



U.S. Department of Health
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RESIDENT FATHERS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT ADOLESCENCE (11 - 18)

Definitions and Topics

- **Resident fathers** are men who co-reside with their children.
- **Academic performance** refers to adolescents' grades, test scores, cognitive abilities, and overall school performance and functioning.
- **Father Engagement** refers to fathers' use of authoritative (demanding and responsive) parenting and direct participation in activities with the child.
- **Father Restrictiveness/Harshness and Controlling Behaviors** refer to harsh physical behaviors, criticism, and restrictive commands.
- **Father Supportiveness** refers to fathers' demonstration of support and encouragement toward his child.
- **Father Warmth/Closeness** refers to resident fathers' demonstration of warmth and affection for his child (e.g., hugging), his sensitivity to his child's needs and desires, and the degree of closeness or intimacy in the relationship between the father and his child.
- **Externalizing behavior problems** include antisocial conduct such as fighting, non-compliance, poor performance in school, delinquent behavior, and substance use.
- **Socioemotional development** refers to adolescents' mental health, self-efficacy, feelings of self-worth, and development of positive relationships with peers and other adults outside the family.

Resident Fathers and Academic achievement/ performance

Father Warmth/ Sensitivity/ Closeness

- Resident Fathers' greater emotional involvement (e.g., closeness, warmth, satisfaction with the father-child relationship) with adolescent children is associated with better educational and economic attainment in young adulthood (ages 17-22).
Source: Harris, K. M., Furstenberg, F. F., & Marmer, J. K. (1998). Paternal involvement with adolescents in intact families: The influence of fathers over the life course. *Demography*, 35(2), 201-216.

Father Engagement

- The amount of time that resident fathers spend engaged in shared activities (e.g., in leisure time, home activities, talking) with their 12- to 18-year-old adolescents has a positive influence on adolescents' academic achievement (i.e., grades).
Source: Cooksey, E. C., & Fondell, M. M. (1996). Spending time with his kids: Effects of family structure on fathers' and children's lives. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58(3), 693-707.
- Resident Fathers' behavioral involvement (doing things together, praising) with adolescent children is positively associated with better educational and economic attainment in young adulthood (ages 17-22).
Source: Harris, K. M., Furstenberg, F. F., & Marmer, J. K. (1998). Paternal involvement with adolescents in intact families: The influence of fathers over the life course. *Demography*, 35(2), 201-216.

Take Time to Be a Dad Today

- Children in grades kindergarten through 12 are more likely to do well academically, to participate in extracurricular activities, and to enjoy school and are less likely to have ever repeated a grade or to have been suspended or expelled from school if their fathers are highly involved in their schooling (e.g., attending a general school meeting, attending a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference, attending a school or class event, and serving as a volunteer at the school).
Source: Nord, C. W. (1998). *Students do better when their fathers are involved at school* (NCES 98-121). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.
- Adolescents aged 14 to 18 who report having highly involved resident fathers (e.g., fathers spend time with them, talk with them about worries, show an interest in their schooling, and help them plan for the future) report more positive attitudes toward school than adolescents who report having less involved fathers.
Source: Flouri, E., Buchanan, A., & Bream, V. (2002). Adolescents' perceptions of their fathers' involvement: Significance to school attitudes. *Psychology in the Schools, 39*(5), 575-582.

Socioemotional Development

Father Warmth/ Sensitivity/ Closeness

- Resident Fathers' emotional involvement (e.g., closeness, warmth, satisfaction with the father-child relationship) with children during adolescence is positively associated with less psychological distress in young adulthood (ages 17-22). A decrease in father involvement over the course of adolescence is associated with higher rates of depression in early adulthood.
Source: Harris, K. M., Furstenberg, F. F., & Marmar, J. K. (1998). Paternal involvement with adolescents in intact families: The influence of fathers over the life course. *Demography, 35*(2), 201-216.
- Adolescents aged 14-19 who report feeling closer to their resident fathers have higher self-esteem and fewer depressive symptoms (measured on the CES-D).
Source: Field, T., Lang, C., Yando, R., & Bendell, D. (1995). Adolescents' intimacy with parents and friends. *Adolescence, 30*(117), 133-140.
- Fifteen- and sixteen-year-old adolescents who report having a secure attachment to their resident fathers have less conflict in their peer interactions.
Source: Ducharme, J., Doyle, A. B., & Markiewicz, D. (2002). Attachment security with mother and father: Associations with adolescents' reports of interpersonal behavior with parents and peers. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 19*, 203.
- Adolescents with depressed mothers are less likely to exhibit internalizing behavior problems if they have positive, close relationships with their resident fathers.
Source: Tannenbaum, L., & Forehand, R. (1994). Maternal depressive mood: the role of the father in preventing adolescent problem behaviors. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 32*, 321-325.
- A higher-quality father-child relationship or stepfather-stepchild relationship is associated with higher self-esteem (measured by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale) among adolescents.
Source: Amato, P. R. (1986). Father involvement and the self-esteem of children and adolescents. *Australian Journal of Sex, Marriage & Family, 7*(1), 6-16.

Father Supportiveness

- Adolescents (ages 11-18) who perceive their resident fathers as being highly accepting of them (measured by the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire, Child PARQ: Father Version) exhibit better psychological adjustment (measured by the Personality Assessment Questionnaire, Child PAQ), compared with adolescents who perceive their fathers as being less accepting.
Source: Veneziano, R. A., & Rohner, R. P. (1998). Perceived paternal acceptance, paternal involvement, and youths' psychological adjustment in a rural, biracial southern community. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 335-343.
- African American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 who report that their resident fathers are significant male role models to them show fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety (measured by the Brief Symptom Inventory, BSI), compared with adolescents who report that their fathers are not significant role models.
Source: Salem, D. A., Zimmerman, M. A., & Notaro, P. C. (1998). Effects of family structure, family process, and father involvement on psychosocial outcomes among African American adolescents. *Family Relations*, 47, 331-341.
- Resident Fathers who believe it is important for females to be attractive and to be careful about their food intake are more likely to have 13-15 year old daughters who develop eating disorders (i.e., induce vomiting to lose weight).
Source: Dixon, R. S., Gill, J. M. W., & Adair, V. A. (2003). Exploring paternal influences on the dieting behaviors of adolescent girls. *Eating Disorders*, 11, 39-50.

Father Engagement

- Higher levels of resident father engagement (e.g., time spent with child, hugging child, showing interest in child's schooling, and talking with child) are associated with high levels of life satisfaction among 13-19 year old British boys. High father involvement also protects boys from extreme victimization through bullying.
Source: Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2002). Life satisfaction in teenage boys: The moderating role of father involvement and bullying. *Aggressive Behavior*, 28, 126-133.
- Adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 whose resident fathers are highly involved (e.g., spends time with child, talks through worries, helps child with school work) report they are happier and more confident than adolescents whose fathers are less involved.
Source: Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2003). The role of mother involvement and father involvement in adolescent bullying behavior. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 18(6), 634-644.
- Resident father's involvement (measured by the Inventory of Father Involvement) is positively associated with prosocial behavior (measured with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, SDQ) in 11- to 19-year-old White and Indian British adolescents. For White British boys, resident father's involvement is associated with fewer peer problems, and for White British girls, resident father's involvement is associated with fewer total difficulties, conduct problems, and peer problems (also measured with the SDQ).
Source: Flouri, E. (2005). Father's involvement and psychological adjustment in Indian and White British secondary school age children. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 10(1), 32-39.
- African American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 whose resident fathers spend more time engaged in shared activities with them show fewer symptoms of depression (measured by the Brief Symptom Inventory, BSI), compared with adolescents who report that their fathers spend less time with them.
Source: Salem, D. A., Zimmerman, M. A., & Notaro, P. C. (1998). Effects of family structure, family process, and father involvement on psychosocial outcomes among African American adolescents. *Family Relations*, 47, 331-341.

- Resident fathers' interest in their daughter's education at age 16 protects against adult psychological distress (measured by the Malaise Inventory) when daughters are adults (age 33).
Source: Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2003). The role of father involvement in children's later mental health. *Journal of Adolescence*, 26, 63–78.
- Higher resident father involvement is associated with fewer adolescent behavioral difficulties and less hyperactivity, and with higher levels of prosocial behavior in adolescents (all assessed with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire).
Source: Flouri, E. (2008). Fathering and adolescents' psychological adjustment: The role of fathers' involvement, residence and biology status. *Child Care, Health & Development*, 34(2), 152-161.

Father Restrictiveness/ Harshness and Controlling Behaviors

- Resident fathers who use more inductive disciplinary techniques (e.g., give reasons for rules, ask adolescents' opinions, reason with and explain decisions) and less harsh discipline (e.g., yelling, physical discipline) have adolescents who exhibit higher self-efficacy (i.e., a sense of mastery and control over their environments) in the seventh grade.
Source: Whitbeck, L. B., Simons, R. L., Conger, R. D., Wickrama, K. A. S., Ackley, K. A., & Elder G. H. (1997). The effects of parents' working conditions and family economic hardship on parenting behaviors and children's self-efficacy. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 60(4), 291-303.

Externalizing Behaviors

Father Warmth/ Sensitivity/ Closeness

- Adolescents who report feeling close to and having a warm, caring relationship with their resident fathers are less likely to engage in delinquent acts (i.e., violence, theft, disorder, and running away), compared with adolescents who report less closeness with their fathers.
Source: National Fatherhood Initiative. (2004). *Family structure, father closeness, and delinquency: A report from the National Fatherhood Initiative*. Gaithersburg, MD: Author.
- Adolescents who report feeling close to and having a warm, caring relationship with their resident fathers are less likely to abuse substances (i.e., smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, use inhalants, and use hard drugs), compared with adolescents who report less closeness with their fathers.
Source: National Fatherhood Initiative. (2004). *Family structure, father closeness, and drug abuse: A report from the National Fatherhood Initiative*. Gaithersburg, MD: Author.
- Resident fathers' emotional involvement (e.g., closeness, warmth, satisfaction with the father-child relationship) with adolescent children is associated with less delinquency in young adulthood (ages 17-22). A decrease in father involvement over the course of adolescence is associated with higher rates of delinquency in early adulthood.
Source: Harris, K. M., Furstenberg, F. F., & Marmer, J. K. (1998). Paternal involvement with adolescents in intact families: The influence of fathers over the life course. *Demography*, 35(2), 201-216.
- High levels of resident father support of (e.g., hugging, praising) and closeness with 5- to 18-year-old children are associated with fewer child behavior problems at home (e.g., running away, trouble with police, emotional/behavioral problems, and parent reports of how difficult the child is to raise) and at school (e.g., repeating a grade, getting suspended/expelled).
Source: Amato, P. R., & Rivera, F. (1999). Paternal involvement and children's behavior problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(2), 375-384.

- High levels of resident father closeness and supportiveness are associated with a lower likelihood that youth will engage in delinquency (e.g., carrying a gun, stealing, damaging property, selling drugs) or substance use (e.g., drug, alcohol, tobacco use).
Source: Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., Capps, R. C., & Zaff, J. (2006). The influence of father involvement on youth risk behaviors among adolescents: A comparison of native-born and immigrant families. *Social Science Research*, 35, 181-209.
- A positive father-child relationship (indicated by high levels of closeness and supportiveness) is associated with a lower likelihood that adolescents will engage in multiple risky behaviors (i.e., delinquent activities and substance use), especially for male adolescents.
Source: Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., & Carrano, J. (2006). The father-child relationship, parenting styles, and adolescent risk behaviors in intact families. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(6), 850-881.
- Adolescents with depressed mothers are less likely to exhibit externalizing behavior problems if they have a positive father-child relationship.
Source: Tannenbaum, L., & Forehand, R. (1994). Maternal depressive mood: the role of the father in preventing adolescent problem behaviors. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 32, 321-325.
- African American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 who report that their resident fathers are significant male role models to them exhibit fewer problem behaviors (including delinquency and alcohol, drug, and tobacco use), compared with adolescents who report that their fathers are not significant role models.
Source: Salem, D. A., Zimmerman, M. A., & Notaro, P. C. (1998). Effects of family structure, family process, and father involvement on psychosocial outcomes among African American adolescents. *Family Relations*, 47, 331-341.

Father Engagement

- High levels of resident father engagement (e.g., eating together, engaging in activities, playing, talking, helping with homework) with their 5- to 18-year-old children are associated with fewer child behavior problems at home (e.g., running away, trouble with police, emotional/behavioral problems, and parent reports of how difficult the child is to raise) and at school (e.g., repeating a grade, getting suspended/expelled).
Source: Amato, P. R., & Rivera, F. (1999). Paternal involvement and children's behavior problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(2), 375-384.
- Resident fathers' greater behavioral involvement (doing things together, praising) with adolescent children is associated with less delinquency in young adulthood (ages 17-22). A decrease in father involvement over the course of adolescence is associated with higher rates of delinquency in early adulthood.
Source: Harris, K. M., Furstenberg, F. F., & Marmor, J. K. (1998). Paternal involvement with adolescents in intact families: The influence of fathers over the life course. *Demography*, 35(2), 201-216.
- Boys whose resident fathers were highly involved (e.g., took child on outings, read to child, managed child, showed interest in child's education) at age 7 are less likely to report having been in trouble with the law at age 16.
Source: Flouri, E. & Buchanan, A. (2002). Father involvement in childhood and trouble with the police in adolescence: Findings from the 1958 British Cohort. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17, 689-701.
- High levels of paternal monitoring are associated with a lower likelihoods that youth will engage in a first act of delinquency (e.g., carrying a gun, stealing, damaging property, selling drugs) or substance use (e.g., drug, alcohol, tobacco use).
Source: Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., Capps, R. C., & Zaff, J. (2006). The influence of father involvement on youth risk behaviors among adolescents: A comparison of native-born and immigrant families. *Social Science Research*, 35, 181-209.

- Resident father's involvement (measured by the Inventory of Father Involvement) is positively associated with prosocial behavior (measured with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, SDQ) in 11- to 19-year-old White and Indian British adolescents. For White British boys, father's involvement is associated with fewer peer problems, and for White British girls, father's involvement is associated with fewer total difficulties, conduct problems, and peer problems (also measured with the SDQ).

Source: Flouri, E. (2005). Father's involvement and psychological adjustment in Indian and White British secondary school age children. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 10*(1), 32–39.

- African American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 whose resident fathers spend more time engaged in shared activities with them exhibit fewer problem behaviors (including delinquency and alcohol, drug, and tobacco use), compared with adolescents who report that their fathers spend less time with them.

Source: Salem, D. A., Zimmerman, M. A., & Notaro, P. C. (1998). Effects of family structure, family process, and father involvement on psychosocial outcomes among African American adolescents. *Family Relations, 47*, 331-341.

- A high level of resident father involvement with 10- to 14-year-old adolescents (e.g., how often he talks and shares with his adolescent, listens to his adolescent, knows who his adolescent is with, spends time with his adolescent, attends important events/activities, is close to his adolescent) is associated with fewer adolescent internalizing and externalizing problems (measured by the BPI), less adolescent delinquency (e.g., violence, theft, property damage), and lower incidence of negative feelings (e.g., sadness, nervousness, boredom, loneliness), compared with lower levels of father involvement.

Source: Carlson, M. J. (2006). Family structure, father involvement and adolescent behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 68*(1), 137-154.

Father Restrictiveness/ Harshness and Controlling Behaviors

- Resident fathers who have an authoritarian parenting style (characterized by high demandingness and low responsiveness) have youth who are more likely to engage in a first act of delinquency (e.g., carrying a gun, stealing, damaging property, selling drugs) or substance use (e.g., drug, alcohol, tobacco use) during adolescence.

Source: Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., Capps, R. C., & Zaff, J. (2006). The influence of father involvement on youth risk behaviors among adolescents: A comparison of native-born and immigrant families. *Social Science Research, 35*, 181-209.

- Resident fathers who have an authoritarian parenting style (controlling and strict) are more likely to have adolescents who engage in delinquent activity and substance use. However, when the father-child relationship is positive (i.e., there is a high level of closeness and supportiveness), authoritarian parenting is less negatively associated with adolescent delinquency and substance use.

Source: Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., & Carrano, J. (2006). The father-child relationship, parenting styles, and adolescent risk behaviors in intact families. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*(6), 850-881.