

Intervention project

Reducing number of early school leavers in Ireland

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Problem definition

- High-level of drop-outs from secondary education in Ireland (16 per cent)

Community needs

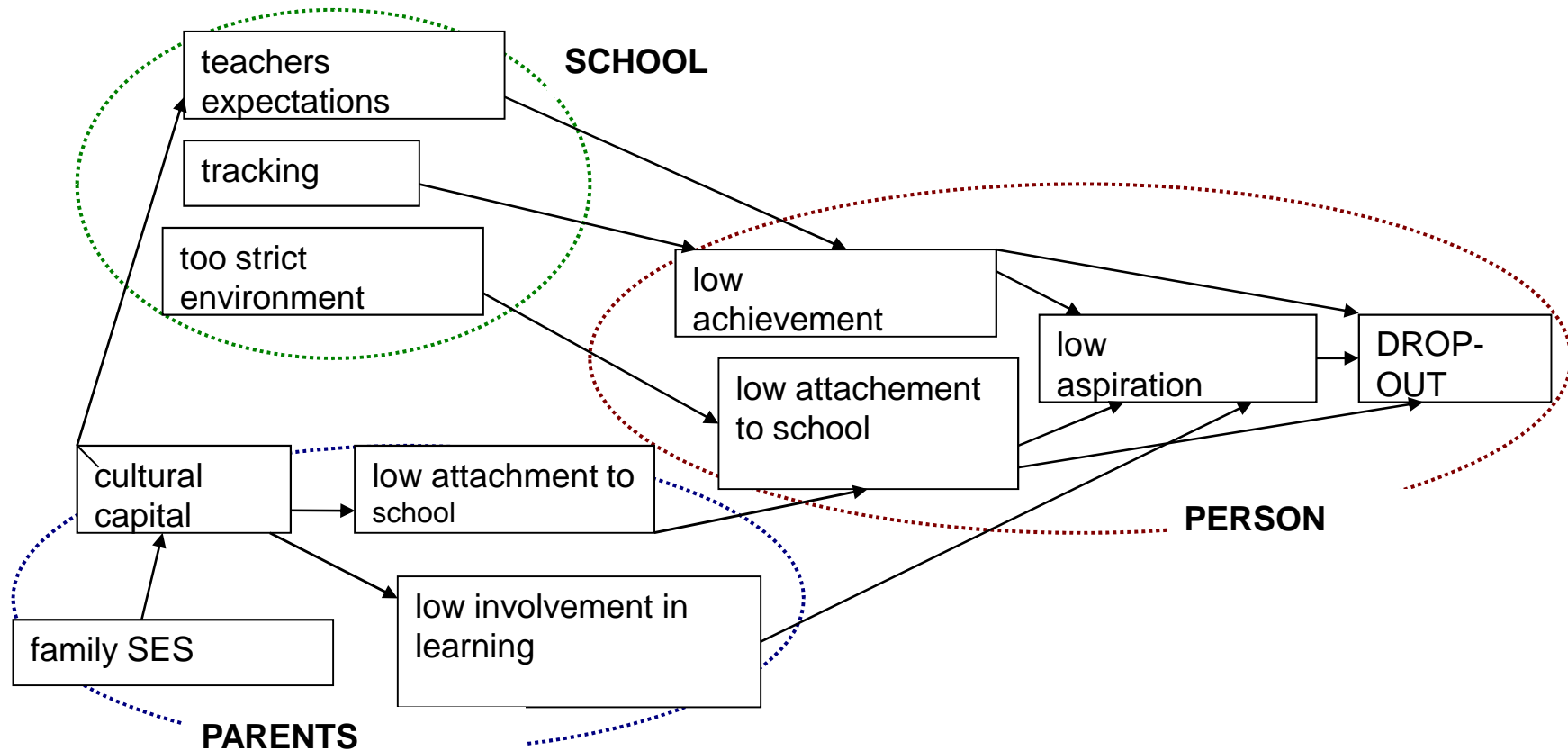
Why is it a problem?

- *For individual:*
 - increased risk of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion,
 - increased risk of pathological behavior.
- *For society:*
 - increased costs in supporting of those who are unemployed,
 - loss of human capital (skilled workers),
 - social pathology.

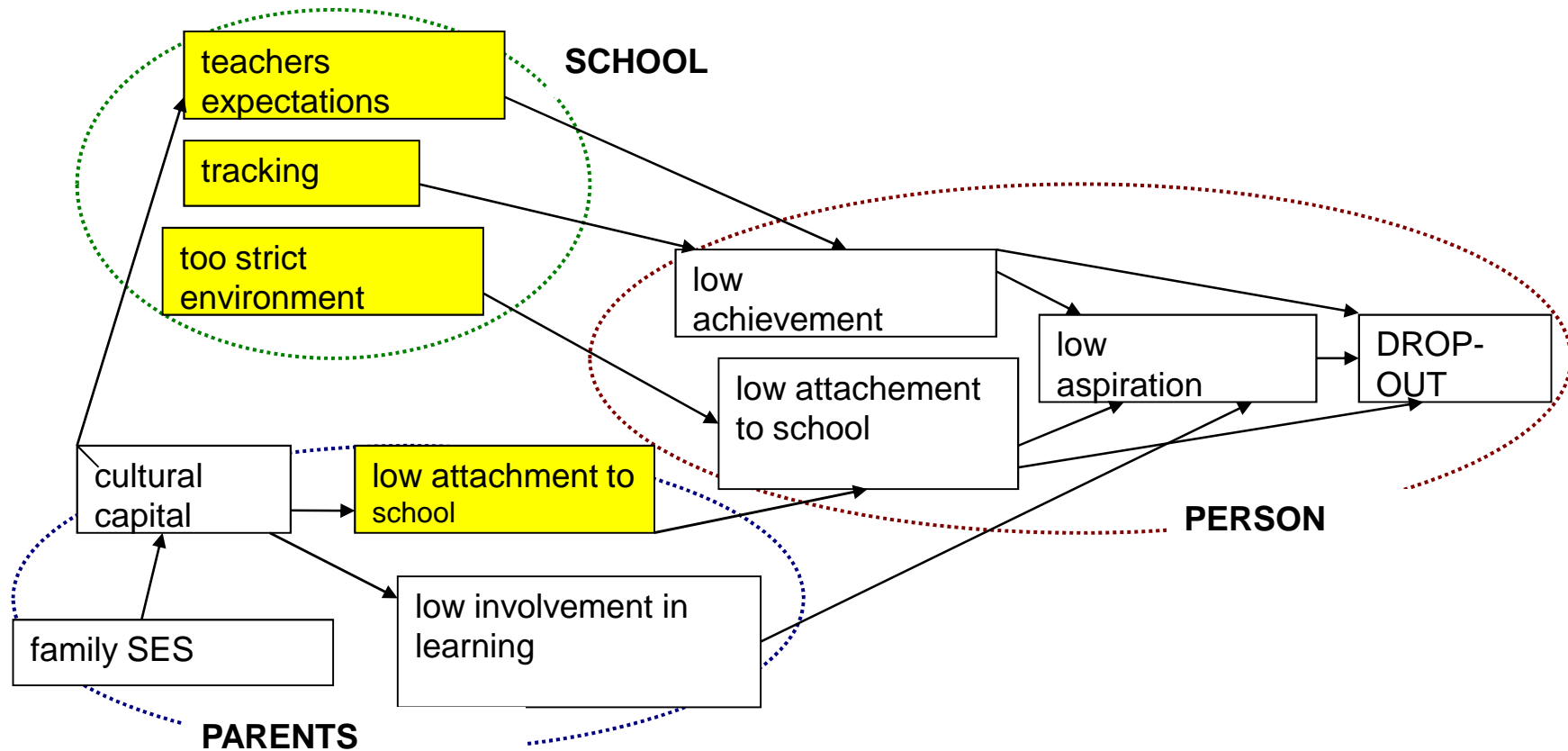
Target group

- 5 % of secondary schools with the highest level of drop-outs in Ireland

Influential factors



Influential factors



Interventions strategy

- Training program for teachers
 - psychological training (self-fulfilling prophecy ..),
 - classroom management (disciplinary climate...).
- Outreach to parents
 - introductory meetings, common gatherings, „Olympic games“, theater
- Reorganization of schools
 - detracking (same curriculum for every student, extra teaching for the needed)

Desired results

- *Outputs*
 - Higher teachers expectations
 - Higher attachment of parents to school
 - Less strict school environment
 - The same curriculum for every student
- *Outcomes*
 - Reducing level of drop-outs
- *Impact*
 - Continuing in further education

Resources

- Skilled instructors for training program
- Mentors in designing out-reach activities
- Financial funds for out-reach activities
- More teachers

Assumptions

- School matters !
- Coleman et al.: Structure and organization of schools do not have any effect upon achievement – what matters are students' and parents' characteristics

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Research design

- Quasi-experiment
- Unit: school

Two groups:

N O X O (5 % schools with highest drop-out)

N O O (other secondary schools)

Statistical analysis

- Regression-discontinuity design
- Potential threats:
 - History
 - Maturation
 - Testing
 - Instrumentation
 - Mortality
 - Regression

Advantages

- Cheap
- Relatively ethical in contrast to randomized design
- Access to data (data from central register, no need for data collecting, not time and money consuming)

Limitations

- Intervention only at the school level
- Impact not measured

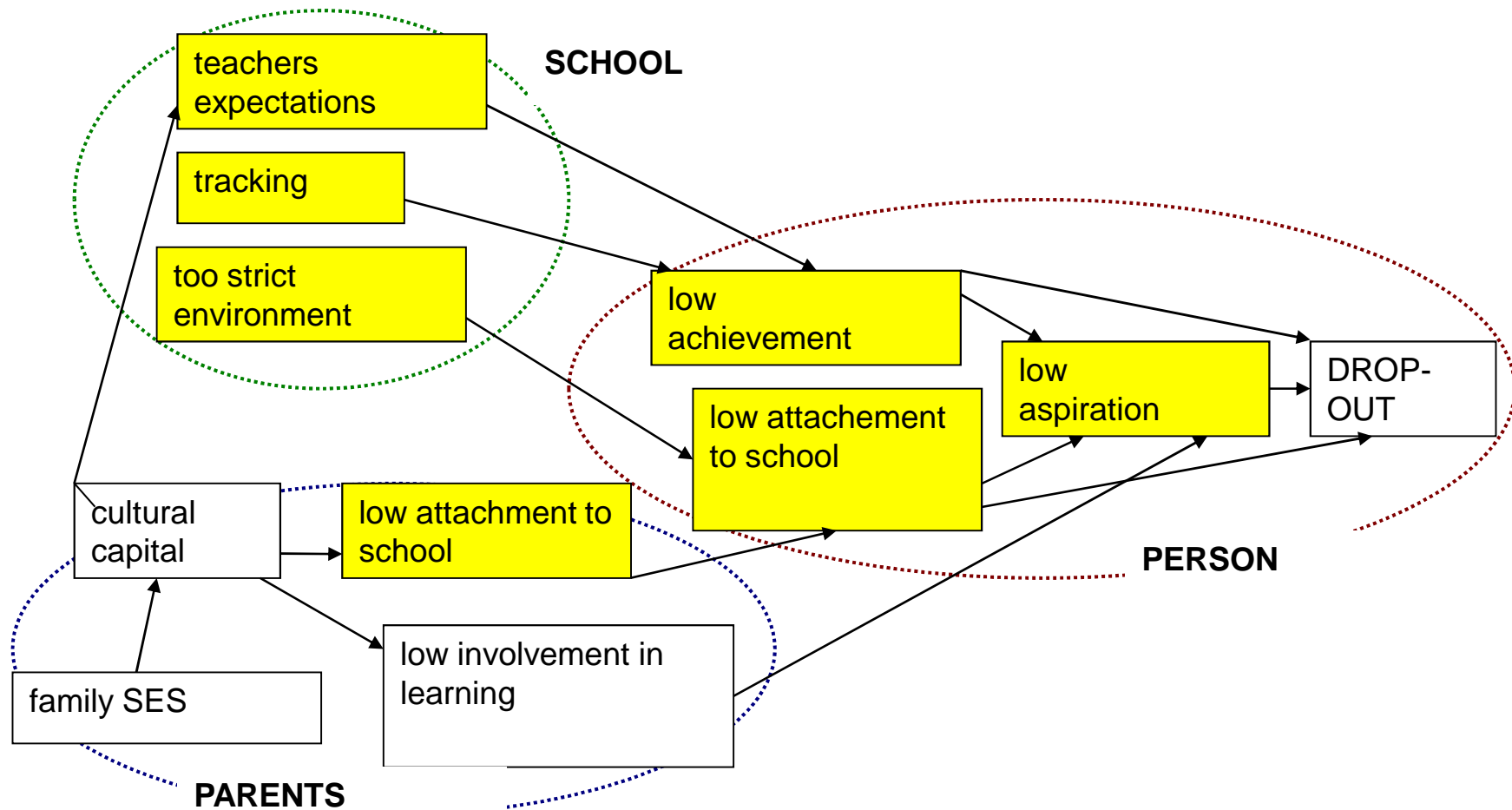
Open questions

- Multi-level design?
- If individual level included, how to contact persons later?

Possible interventions at individual level

- Counselor
- Special instruction in study skills and knowledge for students
- Assistance for the homework
- Extra-curricular activities
- Common breakfast
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Influential factors



Thank you
for your attention



Critical friends are more than welcome!