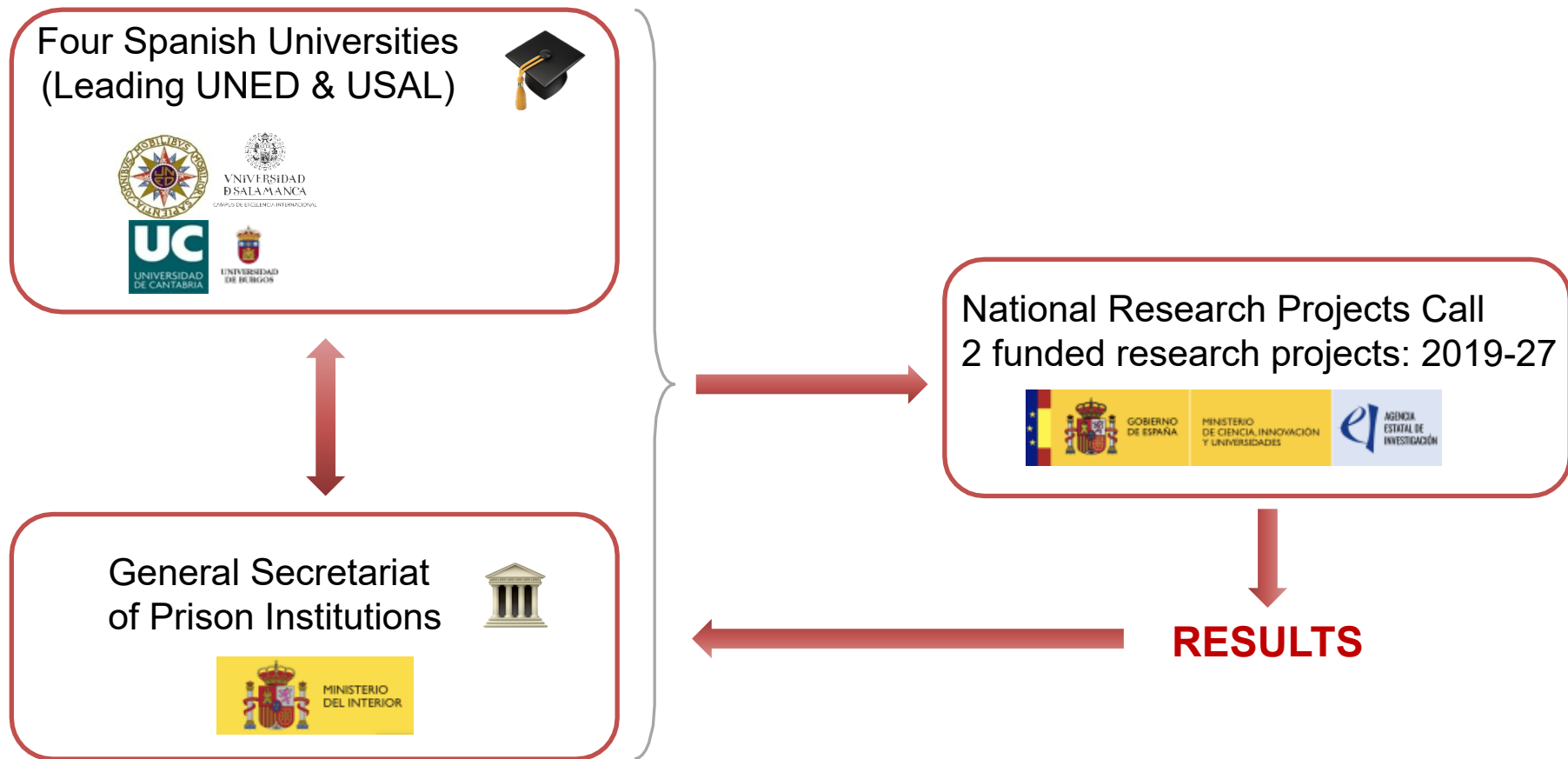
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30th Council of Europe Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services (CDPPS)
Krakow, 24-25 September 2025

Index

1. WHERE DO WE START FROM?
2. WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?
3. WHAT CAN WE DO?

1. Where do we start from?



PRACTICE EVIDENCE-BASED

1. Where do we start from?

Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning children with imprisoned parents

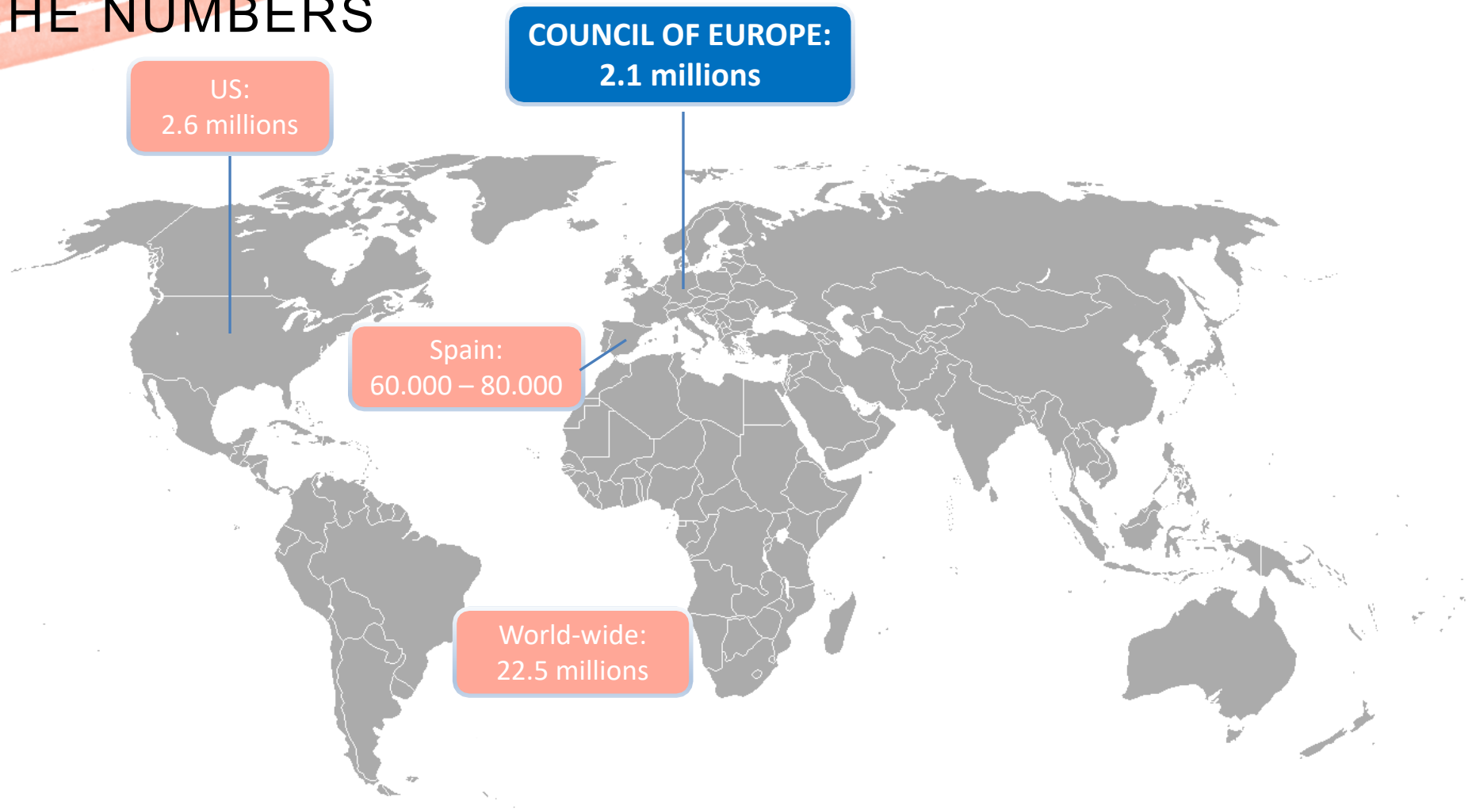


Building a Europe
for and with children



1. Where do we start from?

THE NUMBERS



1. Where do we start from?

EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

MATERIAL AND
ECONOMIC
HARDSHIP

(Wildeman, 2014)

SCHOOL AND
ATTENTION
PROBLEMS

(Thurman et al., 2018)

STIGMA

(Saunders, 2018)

EMOTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

(Thomson et al., 2018)

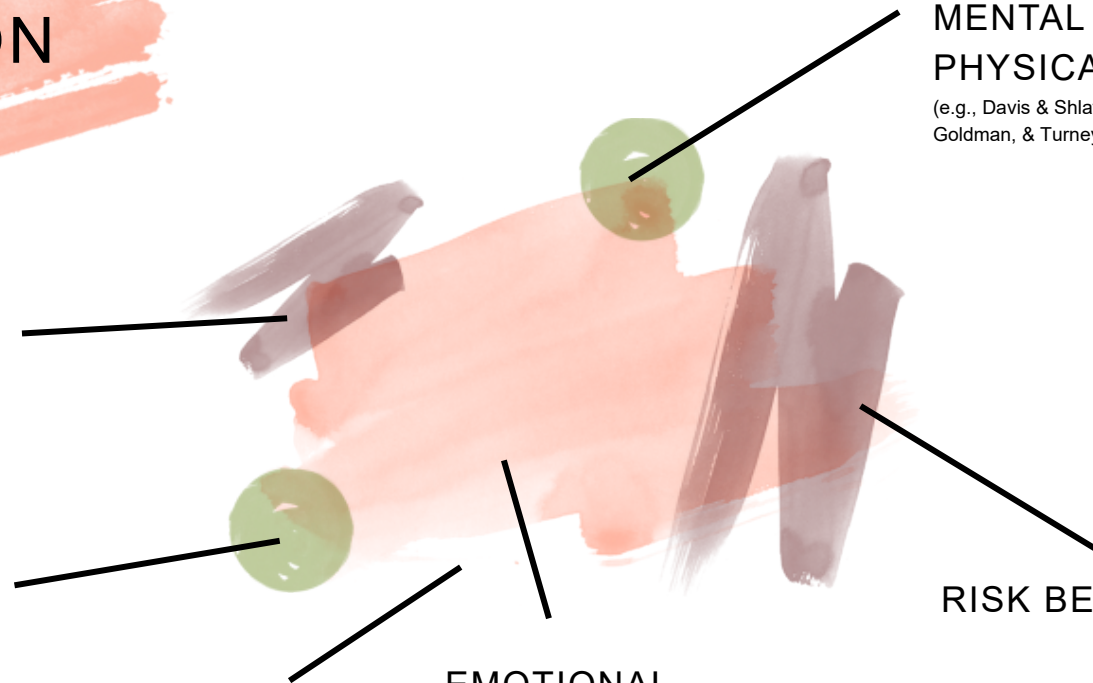
MENTAL AND
PHYSICAL HEALTH

(e.g., Davis & Shlafer, 2017; Wildeman,
Goldman, & Turney, 2018)

RISK BEHAVIORS

Substance use
HIV
Early sexual relations
Delinquency

...
(e.g., Besemer et al., 2017; Khan et al.,
2018)



1. Where do we start from?

Systematic Review

Parental Incarceration, Development, and Well-Being: A Developmental Systematic Review



Alicia Herreros-Fraile ¹, Rodrigo J. Carcedo ^{1,2,*} , Antonio Viedma ³, Victoria Ramos-Barbero ⁴, Noelia Fernández-Rouco ^{1,5} , Pilar Gomiz-Pascual ³ and Consuelo del Val ³

Table 1. Summary of significant direct effects of parental incarceration on the different outcomes.

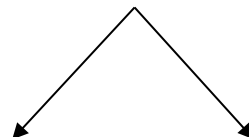
	Children 0 to 6 Years	Children 7 to 11 Years	Adolescents (12 to 18 Years)	Developmental Stage Is Not Determined
Physical health	3/4 (75%)	3*/4 (75%)	-	4/5 (80%)
Cognitive skills and academic performance	4/5 (80%)	4/8 (50%)	5/8 (62.5%)	-
Socioemotional skills	0/1 (0%)	1/1 (100%)	2/3 (66.6%)	-
Risk behaviors	-	-	4/6 (66.6%)	-
Delinquent behaviors	-	3/4 (75%)	2/4 (50%)	-
Externalizing symptoms	2/3 (66.6%)	7/8 (87.5%)	6/10 (60%)	-
Internalizing symptoms	1/2 (50%)	6/8 (75%)	5/11 (45.5%)	3/3 (100%)
Materials hardship	2/2 (100%)	2/2 (100%)	-	-

Index

1. WHERE DO WE START FROM?
2. WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?
3. WHAT CAN WE DO?

2. What have we found?

Two research projects



Adolescents at-risk: the needs and effects of imprisonment on children of prisoners in Spain (MEAMPRIS)

Funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation
(Reference: PID2019-110006RB-I00)

Childhood at risk: the effects of parental incarceration on children ages 3 to 11 (MEAMPRIS/2)

Funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation
(Reference: PID2023-149397OB-I00)

GENERAL GOAL:

1. Identify the most relevant contextual and individual factors associated with the well-being of **children/adolescents** who have a parent in prison.

2. What have we found?

Two research projects

Adolescents at-risk: the needs and effects of imprisonment on children of prisoners in Spain (MEAMPRIS)

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GENERAL GOAL:

1. Identify the most relevant contextual and individual factors that predict the well-being of **adolescents** who have a parent in prison.

2. What have we found?

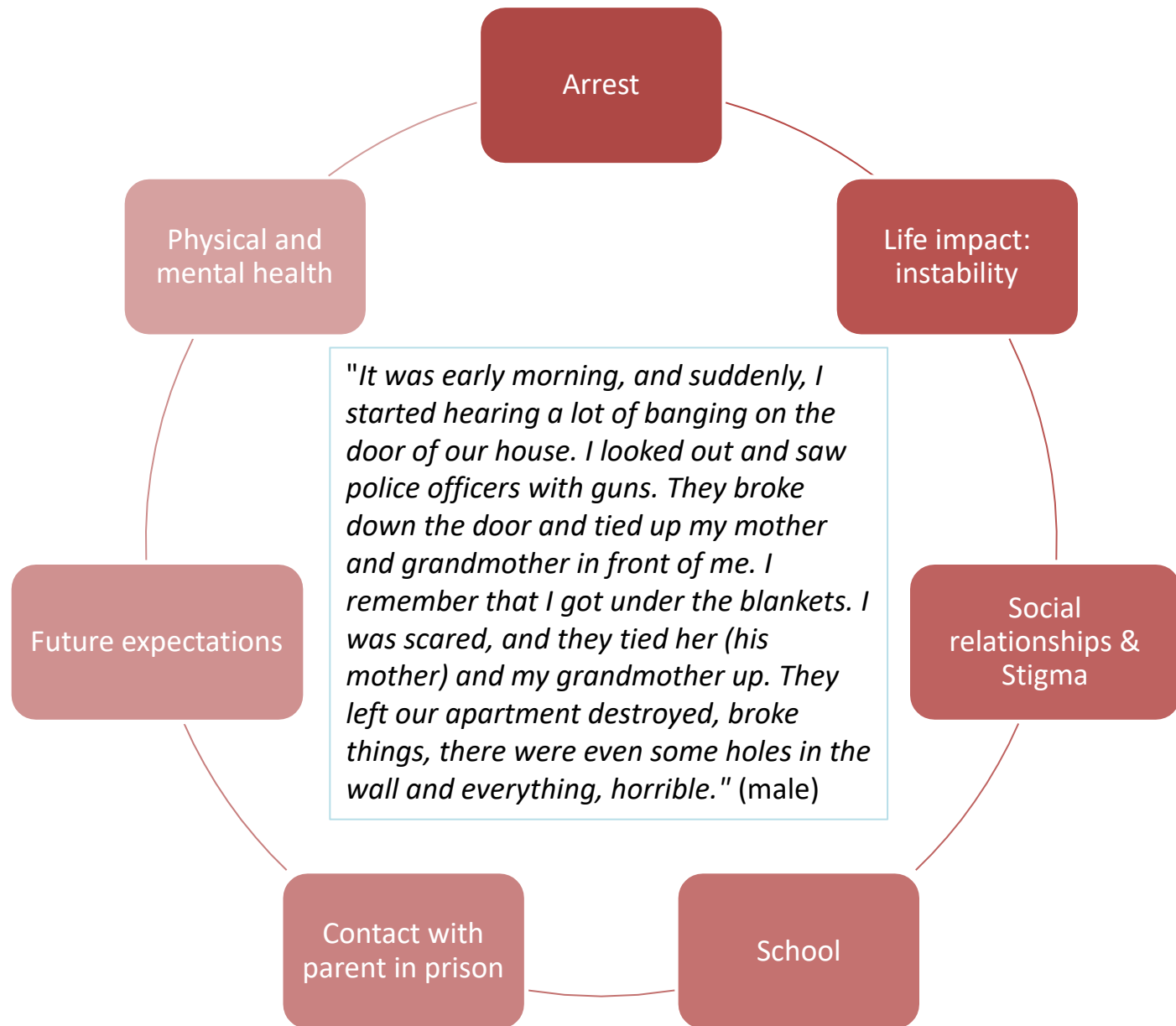
METHOD: QUALITATIVE STUDY

PROFILES	PARENT IN PRISON	ADOLESCENT	CAREGIVER
1	Father	Boy	Parent
2	Mother	Girl	Another relative
3		Other	Institution

20 family units: 60 in-depth interviews

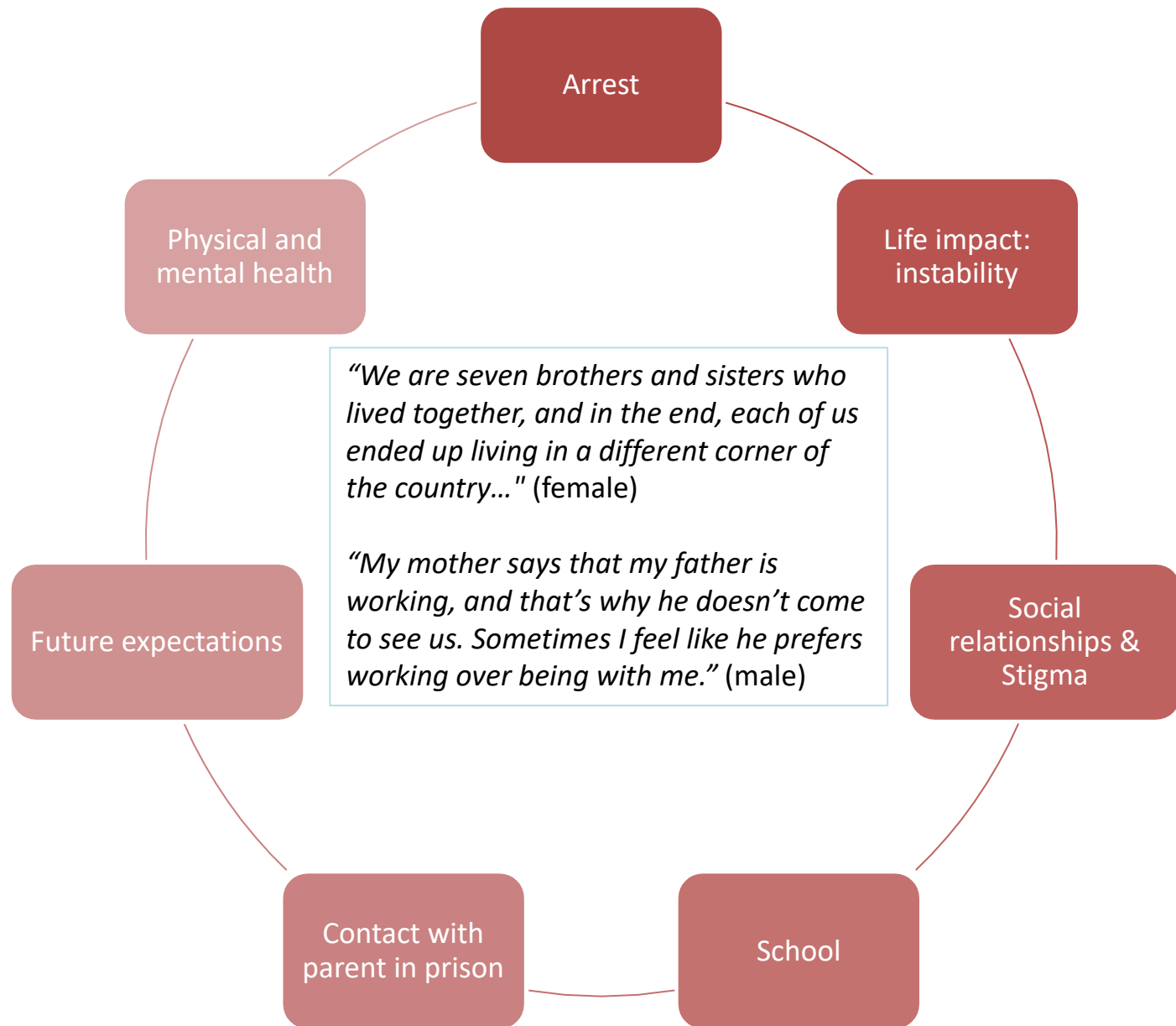
2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



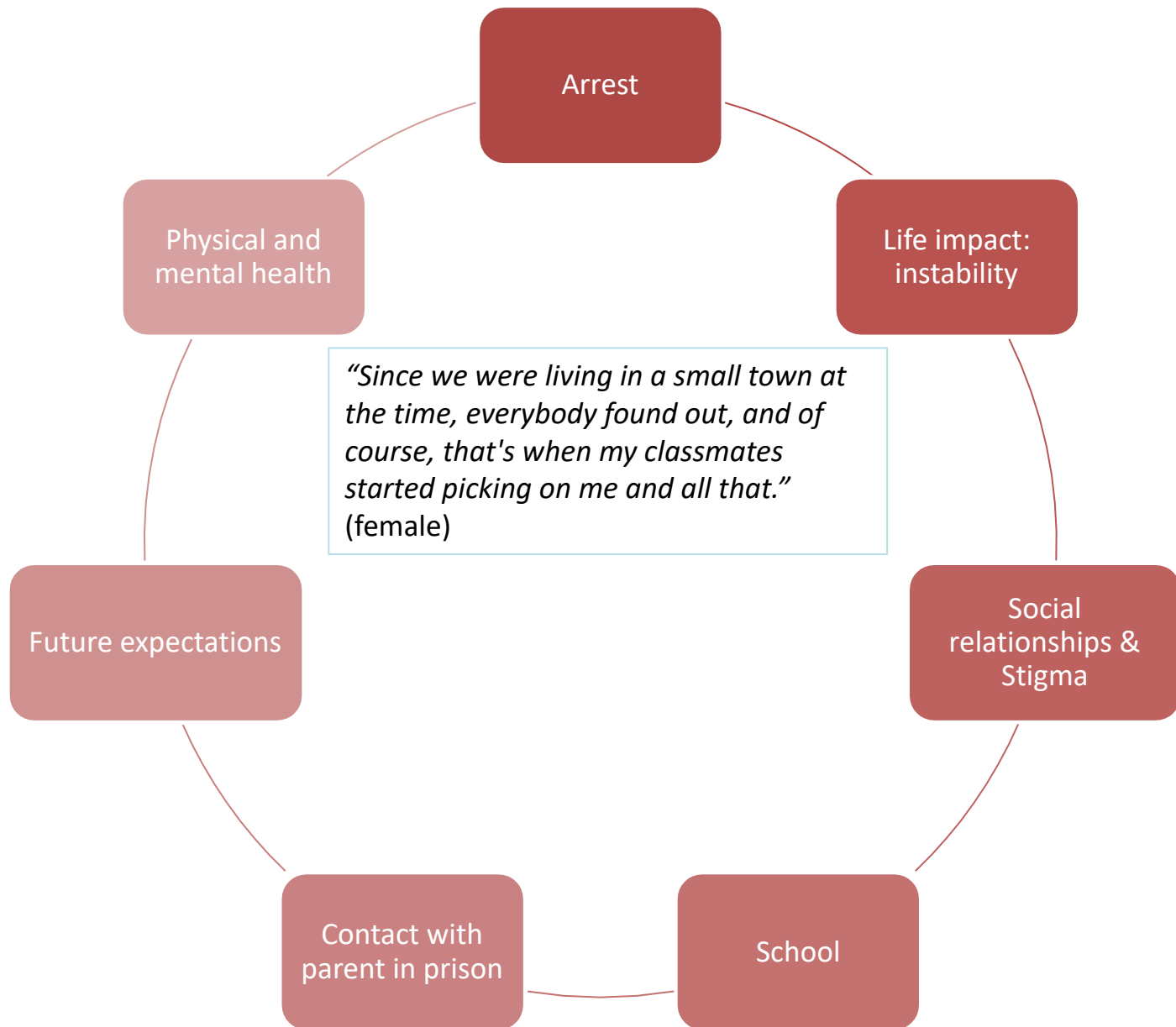
2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



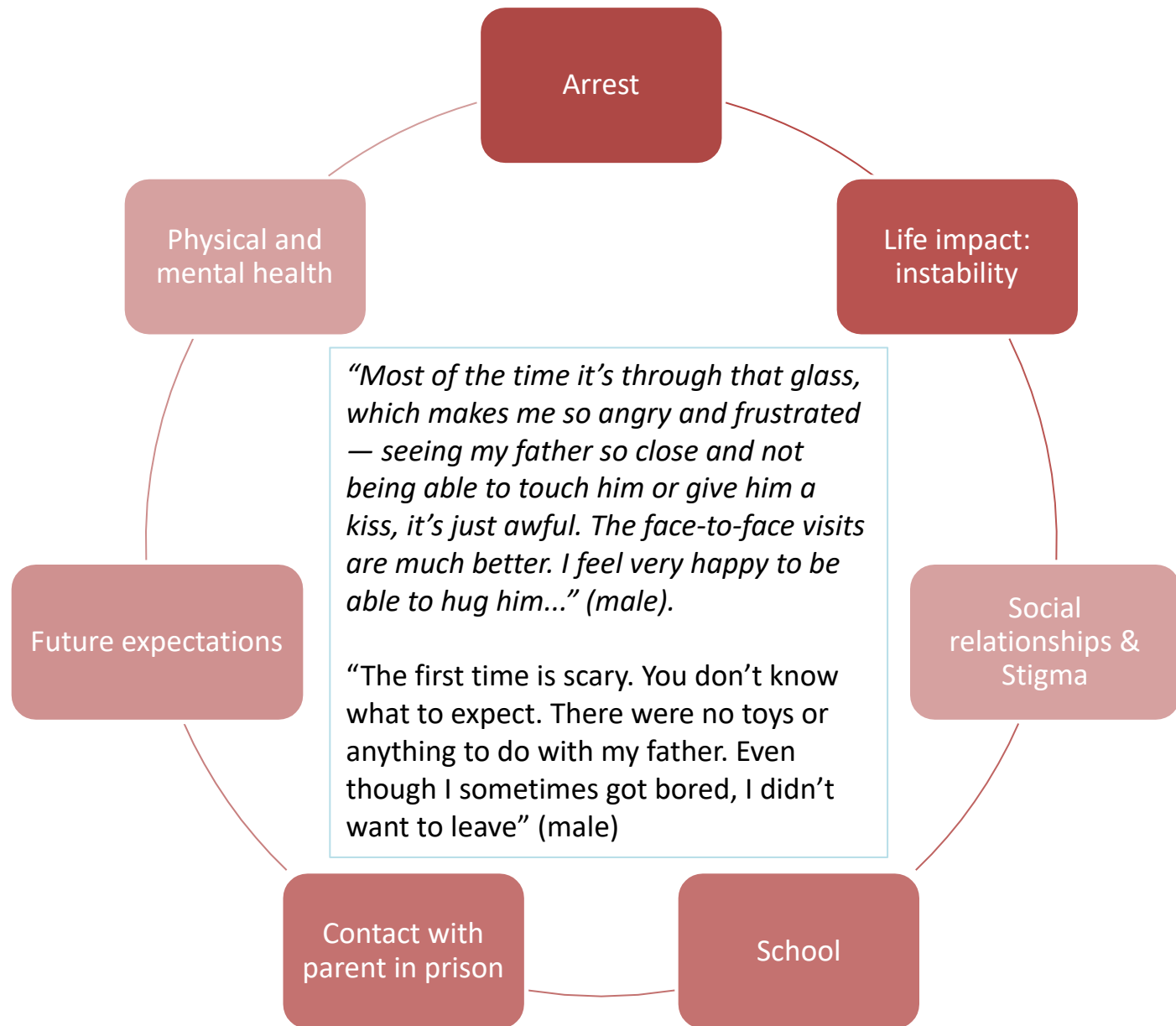
2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



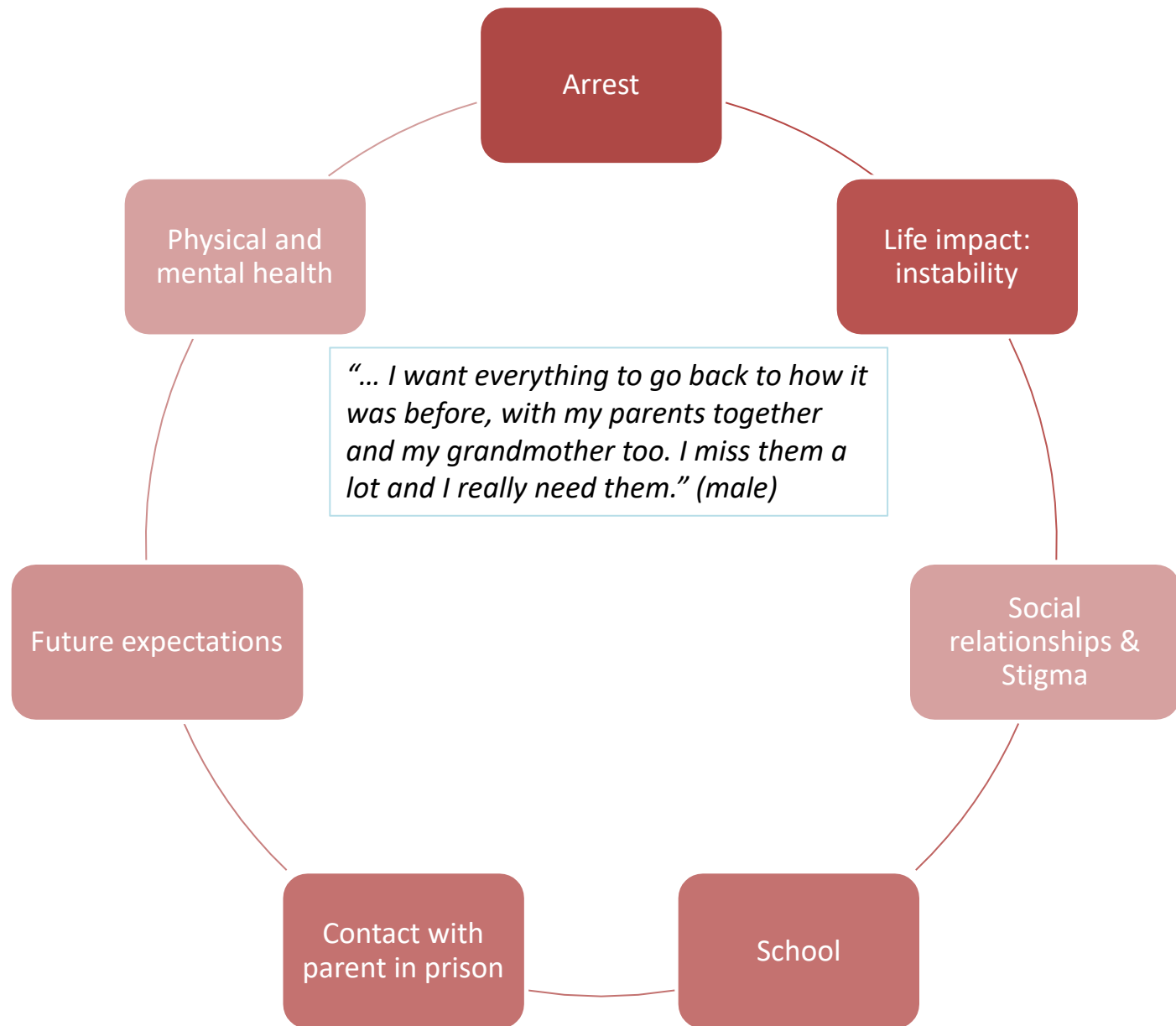
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RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



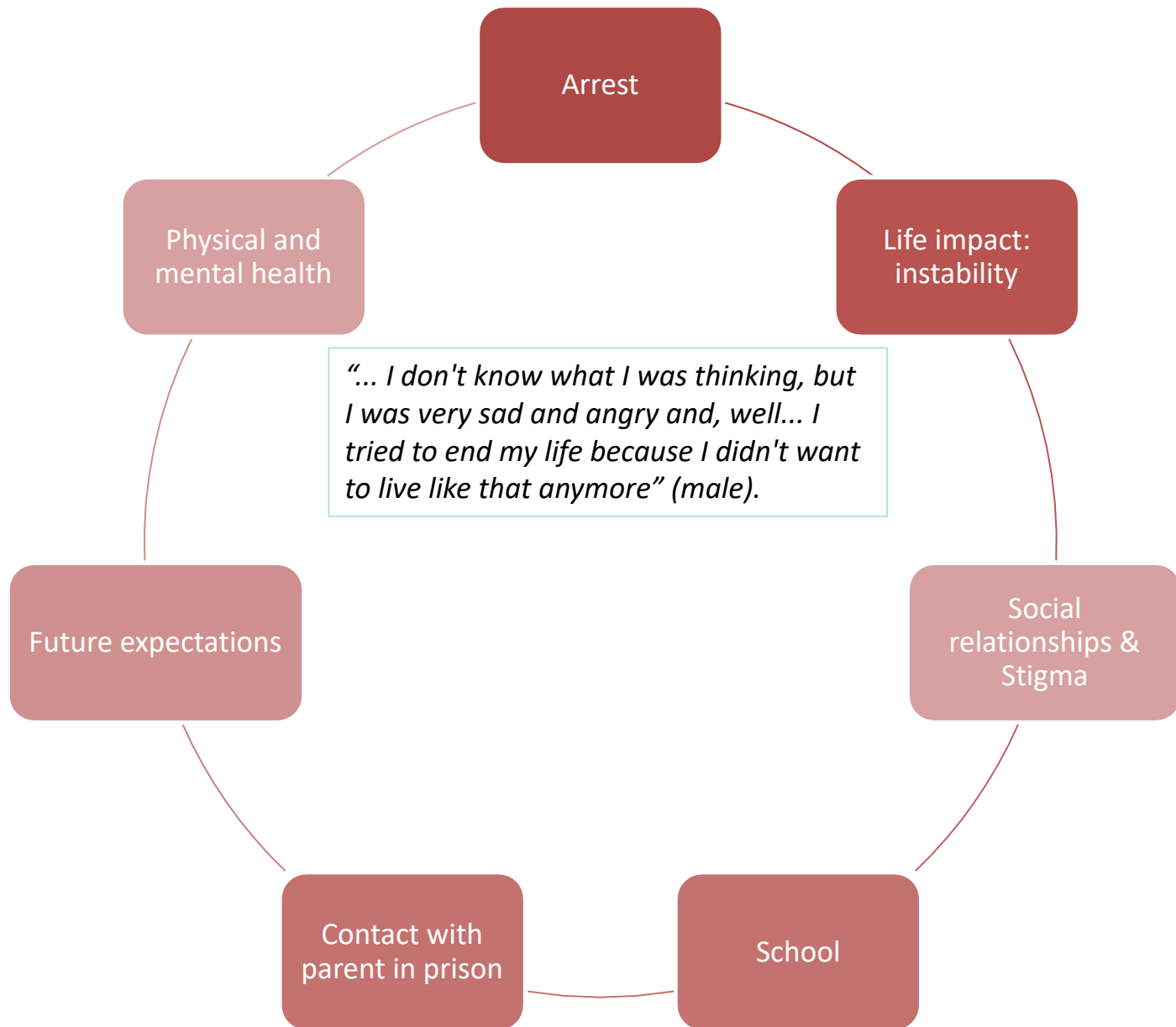
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RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



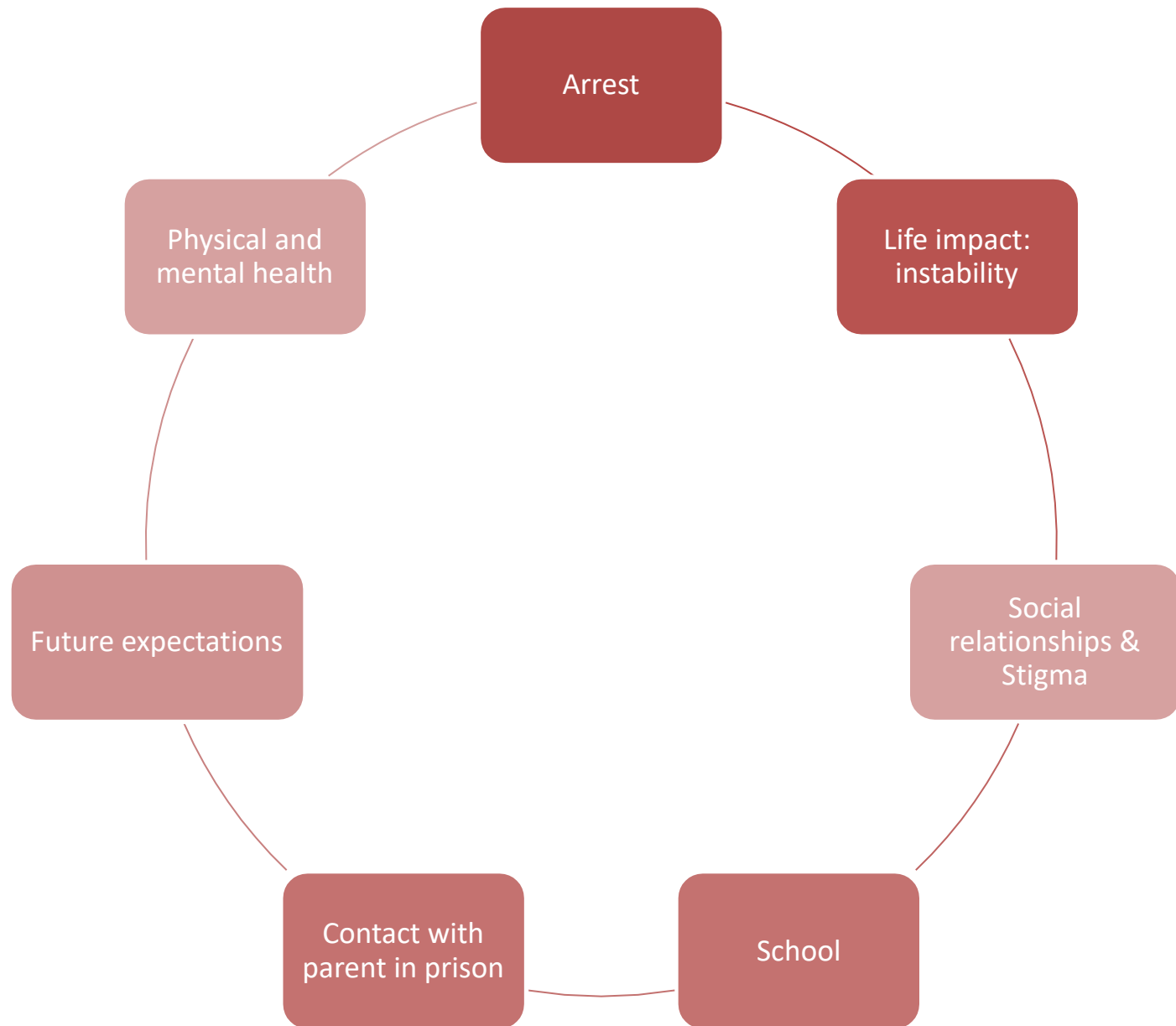
2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY



LIFE & ECONOMIC SITUATION

- Income
- Life changes

FAMILY

Adolescent:

- Family support
- Relationship with parent in prison
- Relationship with caregiver

Caregiver:

- Caregiving stress
- Caregiving efficacy
- Coparenting
- Psychological well-being

PRISON

- Satisfaction with prison communications

SCHOOL

- Connection with the school
- Academic performance

PEERS/FRIENDS

- Friends' support

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS (ADOL.)

- Stigma
- Socioemotional competencies
- Benevolent experiences in childhood
- Passion for an activity



2. What have we found?

RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

METHOD:

QUANTITATIVE STUDY

100 caregivers and 125 adolescents

ADOLESCENT'S WELL-BEING

- Externalizing symptoms
- Internalizing symptoms
- Physical health
- Satisfaction with life

**Children of mothers,
lower levels of well-being**

LIFE & ECONOMIC SITUATION

FAMILY

PRISON

SCHOOL

PEERS/FRIENDS

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS
(ADOLESCENT)

2. What have we found?

ADOLESCENTS' WELL-BEING

EXTERNALIZING
SYMPTOMS

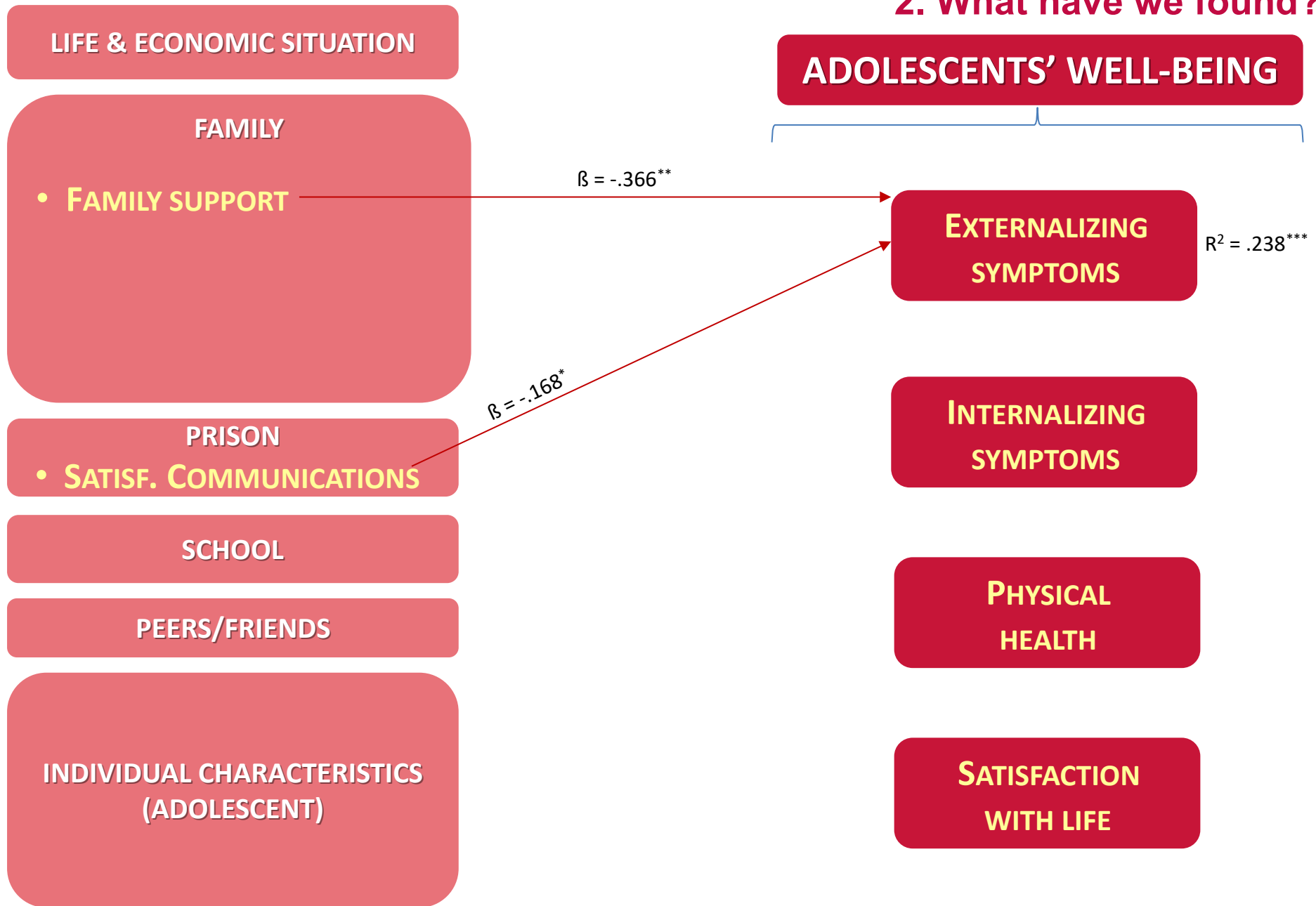
INTERNALIZING
SYMPTOMS

PHYSICAL
HEALTH

SATISFACTION
WITH LIFE

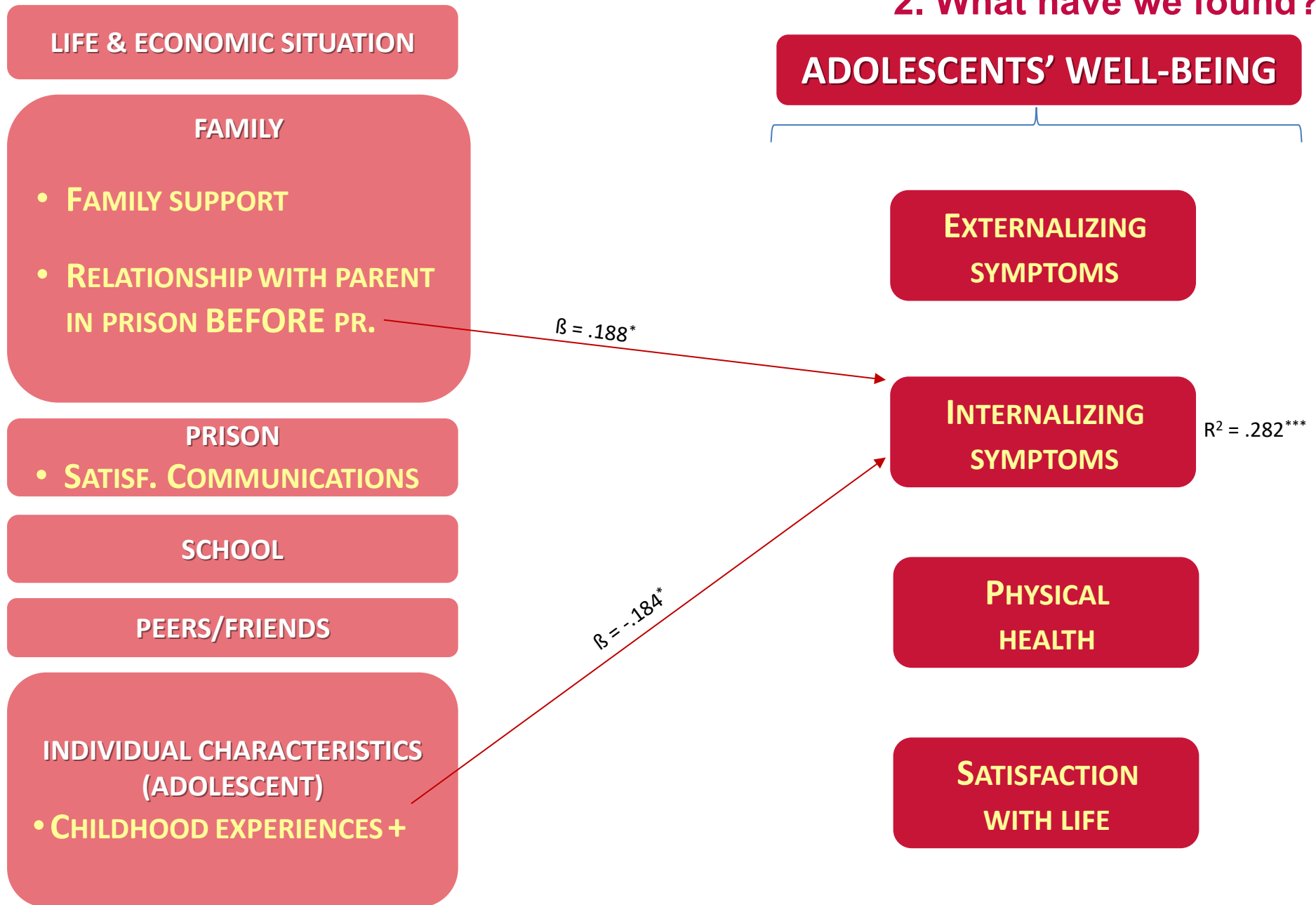
RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

2. What have we found?



RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

2. What have we found?



RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

2. What have we found?

ADOLESCENTS' WELL-BEING



$$\beta = .357^{**}$$

EXTERNALIZING
SYMPTOMS

INTERNALIZING
SYMPTOMS

PHYSICAL
HEALTH

$$R^2 = .227^{***}$$

SATISFACTION
WITH LIFE

RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

2. What have we found?

ADOLESCENTS' WELL-BEING

FAMILY

- FAMILY SUPPORT
- RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENT IN PRISON BEFORE PR.

PRISON

- SATISF. COMMUNICATIONS

SCHOOL

PEERS/FRIENDS

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS (ADOLESCENT)

- CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES +
- SOCIOEMOTIONAL COMP.

EXTERNALIZING SYMPTOMS

INTERNALIZING SYMPTOMS

PHYSICAL HEALTH

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

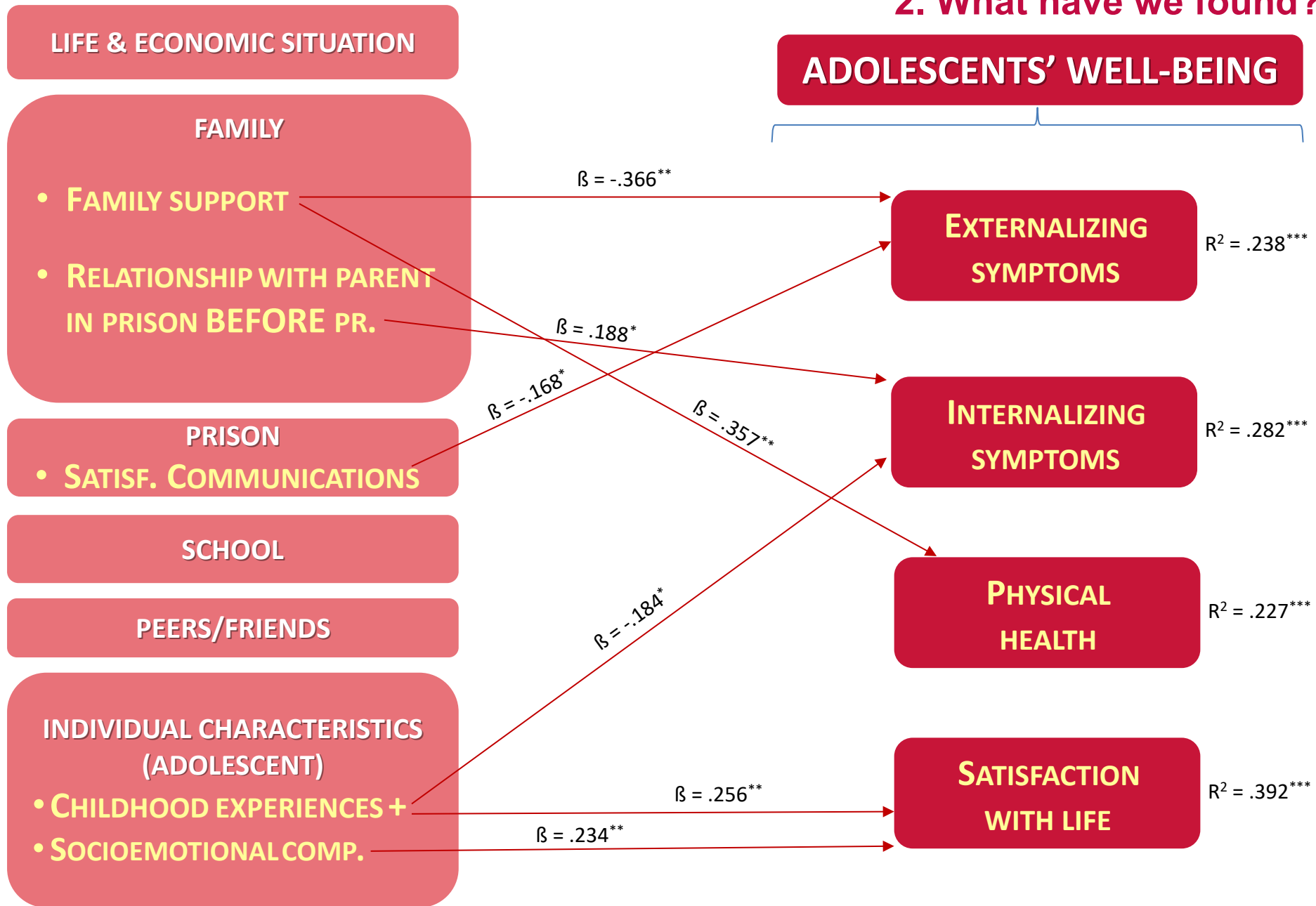
$R^2 = .392^{***}$

$\beta = .256^{**}$

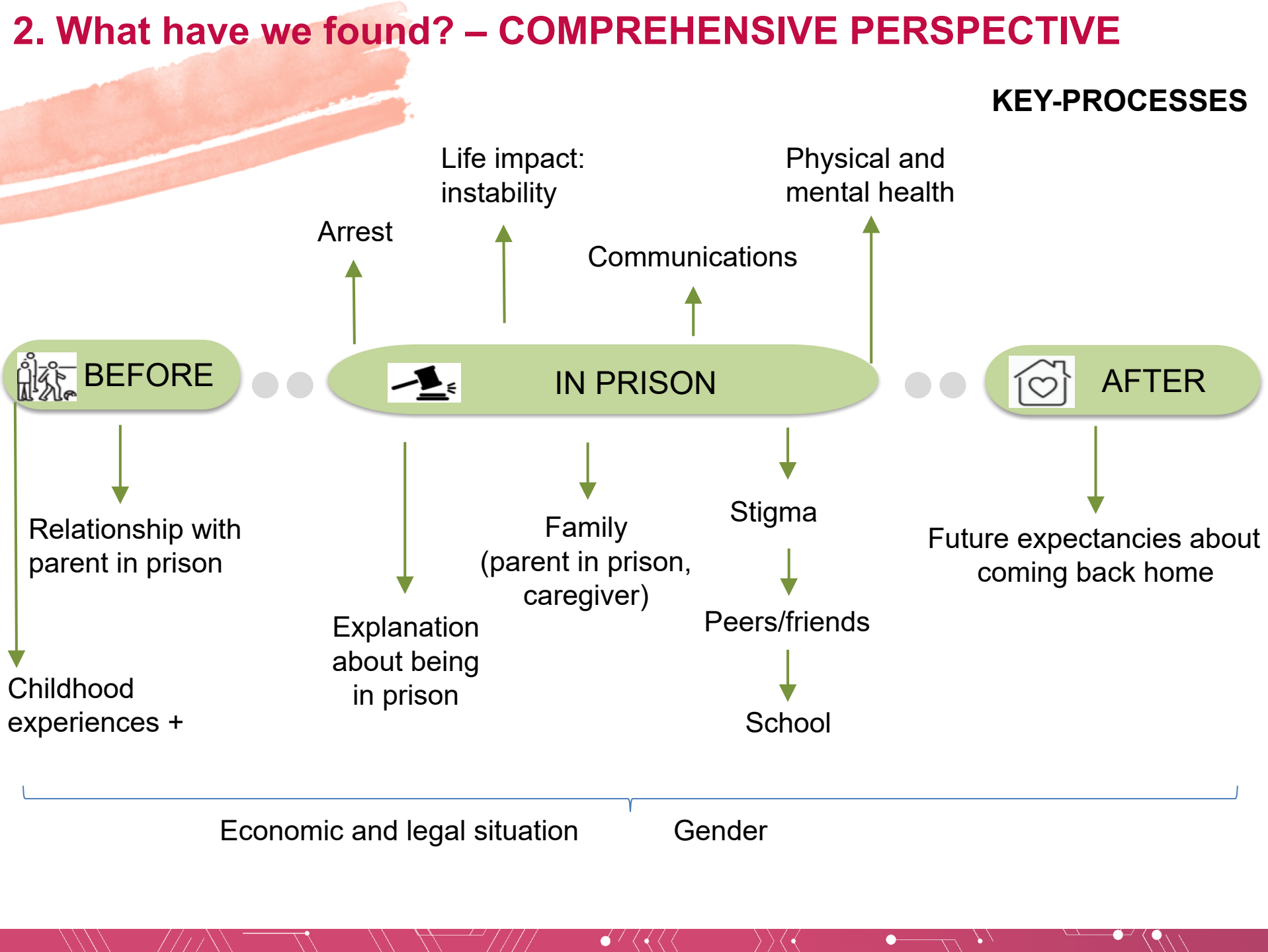
$\beta = .234^{**}$

RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

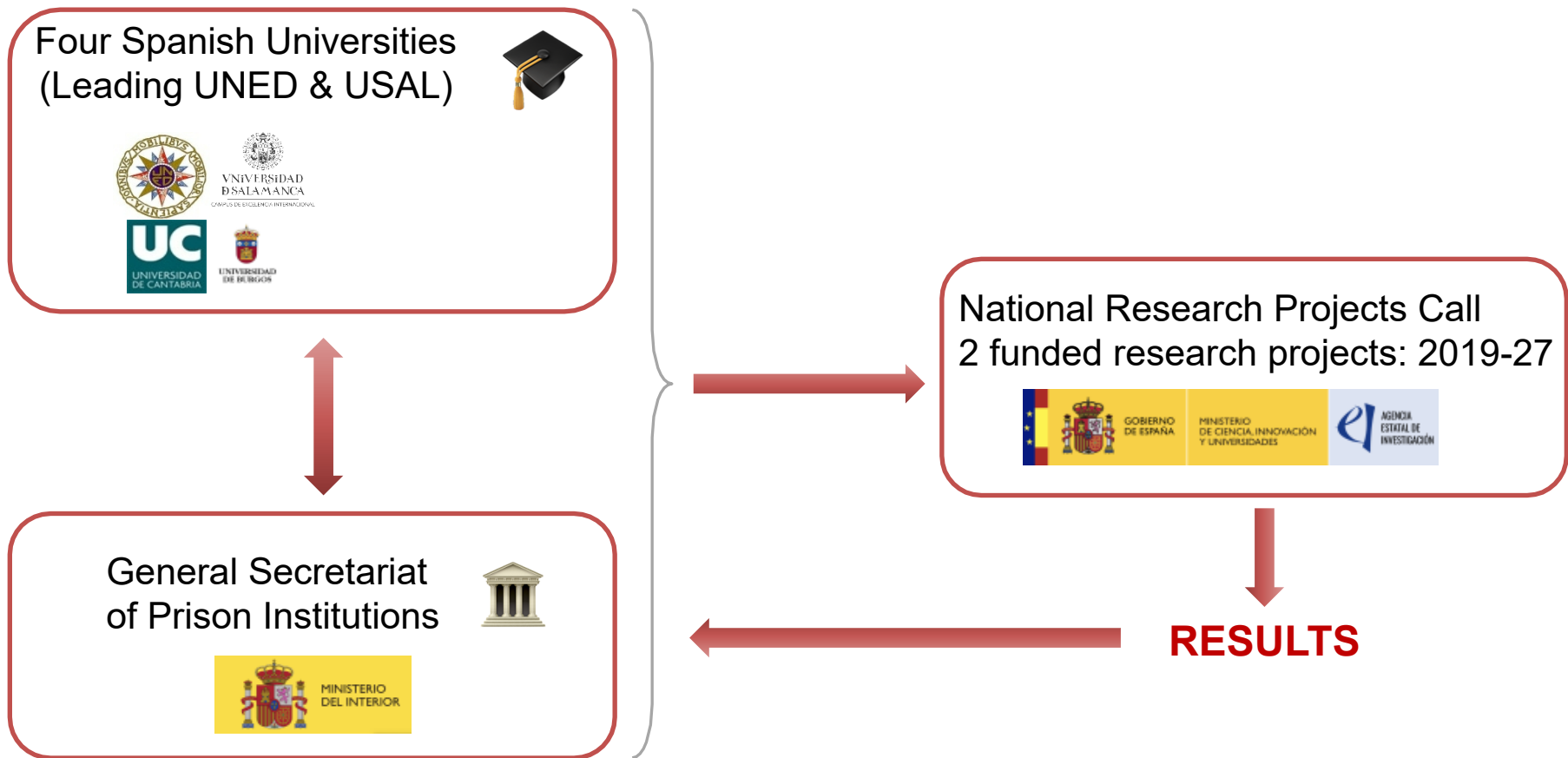
2. What have we found?



RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

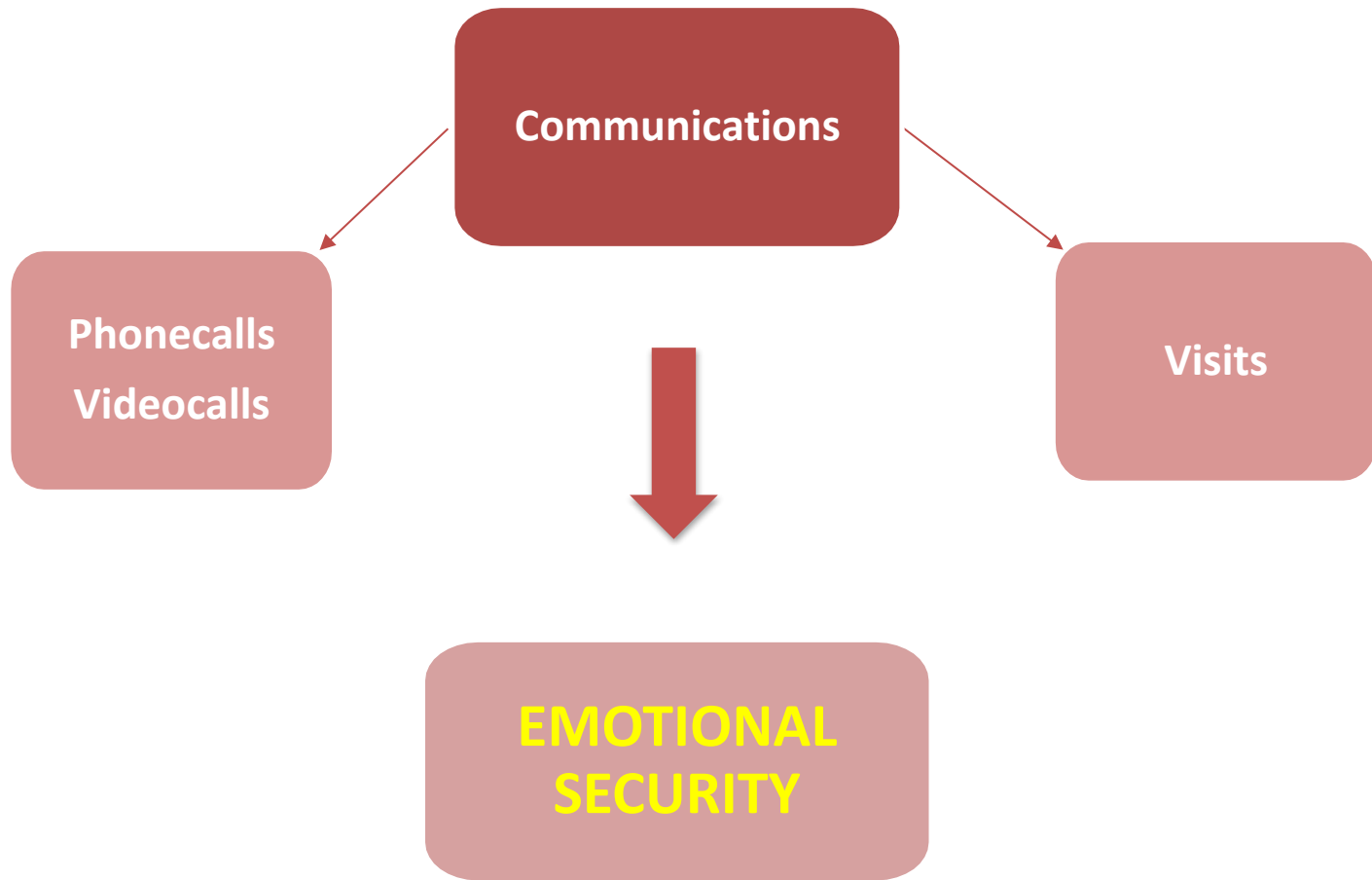


3. What can be done? (an example)



PRACTICE EVIDENCE-BASED

3. What can be done? (an example)



3. What can be done? (an example)

Visits



Promote visits
with physical
contact vs.
plexiglass

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

Outside
prison

Preparing
the visit with
the family

Social
workers

External
services
(e.g., HPRIFAM)



3. What can be done? (an example)

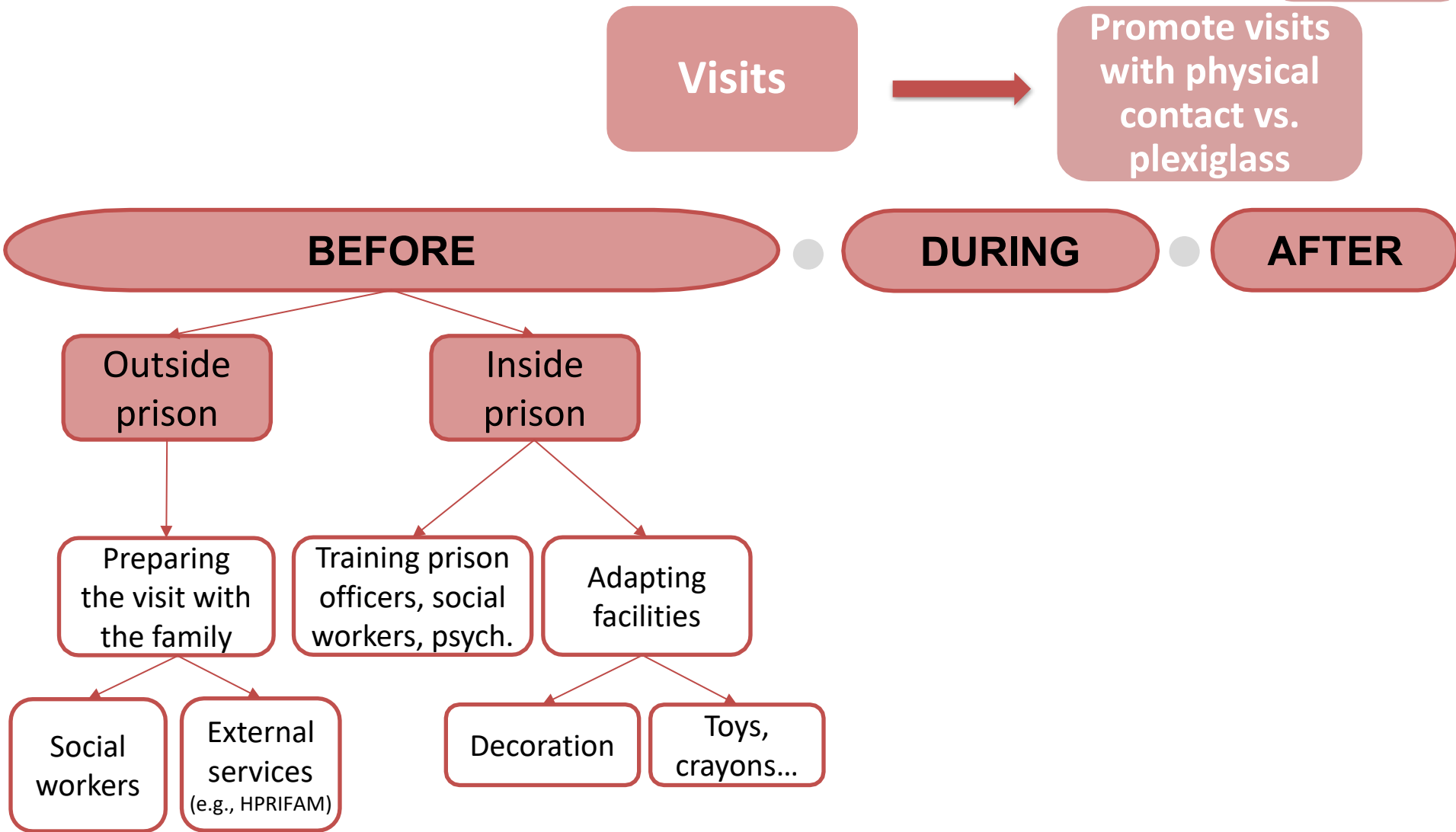


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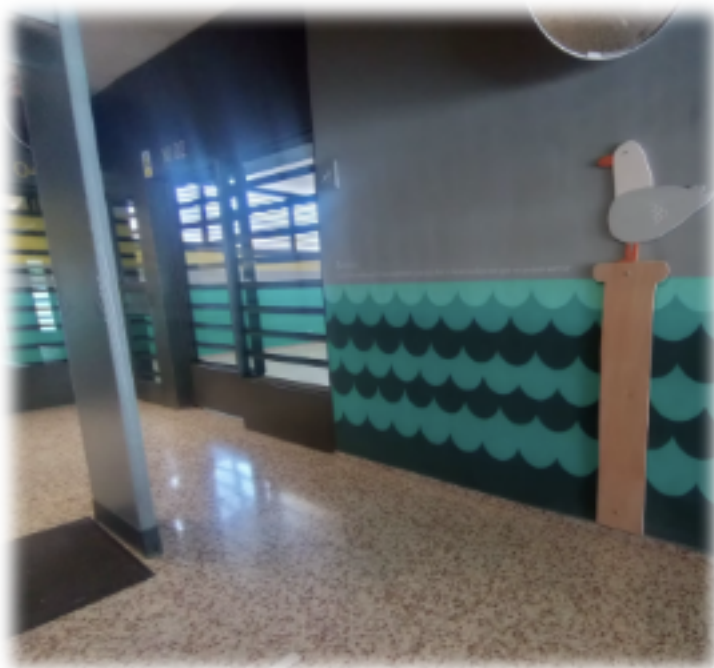


**VNiVERSiDAD
D SALAMANCA**

3. What can be done? (an example)



Facilities

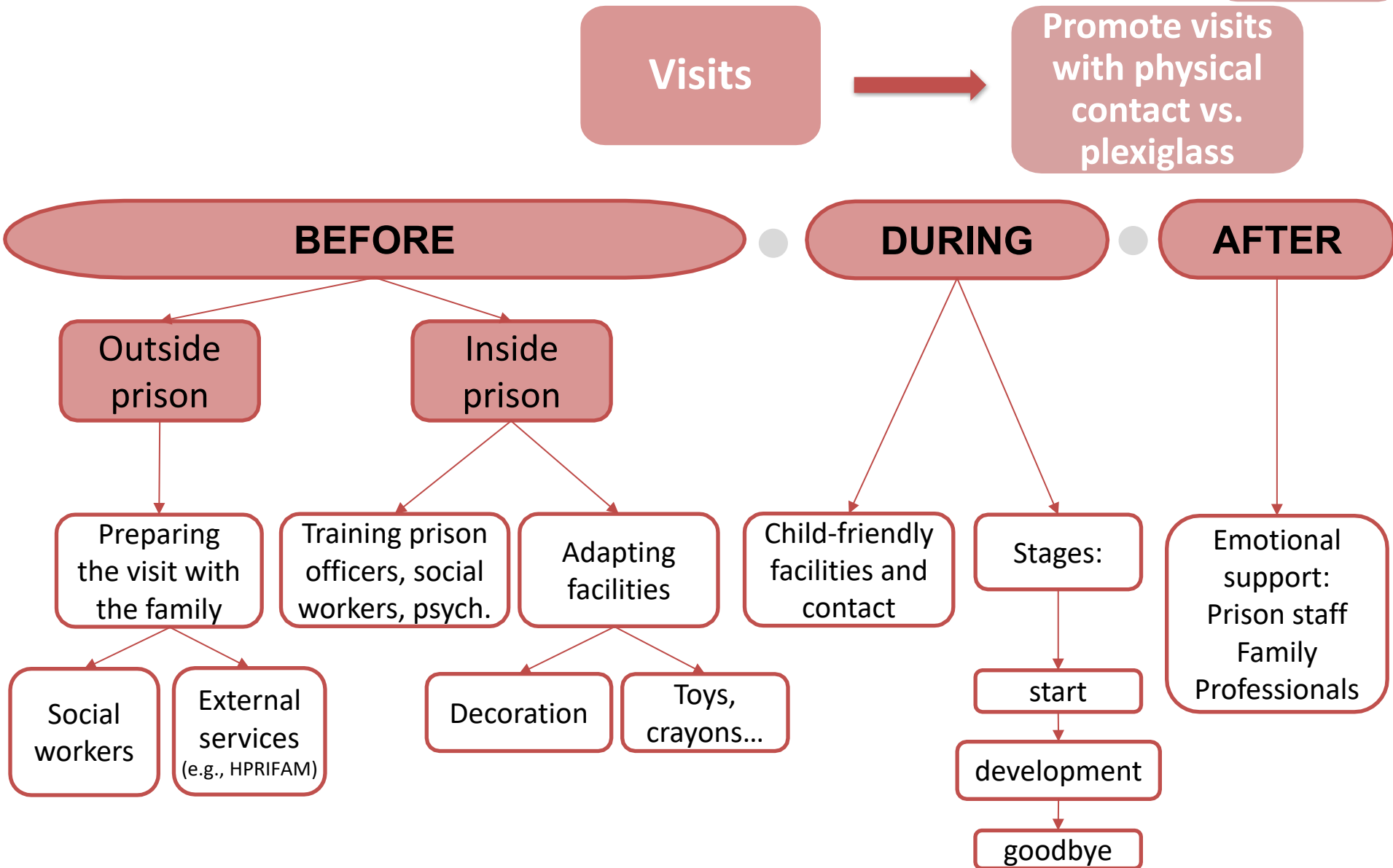


Toys

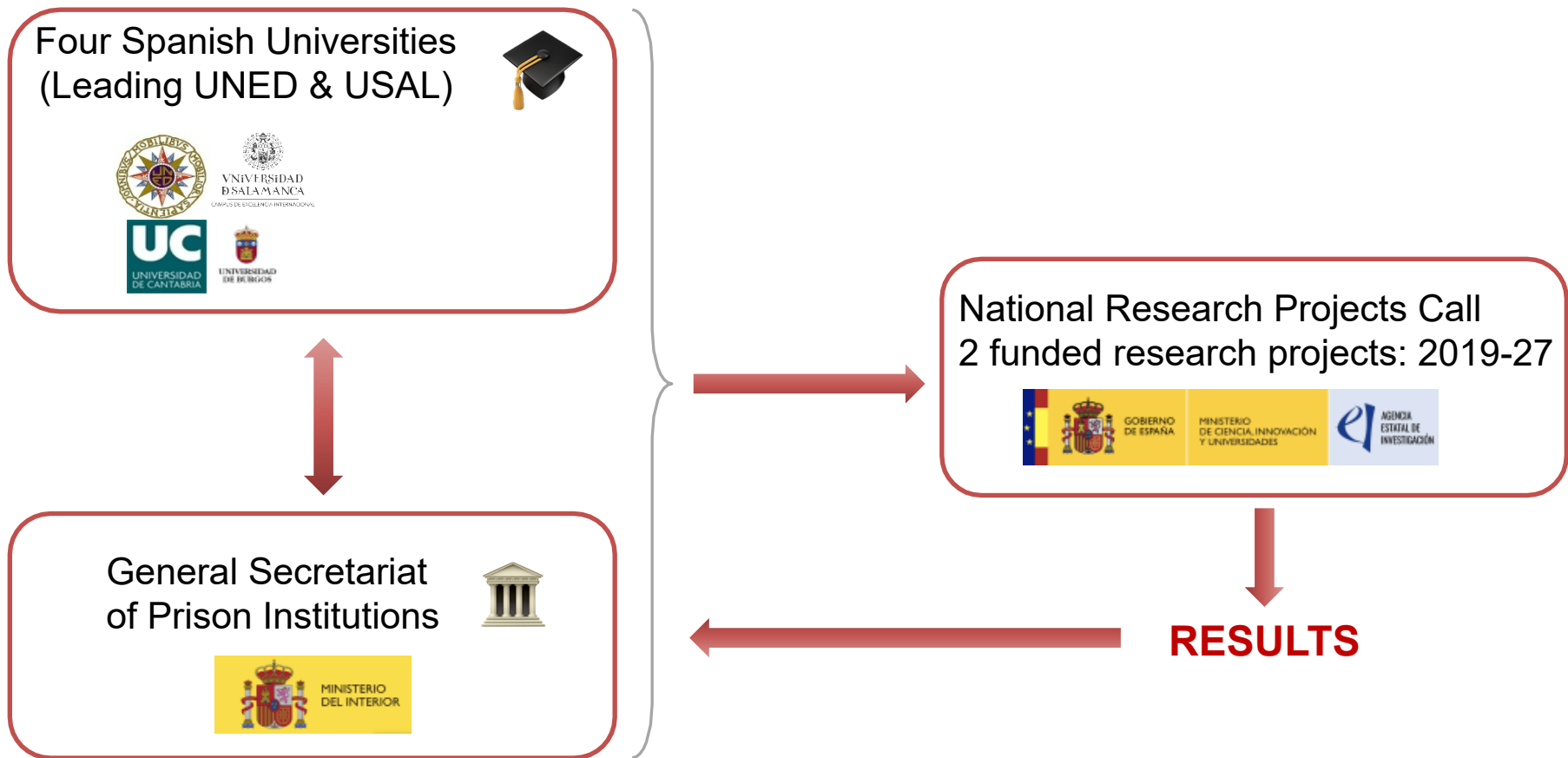
Brians 2 Prison
(Barcelona)



3. What can be done? (an example)



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PRACTICE EVIDENCE-BASED

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