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**PARENT-CHILD CONCORDANCE REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF BULLYING IN  
EARLY ADOLESCENCE**

A Dissertation in

School Psychology

by

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## ABSTRACT

Bullying and peer victimization are international phenomena that can lead to, or worsen a child's emotional problems, having lasting effects into adulthood (Arsenault, 2017; Holt, Kaufman Kantor, & Finkelhor, 2009; Calvete, Fernandez-Gonzalez, Gonzalez-Cabrera, & Gamez-Guadix, 2018). Parent involvement has been known to be a protective factor for youth across a variety of domains (Kelly et al., 2012; Stone, 2006; Pelgrina, Garcia-Linares, & Casanova, 2003; Sheldon, 2002). However, parents and caregivers and their youth often have differing views on the prevalence of bullying and victimization (Pelgrina et al., 2003). Previous research has shown that results are mixed as to whether parental monitoring and positive parent-child relationships have an effect on bullying behaviors (Shetgiri et al., 2012; Stavrinides et al., 2015; Top et al., 2017). The current study sought to add to the previous literature by examining the factors that affect caregiver and youth ratings of bullying and victimization behaviors. It was hypothesized that caregiver involvement, supervision and rules, positive parenting, and caregiver perceptions of youth friend group would have a significant effect on both youth and caregiver-reported bullying and victimization behaviors. Furthermore, youth and caregiver agreement on victimization behaviors was assessed through intra-class correlations; it was hypothesized that agreement ratings would fall in a low-to-medium range. Results from the current study indicated that caregiver involvement was a significant factor in reduced caregiver reporting of youth aggression and social problems. Surprisingly, caregiver reported positive parenting and parental monitoring were not significant. Youth-reported positive parenting had a significant effect on both victimization-related and bullying-related behaviors. Supervision and rules was also a significant factor in youth-reported sense of safety and popularity metrics. Contrary to previous research, youth-reported caregiver involvement was not a significant factor across the dependent

variables. Concordance between youth and caregiver ratings of victimization behaviors did support previous research studies' findings, as agreement between the raters fell in a low range.

*Keywords:* bullying, victimization, parent involvement, parent-child agreement, low socio-economic status

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

Bullying and peer victimization are international phenomena that may occur throughout a child's developmental years. Persistent bullying can lead to, or worsen, a child's emotional problems, as well as negatively impact their social well-being (Arseneault, 2017; Holt, Kaufman Kantor, & Finkelhor, 2009; National Association School Psychologists [NASP], 2012). Bullying can also have a lasting effect on individuals into adulthood, including higher rates of delinquency for individuals who perpetuate bullying behaviors, and higher rates of depressive symptoms for individuals who have been victimized (Arseneault, 2017; Calvete, Fernandez-Gonzalez, Gonzalez-Cabrera, & Gamez-Guadix, 2018). It is estimated that between one in four and one in three students in the United States report having been bullied at school (Stopbullying.gov, 2017). Furthermore, individuals from marginalized populations, such as sexual minority youth or individuals with disabilities, experience higher rates of bullying and victimization (Stopbullying.gov, 2017; NASP, 2012).

Given the high rate of prevalence of bullying, it is one of the major concerns for parents as their children age (Holt et al., 2009). There is often a disconnect between what adults believe about bullying, and what children and adolescents experience. The disconnection between adults and children is due, in part, to misconceptions about the definition of bullying, and to children and adolescents not reporting the behaviors when they occur (Holt et al., 2009; Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). When children and adolescents report bullying, they are more likely to tell their parents rather than an adult at school (Demaray et al., 2013; Holt et al., 2009; Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Despite the pattern of reporting between children and adults, there is still a dearth of research comparing parental and child perceptions of bullying. Previous research has shown that while parents know more about their child's victimization than teachers, there is still

a gap between parents' knowledge of their child, or children, being bullied which may make it impossible for parents to advocate for and support their children when necessary (Demaray et al., 2013; Holt et al., 2009). Thus, it is important to further understand what factors may influence parental perceptions of bullying and victimization, in order to better involve parents in bullying prevention and intervention efforts.

### **Parental Involvement and Child Outcomes**

Knowledge about bullying for children is related, more broadly, to parental knowledge of and participation in their children's education overall. It is widely understood that parental involvement in their child's education leads to positive academic and behavioral outcomes for children (Kelly et al., 2012; Stone, 2006; Pelgrina, Garcia-Linares, & Casanova, 2003; Sheldon, 2002). When parents take a stake in their child's social and emotional wellbeing, it leads to more prosocial outcomes for children (Park & Holloway, 2013; Kelly et al., 2012; Pelgrina et al., 2003). However, when children reach the age of adolescence, parents tend to disengage from academics and students' achievement is affected (Im, Hughes, & West, 2016).

Researchers Im, Hughes, and West (2016) examined the trajectories of friends' and parents' school involvement across early adolescence and its relationship to academic achievement. The researchers found in their urban, lower-socioeconomic status (SES) sample, that parental involvement trajectories regarding knowledge of school did not directly predict engagement or achievement, but that friends' school involvement during early adolescence directly predicted later behavioral engagement and achievement (Im et al., 2016). They also found a pattern of decline in parental knowledge of school activities (Im et al., 2016). The researchers noted that friends' involvement combined with parent knowledge predicted different academic outcomes, as well as contributed to the sense of school belonging. The influence of

peers and their attitudes towards schooling can affect adolescent engagement in school and academic performance, but the importance of parental knowledge, though not directly related to achievement and belonging, can play a part in later success as well. One limitation of the study, however, was the lack of questions related to parental engagement and involvement with school activities (Im et al., 2016). Further, the study failed to examine social-emotional outcomes. It would be beneficial to examine the parental perception of peer influences, which more directly relate to an understanding of when social interaction goes wrong as in the case of bullying, in conjunction with parental knowledge of school behaviors, to see what level of influence they play in academic achievement and socio-emotional adjustment in adolescents.

Given that most developmental concerns are multiply determined, it is important to look at involvement through a bioecological lens, and consider the factors that may influence parental involvement in adolescence as development occurs in nested contexts (e.g., neighborhoods, schools, classrooms, social groups). Sheldon (2002) argued through his research that parents' social networks and beliefs affect the degree to which parents are involved in their child's education. His research showed the relationship between parents and education involved more variables than just parent and child; instead, parents are social actors whose networks influence involvement not only with their child, but with the school and other parents as well (Sheldon, 2002). In light of the impact of parent social context on broader school involvement, it is possible that parents' social networks also influence their perceptions of children's social wellbeing. A parent's understanding of their child's friendships and interactions with peers may be influenced through the parent's knowledge about said friendships, as well as interactions with other parents.

## **Parenting and Bullying**

Parent influence on child outcomes as part of a whole-child view of development has been consistently studied, yet study of the concordance between parent and child reports of bullying are limited. One study examined parent and child concordance about bullying involvement, and family characteristics related to bullying and peer victimization (Holt et al., 2009). Holt and colleagues (2009) found that rates of reported bullying were higher from students than parents, and parents were generally unaware of their children's behaviors. This research supported the notion that students are not always forthcoming with their parents about information about school, finding a weak concordance between parent and child reports of bullying involvement (Holt et al., 2009). The researchers found that students who experience physical bullying are less likely to tell their parents about their experiences (Holt et al., 2009). Previous research has shown that students are less likely to report bullying out of fear of retaliation, assumptions that adults will not help, and perceptions that the incident is not serious enough (Smith & Myron-Wilson, 1998).

One of the primary channels by which children and adolescents learn behaviors is from their parents and caregivers. The level and type of parental involvement has an effect on child behavior outcomes, well into adulthood (Hill, Witherspoon, & Bartz, 2016; Ahmed, Minnaert, van der Werf, & Kuyper, 2010; Sheldon, 2002). There is research showing that lower levels of parental involvement are linked to increased bullying behavior (Holt et al.; Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). There have been consistent findings regarding family characteristics and level of involvement in bullying, either as a bully, victim, or bully-victim. Bullying behavior is often linked to more authoritarian families that lack warmth and structure, as well as less parental involvement from both mothers and/or fathers (Holt et al., 2009). Victims tend to come from

families with high levels of cohesion, high conflict, and often live in a lower SES environment (Holt et al., 2009). Further, male victims tend to have overly close relationships with their mothers, while female victims tend to have mothers who withdraw love (Holt et al., 2009). There is less research regarding family characteristics of bully-victims, or individuals who engage in both perpetration and are victimized, but what research has been conducted has shown that their parents are often less warm and more overprotective, provide inconsistent discipline, and their families have low levels of cohesion (Holt et al., 2009).

Espalage, Bosworth, and Simon (2000) conducted a study examining the social context of bullying behaviors in early adolescence. The focus of the study looked at the associations between bullying behavior and social atmospheres of middle school students, including the parent influences, peer influences, and other contextual factors. Espalage and colleagues (2000) found that family physical discipline was associated with bullying behavior, and that students who spend a great amount of time without adults are more likely to engage in bullying behavior. These findings emphasize the importance of examining the relationship between caregiver and child, understanding the levels of communication, and the family processes, in order to create a more complete picture of bullying behaviors in early adolescence.

### **Changes in Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement in their child's life is important in every aspect of the child's development. Parental involvement in their child's schooling is especially important, even into the secondary school level (Pelgrina et al., 2003). Despite the importance of parental involvement in their child's schooling, parental involvement in school tends to decline over time (Park & Holloway, 2013). In a study examining parents' at-home and at-school academic involvement with middle school students, Shunnow and Miller (2001) found that parents tend to

support their children more when they are doing poorly. In addition, they found that children who do well in school might have parents who are more likely to be involved (Shunnow & Miller, 2001). The researchers identified barriers to parental involvement, including contact between parents and child, as well as parents being able to initiate contact with school personnel (Shunnow & Miller, 2001). With research showing that parental involvement declines in middle school, and rates of bullying increase in the middle school years, it is important to analyze potential links between the two phenomena. Given that there are parents who feel less efficacious with interfacing with school personnel, it is important that factors be examined so that professionals may take steps to reach out more with those families that are more likely to feel unable to advocate for their child.

Hill, Witherspoon, and Bartz (2016) found in their research that both parents and youth believe that parents should be involved in middle school, but middle schools are often characterized by increased hierarchy and bureaucracy, thus making it difficult for parents to build relationships with school personnel. Research from Deslandes and Bertrand (2005) supported this notion of difficulty with interfacing with school personnel at the high school level, finding that parents will become involved in their adolescent's education if they believe their child wants them to do so. It is important for school personnel to make regular contact with parents, not just when students are struggling, in order to build connections between school and home, and encourage parents to continue to be involved in their child's education. With parents being less involved in their child's education, they may be less inclined to notice whether their child is being bullied. Even if parents were aware of bullying, parents may not know the best way to interact with school professionals to support their child. Furthermore, if children feel as if their parents are not invested in their education or activities, or that their parents do not know



how to work with their teachers or administrators, they may be less likely to report bullying to their parents.

### **Perceptual Differences Between Parents and Adolescents**

Adolescence is marked by a variety of changes, both mentally and physically. During this time, there is a shift in the parent-child relationship, from a more hierarchical relationship, to an increase in autonomy from the adolescent, and a grappling with this change from the parent (Lester, Mander, & Cross, 2015). During adolescence, parents and children tend to think differently about aspects of life, including perceptions of the family environment, and bullying. In a study regarding parents' and adolescents' ability to predict academic competence, Pelgrina, Garcia-Linares, and Casanova (2003) reported in their study that levels of concordance between parents and adolescents about family variables are low to moderate. They also found that correlations between parents and children regarding dimensions such as involvement, support, and decision-making were low or moderate (Pelgrina et al., 2003). The researchers reported that adolescents tend to rate family characteristics more negatively, while parents tend to exaggerate dimensions such as acceptance and discipline (Pelgrina et al., 2003). Because individual respondents can only report based on their own vantage point and given that parents and adolescents are doing different kinds of developmental work in their individual lives, the keeper of the "truth" in reporting is probably somewhere in the middle. However, family dimensions and characteristics are not the only areas in which parents and adolescents report different views. Parents and adolescents also have differences in reporting regarding bullying behaviors and involvement.

Holt, Kaufman Kantor, and Finkelhor's (2009) study examining parent and child concordance of bullying involvement used frequency analyses to gain a level of understanding of

parent and adolescent attitudes towards bullying. They found that there was a weak concordance between parent and child reports of bullying involvement, with fewer parents believing their child had been bullied than reported (Holt et al., 2009). While over half of the students told their parents when they were being picked on, parents were less likely to accurately report whether their child was teasing another student (Holt et al., 2009). Some of the discrepancy in reporting may be due to findings that children do not always tell their parents when they are being bullied (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Although children and adolescents failing to report bullying may account for some of the discrepancy, research has also shown that the gender of the child can also affect the level of agreement between parent and child.

In a study examining bullying in Greek elementary schools, Houndoumadi and Pateraki (2001) found that female students reported that their parents talked to them about being bullied more often than for male students. Additionally, they found that one quarter of the students reported they had been bullied, but did not tell anyone, and that females were more likely to report their victimization than males (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Researchers Demaray, Malecki, Secord, and Lyell (2013) sought to understand agreement between students', teachers', and parents' perceptions of victimization and bullying. They found that both parents and teachers underreported rates of bullying, with parents being slightly more accurate (Demaray et al., 2013). Students reported highest levels of victimization, and teachers reported the lowest (Demaray et al., 2013). Parents and their children had higher levels of agreement at the lower grade levels with both their male and female children (i.e., third and fourth grade), but as their children aged, the level of agreement between them declined (Demaray et al., 2013). At the fifth and sixth grade level, parent ratings were related to male students, but not female students; additionally, when the researchers used Cohen's kappa to estimate the agreement between raters,

parents and male students showed stronger levels of agreement than parents and girls in the overall third through eighth grade sample (Demaray et al., 2013). Further and future studies should seek to understand why these gender differences occur, so that parents can serve as more effective advocates for their children.

### **Trends in Bullying Behavior**

Researchers are often interested in the trends and rates of bullying throughout the developmental period. There are many theories surrounding why students bully one another, including social dominance theory (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). The social dominance theory posits that bullying may be a way in which adolescents manage peers and dominance in relationships as they transition into new social groups (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). Previous findings in the research have been consistent, stating that bullying generally increases during middle school (Lester et al., 2015; Nocentini, Mensini, & Salmivalli, 2013; Pepler et al., 2006; Pellegrini & Long, 2002). Generally, bullying tends to increase during early childhood, peak in early to middle adolescence, and decline by late adolescence (Nocentini et al., 2013). Much of the previous research on bullying has focused on the middle school years, with fewer studies examining the transition to high school. In their research study examining the developmental perspective on bullying, Pepler and her colleagues (2006) found that reports of bullying tend to be highest around school transitions, with the lowest levels of bullying at the end of high school. While middle school years are often characterized with a variety of transitions, both educationally and physically, the transition to high school also marks a variety of change and social anxiety.

In a study examining bullying behavior following students' transition to a secondary boarding school context, Lester, Mander, and Cross (2015) noted an increase and prevalence of

bullying behaviors over the course of the first year of secondary school. Lester and colleagues also found a sustained level of bullying behavior over the first two years of secondary school (Lester et al., 2015). The results from this research show there is a need to further study students in their transition to high school, and that this time of transition may be a critical period for improving psychoeducation for both parents and educators regarding the trends in bullying behaviors, so that parents may be able to more effectively support their adolescents against the negative effects of bullying, or reduce participation in bullying behaviors.

### **Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

Clearly, bullying behaviors and peer victimization have lasting effects for students. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has made a strong statement urging school personnel to decrease rates of bullying, as well as incorporating parents and caregivers more in the school setting (NASP, 2012). With the combination of parental involvement decreasing through a child's schooling, and the lack of agreement between parents and children's reports on bullying behaviors, it is important to examine parent knowledge of bullying and other involvement factors further (Hill et al., 2016; Park & Holloway, 2013; Holt et al., 2009; Shunnow & Miller, 2001). Past research regarding parental ability to recognize bullying behaviors and victimization in their children have been disheartening (Demeray et al., 2013; Holt et al., 2009). It is imperative that future research aids in understanding the discrepancy between parents and their youth, and the factors that influence parental perceptions of bullying and victimization. Thus, the current study aims to help fill the gap in the research surrounding parent and adolescent concordance around bullying behaviors and victimization. There are two primary aims of the current study:

- What are the factors that affect caregiver and youth ratings of bullying behaviors and victimization?
  - It is hypothesized that caregiver monitoring, positive parenting practices, caregiver involvement, and caregiver perceptions of youth friendships will have a significant effect on both youth and caregiver reporting of bullying and victimization behaviors.
- How accurate are caregivers' perceptions compared to youth report of bullying behaviors?
  - It is hypothesized that youth will report higher rates of bullying behaviors than caregivers, and based on previous research, concordance between youth and caregivers will fall within a low to medium range.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Literature Review**

The overarching purpose of the study is to further understand the caregiver-youth relationship in regards to parental ability to perceive youth participation in bullying, as either bully or victim. The following literature review will outline the guiding theoretical framework, explore the previous literature in trends in bullying, and previous literature on parental involvement and its effect on the caregiver-youth relationship. The literature review begins with an overview of the guiding theoretical framework. In order to complete sound research, it is important to understand how frameworks and theories guide perceptions of phenomena. By reviewing the previous literature regarding the developmental trends in bullying, one can familiarize oneself with the lasting effects, the rates of occurrences, and be able to formulate hypotheses and guide future research. Bullying does not operate within a vacuum, thus understanding and reviewing previous research on parental involvement and the parent-youth relationship creates a more comprehensive understanding of the context surrounding bullying, as well as identifies areas for psychoeducation and prevention efforts. The final section of the literature review is an integrated view of the overall rationale and aims that guide the research.

### **Guiding Theoretical Framework**

In order to fully understand a particular phenomenon, it is important to conceptually understand the influence of the intersecting facets of an individual's life. The influences of a child's home life will have an effect on how they behave with others at school. Parenting styles can also influence a child's behavior, and the interaction between home and school life can create lasting effects on a child academically and socially. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory is the main guiding framework for the research. Traditionally, when Bronfenbrenner's

bioecological theory is discussed or tested, researchers typically focus on the systems within his model (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009). Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory consists of systems that interact with one another to best describe the behavior and outcomes of an individual. Bronfenbrenner's identified systems are the *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *exosystem*, *macrosystem*, and *temporal components*.

Microsystems include the people and places which directly affect or interact with an individual (Tudge et. al, 2009). For example, microsystems would include the school the adolescent attends, and the friends he or she interacts with regularly. Mesosystems encompass the interactions between an individual's microsystems (Tudge et. al, 2009). Mesosystems include the link between home and school, including instances of bullying that occur via the internet or bullying that results from certain social groups targeting other peer groups for victimization. The exosystem refers to the links between indirect systems that affect an individual (e.g., parent's stress in the workplace indirectly impacting a child in the home; Tudge et. al, 2009). The present study will focus on caregiver and youth perceptions of involvement, and whether the accuracy of caregiver perceptions of involvement or friend group influence caregiver perceptions of bullying behavior. The macrosystem is typically defined as the society's culture and values, beliefs and ideas, as well as political climate (Tudge et. al, 2009); for example, the potential differences in maternal and paternal involvement, as the culture surrounding parenting significantly differs depending on the gender of the parent (McBride & Rane, 1997).

Although Bronfenbrenner's model contains different systems to address factors that may influence an individual, it is the *proximal processes* that makes the theory complex and are often forgotten (Tudge et. al, 2009; Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). The proximal processes are

fundamental to the theory, and are enduring patterns of interaction between an individual and his environment (e.g., people, places, things; Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). For example, instances of bullying tend to occur in locations where there is minimal adult supervision (Moon & Fiftal Alarid, 2015). Proximal processes can affect developmental outcomes, but attention needs to be paid to the person, context, and the outcome under consideration (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). For example, SES and neighborhood can act as proximal processes for an individual. These macro- and microsystem factors can have an impact on parental stress levels, which in turn has an effect on parent-child interactions, family processes, and parenting practices (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). Further, increased family and parenting stress impacts child positive and negative social behaviors, as well as academic outcomes (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). Parent-child interactions and parenting practices can be conceptualized as the function of proximal processes, and help researchers and practitioners understand how human development is affected. The interaction between these systems, as well as proximal processes are fundamental for understanding the potential influences on both parental perceptions of involvement, adolescent friend group, and adolescent behaviors, as well as those of the child. The study seeks to examine how the parent-child relationship, as well as parental perceptions of other aspects of the adolescent's life, affects the accuracy of perceptions of bullying, and understanding what factors may influence the level of accuracy. By taking a comprehensive approach to examining individual's perceptions of behaviors, one is taking a more realistic approach understanding to social relationships.

### **Definitions and Trends in Bullying**

Bullying is a negative persistent aspect of childhood and adolescence. It has been reported that between 20-25% of youth are involved in bullying as perpetrators, victims, or both (Juvonen & Graham, 2014). In order to address the problem of bullying, a key factor is



understanding how it is defined by those who study it or are involved in it. Olweus (1994) is one of the major researchers in the bullying literature, and defines bullying as “repeated aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions and an imbalance of power or strength.” This definition has been used in many of the previous studies regarding bullying, its implications, and developing effective prevention and interventions. The definition of bullying has been expanded to include intent to harm, as either being physical or relational, direct or indirect, can be perpetrated by a group or victim, and the victims can either be a group or a single individual (Demray et al., 2013). One of the issues in linking research to practice is that the researchers’ definition of bullying often does not reflect the definitions of students, teachers, or parents (Thomas, Connor, Baguley, & Scott, 2016). Furthermore, there are differences in defining bullying between students, parents, and teachers (Demaray et al., 2013). The differences in defining bullying can point to areas for psychoeducation for caregivers and teachers alike. While the study does not seek to create a new definition of bullying to capture the thoughts of both adults and children, the study seeks to contribute to the research by further understanding the factors that influence caregiver perceptions of bullying and victimization.

There is no singular definition of aggression in regards to bullying. Generally speaking, aggression is defined as anger directed at an object, human, or animal that causes damage or harm (Smeets et al., 2017). Aggression can be broadly divided into two branches: proactive and reactive aggression (Smeets et al., 2017). Reactive aggression refers to a response to provocations or frustration, and are often seen as impulsive (Smeets et al., 2017). Proactive aggression refers to conscious and planned actions (Smeets et al., 2017). There are a variety of ways in which an individual can be targeted, or target another. *Physical aggression* in regards to bullying are the acts of hitting, kicking, or otherwise causing harm through physical means.

Physical aggression was measured through the study by items looking at whether the child threatens, gets into fights, or otherwise attacks people. *Verbal aggression* consists of behaviors related to name calling or taunting. Items such as “teases a lot” are targeting the frequency of such behaviors. *Relational aggression* and *indirect aggression* refer to the use of social relationships to cause harm; indirect aggression typically uses third parties to spread rumors and gossip, as well as social exclusion (Smith, Cowie, Olafsson, & Liefhoghe, 2002). Relational aggression pertains more to the consequences of negative acts and the intent to damage relationships (Smith et al., 2002). *Instrumental aggression* specifies that harming the target of aggression is a secondary goal to the perpetrator’s overall outcome (Sherrill & Bradell, 2017).

Measuring bullying and victimization can be challenging. While bullying is widely researched, it is often based on self-report data, which is in its nature, flawed. One can approximate engagement in bullying behaviors, or if one is being victimized, through patterns of responses from multiple informants. Researchers Hong, Kim, and Piquero (2017) found in their study that adolescents and youth who associate themselves with deviant peers are more likely to be exposed to and engage in deviant behaviors, including perpetration of bullying. They argued that the quality of peer relationships who are involved in bullying needs to be considered in future studies (Hong et al., 2017).

In addition to examining peer relationships and peer associations, youth sense of safety and social isolation have been linked to higher rates of peer victimization. Researchers Hutzell and Payne (2012) found in their research that students who have experienced bullying are more likely to avoid locations in and around schools. They found that students who have been made fun of, excluded, have had rumors spread about them, or have experienced physical bullying are more likely to feel unsafe and avoid school (Hutzell & Payne, 2012). In a study on friendless

adolescents and perceived social threats, researchers Lessard and Juvonen (2018) hypothesized that an absence of friends at school would increase the likelihood of youth viewing their school as unsafe and threatening. They found an indirect relationship between difficulties with peers sixth and increased internalizing difficulties in eighth grade (Lessard & Juvonen, 2018).

Additionally, victims of bullying often have fewer friends and are rejected by classmates more often than non-involved peers (Spriggs, Iannotti, Nansel, & Haynie, 2007). While bullies are also often disliked by peers, they are typically less socially isolated, due to popularity amongst other aggressive and deviant peers (Spriggs et al., 2007). It is prudent to examine these indirect environmental and social factors when considering youth who may be victimized.

In order to understand the factors that influence caregiver perceptions of bullying and victimization in youth, it is important to understand how bullying changes throughout the school years. Additionally, it is important to understand how caregivers and teachers typically perceive and respond to bullying as children age. By understanding how bullying and perceptions of bullying shift throughout development and school, parent and teacher psychoeducation can be better tailored to suit the needs of the students.

### **Bullying in Elementary School**

Although school grouping practices may vary, generally speaking, elementary school is typically categorized as school serving kindergarten through fifth grade. Elementary schools typically focus on the foundations of education, teaching students the skills necessary for middle school, high school, and life. Typically, students will remain in one or a core group of classrooms, and associate with the same cohort of peers and teachers. Children typically report more instances of bullying in elementary school than in middle or high school (Demaray et al., 2013; Houndomadi & Pateraki, 2001). There has been a link between lower achievement and

being involved with bullying, as either a victim or bully (Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010). Students who experience higher rates of victimization also have negative feelings about school and fear of school, reduced student functioning including poor mental health outcomes, and lower academic achievement (Wang, Brittain, McDougall, & Vaillancourt, 2016; Erginoz et al., 2015).

Another aspect to consider in elementary school are students' thoughts and perceptions around bullies and victimization. A study conducted with Greek elementary students assessed student attitudes towards bullying (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). In the study assessing 1,312 students aged seven to 11-years-old, the researchers found that students typically report that bullying behavior bothers most students, and about half of the students reported they do not know if their teachers recognize that people are being bullied (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). They found that girls reported victimization more than boys, and that parents of girls are more likely to talk to them about being bullied than boys (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Within this study, one quarter of the students who reported they had been bullied did not tell anyone, and of those who chose to report, about half of them chose their parents (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001).

The study also assessed whether students empathized with the bullies or victims, and found that more bullies than victims were able to "understand" bullying behavior (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Houndoumadi and Pateraki's (2001) research examined individuals who are more likely to bully their not well-liked peers. Boys were more likely to report that victims "deserved it," and expressed that they perceive bullies or bully-victims to be cool (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Given the gender differential on the acceptability of bullying behavior, boys may need to be included in more conversations about bullying, and encourage all children to

report bullying to parents and teachers. It is concerning that students were unsure if teachers were aware of occurrences of bullying. Previous research has shown that rates of bullying are higher in schools with greater conflict and in environments where students feel unsafe (Swearer et al., 2010). This research highlights the importance of early psychoeducation for parents on how to talk to children about bullying, especially boys, and for teachers on creating a safe learning environment as well as recognizing instances of bullying in their students.

### **Bullying in Middle School**

The middle school years are classified by students in sixth through eighth grade; students begin to learn more complex topics, as well as build on problem-solving skills. There is also a change in the environment in middle school, as students now move between classrooms and teachers for different course subjects. Teasing is common between middle schoolers (Espelage et al., 2000). The transition to middle school is coupled with an increase in bullying and victimization as smaller “feeder” schools at the elementary level are being funneled in to a larger, new school environment (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). The entire climate of a school can be negatively affected by bullying, and research has shown that students are less likely to come forward if they feel their school is tolerant of bullying (Unnever & Cornell, 2004; Espelage et al., 2000). Similar to the associations with achievement in elementary school, participation in bullying, as either a victim or bully, is linked to lower levels of achievement, as well as a lower sense of competence (Lopez & DuBois, 2005).

There are similar social-emotional outcomes for middle school students as there are for elementary school children. Bullying has a negative impact on bullies and victims alike, as victimization and rejection lead to lowered feelings of self-worth (Lopez & DuBois, 2005). Chronic victimization may overwhelm children’s resources, affecting coping mechanisms, and

damaging their adjustment to school (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Chronic victimization may also lead to feeling less competent in social skills and an ability to get along with peers, thus creating additional social difficulties later in adolescence (Lopez & DuBois, 2005).

Similar to previous research conducted by Houndoumadi and Pateraki (2001), Pellegrini and Long (2002) examined rates of bullying and perceptions of bullying for middle school students. Pellegrini and Long (2002) found that boys were more likely to view bullying and proactive aggression more positively as they progress through early adolescence. Pellegrini and Long (2002) define proactive aggression as being used reactively, or used in response to a provocation. The dominance theory guides the research, and posits that bullying is used by middle schoolers as a way to establish dominance between peers (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). Pellegrini and Long (2002) found in their research that boys were more likely to use aggression, defined through direct observations of physical aggression, threats, or insults. Their findings support Espelage and colleagues' (2000) study examining the social context of bullying in middle school. The results indicated that males report participating in bullying behaviors in higher rates than female students. The change in the schooling atmosphere, coupled with the increased rates of bullying, especially for boys, indicates a need for early targeted psychoeducation for teachers and parents.

In the elementary school years, rates of reporting bullying were not as high as researchers found instances of bullying (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). The trend of underreporting bullying continues and increases in middle school as older students are even less likely to come forward to report bullying (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Under-reporting of bullying occurs for a variety of reasons, from older students having a desire to be more autonomous and independent, to fear of retaliation (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Other contributing factors to under-reporting include

student desire to maintain peer status, or they have stronger support groups and coping skills (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). When there is a more negative school climate, students are more likely to believe school staff will do little to intervene when bullying occurs (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). However, Unnever and Cornell (2004) found in their study examining reports of bullying in middle school students that when students are more frequently bullied, they are more likely to report it. Unnever and Cornell (2004) also found that the type of bullying (physical or relational) does not affect the rate of reporting, instead the frequency of bullying indicates whether students report.

Similar to students in elementary school, girls are more willing to seek help than boys (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). The researchers found that when examining the options of telling somebody or telling nobody, boys were less likely to report bullying (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). When comparing rates of reporting to an adult versus another peer, boys were more likely to tell an adult than girls; girls were more likely to report the incident to another peer (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Peer relationships become especially important to girls in middle school and early adolescence, so it is not surprising that girls are less likely to report to an adult than boys (Wang & Holcombe, 2010). Future psychoeducation and interventions should be tailored to increase overall rates of reporting, and target females to report their victimization not only to a peer, but to a trusted adult as well.

In order to more fully understand bullying as a whole, it is important to get an ecological understanding of all of the influences in a youth's life. Therefore, it is important to look at family processes that may influence the level of perpetration or victimization. Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon's (2000) examination of the social contexts of bullying behaviors looked at the family dynamic factors that were linked to perpetration of bullying behaviors. They found

that time spent with adults who suggest nonviolent methods of conflict resolution is linked to lower rates of bullying behaviors. Conversely, the students who spent the most time during the week unsupervised by an adult were more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors (Espelage et al., 2000). Time spent with adults is not the only contributing factor to perpetration with bullying, however. Physical discipline, overprotective parenting, psychological control, and coercive power-assertive parenting are all also linked to increased likelihood of bullying behaviors (Unnever & Cornell, 2004; Espelage et al., 2000). The findings indicate that the home environment is important, and parenting practices and strategies can be influential for reducing perpetration of bullying behaviors.

### **Bullying in High School**

The final years of a students' education are coupled with more change and transitions, both in and out of school. The transition to high school can be stressful to some students, and parents and adolescents often grapple with adolescents' growing needs for autonomy and desire for social support from peers (Lester et al., 2015). The bioecological framework is especially salient during adolescence, as the interplay between school, peer, and family environments are important social contexts for them to develop social affiliations, and shape perceptions and development around what is acceptable behavior (Erginoz et al., 2015). Research by Zeedyk et al. (2003) examined what the greatest stressors to adolescents are in the transition to secondary school. Zeedyk and colleagues (2003) collapsed the responses into 15 categories, including aspects such as getting lost, peer relations, workload, new environment, new teachers, bullying, and academic performance. Bullying was the most reported concern among secondary school students, followed by getting lost, peer relations, and workload (Zeedyk et al., 2003).



More recent research on bullying has focused on the advent of cyber-bullying, and bullying of gender minorities (Pontes, N., Ayres, Lewandowski, & Pontes, M., 2018; Gordon et al., 2017; Fousiani, Dimitropoulou, Michaelides, & Van Petegem, 2016). Cyber-bullying bends the barrier between home and school environment, as children and adolescents now have round the clock access to their peers. Parents are now not only tasked with being privy to what happens within the school walls, but also what content and activities their children and adolescents are engaging with at home. The internet acts as the connection between all of an adolescent's microsystems, and while it can be a positive influence by adolescents exploring diverse cultures and providing learning opportunities, it can also have lasting negative effects by bombarding adolescents with what they "should" be, and allowing perpetrators of bullying constant access to victimize their peers (Hamm et al., 2015). Adolescents with a nonconforming gender identity are at a greater risk for bullying, victimization, discrimination, and violence (Gordon et al., 2017). In their research study examining gender expression and rates of victimization and bullying, Gordon and colleagues (2017) found that highly gender conforming students, especially males, are at an increased risk on fighting, as aggression is considered to be a contributor to the male identity. Thus, distinctions in gender continue to arise in the bullying literature, and should continue to be a targeted area for research and education.

When considering the outcomes of bullying at the secondary level, most of the findings on bullying in high school have identified risks and outcomes parallel to those studying bullying and victimization in earlier school years. The findings have indicated that establishing social dominance is a key factor in perpetuating bullying behaviors, and these patterns are more likely to emerge during times of transition (Nocentini et al., 2013). Additionally, social anxiety is greater in early adolescence, which in turn may then influence the need to prove dominance or

social status to peers through bullying behaviors (Calvete et al., 2018). Due to the social nature of adolescents and the desire to establish dominance, bystanders have been found to play a key role in the perpetuation of bullying behaviors (Nocentini et al., 2013). When bystanders and peers are more tolerant or reinforcing of these behaviors, bullying tends to increase (Nocentini et al., 2013). Further, friendships and peer support are essential for social, emotional, and mental health development for adolescents, thus it is important to consider adolescent peer groups when examining bullying and victimization in high school (Lester et al., 2015).

Family characteristics and relationships continue to play an important role in protecting against the negative effects of bullying, or can influence participation in perpetrating bullying. In the same vein as middle school students, adolescents having more unsupervised time has been linked to aggression, bullying, delinquency, and criminality (Erginoz et al., 2015). Conversely, adolescents who have a close relationship with their parents improve their ability to select prosocial friends, which is then related to a decreased involvement in violence in school and beyond (Erginoz et al., 2015). Much of the research regarding adolescent bullying and family contexts has explored the advent of cyber-bullying. With increased access to the internet, bullying is no longer confined to school walls, and follows adolescents home. Family characteristics and adolescent-child relationships have been found to play a key role in lowering cyber-bullying behaviors. In a study examining perceived parenting and cyber-bullying, Fousiani et al. (2016) found that perceived parental autonomy support was indirectly related to less cyber-bullying; autonomy support was positively linked to adolescents' need for relatedness, which in turn is related to higher adolescent capacity in responding to others' emotions (Fousiani et al., 2016).

## **Bullying and Socioeconomic Status**

Research among diverse populations have found that socioeconomic inequality can be considered a potential risk factor for increased involvement in bullying (Malecki, Demaray, Smith, & Emmons, 2020). Previous research has found that bullies are often over-represented in middle and higher socioeconomic status (SES) families, while victims are often over-represented in lower SES families (Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky, 2009). Some researchers have noted that children in from lower SES families fear victimization or exclusion by classmates for failure to keep up with trends (Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky, 2009). In a study of Colombian students in fifth- and ninth-grade, Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky (2009) found that bullying prevalence was higher in private, tuition-based schools, rather than publicly funded schools. Additionally, they found that income inequality was associated with school bullying among ninth graders (Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky, 2009). Community safety and environment played a role in the prevalence of bullying and victimization behaviors. The researchers found that children who were victims of community violence were more likely to be victims of school bullying (Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky, 2009). Children who had observed community violence were also more likely to be aggressive towards peers (Chaux, Molano, & Podlesky, 2009).

Magklara and colleagues (2012) examined the relationship between bullying behavior in schools, socioeconomic position, and psychiatric morbidity among late-adolescents in Greece. The researchers examined socioeconomic status through the variables of parent education, parental employment, financial status, and school performance (Magklara, Skapinakis, Gkatsa, Bellos, Araya, Stylianidis, & Mavreas, 2012). They found in their research that adolescent boys were more likely to be perpetrators of bullying, but there were no gender differences among victimization (Magklara et al., 2012). Neither parental levels of education nor financial

difficulties in the family were associated with perpetration of bullying behaviors, however economic inactivity from mothers was associated with both perpetration and victimization (Magklara et al., 2012). It is important to continue to understand the intricacies of bullying and victimization among diverse populations to provide better support for students.

### **Parental Perceptions of Bullying**

There is limited information available on parents' perception of bullying (Demaray et al., 2013; Holt et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2016). There has been research to show that parents do believe bullying is harmful, and that children should be punished for engaging in bullying behaviors (Holt et al., 2009). Holt et al. (2009) also found in their study that parents believe schools should be more involved in prevention and discipline. Parents' perception of school environment influences their likelihood to intervene if bullying occurs (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Duong, 2011). If parents had a more positive view of the school environment, parents were more likely to contact the school or talk to their child about the incident (Waasdorp et al., 2011). Therefore, strong connections between home and school are important for promoting transparent communication and increased likelihood of better understanding bullying behaviors more comprehensively.

Previous research has indicated that parents are likely to underestimate the extent of bullying in their child (Demaray et al., 2013). This could be due to a variety of reasons, as children often do not report their victimization or bullying behaviors, but parents may mistake verbal forms of bullying as playful behavior between friends (Demaray et al., 2013). In parents' definition of bullying, they are likely to consider the harmful intention of the perpetrator as more important than the target's perception of harmful intention (Thomas et al., 2016). In addition, many parents do not know a healthy way to respond to their child when they learn their child is

being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviors (Waasdorp et al., 2011). Therefore, there is an identified need for increased psychoeducation and helping parents recognize the different forms of bullying, and how to talk to their children.

Typically, research has shown low parent-child agreement in regards to reports of bullying (Thomas et al., 2016). However, there have been some differences shown in the gender of the child and agreement in bullying, though the results have been inconsistent. Gender of the child seems to influence whether parents discuss bullying involvement with their children (Holt et al., 2009). Demaray and colleagues (2013) found in their study that agreement between parents and children decreases as they age, with parents having higher rates of agreement with boys than with girls. On the other hand, Holt et al. (2009) found parents are more likely to discuss bullying experiences with girls than they are with boys. Due to the inconsistent findings regarding parent perceptions of bullying and child gender, more research is needed to fully understand the extent to which gender influences parent perceptions of bullying behaviors.

### **Definitions and Trends in Parent Involvement**

There has been a plethora of research emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in children's lives, from early childhood into adolescence (Kelly et al., 2012; Masud, Thursamy, & Shakil Amad, 2015). *Parent involvement* is defined according to what facet it pertains to, but generally pertains to a parent's parenting style, communication, collaboration, volunteering or spending time with their child, and decision-making (Stone, 2006). All of these factors play an important role in the success of the child in their social, emotional, and academic functioning. Supporting parent involvement was one of the goals outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), therefore understanding and promoting parent involvement in schooling and increasing parents' connections to school is necessary and important (Park &

Holloway, 2013). Parental involvement in schooling shifts as children age, and understanding how parents interact with their children across the developmental period will be beneficial in order to know what aspects need to be targeted for further psychoeducation and research.

### **Parental Knowledge and Monitoring**

One of the major indicators of a child's success academically and socially is the level of parental knowledge and monitoring of the child's behaviors (Shetgiri, Lin, Avila, & Flores, 2012). *Parental monitoring* can be defined as parenting behaviors involving attention to and tracking of the child's whereabouts, activities, and adaptations (Stavrinides, Nikiforou, & Georgiou, 2015). Parental monitoring can include both direct and indirect supervision of their child, by setting boundaries about who and when their child can see, or asking their child about their friends. Parental monitoring and supervision can be a protective factor against social and emotional risk, as it can prevent children from harm, and children may also feel cared for (Top, Liew, & Luo, 2017). While the research has been clear regarding parental monitoring's positive effect on academic outcomes, there have been inconsistent results regarding parental monitoring's effect in regards to bullying (Shetgiri et al., 2012; Stavrinides et al., 2015; Top et al., 2017).

In a study examining the effects of maternal knowledge, adolescent personality, and bullying, researchers Farrell, Provenzano, Dane, Marini, and Volk (2017) hoped to understand what personality factors may interact with parenting to predict bullying perpetration. Previous research on the parent-child feedback loop has posited that child personality and behaviors may affect parenting style, which in turn then leads to negative child outcomes. The researchers expected higher rates of bullying behaviors from adolescents with lower levels of honesty and humility, agreeableness, and emotionality (Farrell, Provenzano, Dane, Marini, & Volk, 2017).

Further, it was hypothesized that parental knowledge would moderate the links between the personality traits and bullying (Farrell et al., 2017). Farrell and colleagues (2017) found that maternal knowledge of behaviors was not a significant moderator of the links between bullying and emotionality or agreeableness traits. It was also found that monitoring was not a significant moderator for any personality factors and bullying (Farrell et al., 2017). The results may be due to potentially inconsistent monitoring, or youth avoiding monitoring attempts (Farrell et al., 2017). Additionally, parental monitoring without accurate knowledge of behaviors may not be sufficient for reducing bullying behaviors (Farrell et al., 2017). The study only asked adolescents about parent monitoring behaviors, and was cross-sectional in nature. Thus, it is important to gain multiple perspectives on behaviors regarding parental monitoring and knowledge, as well as look at these factors across time for more accurate representations of how parental monitoring and knowledge influence bullying behaviors and victimization.

Researchers Shetgiri, Lin, Avila, and Flores (2012) conducted a study to further understand parental characteristics associated with bullying perpetration for adolescents. Findings indicated that negative parental perceptions of adolescent behavior were associated with higher rates of bullying, providing support for the parent-child feedback loop (Shetgiri et al., 2012). Further, children of parents who were frequently angry with their child and felt their child bothered them a lot had more than double the odds of bullying perpetration (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The researchers also examined parental involvement and monitoring, and found that high parental involvement and communication with their children was associated with lower odds of bullying perpetration (Shetgiri et al., 2017). Additionally, children with parents who meet their friends had significantly lower risk of bullying (Shetgiri et al., 2017). The results from Shetgiri et al.'s (2017) research again were cross-sectional in nature, and only based on parent report. It

is important to examine both parental and youth perceptions concurrently in order to determine a more accurate depiction of the effect of parental monitoring and knowledge with bullying perpetration.

In a study conducted in Cyprus, researchers Stavrinides, Nikiforou, and Georgiou (2015) sought to understand whether various sources of parental knowledge such as parental monitoring, as well as child disclosure, predict changes in bullying and victimization. The study explored perceptions from both parents and adolescents, and researchers collected two waves of data six months apart. The results indicated that sources of parental knowledge at the initial time point predict bullying and victimization at the secondary time point (Stavrinides et al., 2015). Parental solicitation negatively predicted bullying, and presence of bullying positively predicted parental control and child disclosure six months later (Stavrinides et al., 2015). However, increased parental control also predicted more bullying in the future (Stavrinides et al., 2015). Additionally, adolescent initial experiences predicted parental knowledge differently six months later (Stavrinides et al., 2015). Adolescents who experienced victimization had greater parental solicitation of information and less child disclosure later on (Stavrinides et al., 2015). This result is not surprising, as parents become aware of their child's victimization, they are more likely to protect their child by becoming more involved, which in turn may make the child more likely to hide their experiences (Stavrinides et al., 2015). The results from the study bring interesting insight to the parent-adolescent relationship, and also provide evidence for a feedback loop between parental monitoring and problem youth behaviors, and should be examined within another sample.



## **Parent Involvement in Social Relationships**

Parents and caregivers not only have an influence on children's academic outcomes, but also play a major role in child and adolescent social relationships. Earlier in the developmental period, parents can control who spends time with their child, and what they do (Dishion et al., 2008). As children age, however, they become more autonomous and begin to form their own relationships with peers, and these relationships are not always dictated by the parent (De Geode, Branje, Delsing, & Meeus, 2009). In a study by De Geode, Branje, Delsing, and Meeus (2009), the researchers examined whether parent-adolescent relationships and adolescent friendships were related, and to what extent these relationships predict each other over time. The researchers found that higher level of support was related to higher support from friends, and higher levels of negative interactions were related to higher levels of negative interactions with peers (De Geode et al., 2009). Further, their results indicated a bidirectional relationship between parent-adolescent relationships and adolescent friendships, but parent-adolescent relationships had a stronger influence over friendships in early adolescence; this influenced evened out to a more mutual influence in later adolescence (De Geode et al., 2009). The results from De Geode et al.'s (2009) study indicate that interactions between parents and adolescents carry over into relationships; emphasizing the importance of a bioecological framework and the interaction between environments in an adolescent's life influencing behavioral outcomes.

If there is a bidirectional relationship between parent-adolescent relationship and adolescent friendships, it would be beneficial to understand any potential discrepancies in perceptions of control of social relationships. In order to better understand why caregiver and youth concordance of rates of bullying are typically low, it would be important to investigate the concordance between youth and caregiver reports of involvement in social relationships.

Valentiner and MOUNTS (2017) examined discrepancies among adolescent and mothers' reports of maternal consulting in regard to peer relationships and the relation discrepancies on prosocial behavior, loneliness, positive friendship quality, and physical victimization. Results indicated that adolescent reports, but not maternal reports, showed significant associations with the four outcome variables (Valentiner & MOUNTS, 2017). The researchers found that higher levels of adolescent reports of consulting were related to higher levels of positive friendship quality and prosocial behavior, and lower levels of loneliness and physical victimization (Valentiner & MOUNTS, 2017). When using the extended sum-and-difference approach, the researchers also found that discrepancies in mother and adolescent reports reflect poor parent-adolescent relationship quality (Valentiner & MOUNTS, 2017). Given the results of Valentiner and MOUNTS' (2017) research, it would be beneficial to expand upon this study, and examine how caregiver-youth relationship quality, as well as parent perception of friend group, influence perceptions of bullying and victimization in adolescents.

### **The Present Study**

The current study sought to expand upon the previous research examining parental involvement, caregiver perceptions of friend group, perceptions of bullying behaviors and victimization, using multiple informants. There is a need to further understand the concordance between youth and caregiver report of behaviors in order to more effectively develop psychoeducation for caregivers on how to communicate with emerging adolescents. Furthermore, in understanding the accuracy of caregiver perceptions of youth involvement in bullying, as either bully or victim, this information can be disseminated to help inform teachers and school personnel of the factors that may be influencing teachers' ability to accurately perceive bullying behaviors.

The first aim of the current study is to determine the factors that influence caregiver and youth reports of bullying and victimization behaviors. Previous research has shown that there are significantly more positive outcomes, both academically and socially, when caregivers are aware of their children's actions, as well as when caregivers are involved in their children's academics (Kelly et al., 2012; Ma et al., 2016; Pelgrina et al., 2003; Sheldon, 2002; Stone, 2006). However, adolescent- and early adolescent-parent relationships often experience heightened levels of conflict (Brkovic et al., 2014). Furthermore, older adolescents are less likely to report instances of bullying (Demaray et al., 2013). Given the changes in the caregiver-youth relationship, it is hypothesized that caregiver-reported levels of involvement, positive parenting strategies, supervision and rules, and perception of friend group will have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of bullying and victimization. Additionally, using Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, it is important to consider factors in both the parental spheres of functioning as well as the youth's. It is hypothesized that more positive parental perceptions of friend group will lead to lower parental reporting of bullying behaviors. Similarly, it is hypothesized that parental perceptions of truant behaviors will be positively related to parental perception of bullying behaviors. A secondary hypothesis to examine youth-reported victimization and bullying states that youth-reported parental involvement, supervision and rules, parent perception of friend group, and positive parenting will have a significant effect on victimization.

The second aim of the study is to examine the accuracy of caregivers' perceptions to youth reports of victimization behaviors. Similar to the first research aim, previous research has indicated that higher levels of parental involvement, coupled with better caregiver-youth relationship quality is associated with greater awareness of victimization. It is hypothesized that

youth will report higher rates of victimization than caregivers, and concordance between the two informants will be low.

## CHAPTER 3

### Method

#### Design

The current study sought to examine two aims: (a) what are the factors that affect caregiver and youth report of bullying and victimization behaviors, and (b) what is the level of agreement between youth and caregiver report of bullying behaviors. The quasi-experimental between-participants study utilizes data freely available from the Schools and Families Education (SAFE) Children Study. Linear regression analyses were used to determine relevant factors that affect caregiver and youth ratings of bullying and victimization behaviors. Intraclass correlations (ICCs) were utilized to determine the agreement between caregiver and youth report of dependent variables.

#### Participants

The Schools and Families Education (SAFE) Children Study was a randomized control trial designed to test the efficacy of a family-based comprehensive preventive intervention, with children living in inner-city Chicago and entering the 1st grade, for effects on key risk markers for later drug and other substance use (Tolan, Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Schoeny, 2008). Eleven waves of data were collected over three phases of the study (Tolan et al., 2008). In the spring of 1997, there were 424 kindergarten students and primary caregivers recruited to participate in this study. Wave 1 began while the children were in 1st grade. Survey responses were obtained from students and caregivers nine times beginning in 1st grade and ending in 12th grade. Children and caregivers were not surveyed in waves 3 and 7 (Tolan et al., 2008). The datasets are free and publicly available for download through the ICPSR database (SAFE Children, <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NAHDAP/studies/34368>).

Phase I of the study was to assess the intervention provided in the 1st grade. Half of the families were randomly selected to receive the intervention. The other half were assigned to the control group. Phase II of the study was set-up to give half of the intervention group a booster, a second intervention training. Lastly, there was a Phase III which sought to assess the long-term effects of the initial and booster interventions.

The current study included participants from Wave 9, for a total of 424 caregiver and child survey response pairs. Some demographic information including family income, ethnicity, relationship to target child, and target child gender were included in an interview at the onset of the SAFE Children Study. Ninety-three (21.9%) caregivers did not complete the interview, thus participant demographic percentages are based on available data. Full available demographic information can be found in Table 1. Of the interview participants, 51.2% were female ( $n=217$ ). The interview participants' relationship to the target child primarily consisted of Mothers (94.9%,  $n=314$ ), Fathers consisted of 1.8% of interview respondents ( $n=6$ ). In addition to mothers and fathers, 2.4% of respondents included Grandmothers ( $n=8$ ). The majority of caregivers identified as Mexican-American (47.6%,  $n=201$ ), with the remainder of caregivers identified as African American (42.7%,  $n=180$ ), Other Hispanic (5.5%,  $n=23$ ), or Anglo-White/Other (4.3%,  $n=18$ ). Most of the respondents (93.9%) reported a combined household income less than \$50,000, with the largest percentage falling in the \$20,000-\$24,999 range (16.1%,  $n=53$ ). Only 6.1% ( $n=20$ ) of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000 or greater.

Caregivers reported the target child's ethnicity as Black or African American (40.5%,  $n=134$ ); Mexican, Mexican-American, or Chicano (50.2%,  $n=166$ ); Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Hispanic/Latino (5.7%,  $n=19$ ); or Anglo-White/Other (3.6%,  $n=12$ ). The majority of target

children (95.2%,  $n=315$ ) did not receive special education services. More than half of target children were female (54.1%,  $n=179$ ). Children's ages during Wave 9 ranged from age 10 (12.4%,  $n=41$ ) to age 12 (1.8%,  $n=6$ ). The majority of children who completed the survey were 11 years old (67%,  $n=284$ ).

## **Measures**

The SAFE Children Study administered surveys to children, caregivers, and teachers. The survey included demographic information, such as household income, parent education, number of children in the family, parent gender, child gender, child age, parental age, and parental marital status. Both the caregiver and child survey contained items pertaining to delinquency, peer relations, parental involvement, parental supervision, stress and coping, perceived competence, and safety. For the purposes of this dissertation, caregiver and child items pertaining to parental involvement, parental supervision, and peer relations were selected for analyses. For a full list of items included in the analyses, please see Table 2.

**Independent variables.** The main focus of the study is to examine what factors influence the accuracy of a caregiver's ability to detect whether their child is bullying others or being victimized. The independent variables from the parent survey included items pertaining to parental extent of involvement, supervision and rules, positive parenting scale, and peer relations. The SAFE Children Study included the Pittsburgh Youth Survey (PYS) to both caregivers and youth to measure their attitudes on different aspects of parental involvement, positive parenting, supervision and rules, discipline, and peer relations (Tolan et al., 2008; Thornberry, Huizinga, & Loeber, 1995). The PYS was originally designed to measure (a) positive parenting, (b) discipline effectiveness, (c) avoidance of discipline, and (d) extent of monitoring and involvement in the child's life (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, Zelli, & Huesmann,

1996). *Discipline effectiveness* is a measure of the caregiver's estimate of how effective his or her discipline style is in controlling the child's behavior (Gorman-Smith et al., 1996). *Avoidance of discipline* refers to the caregiver's avoidance of providing consequences or disciplining the child for fear of escalation of behaviors (Gorman-Smith et al., 1996). In the Gorman-Smith and colleagues (1996) study, two latent constructs were identified within the measure, *Discipline* and *Monitoring*. Chronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .68 to .81.

The PYS has both a caregiver and youth form, responses from both caregivers and youth were used in the current study. Items on the PYS are answered in a Likert-style manner, ranging on a scale from 1 (*Don't know*) to 5 (*Home Supervised/Almost every day*). For example, the item, "How often has he/she talked with you about what you had actually done during the day?" has response options of 1 (*Don't know*), 2 (*Less than once a month*), 3 (*At least once a month*), 4 (*Within the last week*), and 5 (*Yesterday/Today*). Some items have three choices (1=*No/Never*, 3=*Probably/Sometimes*, 5=*Certainly/Always*). For example, the item, "How often do you have a friendly talk with him/her?" includes the response options of 1 (*Hardly ever*), 2 (*Sometimes*), and 3 (*Often*). On the caregiver ratings of parental involvement, Cronbach's alpha fell in the acceptable range ( $\alpha=.776$ ). Youth ratings of parental involvement also fell in the acceptable range ( $\alpha=.789$ ). Both respondents' supervision and rules coefficient fell in the acceptable range (caregiver  $\alpha=.957$ ; youth  $\alpha=.874$ ). Cronbach's alpha on the Positive Parenting domain fell in the acceptable range for both caregiver ( $\alpha=.844$ ) and youth ( $\alpha=.807$ ) reports.

**Dependent variables.** The aim of the study was to determine the factors that affect parental and youth ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors. While the SAFE Children Study did not include direct measures of bullying and victimization, the Pittsburgh Youth Survey contained items pertaining to peer relations (Tolan et al., 2008). Additionally, the Achenbach



Child Behavior Checklist was administered to caregivers, and the researchers also included a measure on child sense of safety at home and school (Tolan et al., 2008). Research has shown that using peer relations and child safety can be proxy measures of victimization (Lessard & Juvonen, 2018).

Peer relations, popularity, and social rejection were all measured in the SAFE Children Study through the PYS (Tolan et al., 2008). Caregiver reliability coefficients for peer relations and rejection from peers fell below an acceptable range (Peer Relations  $\alpha=.358$ ; Rejection  $\alpha=.280$ ). The youth peer relations regarding popularity reliability coefficient fell within an acceptable range ( $\alpha=.793$ ). Caregiver peer relations regarding popularity reliability coefficient also fell within an acceptable range ( $\alpha=.860$ ).

Caregivers in the SAFE Children Study completed the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach, 1991; Tolan et al., 2008). The CBCL measures anxiety, depression, aggressive, noncompliant, and under-controlled behaviors (Achenbach, 1991). The CBCL also includes sub-areas including social withdrawal, somatic complaints, destructive behavior, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, and delinquent behaviors (Achenbach, 1991). The CBCL includes three response options (*1=Not true; 2=Somewhat/Sometimes True; 3=Very/Often True*). For the purposes of the current study, caregiver ratings of aggressive behaviors and social problems were included in analyses as proxy measures of bullying behaviors. An example of items included in the aggressive behaviors scale includes, "Cruelty, bullying, or meanness." An example of an item on the social problems subscale includes, "Showing off or clowning." Both scales showed adequate reliability (Aggression Cronbach's  $\alpha=.821$ ; Social Problems Cronbach's  $\alpha=.788$ ) in the sample used in the current study.

The SAFE Children Study researchers included a measure of youth report of safety at school and in their neighborhood (Tolan et al., 2008). Research has shown that youth who feel less safe at school and at home are more likely victims of bullying (Lessard & Juvonen, 2018). Thus, the youth report of safety was used as a proxy measure of youth report of victimization. The items used to assess safety were adapted from the Social and Health Assessment (Weissburg et al., 1991). The Social and Health Assessment is a 182-item instrument designed to assess positive school and community involvements and high-risk behaviors of middle- and high-school students (Kasprow, Voyce, Barone, Shriver, & Weissberg, 1995). Beliefs about safety were assessed across four domains: home, neighborhood, school, and on the way to/from school (Kasprow et al., 1995). Youth chose from four possible response options (*1=Definitely not true; 2=Mostly not true; 3=Mostly true; 4=Definitely true*) to items across each domain (e.g., “I feel safe at my school”). Cronbach’s alpha reliability from the current study fell within the acceptable range ( $\alpha=.926$ ).

**Prevalence of Bullying and Victimization.** Given the high prevalence rate of bullying internationally, it is important to understand the rate of bullying and victimization in the current sample. As the SAFE Children Study did not include direct measures related to bullying and victimization, youth-reported engagement in delinquent behaviors and difficulties with peer relationships were used as proxy measures of engaging in bullying behaviors. Delinquency behaviors were measured through the Self Report of Delinquency (SRD; Elliott, Ageton, & Huizinga, 1985). The items on the SRD are dichotomous (*1=Yes, 0=No*), with additional follow-up questions to further explore the frequency of engaging in the behavior in the past year and the age the respondent first engaged in the behavior (Tolan et al., 2008). For the purposes of the current study, a simple percentage based on whether the youth had ever engaged in the behavior

was utilized. Researchers Piquero, Macintosh, and Hickman (2002) used Rasch modeling to assess the validity of the SRD. Results from the Rasch model revealed misfit of delinquency items from the original Elliott, Ageton, and Huizinga (1985) measure. The researchers noted that content validity of an item or scale may change over time, and longitudinal studies need to utilize measures that are highly reliable and valid (Piquero, Macintosh, & Hickman, 2002). Rates of victimization were calculated through youth-reported popularity metrics on the PYS, feelings of safety, and youth-reported internalization on a Youth Self-Report (YSR; Tolan et al. 2008). Items on the YSR were rated on a 3-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (*Not True*), to 2 (*Very True or Often True*). Items identified for victimization rates included items such as “I feel others are out to get me,” and “I feel worthless or inferior.” Responses greater than 0 were included in the victimization rate; responses were delineated between “Sometimes” and “Very True.” Cronbach’s alpha for all included variables can be found in Table 3.

### **Analytic Approach**

To investigate the hypotheses related to the first aim, linear regression was used. The first aim of the research study sought to understand the effect of parental involvement, peer relations, positive parenting, and supervision on parental and youth report of bullying and victimization behaviors. The first hypothesis stated that all identified independent variables will have a significant effect on caregiver report of bullying and victimization behaviors. The second hypothesis stated that all identified independent variables will have a significant effect on youth reported victimization.

Linear regression attempts to model the relationship between variables by fitting a linear equation to observed data (Linear Regression, n.d.). The linear regression equation line takes the form  $Y = a + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3$  where X are defined as the independent variables and Y is the

dependent variable. The slope of the line is  $\beta$ , and  $a$  is the intercept (Linear Regression, n.d.). Least-squares regression finds the best-fitting line for the data by minimizing the sum of the squares of the vertical deviations from each data point to the line, leaving no cancellations between positive and negative values (Linear Regression, n.d.). To assess the effect of youth gender on the dependent variables, the demographic variable of target child gender was added into the model at the first step. The remaining independent variables were added to the second step of the model.

The second aim of the study was to examine youth and caregiver concordance regarding victimization behaviors. In order to assess the accuracy of parents' perceptions of victimization, intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs) were used. Intraclass correlations are often used as a measure of reliability (Lijequist, Elfving, & Skavberg, 2019). Intraclass correlations may also indicate the ability of an experimental method to detect and measure differences between subjects (Lijequist et al., 2019). However, differences can be masked by individual variations within the method of measurement (Lijequist et al., 2019). The ICC is calculated as a ratio of the variance of interest divided by the total variance, or the variance of interest divided by the variance of interest and the unwanted variance ( $\rho = \sigma_r^2 / \sigma_r^2 + \sigma_v^2$ ; Lijequist et al., 2019). If the unwanted variance is equal to or larger than the variance of interest, the reliability of the method is poor, and results in a value of less than 0.5 (Lijequist et al., 2019). If the ICC results in a value of 0.8 or 0.9, the method is seen as holding high reliability (Lijequist et al., 2019). Intraclass correlations were used to determine the agreement between caregiver and youth report of dependent variables.

## Missing Data

Missing data were analyzed using Little's Test of Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) through SPSS. The null hypothesis for Little's MCAR test is that the data are missing completely at random (MCAR). Data are MCAR when the pattern of missing values does not depend on the data values. Because the significance value is less than 0.05 in the current data set, it was concluded that the data are *not* missing completely at random (MNAR). Multiple imputations were run on the variables included in the analyses to account for the missing data. Multiple imputation uses other variables in the dataset to predict missing values. The process of multiple imputation contains four steps: (a) create "m" sets of imputations for missing values using an imputation process with a random component; (b) each dataset will have slightly different values for the imputed data; (c) analyze each completed dataset; (d) combine the results, calculating the variation in parameter estimates. SPSS uses an MCMC algorithm, using linear regression for continuous variables and logistic regression for categorical variables. MCMC/Fully Conditional Specification imputes incomplete variables one at a time, using the filled-in variable from one step as a predictor for subsequent steps. Multiple imputation obtains approximately unbiased estimates of parameters from the random error. The imputed dataset was used in the regression analyses and ICCs.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Results**

There were two aims to the current research study: (a) determine the factors that predict caregivers and youth ratings of bullying and victimization, and (b) determine the agreement between caregiver and youth reports of victimization. Within the first aim, I sought to investigate two hypothesis: (a) caregiver ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of friend group, and positive parenting will have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors, and (b) youth ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of friend group, and positive parenting will have a significant effect on youth ratings of victimization and bullying. The second aim held one hypothesis: Youth will report higher ratings victimization, and agreement between caregiver and youth ratings of victimization will fall in the low to medium range. Cronbach's alpha fell within an acceptable range for all variables, with the exception of caregiver ratings of peer relations and caregiver ratings of rejection by peers. Skewness fell within acceptable ranges, with the exception of Caregiver ratings of Supervision and Rules, Caregiver ratings of Youth Aggression, Caregiver ratings of Youth Rejection by Peers, Youth report of Supervision and Rules, and Youth report of Safety. Kurtosis fell within acceptable ranges, with the exception of Caregiver report of Supervision and Rules, Caregiver report of Friend's Bad Behavior, and Caregiver ratings of Peer Rejection. Please see Table 4 for descriptive statistics for all variables.

#### **Determining Prevalence of Youth Bullying and Victimization Behaviors**

In order to gain understanding into the youth-reported levels of bullying and victimization, percentages of physical delinquency, arguing with peers, sense of safety, and internalizing behaviors were assessed. From the valid youth-reported sample, 4.68% of youth

respondents reported engaging in physical bullying-related behaviors, including wrecking others' property, taking something from a teacher/kid at school, attacking someone with a weapon, hitting someone to hurt them, and throwing an object at someone. The highest-reported frequency in physical bullying behavior was hitting someone to hurt them; 11.9% of youth reported that they had engaged in this behavior. Youth reported a prevalence rate of 6.34% overall, reporting that they "Almost Always" or "Always" had difficulties with peers, including arguing with friends, getting angry with friends, and disagreements with friends. Please see Table 5 for rates of bullying behaviors.

Victimization was approximated through feelings of safety and levels of internalizing behaviors as reported on the Youth Self Report survey. The overall prevalence of youth feeling "Never Safe" or "Sometimes Safe" fell at 14.41%. Youth reported feeling least safe on the way home from school (19.03%), followed by on the playground (18.13%) and after school (18.13%). Youth reported that it was somewhat or very true that they felt others were out to get them at a rate of 19.03%. Eighteen (5.44%) youth reported they very often feel lonely, and 6.04% of youth reported they very often feel worthless or inferior. Youth report of feeling all internalizing behaviors "very often" fell at a prevalence rate of 6.9%, and "sometimes" fell at 18.63%. Please see Table 6 for rates of victimization.

Previous research has noted that bullies, while often unliked by their peers, are not always socially isolated (Spriggs et al., 2007). Victims of bullying, on the other hand, are often not liked by their peers and are often socially isolated (Spriggs et al., 2007). Therefore, by looking at youth self-report popularity metrics including popularity in comparison to peers, having friends in comparison to peers, and being liked in comparison to peers, in conjunction with reports of engaging in the aforementioned behaviors and reported feelings, an estimation of

bullying and victimization can be calculated. A total of 4.03% of youth reported that they are not popular, liked, nor do they have friends in comparison with their peers. The prevalence rate of youth that reported that they are a little popular, have a few friends, and are a little liked by their peers fell at 11.28%. Most youth (52.87%) reported they consider themselves to be within an average level of popularity. Please see Table 7 for rates of popularity metrics.

### **Factors Influencing Caregiver and Youth Reports of Bullying and Victimization**

**Hypothesis 1.** Two hypotheses were associated with exploring the first aim. The first hypothesis stated that caregiver ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of child's friend group, and positive parenting will have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors. Multiple regressions were conducted to determine the effect of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of the youth's friend group, and positive parenting on caregiver-reported bullying and victimization behaviors.

Bivariate correlations among caregiver-reported variables showed that parent involvement had significant positive correlations with positive parenting, and youth being liked by peers. As caregivers reported higher levels of involvement, they also reported higher levels of utilizing positive parenting strategies and their target child being liked by peers. Parent involvement had a significant negative relationship with youth aggressive behavior, youth delinquent behavior, youth social problems, youth having friends who misbehave, and youth being rejected by peers. That is to say, when caregivers increased their involvement in the youth's life, there was a caregiver-reported decrease in youth aggressive and delinquent behaviors, as well as a decrease in negative associations with peers. Positive parenting was also significantly negatively associated with youth aggressive behaviors and friends' bad behaviors.



Positive parenting had a significant positive relationship with youth being liked by peers. Caregiver-reported child aggressive behaviors had significant positive correlations with youth delinquency, youth social problems, friends' bad behavior, and youth rejection by peers. Caregiver reported child aggressive behaviors had a significant negative relationship with youth being liked by peers. Similarly, caregiver-reported youth delinquency and social problems had significant correlations with each other, friends' bad behavior, and being rejected by peers. Both caregiver-reported youth delinquency and social problems had significant negative relationships with being liked by peers. Please see Table 8 for the full correlation table.

***Achenbach Aggression Scale as dependent variable.*** The first hypothesis was partially supported, the overall model did have a statistically significant effect (Model 2  $\beta=1.002, p<.05$ ). The caregiver extent of involvement was shown to have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of child aggression ( $\beta=-.231; p<.05$ ). Results indicated that caregivers with more involvement had children with less reported aggressive behavior. Caregiver perception of friends' bad behavior also had a significant effect on caregiver reports of youth aggression ( $\beta=.163, p<.05$ ). Meaning that caregivers who viewed their child's behavior more negatively also rated their child as engaging in more aggressive behaviors. Caregiver reported positive parenting ( $\beta =-.020; p=.741$ ) and parental supervision and rules ( $\beta =-069.; p=.190$ ) did not indicate a significant effect on caregiver-reported child aggression.

***Achenbach Social Problems Scale as dependent variable.*** When examining caregiver ratings of child social problems, the regression model supported the first hypothesis (Model 2  $\beta =1.289, p<.05$ ). Again, caregiver extent of involvement had a statistically significant effect on child social problems ( $\beta =-.190, p<.05$ ). Results indicated that caregivers with more involvement reported fewer youth social problems. Caregiver perceptions of the child's friend's bad behavior

was also significant ( $\beta = .121$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Caregivers who viewed their youth's friends more negatively also reported their youth having increased social problems. Positive parenting ( $\beta = .014$ ;  $p = .881$ ) and supervision and rules ( $\beta = -.108$ ;  $p = .126$ ) did not have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of the child's social problems.

***Peer Relations – Liked by Peers as dependent variable.*** Overall, the model supported the first hypothesis (Model 2  $\beta = 3.304$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Extent of caregiver involvement continued to indicate statistical significance ( $\beta = .194$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Caregiver perceptions of the child's friend's bad behavior also indicated statistical significance ( $\beta = -.267$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Results indicated that increased caregiver involvement and positive caregiver perceptions of youth friend group resulted in caregiver-reported ratings of youth being liked by peers. Positive parenting ( $\beta = -.032$ ;  $p = .590$ ) and supervision and rules ( $\beta = .017$ ;  $p = .742$ ) did not have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of the child's acceptance from peers.

***Peer Relations – Rejected by Peers as dependent variable.*** The first hypothesis was not supported through the overall model (Model 2  $\beta = .485$ ;  $p = .299$ ). The only significant variable in the model was caregiver perception of the child's friend's bad behavior ( $\beta = .404$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Results indicated that caregiver reported negative perceptions of youth's peer group had increased peer rejection. All other variables including Extent of Involvement ( $\beta = -.004$ ;  $p = .947$ ), Positive parenting ( $\beta = -.074$ ;  $p = .134$ ), and Supervision and rules ( $\beta = .075$ ;  $p = .164$ ) were not statistically significant.

***Effect of youth gender.*** To assess the effect of youth gender separately from each of the other independent variables, target youth gender was added at the first level of each regression. Gender did not have a significant effect on caregiver reports of aggression, social problems, or being liked by peers. Gender did however have a significant effect in caregiver report of

rejection by peers, both on its own in the first model ( $\beta=.120, p<.05$ ), and alongside the other independent variables ( $\beta=.134, p<.05$ ). Meaning, caregivers reported that females were more likely to be rejected by peers than their male counterparts.

**Hypothesis 2.** Two hypotheses were associated with exploring the first aim. The second hypothesis stated that youth ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of child's friend group, and positive parenting will have a significant effect on youth ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors. Multiple regressions were conducted to determine the effect of extent of involvement, supervision, caregiver perception of the youth's friend group, and positive parenting on youth-reported bullying and victimization behaviors.

Bivariate correlations on youth-reported variables indicated numerous statistically significant relationships between variables. Youth-reported parent involvement was positively related to supervision and rules, positive parenting, popularity, sense of safety, and adult supervision in the neighborhood. That is to say, when youth reported higher levels of parent involvement, they also reported feeling safer, having more supervision at home and in the neighborhood, and having a positive relationship with their caregiver. Youth-reported parent involvement held a significant negative relationship with fighting with peers. Thus, as youth-reported parent involvement increased, arguing with friends decreased. Youth-reported supervision and rules also had significant positive relationships with positive parenting, sense of safety, and adult supervision in the neighborhood. Youth-reported supervision and rules had significant negative relationships with arguing with friends. Youth-reported positive parenting was positively correlated with popularity, sense of safety, and adult supervision in the neighborhood. Youth-reported positive parenting was negatively correlate with arguing with friends. Youth-reported parental perceptions of friends (i.e., parents think friends are a bad

influence) was positively correlated with arguing with friends, and significantly negatively correlated with a sense of safety. Meaning, as youth reported higher ratings of their parents thinking their friends are a bad influence on them, youth also reported higher levels of arguing with friends, and lower levels of feelings of safety. Youth-reported peer disputes was negatively correlated with sense of safety and adult supervision in the neighborhood. As youth reported more arguments with friends, they reported less supervision in the neighborhood and felt less safe. Youth-reported popularity was positively correlated with adult supervision, while youth-reported sense of safety was negatively correlated with adult supervision. Please see Table 13 for values.

***Child Sense of Safety as dependent variable.*** The second hypothesis was supported through the model (Model 2  $\beta = 2.773$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Youth report of caregiver perceptions of friends ( $\beta = -.199$ ;  $p < .05$ ), Supervision and rules ( $\beta = .170$ ;  $p < .05$ ), and Positive parenting ( $\beta = .161$ ;  $p < .05$ ) had a significant effect on the youth report of safety overall. Results indicated that youth-reported ratings of higher caregiver supervision and rules and positive parenting, as well as more positive caregiver perceptions of friend group led to a higher youth rating of safety overall. Youth report of Extent of involvement ( $\beta = -.017$ ;  $p = .782$ ) and youth report of Adult supervision in the neighborhood ( $\beta = .075$ ;  $p = .183$ ) did not have a significant effect in the model.

***Popularity as dependent variable.*** The second hypothesis was partially supported (Model 2  $\beta = 2.036$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Youth report of Adult supervision ( $\beta = .128$ ;  $p < .05$ ), Supervision and rules ( $\beta = -.124$ ;  $p < .05$ ), Extent of involvement ( $\beta = .152$ ;  $p < .05$ ), and Positive parenting ( $\beta = .140$ ;  $p < .05$ ) all had a significant effect on youth reports of popularity. Results showed that youth reported higher levels of supervision, involvement, and positive parenting led to higher youth

ratings of popularity (e.g., liked by peers, having friends). Youth-reported caregiver perceptions of friend groups did not indicate a statistically significant effect ( $\beta=.044$ ;  $p=.409$ ).

***Arguing with friends as dependent variable.*** When looking at youth peer relations and the level of disagreement and arguing, the overall model supported the second hypothesis (Model 2  $\beta = 3.043$ ;  $p < .05$ ). However, Adult supervision ( $\beta = .002$ ;  $p = .972$ ) and Extent of involvement ( $\beta = -.026$ ;  $p = .667$ ) were not statistically significant and did not support the second hypothesis. Youth report of Parental perceptions of friends ( $\beta = .301$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and Positive Parenting ( $\beta = -.238$ ;  $p < .05$ ) supported the model. Youth report of Supervision and rules approached significance ( $\beta = -.091$ ;  $p = .091$ ). Results showed that youth-reported caregiver friend perception and increased positive parenting interactions led to fewer arguments with friends.

***Effect of youth gender.*** Similar to caregiver regression analyses, youth gender was added at the first level of each regression. Youth gender was not significant across any of the dependent variables assessed (i.e., sense of safety, popularity, arguing with peers).

### **Agreement Between Youth and Caregiver Reports of Victimization.**

**Hypothesis 1.** The hypothesis related to the second aim of the study stated that youth would report higher rates of victimization than caregivers, and that concordance between youth and caregiver ratings would fall in a low to medium range of agreement. Intra-class correlations (ICCs) were conducted on caregiver and youth reports of the dependent variables including popularity, liked by peers, and having friends compared to peers. The overall agreement between parent and youth report fell in the acceptable range. The average measure ICC was .784 with a 95% confidence interval from .747 to .818 ( $F(329, 2303)$ ,  $p < .05$ ). When looking at each domain independently, there was little to no agreement between youth and caregiver reports. When looking at youth popularity compared to peers, the average ICC was .123 with a 95%

confidence interval of  $-.089$  to  $.294$  ( $F(329, 329)$ ,  $p=.116$ ). The results from youth and caregiver report of having friends compared with peers proved to be statistically significant, but fell in a range of little-to-no agreement. The average ICC was  $.334$ , with a 95% confidence interval from  $.173$  to  $.464$  ( $F(329, 329)$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Finally, when looking at youth and caregiver report of the target child being liked by peers, the results were statistically significant but fell in the little-to-no agreement range. The average ICC was  $.249$ , with a 95% confidence interval of  $.068$  to  $.395$  ( $F(329, 329)$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

The hypothesis that youth will report higher rates of victimization than caregivers, and agreement between youth and caregivers will fall in a low to medium range was partially supported. All ICCs between youth and caregivers fell in a low to medium range. However, youth did not report higher rates of victimization, when using social isolation as a proxy for victimization. With the exception of youth report of popularity ( $\mu=2.927$ ), average youth ratings of having friends and being liked by peers was higher than caregiver reported popularity metrics.

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine factors that affect caregiver and youth ratings of bullying and victimization behaviors and examine the agreement on victimization between raters. The overall prevalence rate of engaging in bullying behaviors in the current sample fell at 4.68% of youth reporting engaging in some kind of physical bullying behavior, and 6.34% reporting relational difficulties with peers. These prevalence rates are lower than previous research (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). Victimization rates, measured through feelings of safety (14.41%) and internalizing behaviors (6.9%) also fell in the lower range compared with previous research (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009).

#### **Factors that Predict Bullying and Victimization**

The first aim sought to determine the factors that predict caregiver and youth ratings of bullying and victimization. The first hypothesis stated that caregiver ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of friend group, and positive parenting would have a significant effect on caregiver ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors. The first hypothesis was partially supported and aligns with previous research; caregiver involvement was a significant factor in reduced reporting of aggression and social problems, as well as being liked by peers. The reason for this could be twofold: parents are more likely to be involved when they are getting more communication from the school setting and are made aware of an issue; it is also known that involvement can work as a protective factor against social problems and aggression. These results are in agreement with Ok and Aslan's (2010) findings that bullying significantly decreases when parent's involvement increases.

In regard to caregiver ratings of popularity metrics, including being liked by peers and rejected by peers, caregiver perceptions of friend group, specifically bad behaviors within the friend group had a significant effect on caregiver ratings. As caregivers had more negative perceptions of youth friend group, they were more likely to rate their youth as being less liked by peers and more rejected by peers. If a caregiver believes their youth is associating with the “wrong crowd,” they are more likely to view their youth in a more negative light. Caregivers may view behaviors as more aggressive and may believe they are more likely to have more social problems, even if the behaviors are deemed developmentally appropriate by others.

Contrary to previous research (Goldstein, Davis-Kean, & Eccles, 2005), positive parenting and parental monitoring were not significant across any of the dependent variables (i.e., aggression, social problems, liked by peers, rejected by peers). The results of the current study might suggest that parental monitoring and supervision may not be a top priority for caregivers in reducing bullying or victimization of their youth. The results of this study support Georgiou and Stavrinides (2013) findings that caregiver monitoring was not a significant factor in predicting bullying or victimization.

Youth gender did not have a significant role in caregiver ratings, with the exception of being rejected by peers. Caregivers rated their female youth as rejected more by their peers than male children. This finding is not surprising, as we know that developmentally, females are more likely to be involved in relational bullying than physical bullying (Houndoumadi & Pateraki, 2001). Houndoumadi and Pateraki (2001) also found in their study that females are more likely to report victimization than males, so this youth rejection finding provides support for their research.



The second hypothesis stated that youth ratings of caregiver extent of involvement, caregiver supervision, caregiver perception of friend group, and positive parenting would have a significant effect on youth ratings of victimization and bullying. Support for the second hypothesis was mixed. Across all dependent variables (youth-reported sense of safety, popularity, arguments with peers), youth reported positive parenting did have a significant effect. Youth-reported positive parenting had a positive effect on sense of safety, higher levels of popularity, and fewer arguments with friends. These findings align with Erginoz et al. (2015), who found that having closer parent-child relationships improved youth's ability to select more pro-social peers as friends. Supervision and rules proved significant for youth-reported sense of safety and popularity (i.e., having friends compared with peers, being liked compared with peers). This echoes Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon's (2000) research, which reported that students who spent the greatest amount of time without adults were more likely to engage in bullying behavior. Youth-reported caregiver perception of friend group did have a significant effect on youth-reported sense of safety and arguing with peers. Surprisingly, youth-reported parental involvement was not significant. Youth may deem the types of interactions they have with caregivers as more salient than the amount of interactions they have with caregivers. This holds from a developmental perspective, as youth emerge into adolescence, they begin to spend less time with caregivers and more time with peers. Emerging adolescents deeply care about how they are perceived, so it stands to reason that caregiver perceptions of friends would be a significant variable in feelings of safety and arguing with friends.

### **Agreement in Reports of Victimization**

The second aim of the study was to determine the agreement between caregiver and youth reports of victimization. It was hypothesized that youth would report higher ratings of

victimization than caregivers, and that agreement between youth and caregiver ratings of victimization would fall in a low to medium range. The hypothesis pertaining to the second aim of the study was partially supported. Youth did not report higher rates of victimization than caregivers; in fact, the average rating of youth-reported popularity metrics were higher than caregiver-reported popularity metrics. When examining the agreement between youth-reported and caregiver-reported victimization, both ICCs fell in the low range of agreement. The youth and caregiver reported ICCs for having friends and being liked by peers were statistically significant, but fell below a poor range of reliability. The results from the current study align with Demaray and colleagues (2013), who found in their agreement among parent and youth perceptions of victimization and bullying that parents and youth agreement fell in the “fair” range. If anything, the results of the current study indicate that parents and youth may not have the same viewpoint on victimization at all, as the agreement ratings fell below an acceptable range. This could harken back to the factors caregivers and youth deem as significant in perceiving victimization. The quality of interactions between caregivers and youth as youth emerge into adolescence may not be adequate or comprehensive enough for caregivers to fully understand the youth perspective. It may be time to consider what youth deem as important when designing comprehensive family-based interventions.

### **Limitations**

The present research study posed a few limitations that future researchers would be wise to address. As the SAFE Children Study’s primary purpose was a family-based substance-use prevention program, there were no direct measurements of bullying and victimization on either the youth survey or caregiver survey. Although bullying and victimization could be approximated through closely-related variables and constructs, actual rates of bullying and

victimization could not be gleaned through the current sample. Additionally, the overall prevalence of bullying and victimization through the assumed variables fell in a low range when compared with previous literature on bullying (Kimon Tsitsika et al., 2014, Stopbullying.gov). Future research exploring similar topics should include a sample of individuals and families who have experienced bullying to reduce potential noise from results. Some variables did not fall within an acceptable range of normality, and caregiver reports on youth peer relations held low reliability metrics. Some of the caregiver metrics held low reliability metrics due to restricted ranges in responses. On popularity metrics, most caregivers indicated their youth were not rejected by peers or a little rejected by peers. This, in turn, affects reliability as there is less variance in the sample (Fife, Mendoza, & Terry, 2012). Range restriction can become problematic when estimates of reliability or validity are selected; because the variance is altered due to restricted range, both correlations and reliability coefficients are affected (Fife, Mendoza, & Terry, 2012). Thus, the results from the current study should be interpreted with caution. Future studies should seek to delve into the intricacies of social rejection to tease apart the gaps in knowledge.

Furthermore, the mode of data collection was self-report. Self-report data are prone to bias, and future research would include objective data such as student disciplinary reports. The current study did not include teacher responses, although the SAFE Children Study did survey teachers as well. Future research should consider teacher and parent concordance, as well as teacher and youth concordance to continue to identify the gaps in definitions of bullying and victimization. Finally, the sample included in the current research study were primarily low-income families. Low-income families are prone to higher rates of stress (American Psychological Association, 2017) which may have influenced responses overall.

### **Directions for Future Research**

The current study brings to light some of the important factors that affect caregiver and youth perceptions of behaviors typically associated with bullying and victimization.

Additionally, the results from the current research align with previous studies that report that agreement between caregiver and youth reports of bullying and victimization often fall in a low range; that is, caregivers often do not know what their child is experiencing socially in the school setting. The current study leaves room for future research in a variety of avenues. Perhaps most importantly, future research should use measures that directly assess victimization and bullying behaviors in youth. Such studies would build upon the current study, while also allow for reliability analyses of measures designed to assess these constructs. The research surrounding bullying and victimization would benefit from the addition of teachers into the analyses. Parents have reported feeling frustrated with schools' handling of bullying, and have reported feeling left out of the process (Hale, Fox, & Murray, 2017). Examining youth, caregiver, and teacher concordance of bullying and victimization may help to identify methods of bridging the communication gap between the three parties, and may inform necessary modifications to school and district bullying policies.

Since the advent of the internet, more youth are spending time on their devices (Rideout, Pai, & Saphir, Common Sense Media, 2015). In a Key Findings report from Common Sense Media (2015), the researchers found that on any given day, adolescents (13 to 18 years old) spend an average of nine hours of entertainment media use. The report noted that youth aged eight to 12 years old spend an average of six hours on entertainment media use daily (Rideout, Pai, & Saphir, 2015). The report identified different types of media users; the "Social Networkers" spend more than three hours a day using social media, while the average social

media use sits at about an hour a day across all teens (Rideout, Pai, & Saphir, 2015). Additionally, though most teens noted their parents knew “a lot” or at least “some” about the type of media content consumed, a quarter of respondents reported their parents know “a little” or “nothing” about what they do or say online (Rideout, Pai, & Saphir, 2015). With a substantial amount of time spent on social media, and youth reporting their parents know “little” or “nothing” about their activities online, it stands to reason that parents and caregivers may be oblivious to any cyberbullying their child may be experiencing or perpetrating. Youth who have experienced cyberbullying have reported decreased feelings of safety at school and have reported they are afraid to go to school (Betts, Spenser, & Gardner, 2017). Future researchers may find it worthwhile to measure the concordance between parent perception of youth utilization of the internet and actual youth reported internet behaviors.

## **Conclusions**

The results of the current study provide further evidence for what researchers in bullying have already known: that caregiver involvement is an important factor when looking at bullying and victimization. Both youth and caregiver ratings of caregiver involvement indicated higher ratings on popularity metrics (e.g., liked by peers). This finding echoes what researchers Abdirahman, Fleming, and Jacobsen (2013) found in their study; parental involvement was associated with a reduced likelihood of peer victimization. Therefore, it is important to keep parents involved throughout their child’s educational trajectory, and communicate when social issues may arise in the school setting. Researchers Hale, Fox, and Murray (2017) conducted a focus group with parents of children who have been victimized, they noted that parents appreciated direct communication from the school team. Every parent who participated in the focus group contacted the school, but many felt frustrated with school anti-bullying policies or

they felt that teachers and administrators did not take the parent report seriously (Hale, Fox, & Murray, 2017). Many parents reported blaming themselves for their child's victimization, even though they felt they took appropriate actions through contacting the school (Hale, Fox, & Murray, 2017).

A new, but unsurprising, contribution to the research was that caregiver negative perceptions of friend group played an important role in caregiver ratings of peer acceptance and rejection, as well as youth ratings of safety and arguing with peers. This finding supports previous research conducted by Hinduja and Patchin (2013), who found in their study on social influences on cyberbullying behaviors that students who spend more time with deviant peers are more likely to engage in deviant behaviors and cyberbullying. The researchers found that youth who are bonded more strongly with their parents are less likely to behave in incongruent ways, and were associated with a lower likelihood of deviant peer associations (Hinduja & Patchin, 2013). Hinduja and Patchin (2013) school have strong and clear anti-bullying and cyberbullying policies, and note that peer mentoring programs may be beneficial for mitigating cyberbullying and promoting positive peer relationships.

Surprisingly, the current study indicated that positive parenting and supervision and monitoring had mixed results for caregivers and youth. Caregiver reported positive parenting and supervision and rules did not have a significant effect on any of the variables assessed (i.e., aggressive behaviors, social problems, liked by peers, peer rejection). These findings align with research from Farrell, Provenzano, Dane, Marini, and Volk (2017), who noted that caregiver knowledge and monitoring were not significant moderators for bullying. Thus, the closeted school professional mantra of "blame the parents" may not be the sole contributor for bullying behaviors, and school professionals need to take a comprehensive approach to addressing

bullying behaviors. However, youth-reported positive parenting and supervision and rules did have a significant effect on feelings of youth safety and popularity metrics.

What is clear is that caregivers and youth are not in alignment when it comes to perceptions of bullying and victimization. From the factors that youth and caregivers rate as influences on victimization and bullying behaviors, to agreement ratings between them, there are still definitional gaps to be reconciled. Researchers and school practitioners should continue to clarify definitions of bullying and victimization, and work to increase communication between youth and caregivers. Caregivers should engage in continual dialogue, and provide opportunities for practice and to refine social skills and competencies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2013). School professionals need to be more transparent in their communications with families and involve parents from the outset of a report of bullying. Additionally, school professionals should work to promote a positive school climate that encourages communication between staff and students. When students feel a higher comfort level in the school building, they will be more likely to share their concerns with an adult, either at home or in school (Swearer et al., 2010). By focusing on factors youth and caregivers deem as essential influences on ratings of victimization and bullying behaviors, developers of interventions can adjust their guiding frameworks to reflect the appropriate needs and reduce victimization and increase positive academic and behavioral outcomes for bullies and victims alike.

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## Appendix

Table 1

### *Demographic Information Collected from Interview*

<b>Demographic Information</b>	<b>Valid Percentage</b>	<b>n</b>
Assigned Condition		
Treatment	53.1	225
Control	46.9	199
Caregiver Ethnicity		
African American	42.7	180
Mexican American	47.6	201
Other Hispanic	5.5	23
Anglo-White/Other	4.3	18
Total Family Income		
Less than \$5,000	8.2	27
\$5,000-\$9,999	5.8	19
\$10,000-\$14,999	13.4	44
\$15,000-\$19,999	14.9	49
\$20,000-\$24,999	16.1	53
\$25,000-\$29,000	13.7	45
\$30,000-\$39,000	13.1	43
\$40,000-\$49,000	8.8	29
More than \$50,000	6.1	20
Child Ethnicity		
Black or African American	40.5	134
Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano	50.2	166
Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Hispanic/Latino	5.7	19
Anglo-White/Other	3.6	12
Relationship to Target Child		
Mother	94.9	314
Father	1.8	6
Grandmother	2.4	8
Other	.9	3
Child in Special Education		
Yes	4.8	16

No	95.2	315
<hr/>		
Target Child Gender		
Male	45.9	152
Female	54.1	179
<hr/>		
Target Child Age		
10	12.4	41
11	67	284
12	1.8	6
<hr/>		

Table 1

*Identified Items Sorted by Independent and Dependent Variables*

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Item</b>
Parental Extent of Involvement	
C#CSDEXI	Mean scale score; child ratings of parental extent of involvement
C#CSD001	When was the last time you talked about what you were going to do for the coming day?
C#CSD002	How often does he/she talk to you about what you were doing to do for the coming day?
C#CSD003	When was the last time you talked with him/her about what you had actually done during the day?
C#CSD004	How often has he/she talked with you about what you had actually done during the day last year?
C#CSD007	Do you help with family fun activities?
C#CSD008	Do you like to get involved in family activities?
C#CSD009	How often does he/she have time to listen to you when you want to talk with one of them?
C#CSD010	How often do you and he/she do things together at home?
C#CSD011	How often do you go with members of the family to movies, sports events, or other outings?
C#CSD012	How often do you have a friendly talk with him/her?
C#CSD013	How often do you help with chores errands and/or other work around the house?
C#CSD014	How often does he/she talk with you about how you are doing in school or at work?
P#PSDEXI	Mean scale score; parental ratings of extent of involvement
P#PSD001	When was the last time you discussed his/her plans for the coming day?
P#PSD002	In the past 12 months, discussed plans for the coming day?
P#PSD003	When was the last time you talked about what he/she had actually done during the day?
P#PSD004	In the past 12 months, how often have you talked about what he/she had actually done during the day?
P#PSD007	Does he/she help with family fun activities?
P#PSD008	Does he/she like to get involved in such family activities?
P#PSD009	How often do you have time to listen to him/her when he/she wants to talk to you?
P#PSD010	Do you and him/her do things together at home?
P#PSD011	Does he/she go with members of the family to movies, sports events, or other outings?

P#PSD012	How often do you have a friendly talk with him/her?
P#PSD013	Does he/she help with chores, errands and/or other work?
P#PSD014	Do you talk with him/her about how he/she is doing in school?
<hr/>	
Supervision and Rules	
C#CSDSUR	Mean scale score, child ratings of parental supervision and rules
C#CSD005	Do you have a set time to be home on school nights?
C#CSD006	Do you have a set time to be home on weekend nights?
P#PSDSUR	Mean scale score; parental ratings of supervision and rules.
P#PSD005	Does he/she have a set time to be home on school nights?
P#PSD006	Does he/she have a set time to be home on weekend nights?
<hr/>	
Positive Parenting Scale	
C#CSDPOP	Mean scale score; child ratings of positive parenting practices
C#CSD029	How often does he/she give you a wink or a smile?
C#CSD030	How often does he/she say something nice; praise or approval?
C#CSD031	How often does he/she give you a hug, pat on the back, or kiss?
C#CSD032	How often does he/she give you some reward?
C#CSD033	How often does he/she give you some special privilege or do some special activity?
C#CSD034	How often does he/she do something special together or go somewhere special?
P#PSDPOP	Mean scale score; parental ratings of positive parenting practices.
P#PSD029	Give him/her a wink or smile?
P#PSD030	Say something nice; praise or give approval?
P#PSD031	Give him/her a hug, pat on the back, or kiss?
P#PSD032	Give him/her some kind of reward, like a present, extra money, or something else?
P#PSD033	Give him/her a special privilege such as staying up late, or doing some special activity?
P#PSD034	Do something special together, such as going to the movies or to a game?
<hr/>	
Peer Relations	
C#CPABAD	Mean scale score; child ratings of parental perceptions of friend group
C#CPA036	Have your parents said that any of your friends were a bad influence on you?
C#CPA040	Do any of the kids in your friend group do things that your parents don't want you to do?
C#CPA042	Have your parents told you that you shouldn't play with someone?
P#PRPBAD	Mean scale score; parental ratings of child's friend's negative behavior
P#PRP005RF	How often did he/she associate with children who worked hard in school and completed their homework?
P#PRP006RF	How often did he/she associate with children who were involved in positive school or community activities?
P#PRP007RF	About how many of his/her friends misbehaved or broke rules
P#PRP008RF	About how many of his/her friends experimented with smoking?

P#PRP009RF	About how many of his/her friends experimented with other substances?
P#PRP010RF	About how many of his/her friends dressed or acted as if they were in a gang?
P#PRP011RF	About how many of his/her friends were older?
P#PRP012RF	About how many of his/her friends did not attend school?
<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Item</b>
<b>Peer Relations</b>	
C#CPAPOP	Mean scale score; child ratings of perceived popularity
C#CPA024	Compared to other kids, I am popular
C#CPA025	Compared to other kids, I have friends
C#CPA026	Compared to other kids, I am liked
P#PRPPOP	Mean scale score; parental ratings of child's popularity
P#PRP019	Compared to his/her peers, my child is popular.
P#PRP020	Compared to his/her peers, my child has friends
P#PRP021	Compared to his/her peers, my child is liked
P#PRPREJ	Mean scale score; parental ratings of child's rejection by peers
P#PRP023	About how many of his/her peers disliked or rejected him/her?
P#PRP024	About how many of his/her peers ignored him/her, or were simply neutral about him/her?
<b>Child sense of Safety</b>	
C#CAFTOT	Mean scale score; child ratings total sense of safety
C#CFA001	I feel safe on my way to school in the morning.
C#CFA002	I feel safe on the school playground before school.
C#CFA003	I feel safe in my class at school.
C#CFA004	I feel safe at lunch at school.
C#CFA005	I feel safe at gym class at school.
C#CFA006	I feel safe after school before I go home.
C#CFA007	I feel safe on my way home from school.
C#CFA008	I feel safe at the playground closest to my house.
C#CFA009	I feel safe playing in my yard.
C#CFA010	I feel safe playing on my block.
<b>Aggression Scale</b>	
P#CBCAGG	Mean scale score, parental ratings of child aggressive behaviors
P#CBR002	Cruelty, bullying, or meanness
P#CBR004	Destroys his/her own things
P#CBR005	Disobedient at home
P#CBR006	Disobedient at school
P#CBR009	Sudden change in mood or feelings
P#CBR010	Talks too much
P#CBR011	Threatens people
P#CBR012	Unusually loud
<b>Social Problems Scale</b>	



P#CBCSPR	Mean scale score, parental ratings of child social problems.
P#CBR001	Bragging, boasting
P#CBR003	Demands a lot of attention
P#CBR007	Easily jealous
P#CBR008	Showing off or clowning

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Table 2

*Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha of Measures*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Caregiver Parental Involvement	.776	.826	13
Caregiver Supervision and Rules	.957	.960	3
Caregiver Positive Parenting	.844	.865	7
Caregiver Peer Relations	.358	.580	9
Caregiver Aggression	.821	.847	9
Caregiver Social Problems	.788	.813	5
Caregiver Popularity	.860	.874	4
Caregiver Popularity: Rejection	.280	.534	4
Youth Parental Involvement	.789	.814	13
Youth Supervision and Rules	.874	.887	3
Youth Positive Parenting	.807	.833	7
Youth Sense of Safety	.926	.931	11
Youth Peer Relations: Popularity	.793	.819	4

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics of Variables*

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>
Caregiver Parental Involvement	4.417	.447	-.701	.159
Caregiver Supervision and Rules	1.957	.243	-6.973	51.853
Caregiver Positive Parenting	4.419	.684	-.516	-.612
Caregiver Aggression	.381	.309	1.126	1.757
Caregiver Social Problems	.514	.417	.693	.153
Caregiver Friend's Bad Behavior	1.422	.266	.843	3.199
Caregiver Popularity	3.423	.725	-.045	.067
Caregiver Popularity: Rejection	1.322	.552	2.320	7.770
Youth Parental Involvement	4.087	.594	-.752	.590
Youth Supervision and Rules	1.592	.557	1.048	-1.348
Youth Positive Parenting	3.975	.739	-.711	.601
Youth Parents think Friends are Bad Influence	.99	1.003	.719	-.571
Youth Adult Supervision in Neighborhood	3.215	.827	-.025	-.698
Youth Fight/Argue with Friends	2.114	.672	.067	-.644
Youth Sense of Safety	3.529	.614	-1.538	2.028
Youth Peer Relations: Popularity	3.522	.742	-.297	.034

Table 5

*Bullying Prevalence*

	Never		Almost Never		Sometimes		Almost Always		Always	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Argue with friends	97	29.3	103	31.1	116	35	9	2.7	6	1.8
Frustrated with friends	110	33.2	96	29	110	33.2	9	2.7	6	1.8
Disagree with friends	74	22.4	103	31.1	106	32	27	8.2	21	6.3
Friends get upset by opinions	144	43.5	99	29.9	69	20.9	10	3	9	2.7
Get angry with friends	102	30.8	126	38.1	89	26.9	9	2.7	5	1.5
Friends do things you do not like	127	38.4	104	31.4	85	25.7	9	2.7	6	1.8

Table 6

*Bullying Behaviors Prevalence*

	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Wrecked others property	20	6	311	94
Taken something from teacher/kid at school	11	3.3	320	96.7
Attacked someone with a weapon to hurt them	7	2.1	324	97.9
Hit someone to hurt them	37	11.2	294	88.8
Used weapon/bully someone to get money	0	0	331	100
Thrown object at someone	18	5.4	313	94.6

Table 7

*Victimization Prevalence*

	Never		Sometimes		Most of the Time		Always	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Safe on the way to school	10	3	42	12.7	52	15.7	227	68.6
Safe on the playground	13	4	47	14.2	39	11.8	232	70.1
Safe in class	6	1.8	22	6.7	27	8.2	276	83.4
Safe at lunch	8	2.4	26	7.9	31	9.4	266	80.4
Safe at gym	6	1.8	31	9.4	31	9.4	263	79.5
Safe after school	17	5.1	43	13	58	17.5	213	64.4
Safe on the way home	14	4.2	49	14.8	55	16.6	213	64.4

Table 8

*Victimization Behaviors Prevalence*

	<b>Not True</b>		<b>Somewhat/Sometimes True</b>		<b>Very or Often True</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Lonely	214	64.8	98	29.7	18	5.5
Cry a lot	203	61.5	99	30	28	8.5
No one loves me	275	83.3	30	9.1	25	5.9
Others out to get me	267	80.9	37	11.2	26	7.9
Worthless or inferior	280	84.8	30	9.1	20	6.1
Unhappy, sad, depressed	234	70.9	76	23	20	6.1

Table 9

*Percentage Youth Reported Popularity Metrics*

	<b>No</b>		<b>Few</b>		<b>Average</b>		<b>Missing</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Valid</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>			
I am popular	34	10.27	51	15.41	175	52.87	93	424	331
I have friends	3	.91	39	11.78	82	24.77	93	424	331
I am liked	3	.91	22	6.65	103	31.12	93	424	331



Table 10

*Bivariate Correlations for Caregiver-Reported Variables*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1</b>	1								
<b>2</b>	-.018	1							
<b>3</b>	.482**	-.036	1						
<b>4</b>	-.293**	-.035	-.160**	1					
<b>5</b>	-.249**	-.024	-.134*	.598**	1				
<b>6</b>	-.230**	-.057	-.105	.655**	.501**	1			
<b>7</b>	-.329**	.061	-.219**	.249**	.330**	.177**	1		
<b>8</b>	.266**	-.008	.129*	-.162**	-.152**	-.131*	-.322**	1	
<b>9</b>	-.119*	.083	-.131*	.166**	.137*	.124*	.210**	-.091	1

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

\*Significant at the .05 level

1. Parenting – Extent of Involvement
2. Parenting – Supervision and Rules
3. Parenting – Positive Parenting
4. Child Behavior - Aggression
5. Child Behavior – Delinquency
6. Child Behavior – Social Problems
7. Peer Relations – Friends Bad Behavior
8. Peer Relations – Popular, Liked
9. Peer Relations – Popular, Rejected by Peers

Table 11

*Caregiver Regression using Aggression as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Constant	.397**	.055		1.002**	.256	
Target Child Gender	-.010	.034	-.016	.011	.033	.018
Extent of Involvement				-.159	.042	-.231**
Positive Parenting Supervision and Rules				-.009	.027	-.020
Friends' Bad Behavior				-.085	.065	-.069
R <sup>2</sup>	.000			.112		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.088			10.233		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 12

*Caregiver Regression using Social Problems as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Constant	.569**	.075		1.289**	.354	
Target Child Gender	-.036	.046	-.043	-.012	.045	-.015
Extent of Involvement				-.176	.058	-.190**
Positive Parenting				.006	.037	.009
Supervision and Rules				-.137	.089	-.082
Friends' Bad Behavior				.189	.089	.121*
R <sup>2</sup>	-.001			.056		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.601			5.940		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 13

*Caregiver Regression using Peer Relations, Liked by Peers as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Constant	3.386**	.130		3.304**	.595	
Target Child Gender	.024	.080	.016	-.023	.076	-.016
Extent of Involvement Positive Parenting Supervision and Rules				.312	.098	.194**
Friends' Bad Behavior				-.034	.063	-.032
				-.049	.150	-.017
				-.696	.149	-.257**
R <sup>2</sup>	.000			.129		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.088			11.974		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 14

*Caregiver Regression using Peer Relations, Rejected by Peers as Dependent Variable*

	<b>Model 1</b>			<b>Model 2</b>		
	<b>B</b>	<b>SE B</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE B</b>	<b>β</b>
Constant	1.117**	.098		.485	.467	
Target Child Gender	.133	.061	.120*	.148	.059	.134*
Extent of Involvement				.005	.077	.004
Positive Parenting				-.074	.049	-.091
Supervision and Rules				.164	.118	.075
Friends' Bad Behavior				.404	.117	.196**
R <sup>2</sup>	.014			.075		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	4.807			5.343		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 15

*Bivariate Correlations for Youth-Reported Variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	1							
2	.301**	1						
3	.473**	.168**	1					
4	-.092	-.080	-.036	1				
5	-.195**	-.168**	-.275**	.316**	1			
6	.217**	-.026	.232**	.034	.004	1		
7	.151**	.226**	.217**	-.216**	-.348**	.096	1	
8	.302**	.205**	.334**	-.046	-.120*	.196**	-.171**	1

\*\*Significant at .01 level

\*Significant at .05 level

1. Parenting – Extent of Involvement
2. Parenting – Supervision and Rules
3. Parenting – Positive Parenting
4. Peer Relations – Parents think Friends are Bad Influence
5. Peer Relations – Fight or Argue with Friends
6. Peer Relations - Popularity
7. Safety – Child Sense of Safety
8. Peer Relations – Adult Supervision in Neighborhood

Table 16

*Youth Regression using Child Sense of Safety as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Constant	3.624**	.110		2.773**	.271	
Target Child Gender	-.063	.068	-.051	-.039	.065	-.032
Extent of Involvement				-.018	.064	-.017
Supervision and Rules				.187	.061	.170**
Positive Parenting				.134	.050	.161**
Adult Supervision in Neighborhood				.056	.042	.075
Friends' Bad Behavior				-.121	.032	-.199**
R <sup>2</sup>	.003			.128		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.856			9.313		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 17

*Youth Regression using Popularity as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Constant	3.527**	.133		2.036**	.334	
Target Child Gender	-.003	.082	-.002	.010	.080	.007
Extent of Involvement				.189	.079	.152*
Supervision and Rules				-.165	.075	-.124*
Positive Parenting				.140	.062	.140*
Adult Supervision in Neighborhood				.115	.052	.128*
Friends' Bad Behavior				.033	.039	.044
R <sup>2</sup>	.000			.095		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.001			6.787		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$



Table 18

*Youth Regression using Arguing with Friends as Dependent Variable*

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Constant	2.090**	.120		3.043**	.288	
Target Child Gender	.014	.074	.010	.013	.069	.010
Extent of Involvement				-.029	.068	-.026
Supervision and Rules				-.109	.065	-.091
Positive Parenting Adult Supervision in Neighborhood				-.217	.053	-.238**
Friends' Bad Behavior				.202	.034	.301**
R <sup>2</sup>	-.003			.182		
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	.034			14.382		

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$

Table 19

*Mean Item Statistics for Parent/Youth ICCs*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
Youth Popularity	3.5202	.7417	330
Youth – Compared to others I am popular	2.9272	.9988	330
Youth – Compared to others I have friends	3.7878	1.0301	330
Youth – Compared to others I am liked	3.8454	.9786	330
Caregiver – Popularity	3.4212	.7254	330
Caregiver – Popularity compared to others	3.1121	.9073	330
Caregiver – Has friends compared to others	3.3575	1.0162	330
Caregiver – Liked compared to peers	3.7939	.7757	330

Table 20

*ANOVA of Dependent Variables*

		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Between People		858.170	329	2.608		
Within	Between Items	259.748	7	37.107	65.881	.000
People	Residual	1297.141	2302	.563		
	Total	1556.889	2310	.674		
Total		2415.068	2639	.915		

Table 21

*Intraclass Correlation Coefficient between all Variables*

	ICC	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.312	.270	.359	4.631	329	2303	.000
Average Measures	.784	.747	.818	4.631	329	2303	.000

Table 22

*Intraclass Correlation Coefficient between Popularity*

	ICC	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.066	-.042	.172	1.141	329	329	.116
Average Measures	.123	-.089	.294	1.141	329	329	.116

Table 23

*Intraclass Correlation Coefficient between Having Friends Compared with Peers*

	ICC	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.200	.095	.302	1.501	329	329	.000
Average Measures	.334	.173	.464	1.501	329	329	.000

Table 24

*Intraclass Correlation Coefficient between Being Liked Compared with Peers*

	ICC	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.142	.035	.246	1.332	329	329	.005
Average Measures	.249	.068	.395	1.332	329	329	.005

## VITA

Alicia Verity Fischer

### EDUCATION

Ph. D	2020	School Psychology
		The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
M. Ed.	2016	School Psychology
		The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
B. A.	2014	Psychology (Honors)
		The University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2020 – Present	School Psychologist
	Bald Eagle Area School District, Wingate, PA
2019-2020	School Psychologist
	Central Intermediate Unit 10, West Decatur, PA
2018-2019	Graduate Assistant, Guided Study Group Supervisor
	Penn State Learning, University Park, PA
2014-2018	Graduate Research Assistant, THRIVE Parenting Initiative
	The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State, State College, PA

### PRESENTATIONS/PUBLICATIONS

Fischer, A., Bell, K. (2018). Feasibility of implementing parenting programs in a school setting. *National Association of School Psychologists Annual Conference, Chicago, IL*

Fischer, A. (2017). An examination of differences in achievement towards high-stakes testing. *International School Psychologists Association Annual Conference, Manchester, England*

Fischer, A. (2014). Winners, losing, and mediocrity: Individual differences on behavioral performance of Sprague-Dawley rats on an progressive ratio operant task. *FRONTIERS University of Connecticut conference, Storrs, CT*