

Involving additional family members in home visits

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Introduction

The way parents interact with their children greatly influences their children's development. Home visiting programs can help parents improve the quality of interactions with their children and improve child outcomes (Roggman et al., 2016). Often home visits involve only the parent and the child, however, for some home visits other family members—another caregiver, siblings, or other family members—may be present. This provides the opportunity for more family members to be involved and engaged in home visits, which may affect the quality of home visits.

Purpose of Study:

To examine whether home visit practices were affected by the presence of additional family members and whether the engagement of these other family members impacted overall family engagement and the outcomes for parents and children from home visiting.

Methods

Sample: Extant data, from a nationwide sample, of 584 home visits from multiple home visiting models were analyzed for this project, 357 included other family members, which could include another caregiver, siblings, or extended family. Visits involved children ages 0 to 3 years old.

Measure: Home Visit Rating Scales-3 (Roggman et al., 2019) measure home visit quality across seven scales, with scores ranging from 1 (needs support) to 7 (excellent quality). One item explicitly rated the involvement and engagement of additional family members in the visit. Trained and reliable observers coded 30 to 90 minute video recordings for indicators of home visit quality.

1. Relationship building with family
2. Responsiveness to family strengths
3. Facilitation of caregiver-child interaction
4. Collaboration with caregiver
5. Caregiver-child interaction
6. Caregiver engagement
7. Child engagement



Results

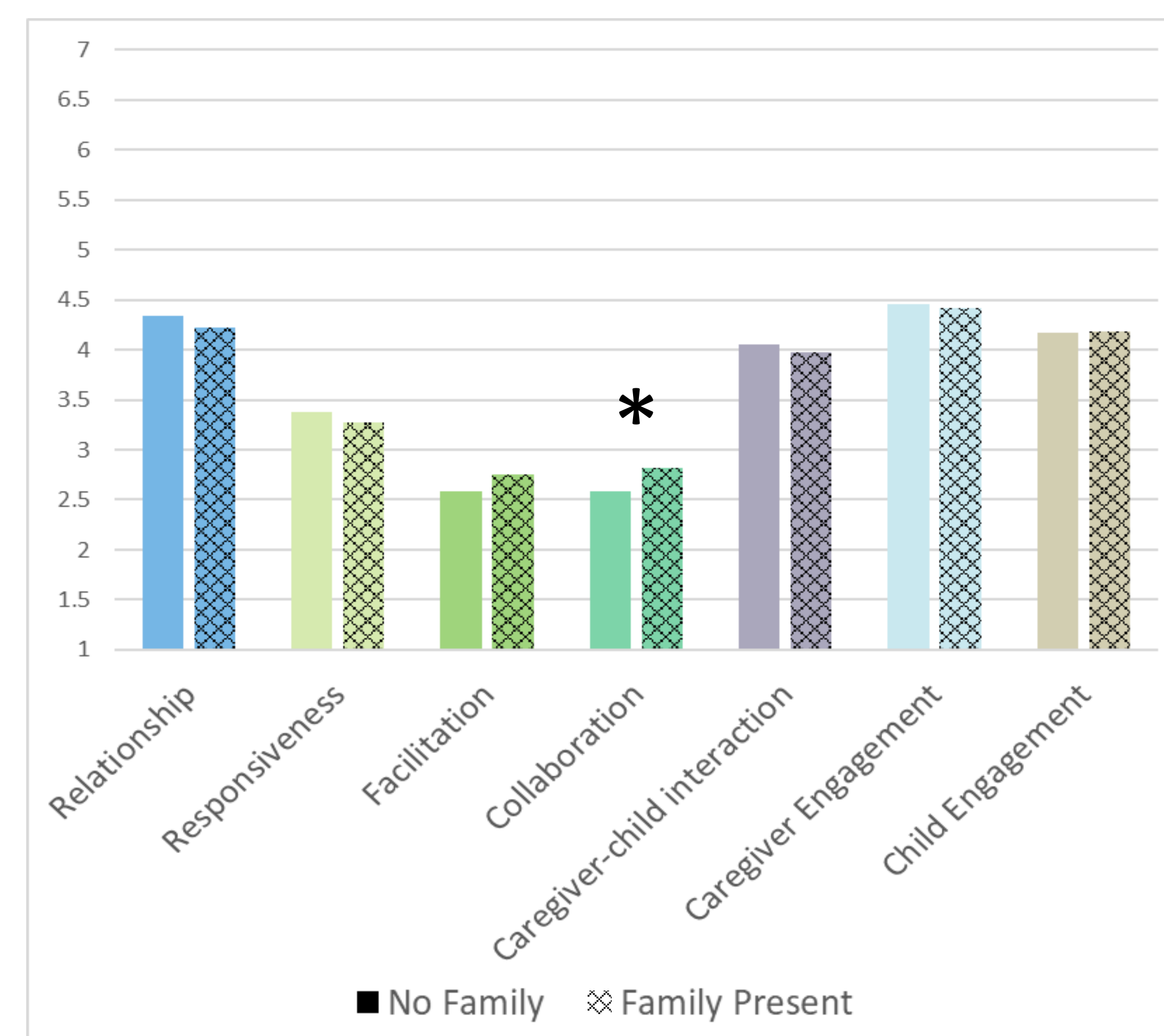


Figure 1. Mean HOVRS scores for visits with and without additional family members. The only significant difference between the two groups was in collaboration; $t(582) = -2.06$, $p = .04$, indicating that home visits that included additional family members had higher scores for collaboration with parents.

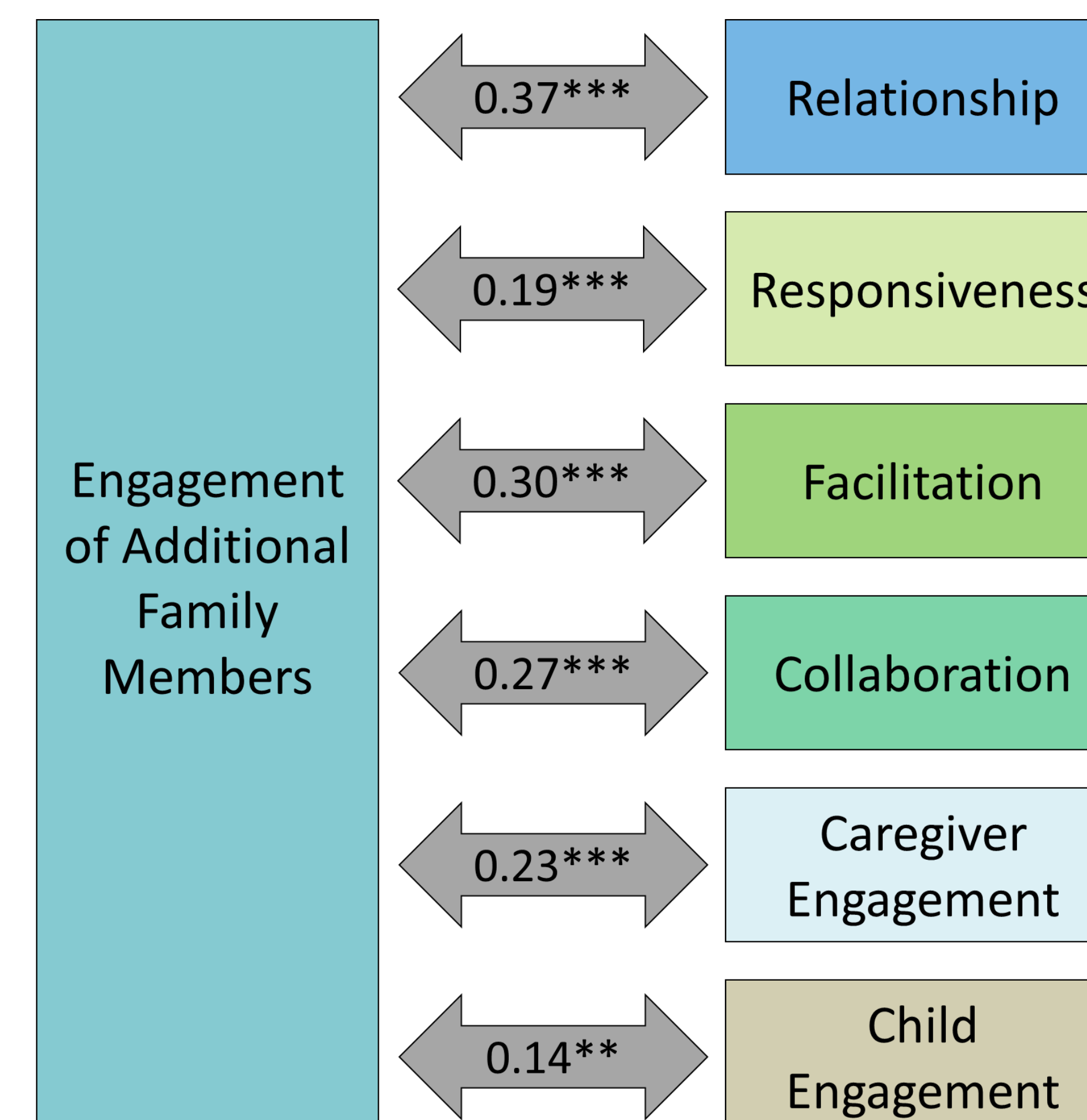


Figure 2. Bivariate associations for engagement of additional family members with HOVRS scores on responsiveness, relationship, facilitation, collaboration, parent engagement, and child engagement [parent-child interaction, n.s.]
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Conclusions

- Although there were statistically significant differences in collaboration between visits where other family members were present and visits with only one parent and one child, the difference was small.
- Better engagement of other family members in visits predicted higher home visit quality.

This shows that having additional family members does not detract from the quality of a home visit, but its important that when there are additional family members that everyone in the home visit is engaged in the visit and with each other to best support child development.