



Evidence about Learning and Health

from the Centre for Research on the
Wider Benefits of Learning

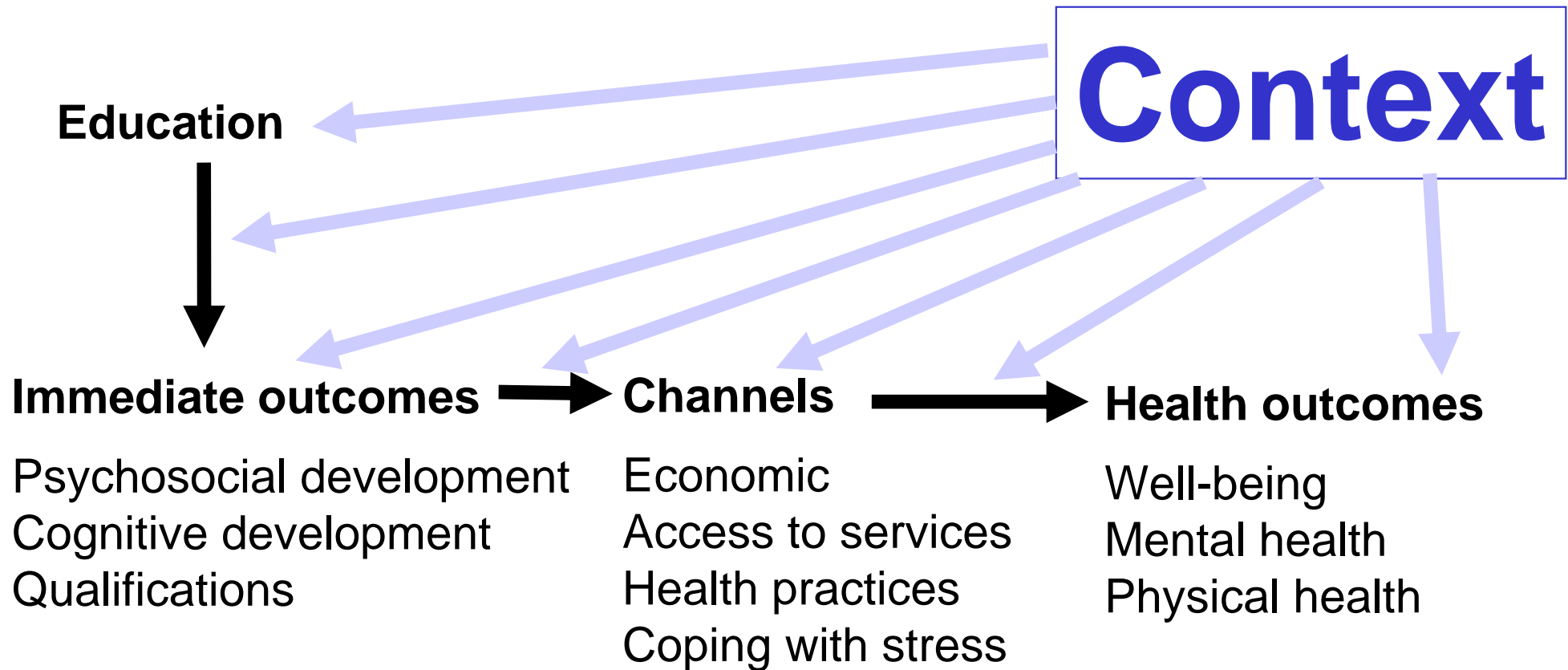
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1. Model of processes linking learning and health based on literature review and in-depth interviews
2. Evidence from large surveys
3. Evidence from in-depth interviews
4. Conclusions



1. Processes through which education promotes health and well-being at the level of the individual



2. Evidence from large surveys

National Child Development Study

- All babies born in GB during a week in 1958
- Followed up at 7, 11, 16, 23, 33, 42 (in 2000)
- Cohort members, parents, teachers, h.v.'s
- Representative of that cohort in Britain

- Attainment at 16
- Adult learning between 33 and 42
- Health and well being at 33 and 42
- Background factors and circumstances throughout the life course



Quantitative evidence about adult learning, mental health and well being

suggests:

- AL contributes to improvements in optimism and efficacy, increased levels of exercise and giving up smoking
- The sizes of the improvements are small but important
- The findings apply to men and women, and to those with poor school attainment



3. Evidence from in-depth interviews

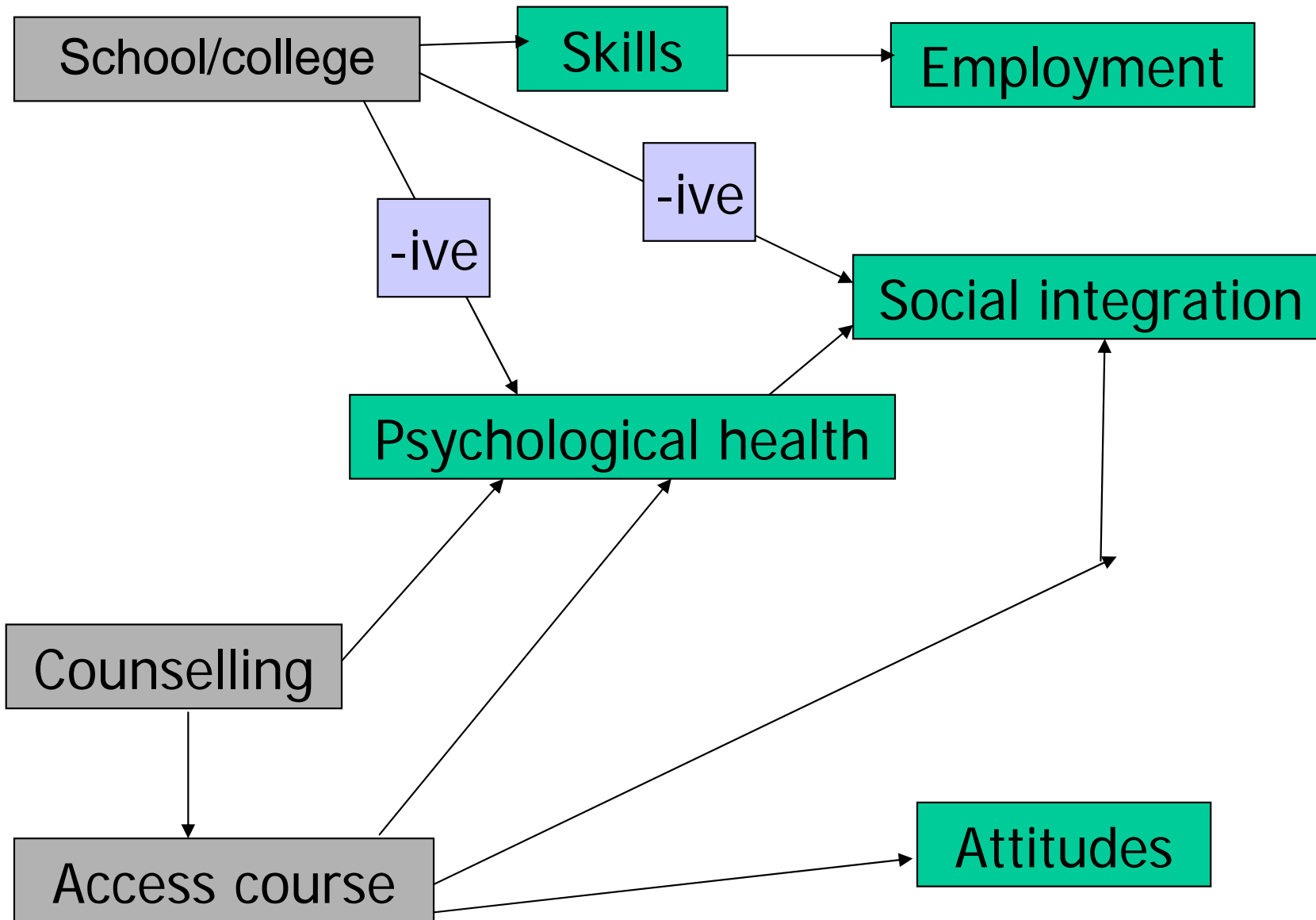
145 in-depth biographical interviews conducted with adults who were currently participating in adult learning



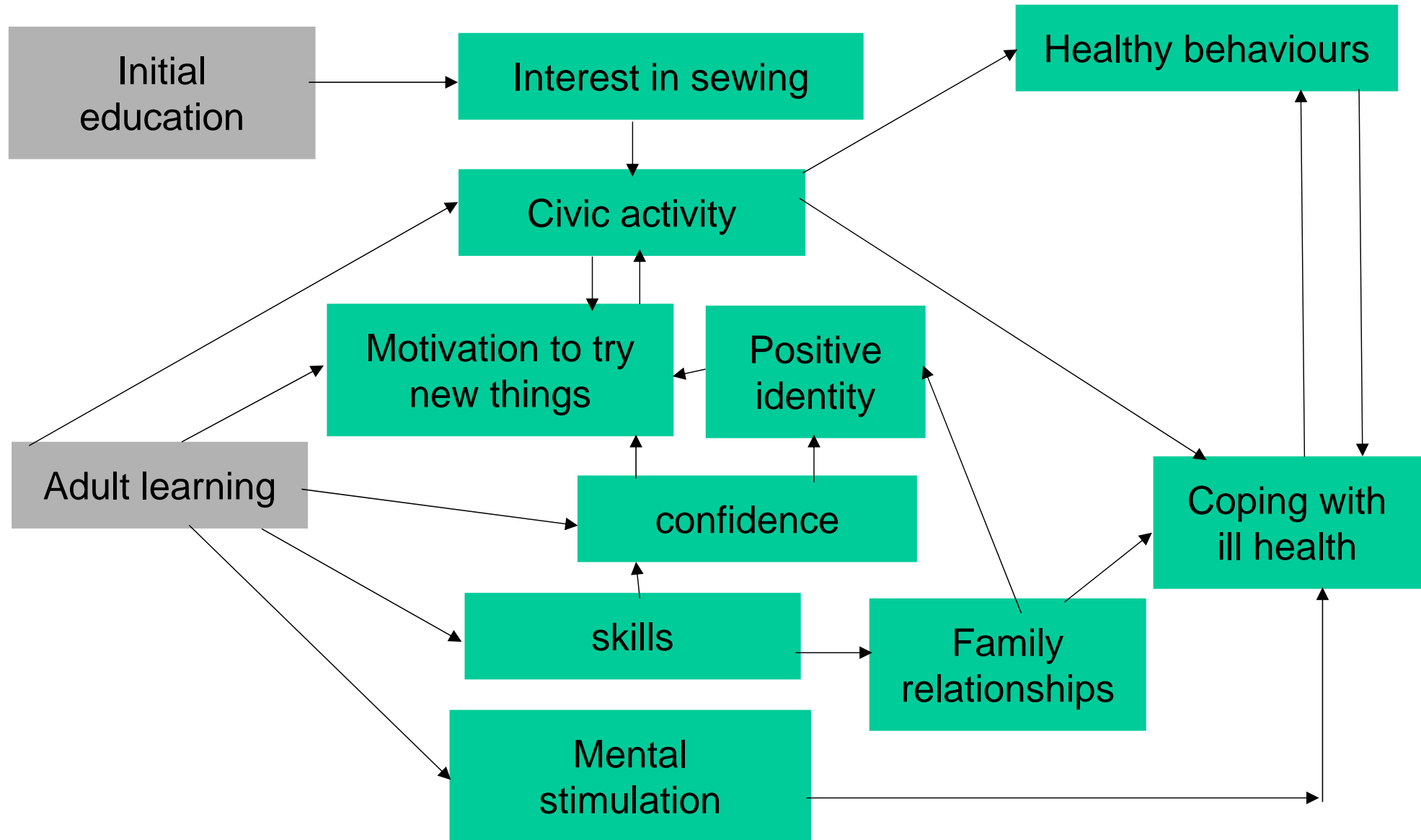
3. Evidence from in-depth interviews

- Sustaining and transforming effects of AL
- AL can promote positive health through enriching people's lives
- AL can protect against onset of depression
- AL important at times of transition
 - E.g., onset of chronic illness or disability, recovery from mental health difficulties, rehabilitation, divorce, bereavement.





Beryl



Conclusions

- Various processes through which education can promote health and well being
- Evidence that AL is part of a process of positive maintenance or change in well being and lifestyle
- AL has very important impacts on well being for some individuals at certain points in their lives
- Impacts of AL depend on the individual's personal and social circumstances

