STARS

Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019

2009

Predicting Children's Emotional And Behavioral Functioning: An Examination Of Coparenting And Parental Satisfaction

Samantha Scott
University of Central Florida

Part of the Clinical Psychology Commons

Find similar works at: https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd

University of Central Florida Libraries http://library.ucf.edu

STARS Citation

Scott, Samantha, "Predicting Children's Emotional And Behavioral Functioning: An Examination Of Coparenting And Parental Satisfaction" (2009). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019*. 4123.
https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/4123

University of Central Florida

STARS

Showcase of Text, Archives, Research & Scholarship

PREDICTING CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL FUNCTIONING: AN
EXAMINATION OF COPARENTING AND PARENTAL SATISFACTION

by

SAMANTHA L. SCOTT
University of Central Florida, 2009

A thesis proposal submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science
in the Department of Psychology
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Summer
2009

Major Professor: Kimberly Renk

ABSTRACT

To examine the interplay among shared parenting, coparent support, parental satisfaction, and child behavior problems, the current study examines the responses of mothers and fathers who have children between the ages of 3- and 6-years. As part of this study, 107 parents (i.e., 80 mothers and 27 fathers) completed a questionnaire packet including measures of coparenting, parental satisfaction, and child behavior problems. Results are examined using correlational and hierarchical regression analyses. Correlational analyses suggest that coparent support and parental satisfaction are related positively and that coparent support and parental satisfaction are related negatively with children's behavior problems. Unique relationships are found in this study when examining overt supportive behaviors versus perceptions of coparent support, suggesting the importance of examining these constructs separately in relation to parental satisfaction and children's behavior. Hierarchical regression analyses reveal that, when coparent support measures are examined as different constructs, coparent support and parental satisfaction contribute uniquely to the prediction of children's emotional and behavioral functioning. These findings highlight the connection between coparent support and parental satisfaction as well as the importance of each in predicting outcomes for children, regardless of how evenly two parents divide childcare responsibilities. These findings also contribute to the literature by suggesting the importance of examining perceptions of support and overt supportive behavior separately. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide valuable information for potential targets of parenting interventions provided to mothers and fathers in mental health facilities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PREDICTING CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL FUNCTIONINING: AN EXAMINATION OF COPARENITNG AND PARENTAL SATISFACTION

During the last forty years, there has been a tremendous increase in women joining the workforce (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000), resulting in many women taking on the dual roles of being both mothers and employees. As mothers are spending more time in the workforce and less time at home, an opposite, or compensatory, trend for fathers may be beneficial for family functioning. In general, however, current research on parental involvement in childcare indicates that mothers are still spending more time with their children than are fathers, even though mothers are spending more time in outside employment than they have in previous years (e.g., Aldous, Mulligan, & Biarnason, 1998). Fathers also are working the same amount of time outside of the home, often putting mothers in the position of what researchers have termed 'second shift' mothering (i.e., beginning their second shift of work as the main parent once returning home from their place of employment; Bulanda, 2004; Hochschild & Machung, 1989). The implications of the added stress that may result from these parenting trends are important to examine, as they are likely to be related to many aspects of family functioning.

Although recent trends in parenting reflect changes from parenting in the past, there is still wide variability across families in terms of parental involvement and specific parenting practices. Consistent with parenting in the past, the amount of parental involvement and the distribution of childcare between parents lie on a continuum; no two families are exactly the same. Furthermore, what works for one family cannot be expected to work for every other

family. Thus, other factors inevitably play a role in family functioning and in the outcomes experienced by children in the context of their family's structure. Discrepancies in previous studies examining the developing trends in parenting likely reflect the complexities created by such variability as well as by differences in how parental involvement is defined. Because an examination of the outcomes related to family structure and parenting practices are crucial to the study of child development and to the identification of appropriate policies for parenting and work arrangements (e.g., family leave), it is necessary to further examine the changing trends in parenting as they relate to various aspects of family functioning.

Recent Trends in Parenting

Although the term *parenting* implies a gender-neutral responsibility involving both parents, shared responsibility for parenting across mothers and fathers in not always evident. Until recently, mothers had the main role in all aspects of parenting, from disciplining to nurturing. In contrast, fathers historically were the sole breadwinners, providing monetarily for their families (Cabrera et al., 2000). More recently, these roles are being challenged. As more women are working outside of the home, there is a growing need for fathers to take a more active role with household and child-related responsibilities. Furthermore, research on the roles of fathers indicates that fathers are important in their children's development and aid in decreasing stress for mothers by providing extra assistance with childcare (Aldous & Mulligan, 2002; Phares, 1999). Thus, both mothers and fathers are important to the functioning of families.

In the last four decades, research on mothers' and fathers' involvement in their families has flourished. Many studies focus on parental involvement in terms of the actual amount of time that parents spend in childcare activities, whereas other studies consider the concept of

2

parental involvement as consisting of specific types of involvement. Although contrasting

effects are found in the context of differing definitions of mother versus father involvement and

with regard to the measures being used (Beitel & Parke, 1998; Cabrera et al., 2000; Pleck, 1997),

some consistent trends are noted. These trends are described here.

<center>Amount of Parental Involvement</center>

Initially, research on the amount of parental involvement in childcare focused on the

amount of time that parents spend with their children. Because simply assessing the amount of

time that parents spend with their children does not provide a full picture of parental

involvement, many studies now use a variety of terms to assess the different types of

involvement that parents have with their children. In particular, parents' involvement is defined

in terms of their engagement (i.e., their direct interactions with their children), their accessibility

(i.e., their being available to their children), and their responsibility (i.e., taking responsibility for

their children; Phares, 1999; Renk et al., 2003). When parental involvement is conceptualized in

this manner, mothers appear to be more involved on average with their children across all three

categories (McBride & Mills, 1993), even when they work outside of the home (Renk et al.,

2003). Although fathers' engagement and accessibility are increasing (i.e., relative to fathers in

the past), their mean involvement is still lower relative to that of mothers. Furthermore, the

amount of fathers' involvement in terms of responsibility remains consistently low (Pleck, 1997).

As the time that mothers spend in outside employment is increasing, a shift in the amount

of maternal and paternal involvement in childcare would be expected. In contrast to this

hypothesis, however, research suggests that, regardless of maternal employment, mothers still

spend more time directly engaged with and accessible to their children (Pleck, 1997). When

<center>3</center>

mothers are working outside of the home, fathers spend more time participating in childcare (Aldous et al., 1998) and in household activities (Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993) relative to fathers in families with mothers who are not employed. Nonetheless, the amount of time that fathers spend with their children is still significantly less than that of mothers. For example, Lamb (1997) reports that, when mothers are not employed, fathers spend about one-fourth of the amount of time engaged with their children and about one-third of the amount of time being accessible to their children relative to mothers. These average rates increase when mothers are employed, but only to about one-third and two-thirds for engagement and accessibility, respectively. Thus, fathers' rates of involvement are still low, regardless of maternal employment (Lamb, 1997).

Nonetheless, fathers' involvement is increasing, albeit slowly, relative to the involvement of fathers from previous generations. Furthermore, fathers' involvement appears to be directly proportional to mothers' involvement. For example, research indicates that fathers' involvement increases as a direct result of the amount of time that mothers are spending in outside employment (Aldous et al., 1998; Deutsch et al., 1993). This involvement also decreases, however, as the discrepancy in income between the mother and father increases (Cabrera et al., 2000; Deutsch et al., 1993). Therefore, although it is encouraging that fathers are more involved when their children's mothers have less time to direct toward childcare, it is important to consider those changes in context. If increases in fathers' involvement are a direct result of maternal employment, it may be that a number of these fathers feel forced to help out more at home, instead of doing so because they desire such involvement.

4

It also might be assumed that an increase in maternal time spent in outside employment would have compensatory effects on the amount of time that fathers are spending at work. Such compensation does not appear to be the case, however. Although mothers spend more time in the workforce, the amount of time that fathers spend in outside employment is not decreasing (Aldous et al., 1998). In terms of childcare, this ratio of time at work versus time at home may be problematic. In particular, research finds that the more time fathers spend in outside employment, the less time they spend with their children (Beitel & Parke, 1998). If the same is true for mothers, an increase in maternal employment (i.e., in addition to fathers' time in outside employment) would mean that children from dual-earner homes may be receiving less time with their parents, even if their parents have an equal distribution of childcare.

<u>Types of Parental Involvement</u>

Has the way in which parents interact with their children changed as fathers' involvement has increased? With the burgeoning literature on shared parenting, researchers are interested in exactly how mothers and fathers are interacting with their children and how such interactions may differ with both the sex of the parents and their children. In the last few decades, as parental roles have changed, so too has the concept of fathering. Fathers are expected to spend a greater amount of actual time with their children. They also are encouraged to spend equal amounts of time with their sons and daughters and to provide the nurturing and caretaking aspects of parenting that once were believed to be the responsibility of mothers (Pleck & Pleck, 1997).

Current research on the division of parental involvement shows that mothers and fathers still parent in different ways but that this trend is changing. Mothers still report having more responsibility for childcare tasks (Renk et al., 2003). They also are involved in more parallel and

functional activities (McBride & Mills, 1993) as well as in more school-based activities (Russell & Russell, 1994) with their children than are fathers. Fathers' involvement in these kinds of activities is increasing relative to fathers in past generations, however. For example, Russell and Russell (1994) indicate that the more mothers participate in school-cognitive activities and outdoor physical activities with their children, the more fathers do as well. Aldous and colleagues (1998) similarly suggest that the biggest predictor of fathers talking with their children about their worries is mothers talking with their children. In contrast, fathers still spend more time in play activities with their children than do mothers (McBride & Mills, 1993; Phares, 1999; Russell & Russell, 1994). These differences, however, may not be due to an actual difference in the amount of time that parents spend with their children. Instead, this finding may be due to the fact that fathers engage in this kind of interaction more than in any other parenting behavior. Furthermore, when mothers self-report about the types of caregiving in which they engage, they may not consider play as a type of caregiving (Beitel & Parke, 1998).

Thus, it seems that mothers and fathers have different ideas about what it means to parent and that fathers' roles in parenting are much less defined than those of mothers. Traditional beliefs about parenting lead to a clearly defined maternal role, affording fathers the choice to step in and compensate for what the mother cannot or does not want to do (e.g., due to lack of time or energy; Aldous & Muligan, 2002; McBride & Mills, 1993). Differences in beliefs about parental roles would likely lead to discrepancies in the amount and type of involvement that parents have with their children. It naturally would follow then that these differences would lead to discrepancies in the results of studies examining parental involvement and its relationship to child development.

In terms of child sex, research on the types of parental involvement finds that fathers still spend more time with their sons than with their daughters (Aldous et al., 1998; Phares, 1999). This division may be decreasing, however, especially in the parenting of younger children (Pleck, 1997; Pleck & Pleck, 1997). Also, fathers are not encouraging as many gender-stereotyped behaviors as they once were (Pleck & Pleck, 1997), especially when they exhibit more egalitarian beliefs (Pleck, 1997). Furthermore, recent analyses of previous studies suggest that mothers and fathers treat both their sons and daughters similarly in many ways, such as with regard to parental warmth, discipline, and encouragement, and that both parents are important in the development of their sons and daughters, even if it is in different ways (Phares, 1999). It seems that fathers want to be more involved with their children. As a result of the changing conceptualization of fatherhood, parenting roles are in fact changing, albeit slowly.

Based on these studies, it appears that similarities in parenting and efforts to coparent (i.e., as in a complementary relationship, in which each parent does the activities that the other parent does not do) do occur in today's families.   It also may be that fathers tend to take on more traditional maternal roles when the mother is not present in the family. When the mother is present, however, previous gender stereotyped parental roles may take over, leading the father to back away from parenting tasks that are considered to be mother specific (Phares, 1999). Finally, it may be that an overall increase in father involvement (i.e., relative to fathers in previous generations) leads to increases in their participation in many domains of parenting duties. Given the diversity of parenting situations in today's families, it is important for researchers to gain further understanding of what transpires in families, how parental satisfaction with the distribution of childcare may be related to outcomes for children, and how this

information may be helpful in informing future policies regarding parents' abilities to combine work and parenting (e.g., family leave).

Child and Marital Outcomes

Given findings such as those described here, changes in parenting trends suggest a definite need to further the examination of the relationships between parental involvement and children's emotional and behavioral functioning. Thus far, research on fathers' involvement and coparenting yields inconsistent results. In general, greater levels of involvement by fathers are related to positive outcomes for children, such as children experiencing fewer behavior problems, greater academic success, and positive social skills. These findings are strong, especially when paternal involvement is assessed as positive (Cabrera et al., 2000; Lamb, 1997; Pleck, 1997). Similarly, absence of fathers' involvement is related to negative outcomes for children, such as children experiencing poor school achievement, low emotion control, and greater risk-taking behavior (Cabrera et al., 2000). Researchers often agree that greater father involvement and having two involved parents leads to a greater amount of supervision, more opportunities for modeling, and an increase in interaction with two adults who have different personalities (Cabrera et al., 2000).

In addition to the relationships between parenting activities and outcomes for children, parenting may be related to the manner in which parents get along with each other. In other words, parents may influence and be influenced by each other (Cummings & O'Reilly, 1997). It is not sufficient, therefore, to assess maternal and paternal involvement without taking into consideration the quality of the coparenting relationship that mothers and fathers have with each other. It may be that having two parents who share parental responsibilities is related to both

8

parents also helping out with other responsibilities, such as housework (Aldous et al., 1998; Russell, 1986). Such a complementary relationship, in turn, may be related to less stress being placed on one parent over the other. It also may be that those mothers and fathers who share parenting responsibilities are more supportive of each other's day-to-day roles (i.e., household tasks, occupational demands; Aldous et al., 1998).

Although it may seem that sharing parental responsibilities is related positively to outcomes regarding the marital relationship, research suggests that many parents are not satisfied with the division of parenting roles that they establish (McBride & Mills, 1993; Renk et al., 2003). Because fathers' parenting roles are not as defined as those for mothers, it may be that fathers have more flexibility in how often and in what ways they interact with their children (Cabrera et al., 2000). Although this flexibility may lead to greater satisfaction for fathers, it also may lead to feelings of resentment for those mothers who feel as if they have no choices regarding their own involvement with their children or that their maternal role is being threatened (Lamb, 1997). When one or both parents do not believe in sharing childrearing responsibilities, greater dissatisfaction may result. Some research suggests that many mothers still hold traditional gender stereotyped beliefs about their parenting role. These traditional beliefs are related frequently to a gatekeeping effect, in which mothers do not want the fathers of their children to take over their responsibility as the 'sole' parent (Gable, Belsky, & Crnic, 1992; McBride et al., 2005). Therefore, although sharing parental responsibilities may have some benefits, it appears that simply dividing such responsibilities is not related directly to positive child and marital outcomes, nor is it necessarily related to increased parental satisfaction.

In summary, previous research demonstrates a need to further examine how parents interact with their children and with each other as well as how these interactions are related to outcomes for children. Simply studying the amount of parental involvement and differences in the types of involvement engaged in by mothers and fathers does not allow for an examination of the quality of such interactions. Simply being more involved does not mean that the interactions between parents and their children or between both parents are positive or beneficial (Phares, 1999). Secondly, individuals define involvement differently. Mothers and fathers often disagree about how much their children's other parent is doing as well as what each parent's actual parenting role should be. Finally, involvement in childcare lies on a continuum; there are vast differences across families in terms of parental involvement and family structure that are related to different outcomes for each family. Thus, research on current parenting trends needs to look within families to examine how parents are working together as well as how satisfied they are with the parental roles that they have established. As a result, the current study examines parents' shared parenting in relation to coparent support, parental satisfaction, and children's emotional and behavioral functioning.

The Parental Alliance

The parental alliance, often referred to as coparenting or shared parenting (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004), is an important topic of research in the study of family dynamics and child outcomes. Coparenting is defined using a number of constructs and as being interconnected with a number of parenting and marriage variables (Feinberg, 2003; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Although coparenting is defined in different ways, this term generally refers to how supportive parents are of each others' roles as parents (McConnell & Kerig, 2002; McHale, 1995) and how

well parents work as a team when childrearing (Schoppe, Mangelsdorf, & Frosch, 2001). More recently, the definition of coparenting is extended to include any two individuals who are responsible for a child and who are working together to raise that child (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004).

Researchers tend to agree that coparenting is a dynamic that is related to, but independent from, the marital relationship and that directly involves the children in the family (Feinberg, 2003; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Controversy exists, however, about whether or not the children in the family should be included in the definition of the coparenting relationship. For example, many researchers believe that coparenting is a triadic process in which both parents as well as the children in the family exert influence over each other (e.g., Johnson, Cowan & Cowan, 1999; McConnell & Kerig, 2002; McHale, 1995). More recent conceptualizations of coparenting, however, suggest that coparenting can take place outside of the presence of the children in the family (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004) and that children's roles should not be included in the research design of studies examining coparenting.

Although a consensus still must be established on the best measures of coparenting, the majority of research includes a variety of constructs in definitions of coparenting. Specifically, research suggests that coparenting consists of both covert behaviors (e.g., support and undermining; Belsky, Crnic, & Gable, 1995; Lavigueur, Saucier, & Trembley, 1995) and overt behaviors (e.g., hostility and competitiveness; McHale, 1995; McHale & Rasmussen, 1998). Many studies also include a parenting discrepancy variable that examines the differences in the amount of involvement (e.g., McHale, 1995), investment (e.g., McConnell & Kerig, 2002), warmth (e.g., McConnell & Kerig, 2002), and/or parenting beliefs (e.g., Deal, Halverson, &

Smith Wampler, 1989; Jouriles, Murphy, Smith, Richters, & Waters, 1991) of each parent.

Thus, although different studies examine coparenting using different definitions, there is some convergence on constructs that seem to be important to the definition of coparenting.

Although coparenting is examined in variable ways, the lack of consistency in how these defining constructs are examined further complicates the existent literature. For example, some researchers examine support in terms of observable behaviors (e.g., McConnell & Kerig, 2002; McHale, 1995; Schoppe et al., 2001), usually during triadic interactions with children, whereas others examine perceptions of support using self-report measures (e.g., Bouchard, Lee, Asgary, & Pelletier, 2007; Dehle, Larson, & Landers, 2001) or a combination of both (e.g., Floyd, Gilliom, & Costigan, 1998; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Obviously, these different conceptualizations may lead to discrepant results, as parents may not feel that they are being supported but may appear to support one another during observation by investigators. Furthermore, it is possible that one parent may appear to be supported when in fact they do not feel that they are (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Thus, it may be that observational data provide more evidence of the actual support that is given, and self-report measures provide a better indication of perceived support. If this description is true, it may be that how supported a parent feels may be related moreso to their parenting behaviors (Gable et al., 1992), making parents' perceptions of the support that they receive particularly important. The present study will attempt to remedy some of these discrepancies and to provide a more replicable examination of coparenting. Although children unequivocally will impact each of their parents and how they parent, it is likely that parents set the tone for how their families will function. Therefore, coparenting is examined in terms of the dyadic relationship between two parents raising children

12

together. As in previous studies, support is examined in terms of overt and covert supportive

behaviors, which are described further below.

Support/Undermining

The degree to which parents are supportive of or undermine one another in their

childrearing is related to a variety of child outcomes. For example, studies demonstrate that

families who are characterized by greater amounts of supportive parenting often have children

with fewer externalizing behavior problems (Schoppe et al., 2001), more prosocial peer behavior

(McHale, Johnson, & Sinclair, 1999), higher academic competence (McHale, Rao, & Krasnow,

2000), and better self-regulation (Abidin & Brunner, 1995). In contrast, families who are

characterized by less supportive coparenting tend to have children with more internalizing

behavior problems (e.g., poor self-regulation) and inattentiveness (Brody & Flor, 1996). Further,

greater amounts of parental undermining are related to more externalizing behavior problems in

children (Schoppe et al., 2001). Thus, it appears that, when two parents demonstrate warmth,

cooperation, and a sense of teamwork, they not only are modeling positive behavior but also are

providing a consistent environment for their children. In turn, it is likely that this type of

environment is a crucial component in children's development of positive behavior and self-

regulation skill.

Hostility/Competitiveness

Hostility/competitiveness often is used to assess how competitive parents are (McConnell

& Kerig, 2002) as well as the number of child-related conflicts in which they engage (McHale &

Rasmussen, 1998). Measures of hostility and competitiveness often include more overt

behaviors, such as parents' verbal sparring and identifiable attempts to ally with their children.

Greater levels of hostility/competitiveness in families are related to children's increased

internalizing, externalizing (McHale & Rasmussen, 1998), and total behavior problems as well

as to child-reported anxiety in boys (McConnell & Kerig, 2002). Similar to

support/undermining, it may be that parents' overt hostility and competition result in children

being provided a poor model of how to interact and problem solve successfully with peers. It

also may be that hostile and competitive coparenting leads to a lack of stability and consistency

for children, resulting in children experiencing emotion regulation difficulties (McHale &

Rasmussen, 1998).

<u>Support/Undermining and Hostility/Competitiveness in the Marital Relationship</u>

Support/undermining and hostile/competitive coparenting measures also are linked to

characteristics of the marital relationship. For example, Van Egeren and Hawkins (2004)

indicate that feeling supported by a coparent is related to perceived positive marital adjustment

and positive marital behaviors for both mothers and fathers. For example, for fathers, being

criticized (i.e., a component of undermining) is related to lower levels of perceived marital

quality and fewer positive marital behaviors. Hostile/competitive coparenting also is linked to

marital distress (McHale, 1995), verbal marital conflict, and poor marital adjustment (McConnell

& Kerig, 2002), all of which are related to poor child outcomes (Davies & Cummings, 1994;

Sturge-Apple, Davies, & Cummings, 2006). In contrast, it is suggested that feeling supported as

a parent is related to increased feelings of competency (Feinberg, 2003; Van Egeren & Hawkins,

2004). In turn, increased competency is related to increased confidence as a parent and to the

fostering of more consistent and effective parenting practices (Floyd et al., 1998). Furthermore,

14

feelings of competency are related to increased parental involvement, especially for fathers (Beitel & Parke, 1998; Minton & Pasley, 1996).

Although both measures of coparenting support are related to overall marital discord, it is important to consider these constructs independent of the marital relationship. It is possible for a parental unit to have high levels of marital conflict but not display the distress related to such conflict in their parenting or in front of their children. In fact, research suggests that marital conflict that does not involve the children in the family is not related significantly to outcomes for children (Feinberg, 2003; Jouriles et al., 1991; Mahoney, Jouriles, & Scavone, 1997). Therefore, in this study, the quality of coparenting interactions are examined as parenting constructs independent of the marital relationship.

<u>Total Support</u>

As mentioned previously, the majority of previous research examines coparenting in terms of support/undermining, hostility/competitiveness, or a combination of the two (e.g., Schoppe et al., 2001; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). A few studies consider these variables as independent constructs (i.e. support, undermining, hostility, and competitiveness), whereas others suggest that the four constructs represent a continuum of support (Feinberg, 2003; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). For example, hostility and competitiveness represent a lack of support along a continuum of overall support. Further complicating previous research of coparent support is the use of measures that assess overt support behaviors versus those that assess perceptions of feeling supported. It is possible that one parent's level of support will not match his or her coparent's perceived level of provided support. If feeling supported is an important indicator of the actual support that is provided, as suggested above, a unique addition

15

to the current literature is to include all four variables of support in an examination of overt

support behaviors and perceptions of feeling supported in relation to parental satisfaction and

children's emotional and behavioral functioning.

<div align="center">Parenting Discrepancies</div>

How two parents function together as a coparenting team cannot be considered without

examining the extent to which parents actually are involved with their children. As previously

discussed, an equal distribution of parental involvement, accessibility, and responsibility is not

the norm in parenting pairs (Lamb, 1997; Renk et al., 2003). Because of this unequal

distribution, many researchers often include measures of parenting discrepancies in involvement,

investment, warmth, and childrearing beliefs when studying the coparenting relationship.

Parenting discrepancy, however, usually refers to one parent being much more involved with his

or her children than the coparent. As with other coparenting measures, tremendous discrepancies

also exist in how this construct is defined and measured. Although some researchers look strictly

at discrepancies across parents in their amount of physical involvement with their children, other

researchers suggest that parenting discrepancies should include differences across parents in their

investment (McConnell & Kerig, 2002), warmth (McConnell & Kerig, 2002; McHale &

Rasmussen, 1998), and childrearing beliefs (Feinberg, 2003).

Research examining parenting discrepancies, regardless of how they are measured,

usually finds that such discrepancies lead to poor child outcomes (e.g., Feinberg, 2003) but with

varying results. In general, discrepancies in parental involvement lead to less unity, togetherness,

and closeness for the entire family (McHale & Rasmussen, 1998), create a greater chance of

there being unsupportive coparenting and disciplining, and often are related to children's

<div align="center">16</div>

behavior problems (Schoppe et al., 2001). McHale and Rasmussen (1998) also suggest that children in families where parental discrepancies are great may experience higher levels of anxiety and insecurity. In fact, McHale and Rasmussen indicate that parenting discrepancies reported when children are infants predict anxiety in preschoolers. Similarly, McConnell and Kerig (2002) find that discrepancies in warmth and investment are related to internalizing behavior problems for girls. It may be that discrepancies in involvement are related to discrepancies in parental warmth, investment, and parenting behaviors merely as a result of the differences in the amount of time that parents spend with their children. Discrepancies in parental involvement, regardless of how involvement is defined, are related to a sense of inconsistency for children. This finding may be particularly important, as inconsistency may be the most important factor in determining child outcomes. Specifically, it is suggested that a sense of inconsistency is related to feelings of helplessness, self-blame, and emotional insecurity in children (McConnell & Kerig, 2002).

In addition, previous research indicates that parenting discrepancies may be a precursor to a lack of support and teamwork in the coparenting unit (e.g., Belsky et al., 1995; McHale, 1995). This lack of support and teamwork, in turn, is related to poor outcomes for children (i.e., rather than discrepancies being the actual cause; Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). For example, it is possible for two parents to have unequal levels of involvement with their children and still be supportive of each other's parenting behavior. In this sense, feeling supported should serve as a buffer against parenting discrepancies in involvement (e.g., McBride et al., 2005). Such a buffer would be beneficial, as most families do not have an equal distribution of childrearing (Lamb, 1997; Renk et al., 2003). Therefore, the present study examines the relationship between

17

coparent support and discrepancies in parental involvement and children's behavior problems. It is assumed that discrepancies in the amount of parental involvement theoretically include discrepancies in other parenting behaviors, such as warmth and investments. Therefore, parenting discrepancies are defined solely in terms of parents' levels of shared parenting.

Determinants of Coparent Support

If, in fact, feeling supported by a coparent leads to more positive child outcomes, it is important to determine what variables may serve as predictors of coparent support. With this goal in mind, researchers examining coparent support examine a variety of related factors, such as marital satisfaction (Purdom, Lucas, & Miller, 2006), role strain (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993; Perrone & Worthington, 2001), and gender role beliefs (Aldous et al., 1998; Renk et al., 2003). These variables also are discussed in terms of their impact on parental satisfaction (Perrone, Webb, & Jackson, 2007), suggesting an indirect link between coparent support and parental satisfaction. Coparent support also is linked to satisfaction in other roles, such as those related to work and marriage (Perrone et al., 2007).

All of these variables may be interrelated, and satisfaction in one role may spill over into other aspects of family functioning. Although there is an overlap that occurs with regard to coparent support and parental satisfaction, previous research has yet to establish concrete relationships between these two variables. As a result, the current study attempts to show that coparent support is related to increased parental satisfaction, providing a unique addition to the research literature. In other words, being satisfied with the parental roles that are established should be related to parents being more supportive of each other in these roles, and vice versa. Such support, in turn, should be related to decreased child behavior problems. In order to fully

18

understand the link between coparent support and parental satisfaction, the variables (i.e., marital satisfaction, role strain, and gender role beliefs) that are linked indirectly to both coparent support and parental satisfaction are discussed briefly here.

<p style="text-align: center;">Marital Satisfaction</p>

Previous research demonstrates links between marital satisfaction and various aspects of parenting and the coparent relationship. Specifically, marital satisfaction is related to how parents interact with their children (Gable et al., 1992; McBride & Mills, 1993) as well as how parents interact with each other in front of their children (Kitzmann, 2000). For example, men and women who report being dissatisfied with their marriage are more likely to engage in negative exchanges (i.e., even in front of their children), to have less family cohesion and warmth (Kitzmann, 2000), and to argue more (Aldous & Mulligan, 2002). Marital dissatisfaction also may result in overt marital conflict (McHale, 1995). Further, marital conflict is related to negative outcomes for children (Leary & Katz, 2004; McConnell & Kerig, 2002; McHale & Rasmussen, 1998), especially when such conflict occurs in front of the children (Feinberg, 2003; Kitzmann, 2000; Mahoney et al., 1997).

Thus, tension from marital conflict is likely to spill over into parent-child interactions and also is related to less effective discipline and even less paternal involvement with children (Kitzmann, 2000). For example, some research suggests that women who are unsatisfied with their marriage tend to overcompensate for this tension in their interactions with their children by becoming overinvolved and preventing fathers from becoming involved with their children (Brody, Pellegrini, & Sigel, 1986; McHale & Fivaz-Depeursinge, 1999). In these cases, fathers often engage in less interaction time, indicating paternal withdrawal (Gable et al., 1992;

Kitzmann 2000). Finally, the effects of marital conflict are related indirectly to poor outcomes for children, with disruptions in parenting serving as a mediator in this relationship (Kitzmann, 2000).

Examining the relationship of marital satisfaction and paternal involvement is particularly important, as increases in paternal involvement are related to decreases in parental stress and to lower levels of role strain. Given these relationships, marital satisfaction may be related to an increase in coparent support (Cabrera et al., 2000; McBride & Mills, 1993). In fact, many studies find that marital satisfaction leads to greater amounts of paternal involvement, responsiveness, and interaction (Aldous & Mulligan, 2002; Gable et al., 1992; McBride & Mills, 1993). Furthermore, results suggest that fathers' involvement is related to their coparents' perceptions of the fathers themselves and of their marriage (Maurer & Pleck, 2006; McHale & Fivaz-Depeursinge, 1999). It may be that marital satisfaction spills over into other aspects of family functioning, or it may be that greater amounts of paternal involvement increase marital satisfaction. Either way, it seems that marital satisfaction is related to coparent support, which may be the most important contributing factor to negative child outcomes (e.g., Feinberg, 2003).

Role Strain

Role strain refers to the stress and anxiety caused by having multiple roles (i.e. family, work, and parenting). Researchers interested in role strain agree that the effects of role strain will worsen as the number of roles increases (Purdom et al., 2006). Therefore, coparent units that are more contemporary (i.e., each coparent has a number of roles) may be at greater risk for role strain. Furthermore, being more committed to a role (or roles) increases stress as the individual becomes more invested in being successful in that role (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993).

20

Finally, role strain appears to lead to depression, poor health, and alcohol abuse (Frone, Russell, & Barnes, 1996) as well as to lower satisfaction in various roles, especially for women (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993). Although role strain can have many deleterious effects, research shows that, when someone is satisfied with one role, their satisfaction often spills over into other aspects of their lives. For example, marital satisfaction often is associated with parental satisfaction. Further, life satisfaction is linked to work, marital, and parental satisfaction (Perrone et al., 2007). Thus, satisfaction in these areas appears to increase well-being and other aspects of functioning (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993).

Furthermore, role commitment is linked to well-being. In fact, the extra care that individuals put into a role can lead to positive outcomes, especially when they feel that they are successful in that role (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993). In addition, higher levels of satisfaction with roles and social support appear to increase overall well-being and to lessen anxiety and depression (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993). These relationships may be different for men and women, however. In a study by Greenberger and O'Neil (1993), findings suggest that satisfaction in various roles may be related more highly to women's well-being than to men's well-being. In particular, findings of this study indicate that women's marital and parental satisfaction are related to their experience of anxiety and depression but not to their experience of role strain. In contrast, for men, role strain is lessened when they perceive greater support of their work and their parenting from their coparent. Based on the findings of this study, it appears that perceived support lessens role strain more for men than for women (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993). It may be that less clearly defined paternal roles are less influenced by role strain. In

21

other words, if the father has more discretion regarding his participation in various roles, it is likely that he will not feel as strained by them.

In a more current study, Perrone and Worthington (2001) report that, in a sample of married couples in which both spouses are employed, job-family role strain is related to lower dual-career satisfaction as well as to lower perceived equity. Interestingly, based on these findings, perceived equity is not related significantly to marital quality, nor does it mediate the relationship between job-family role strain and marital quality. Furthermore, these findings indicate that social support is related to higher satisfaction in the dual-career lifestyle but not to marital quality, whereas communication is related positively to both satisfaction and marital quality (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Based on these findings, it seems that perceived equity alone is not enough to buffer the effects of role strain. Furthermore, although social support is beneficial, it may be that greater coparent support, as indicated by the positive effects of communication, may be a better predictor of marital satisfaction. Finally, when a third role is added, such as becoming a parent, having additional support from a coparent may be even more crucial to feeling satisfied in a parental role.

Gender Role Beliefs

Research also shows that gender role beliefs are related to a variety of marriage and parenting variables. For example, men who are more androgynous and feminine tend to be more involved in childcare (Deutsch et al., 1993; Russell, 1978) and more satisfied with their parental role (Renk et al., 2003). Furthermore, men who have more favorable attitudes toward their involvement with their children have more positive perceptions of their marriage and experience lower levels of parental stress (McBride & Mills, 1993). Similarly, the more a father values his

role as a father predicts his involvement with his children as well as his perceptions of his

caregiving skills (Beitel & Parke, 1998; Bouchard et al., 2007). It also is suggested that having

more gender-equitable attitudes leads to more active participation and responsibility in childcare

and to more parental warmth. In fact, results suggest that fathers who are egalitarian are more

involved with their children both in general and proportionally to mothers' involvement with

their children (Bulanda, 2004). Thus, parents who have more equitable attitudes should be able

to monitor their children's behavior better as a result of a more equitable division of childcare

(Cabrera et al., 2000).

Although traditional gender roles are becoming blurred and men and women are

increasingly taking on the roles once considered appropriate for the opposite sex, core gender

role beliefs still exist. It appears that many couples are practicing equality but do not actually

accept it. Many men still feel that breadwinning is their sole responsibility (Rane & McBride,

2000) and may feel threatened by their children's mother working (Aldous & Mulligan, 2002).

Furthermore, many fathers report that they have difficulty adjusting to the demands of parenting

and working. In addition, they are concerned with looking bad in front of other men (Aldous &

Mulligan, 2002; Russell, 1978). Similarly, women seem to feel threatened with men taking over

their role as nurturer and parent, as indicated by their gatekeeping. Furthermore, women report

feeling guilty about reduced contact with their children (Russell, 1986). In contrast, studies

suggest that, when women value their coparents' contribution to childcare and allow them to take

an active role, men increase their amount of involvement with their children (McHale & Fivaz-

Depeursing, 1999). This finding may be the result of men feeling supported, which is related to

more confidence and a sense of competence in their ability to parent (Bouchard et al., 2007).

23

Perceptions of competence also are related to fathers' motivation for being more involved

with their children. Bouchard and colleagues (2007) report that motivation is related to fathers'

involvement and satisfaction with their performance in their parenting role. Feeling competent

and supported also is related to motivation and parental involvement (Bouchard et al., 2007). An

interesting aspect of fathers' involvement and parental roles is the fact that fathers are more

likely to value their role when they do not feel coerced (Bouchard et al., 2007). Minton and

Pasley (1996) also report similar results, in that the more competent, satisfied, and invested

fathers are in their role, the more involved they are. Salience of the parenting role, however, is

not related to parental involvement (Minton & Pasley, 1996).

Previous findings further implicate a discrepancy in men and women's parenting roles

and suggest that having more contemporary gender role beliefs may not be enough to lead

parents to be more supportive of each others' roles. Having more contemporary gender role

beliefs may lead to a more equitable distribution of childcare but is not expected to improve

outcomes for children if one or both of the parents are unsatisfied with the division (Pleck,

1997). It would follow naturally that being unsatisfied may lead to less supportive behavior,

decreasing the effectiveness of the coparenting unit (e.g., Floyd et al., 1998). Therefore, parental

satisfaction may be related to a more sincere, supportive coparenting unit and to more positive

parent-child interactions as well as to more positive outcomes for children.

Parental Satisfaction

Although parental satisfaction often is implicated in a variety of studies examining

parent, marriage, and family functioning, it very rarely is examined independently. In general,

the research that is available suggests that parental satisfaction may improve other areas of

24

family functioning through role spillover (Perrone at al., 2007). Parents who are satisfied with their child rearing roles are expected to be more positive and warm in their parent-child interactions and to create a more positive home environment. In addition, Thompson and Zuroff (1999) report that, when mothers are not satisfied with their parental role, they are less likely to be warm and more likely to have weaker attachments to their children. Based on the findings of this study, such maternal behaviors are related to adolescent children being more self-critical (Thompson & Zuroff, 1999). Furthermore, previous research suggests that fathers tend to report being more satisfied with their childrearing role than mothers and that mothers who feel that they have a greater responsibility for child care activities tend to report less parental satisfaction (Renk et al., 2003).

These findings suggest that a lack of parental satisfaction may lead to negative outcomes for children. A review of related variables (i.e., marital satisfaction, role strain, and gender role beliefs) further suggest the need to examine the link between coparent support and parental satisfaction, as it appears that coparent support may have a greater impact on child outcomes than parental satisfaction alone. Furthermore, if coparent support and parental satisfaction are related to child outcomes, determining the unique relationships of each to children's emotional and behavioral functioning will be a beneficial addition to previous research on coparenting and may inform interventions aimed at improving parenting and child outcomes.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Based on the aforementioned literature review, parental satisfaction is linked to marital satisfaction, role strain, and gender role beliefs, as well as to coparent support (e.g., Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993; Perrone et al., 2007; Purdom et al., 2006; Renk et al., 2003). From previous

research, it is clear that all of these variables are related, often bidirectionally, and have strong relationships to the overall well-being of parents as well as to parent-child interactions and outcomes for children (e.g., Cabrera et al., 2000; Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993; Thompson & Zuroff, 1999). Thus, high levels of support and teamwork in a coparenting unit are related to better outcomes for children. To further the examination of the relationships among characteristics of the coparenting unit and children's emotional and behavioral functioning, the current study examines a unique constellation of variables.

The first goal of the present study is to examine the distribution of childcare in coparenting units. Specifically, it is expected that the distribution of childcare will fall along a continuum of shared parenting, with the majority of parents sharing childrearing responsibilities to some extent and with mothers having greater amounts of involvement, accessibility, and responsibility relative to fathers. For the purpose of clarity, the term *shared parenting* will refer to the combination of involvement, accessibility, and responsibility and used throughout the paper to represent a greater amount of childcare relative to the target child's other parent. In other words, higher levels of each parent's shared parenting will indicate that the parent is engaging in more childcare overall, as this variable accounts for the parents' involvement, accessibility, and responsibility for their children. Thus, it is expected that engaging in more shared parenting will be related to less coparent support and satisfaction (as each parent is engaging in more childcare). It also is expected that parents who report engaging in more shared parenting will describe their children as experiencing significantly more behavior problems.

The second goal of this study is to examine the moderating effects of coparent support and parental satisfaction in the relationship between shared parenting and children's emotional

and behavioral functioning. First, significant correlational relationships are expected between the independent variables (i.e., shared parenting, coparent support, and parental satisfaction) and the dependent variables (i.e., children's internalizing and externalizing behavior problems) being examined in this study. It is hypothesized that parents who report more shared parenting and less coparent support will rate their children as having more behavior problems. Further, those parents who report more shared parenting and less parental satisfaction will rate their children as having more behavior problems. When parents report more shared parenting and greater amounts of coparent support, they will rate their children as having fewer behavior problems. Finally, when parents report more shared parenting and higher levels of parental satisfaction, they will rate their children as having fewer behavior problems. Therefore, coparent support as well as parental satisfaction will serve as moderators between shared parenting and children's emotional and behavioral functioning.

Finally, to further examine the relationships among these variables and to better understand which of these variables are most important for predicting the internalizing and externalizing behavior problems that are experienced by children, additional hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. In particular, the unique predictive value of the coparent support and parental satisfaction measures is examined in relation to children's behavior problems. It is expected that different aspects of coparent support (i.e., overt support behaviors and perceptions of support) and parental satisfaction will predict children's internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in different ways.

METHOD

Participants

27

Parents of children between the ages of 3- and 6-years participated in this study. Parents were recruited from preschools and day care centers in Central Florida as well as through a campus-wide e-newsletter. From the 302 questionnaire packets distributed, 112 were returned. Two lesbian couples completed the questionnaires but were excluded as their parenting experiences likely differ significantly from the rest of the sample. One other packet was excluded as a result of the target child being in the wrong age range. From the remaining 107 packets, 80 respondents are mothers (75%), and 27 are fathers (25%). Although attempts were made to recruit mother-father pairs, only 19 packets were returned by mothers and fathers who are from the same family. Due to a low sample size of fathers, analyses conducted with father data should be viewed as exploratory in nature. The suggested sample size for a multiple regression analysis ($p < .05$) with eight independent variables and statistical power of .80 is 107 participants in order to obtain sufficient confidence in a medium ($R = .30$) effect size (Cohen, 1992). Although the sample of mothers in this study is less than recommended, correlational analyses of mothers' and fathers' reports vary too greatly to warrant combining them. As a result, analyses for mothers and fathers are examined separately.

Mother participants in this study range in age from 19- to 48-years ($M = 32.00$-years, $SD = 6.70$-years). The majority of these mothers are Caucasian (71.3%). Hispanic mothers (10%) and African American mothers (8.8%) make up the next two largest ethnic groups. The remainder of mothers in this sample are Asian American (2.5%) or from some "Other" ethnic background (7.5%). Almost all of the mothers in this sample have completed some form of higher education (i.e., 37.5% have completed some college, 33.8% have a college degree, and 23.8% have graduated from or are currently enrolled in graduate/professional school). The

remaining mothers have vocational training (1.3%) or a high school diploma (3.8%). Yearly household income for mothers varies between less than $10,000 to over $100,000, with the majority of mothers in this sample earning less than $40,000 per year (i.e., 35% earn less than $10,000, 17.5% earn between $10,000 and $20,000, 12.5% earn between $20,000 and $30,000, 12.5% earn between $30,000 and $40,000). The remaining 22.5% earn $40,000 or more (i.e., 7.5% earn between $40,000 and $50,000, 5% earn between $50,000 and $60,000, 0% earn between $60,000 and $70,000, 2.5% earn between $70,000 and $80,000, 5% earn between $80,000 and $90,000, and 2.5% earn $100,000 or more). The majority of mothers in this sample are married (60%), whereas the remaining mothers are single (22.5%), divorced (8.8%), remarried (6.3%), or widowed (2.5%). Mothers' reports include ratings of a total of 80 children (40 boys and 40 girls), ranging in age from 3- to 6- years old with an average age of 4.18-years (SD = 1.03-years).

Fathers in this study range in age from 19- to 46-years (M = 35.00-years, SD = 7.30-years). The majority of fathers in this study are Caucasian (70.4%). Hispanic (11.1%) and African American (3.7%) fathers make up the next two largest ethnic groups. The remainder of the fathers in this sample are Asian American (3.7%), Native American (3.7%), or from some "Other" ethnic background (7.4%). The majority of fathers in this sample have completed some form of higher education (i.e., 25.9% have completed some college, 33.3% have a college degree, and 18.5% have graduated from or are currently enrolled in graduate/professional school). The remaining fathers have vocational training (3.7%), a high school diploma (14.8 %) or did not graduate from high school (3.7%). Yearly household income for fathers varies between less than $10,000 to more than $100,000, with the majority of fathers in this sample

earning more than $40,000 per year (i.e., 22.2% earn more than $100,000, 0% earn between

$70,000 and $100,000, 3.7% earn between $60,000 and $70,000, 25.9% earn between $50,000

and $60,000, and 11.1% earn between $40,000 and $50,000). The remaining fathers earn

$40,000 or less (i.e., 7.4% earn between $30,000 and $40,000, 3.7% earn between $20,000 and

$30,000, 14.8% earn between $10,000 and $20,000, and 7.4% earn less than $10,000). The

majority of fathers in this sample are married (66.7%). The remaining fathers are single (22.2%)

or remarried (11.1%). Fathers' reports include ratings of a total of 27 children (15 boys and 12

girls), ranging in age from 3- to 6-years (M = 4.07-years, SD = 0.92-years).

Measures

Shared Parenting.

A *Time Spent and Responsibilities* measure is used to assess mothers' and fathers' reports

of shared parenting. Mothers and fathers are asked to record the amount of time that they and

their children's other parent are spending in direct interaction with and being accessible to their

children in an average week day and in an average weekend day. These questions are asked in

an open-ended format (i.e., "Think of a typical day during the work week and a typical day

during the weekend. For the questions below, please estimate how much time (in minutes or

hours) that you spend with your child."), so that each parent can estimate the exact amount of

time that they spend in direct interaction with their child (e.g., playing a game, talking) and that

they are accessible to their child (i.e., when the parent is in the same location as the child, but he

or she is not engaged actively in conversation or any other type of interaction). A weighted

mean of parents' reported week day and weekend time with their children is calculated (i.e.,

30

week day time is weighted by 5 and weekend day time is weighted by 2) for both direct interaction and accessibility. Individual interaction and accessibility scores are combined and divided by the total time reported for both parents to create a reported percentage of time spent interacting with and being accessible to the target child.

Parents also indicate on this measure how much responsibility that they take for school work, discipline, daily care, fun family activities, and extracurricular activities with regard to the target child in comparison to their child's other parent (i.e., "In general, who takes RESPONSIBILITY for the child with regard to the following activities"). For each activity, mothers and fathers rate their responsibility on a Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 (*I do it all*) to 9 (*My child's other parent does it all*). Scores are reversed so that higher scores indicate taking more responsibility for an activity. Each of these scores is averaged (across activity items) and divided by the total responsibility score for an item (i.e., 9), resulting in a percentage of perceived responsibility taken for the target child. Finally, the percentage scores reflecting interaction, accessibility, and responsibility are combined to create a final continuous measure of shared parenting, with higher scores indicating a greater amount of total time spent (i.e., interaction, accessibility, and responsibility) with the child relative to the child's other parent.

Coparent Support.

The *Family Experiences Questionnaire* (FEQ*; Frank, Jacobson, & Avery, 1988) is a 118-item self-report questionnaire that is used to assess parental perceptions of the coparenting relationship, perceived parental competence, and satisfaction with parenting. Items are rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree)* and grouped into 12 subscales based on previous factor analyses. Two of these subscales are used to assess coparenting

31

experiences with regard to coparent support. General Alliance is a 31-item subscale used to assess the extent to which mothers and fathers feel supported by their child's other parent and their satisfaction with shared goals in parenting. More positive coparenting perceptions are indicated by higher scores and are related positively to lower levels of child behavior problems (Floyd & Zmich, 1991), more positive parent-child interactions (Floyd et al., 1998), and coparenting harmony for fathers (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Denigrate Spouse is a 10-item subscale used to assess mothers' and fathers' perceptions of criticism from their child's other parent. In a previous study, internal reliability coefficients for the General Alliance subscale are .96 for mothers and .95 for fathers and for the Denigrated Spouse subscale are .92 for mothers and .88 for fathers, respectively (Floyd et al., 1998). Items from these two subscales are used to assess perceptions of coparenting support and undermining. Items from this measure are modified for this study to reflect the children targeted for these ratings and parents' perceptions of their children's other parent (i.e., to account for families in which the coparenting unit does not included partners who are married).

To measure more overt behaviors of support and undermining, the *Parental Regulation Inventory* (PRI; Van Egeren, 2000) is included. This measure consists of 100-items in which mothers and fathers rate the degree to which their partner uses specific strategies to encourage or discourage them from being involved in parenting. Six items from the PRI comprise the Positive Reinforcement subscale and describe strategies that parents might use to encourage their children's other parent to be involved in childcare (e.g., asking their children's other parent their opinion about childrearing issues; letting their children's other parent know how much they appreciate their parenting contribution). Nine items from the Criticism subscale also are

included to assess the degree to which one parent discourages their children's other parent from being involved in childcare (e.g., telling their children's other parent the right way to handle a situation, taking over childrearing responsibilities). In a previous study combining the Positive Reinforcement and Criticism subscales, internal reliability coefficients were .88 for mothers and .89 for fathers (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Scores from these two subscales are used to assess more overt behaviors reflecting coparent support and undermining. Items from this measure are modified for this study to reflect the children targeted for these ratings and parents' perceptions of their children's other parent (i.e., to account for families in which the coparenting unit does not included partners who are married).

A final measure, the *O'Leary Porter Scale-Revised Version* (OPS; Porter & O'Leary, 1980) is an 11-item self-report scale used to assess mothers' and fathers' perceptions of overt marital hostility displayed in front of the target children. Items include content ranging from overt marital conflict (e.g., "How often do you and/or your child's other parent display verbal hostility in front of this child?") to disagreements over discipline (e.g., "How often do you and your child's other parent argue over discipline problems in this child's presence?"). Mothers and fathers rate the extent to which they engage in such behaviors on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*very often*). Total scores range from 0 to 44, with lower scores representing lower levels of overt hostility expressed in front of the target children. The OPS has moderate concurrent validity with similar measures, such as the Short Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; $r = .63$), as suggested by highly correlated scores between married couples ($r = .72$, $p < .001$; Emery & O'Leary, 1982). Previous studies demonstrate high internal consistency for

mothers (alpha = .84) and fathers (alpha = .83; Verlaan & Schwartzman, 2002) as well as high

test-retest reliability (.96; Porter & O'Leary, 1980).

<u>Parental Satisfaction</u>.

To examine various aspects of parental satisfaction, the *Parenting Satisfaction Scale* (PSS;

Guidubaldi & Cleminshaw, 1994) is included. This measure is a 45-item self-report measure

that provides three subscales (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance,

satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, and satisfaction with parenting performance).

Items are rated from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree*), with higher scores indicating

greater satisfaction. In a two-year pilot study of the measure, all three subscales (i.e., satisfaction

with spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship,

and satisfaction with parenting performance) show high internal consistency, with alpha

coefficients of .95, .89, and .82, respectively (e.g., Guidubaldi & Cleminshaw, 1994). The PSS

also shows strong relationships between parenting satisfaction and a number of child outcomes,

such as social competence, academic achievement, and positive parent-child relationships (e.g.,

Guidubaldi & Cleminshaw, 1994).

An additional subscale from the FEQ (described above), the Perceived Competence

subscale, is included to assess the extent to which mothers and fathers feel that they are doing a

good job as a parent (e.g., "I have the knowledge I need to be a good parent"). This subscale has

15 items and demonstrates good internal consistency for mothers (alpha = .84) and fathers (alpha

= .82; Floyd et al., 1998). Items from this measure are modified for this study to reflect the

children targeted for these ratings and parents' perceptions of their children's other parent (i.e.,

to account for families in which the coparenting unit does not include married partners).

In addition to the aforementioned measures, additional questions regarding parental satisfaction are included on the *Time Spent and Responsibilities* questionnaire. Mothers and fathers are asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the distribution of childcare and household activities. Parents also are asked to rate their satisfaction with the amount of support received from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1(*very dissatisfied*) to 9 (*very satisfied*), with lower scores reflecting lower levels of satisfaction.

Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.

To measure parental reports of the target children's internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, the *Child Behavior Checklist* (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000, 2001) is included. Depending upon the age of the target children, mothers and fathers complete the CBCL for 1.5- to 5-year olds (100 items) or for 6- to 18- year olds (113 items). Mothers and fathers are asked to rate the presence of various behavior problems exhibited by their children (e.g., "argues a lot"; "feels he/she has to be perfect"; "is too fearful or anxious"), using a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*not true)* to 2 (*very true)*. T-scores are provided by both versions allowing for comparability between the two versions. The CBCL is one of the most widely used instruments measuring children's emotional and behavioral functioning. It demonstrates good test-retest reliability for the preschool and school-age versions (mean $r = .85$ and .88 respectively; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000, 2001) and good cross-informant correlations between parents for the competence scales, the empirically based problem scales, and the DSM-Oriented scales ($r = .69$, .76, and .73 respectively; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001).

Procedure

Upon approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), directors of preschools and daycare facilities located in Central Florida were contacted (via telephone and/or email) to explain the study and to request their participation. Schools and daycare facilities were selected based on the age range of children in attendance (i.e., 3- to 6- years old). Each director was given the option to refuse participation so that no specific school was required to participate in the study. Upon verbal consent to participate, directors were asked to complete a Facility Approval Form and to distribute contact forms to the parents of children between 3- and 6- years old currently in attendance at their school/facility. Contact forms, indicating agreement to participate, were collected by teachers and/or directors and picked up by the investigators. Questionnaire packets then were mailed to the participating parent(s) or given to the school's director to distribute. Parents were given the option of turning in their completed packet to their children's teacher or being provided with a stamped envelope in which to mail the completed packet to the investigators. When both parents agreed to participate, each parent was given a separate packet to complete independently. Parents who did not turn in a completed packet were contacted once via email, phone, or mail, requesting that they complete their participation in the study.

Participants also were solicited via a campus wide e-newsletter at the University of Central Florida. Those who received the newsletter and who also were parents were encouraged to contact the investigators if they were interested in participating. Interested participants were then mailed a questionnaire packet and provided a stamped addressed return envelope. Finally, some participants were recruited through an online extra credit system at the University of

Central Florida. Students who had a child between 3- and 6- years of age completed the

questionnaire packet on site in a designated psychology laboratory for extra credit in one of their

psychology courses.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Shared Parenting.

Regarding the amount of time that parents spend with their children, mothers report

spending an average of 51.48 hours ($SD = 41.04$) in direct interaction with their children and

32.58 hours ($SD = 39.32$) being accessible to their children throughout a given week. In contrast,

fathers report spending an average of 24.90 hours ($SD = 18.28$) in direct interaction with their

children and 26.20 hours ($SD = 25.26$) being accessible to their children. With regard to child-

related responsibilities, mothers report taking more responsibility relative to their children's

other parent ($M = 6.36$, $SD = 1.53$, potential range = 1 to 9). Fathers appear to agree and report

taking less responsibility for child-related tasks relative to their children's other parent ($M =$

4.47, $SD = 1.54$; potential range = 1 to 9).

When reports of interaction, accessibility, and responsibility are combined into a

percentage of shared parenting, mothers report spending between 25% and 100% of the time

with their children ($M = 67.32$, $SD = 15.35$) relative to their children's other parent. Fathers also

report spending between 25% and 100% of the time with their children ($M = 47.14$, $SD = 16.73$).

Regarding total shared parenting, it appears that slightly more than one-half of the families in

this sample (53.2%) are characterized by mothers spending more time interacting with, being

accessible to, and taking responsibility for their children (i.e., mothers spending at least 61% of

their time with their children) relative to their children's other parent. In contrast, approximately

one-third of the mothers in this sample (38.3%) report sharing childcare equally with their

children's other parent (i.e., both parents spending between 40% and 60% of their time

interacting with, being accessible to, and responsible for their children). The remaining 8.5% of

families is characterized by fathers spending at least 61% of their reported time with their

children.

Coparent Support.

Three different measures are used to examine coparental support. From the FEQ,

mothers' ratings on the General Alliance subscale have a moderately high average rating of

96.61 ($SD = 21.72$) relative to the highest score possible on this measure (possible range = 31 to

124). Fathers' ratings on the General Alliance subscale are similar to those of mothers with an

average rating of 103.00 ($SD = 17.81$). Mothers' ratings on the Denigrate Spouse subscale have

a relatively low average rating of 15.92 ($SD = 4.86$) relative to the possible range of scores on

this measure (possible range = 10 to 40). Fathers' ratings on the Denigrate Spouse subscale

range have a similarly low average rating of 17.04 ($SD = 5.33$). Based on these ratings, the

mothers and fathers in this sample appear to have moderately high perceptions of receiving

support from their children's other parent and low levels of feeling denigrated by their children's

other parent.

On the PRI, mothers' ratings on the Positive Reinforcement subscale have an average

rating of 18.45 ($SD = 7.09$; possible range = 6 to 36). Similarly, fathers' ratings on the Positive

Reinforcement have an average rating of 19.37 ($SD = 7.25$). Thus, these means suggest that the

mothers and fathers in this sample receive a moderate amount of positive reinforcement from

their children's other parent (i.e., when compared to the potential range of scores on this measure). Mothers' ratings on the Criticism subscale have an average rating of 17.75 ($SD = 7.74$; possible range = 9 to 54), suggesting that the mothers in this sample receive a low to moderate amount of criticism from their children's other parent (i.e., when compared to the potential range of scores on this measure). Fathers' ratings on the Criticism subscale range have an average rating of 23.58 ($SD = 9.43$), suggesting that the fathers in this sample receive a moderate amount of criticism from their children's other parent (i.e., when compared to the potential range of scores on this measure). Overall, ratings from these scales suggest that both mothers and fathers are receiving moderate amounts of positive reinforcement from their children's other parent. Although both mothers and fathers report fairly low levels of criticism on average, the range of ratings suggest that some of these parents are experiencing a great amount of criticism from their children's other parent.

On the O'Leary Porter scale, mothers' ratings of overt hostility have an average rating of 19.97 ($SD = 5.72$; possible range = 0 to 44), and fathers' ratings have an average rating of 21.6 ($SD = 5.77$). Ratings from this scale suggest that both mothers and fathers in this sample are experiencing a moderate amount of overt marital hostility and conflict in front of their children (i.e., when compared to the potential range of scores on this measure).

Parental Satisfaction.

In an effort to examine different aspects of parental satisfaction, three different measures are used. With regard to scores from the PSS, mothers' reports of satisfaction for all three subscales (i.e., satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, and satisfaction with own parenting performance) reflect

moderately low levels of parental satisfaction (i.e., higher scores reflect less satisfaction).

Specifically, mothers' reports of satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance have an average rating of 44.72 (SD = 10.94; possible range = 15 to 60). Mothers' reports of satisfaction with the parent-child relationship have an average rating of 52.07 (SD = 5.09; possible range = 15 to 60). Finally, mothers' reports of satisfaction with their own parenting performance have an average rating of 42.90 (SD = 6.01; possible range = 15 to 60).

Total scores for mothers on the parenting satisfaction scale have an average rating of 140.38 (SD = 16.69; possible range = 45 to 180).

Fathers' reports of satisfaction from the PSS also reflect moderately low levels of parental satisfaction. Specifically, fathers' reports of satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance have an average rating of 49.04 (SD = 8.61). Fathers' reports of satisfaction with the parent-child relationship have an average rating of 50.70 (SD = 6.11) and fathers' reports of satisfaction with their own parenting performance have an average rating of 42.50 (SD = 6.58). Total scores on the PSS for fathers have an average rating of 142.92 (SD = 16.57).   Ratings on the PSS suggest that both mothers and fathers in this study are not satisfied with various aspects of parenting.

On the FEQ, mothers and fathers rate their perceived competence as a parent as part of the Perceived Competence subscale. Ratings for mothers have a mean rating of 44.56 (SD = 6.09; possible range = 15 to 60), and fathers have a mean rating of 42.37 (SD = 6.47). Results from this subscale suggest that both mothers and fathers in this study feel moderately to highly competent in their parenting performance (i.e., when compared to the potential range of scores on this measure).

Finally, three questions regarding parental satisfaction are included on the Time Spent and Responsibilities questionnaire. Mothers' reports of satisfaction regarding the distribution of childcare have an average rating of 5.75 ($SD = 2.61$; possible range = 1 to 9), whereas fathers' reports have an average rating of 6.54 ($SD = 2.32$). Mothers' reports of satisfaction regarding the distribution of household related responsibilities have an average rating of 5.73 ($SD = 2.58$; possible range = 1 to 9), whereas fathers' reports have an average rating of 6.35 ($SD = 2.31$). Finally, mothers' reports of satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices have an average rating of 6.87 ($SD = 2.44$; possible range = 1 to 9), and fathers' ratings have an average rating of 6.92 ($SD = 1.98$). In general, it appears that both mothers and fathers in this study are moderately satisfied with the distribution of childcare and household related responsibilities as well as with the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline strategies.

<u>Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.</u>

With regard to their children's emotional and behavioral functioning, mothers' scores for Internalizing ($M = 44.78$, $SD = 9.53$) and Externalizing ($M = 44.78$, $SD = 9.84$) Behavior Problems fall within the Nonclinical range on average. Similarly, fathers' reports of their children's Internalizing ($M = 43.13$, $SD = 9.37$) and Externalizing ($M = 42.25$, $SD = 9.75$) Behavior Problems fall within the Nonclinical range on average. Therefore, both mothers and fathers in this study report that, on average, their children are not experiencing clinically concerning emotional or behavioral problems.

t-Tests

To examine relative differences between mothers' and fathers' ratings of shared parenting, coparent support, parental satisfaction, and children's emotional and behavioral functioning, independent samples *t*-test comparisons are examined. See Table 1.

Shared Parenting.

With regard to shared parenting, there is a significant difference between mothers' and fathers' reports of the amount of time that they spend interacting with and being responsible for their children. Specifically, mothers ($M = 51.48$, $SD = 41.01$) report spending significantly more time interacting with their children than fathers ($M = 24.90$, $SD = 18.28$), t ($df = 104$) $= -3.19$, $p <$ .01. Mothers ($M = 6.37$, $SD = 1.53$) also report being more responsible for child-related activities than fathers ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.54$), t ($df = 97$) $= -5.27$, $p < .001$. Significant differences are not found between mothers and fathers for parent accessibility, t ($df = 101$) $= -.76$, $p < .50$, however.

Furthermore, significant differences in the combined ratings of interaction, accessibility, and responsibility, an overall measure of shared parenting, also are significant. In particular, mothers ($M = 67.32$, $SD = 15.35$) report significantly higher percentages of shared parenting than fathers ($M = 47.14$, $SD = 16.73$), t ($df = 92$) $= -5.20$, $p < .001$. Similar significant differences also are found for four of the five responsibility questions (i.e., schoolwork, t ($df = 99$) $= 5.60$, $p <$ .001; daily care, t ($df = 104$) $= 7.37$, $p < .001$; extracurricular activities, t ($df = 101$) $= 4.36$, $p <$ .001; and discipline, t ($df = 105$) $= 2.46$, $p < .05$), with mothers indicating that they have more responsibility for these activities. A significant difference between mothers' and fathers' reports of fun family activities is not noted, t ($df = 103$) $= 1.52$, $p < .20$, however.

Overall, these findings suggest that the mothers in this sample are more involved with and responsible for their children compared to fathers. Fathers appear to be equally accessible to their children, relative to mothers, and engage in similar amounts of fun family activities.

Coparent Support.

With regard to coparent support, significant differences are found between mothers' and fathers' reports on the Criticism subscale of the PRI. Specifically, fathers ($M = 23.57$, $SD = 9.43$) report feeling criticized by their children's other parent significantly more than mothers ($M = 17.75$, $SD = 7.74$), t ($df = 99$) = 3.12, $p < .01$. Significant differences between mothers' and fathers' reports are not found for general alliance, t ($df = 88$) = 1.31, $p < .20$, denigrate spouse, t ($df = 95$) = .98, $p < .35$, positive reinforcement, t ($df = 99$) = .58, $p < .60$, or hostility, t ($df = 99$) = 1.23, $p < .25$. Thus, both mothers and fathers in this sample report similar amounts of perceived and overt coparent support. Fathers, however, report receiving significantly more criticism from their children's other parent.

Parental Satisfaction.

With regard to parental satisfaction, there are no significant differences between mothers' and fathers' ratings for any of the subscales of parental satisfaction. Specifically, mothers and fathers do not differ in their reports of satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting practices, t ($df = 97$) = 1.84, $p < .07$, with their parent-child relationship, t ($df = 100$) = -1.13, $p < .30$, with their own parenting performance, t ($df = 95$) = -.31, $p < .80$, or with their perceived parenting competence, t ($df = 95$) = -1.56, $p < .15$. Mothers and fathers also do not differ with the distribution of their childcare responsibilities, t ($df = 102$) = 1.37, $p < .20$, household-related

responsibilities, t (df = 98) = 1.08, $p < .30$, or the amount of support that they received from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices, t (df = 102) = .10, $p < .95$.

Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.

With regard to mothers' and fathers' reports of their children's emotional and behavioral functioning, there are no significant differences in ratings. Specifically, mothers and fathers do not differ in their reports of their children's Internalizing, t (df = 91) = -.74, $p < .50$, or Externalizing, t (df = 91) = -1.09, $p < .30$, Behavior Problems.

Correlational Analyses

Correlational analyses are conducted to examine the relationships among the independent variables (i.e., shared parenting, coparent support, and parental satisfaction) and the dependent variables (i.e., children's internalizing and externalizing behavior problems). See Table 2. Because a significant discrepancy among mothers' and fathers' reports of shared parenting is found, it is likely that their parenting experiences differ as well. As a result, correlational analyses are examined for mothers and fathers separately. It should be noted, however, that the number of fathers who participated in this study may prevent these analyses from being statistically significant, even when there are large effect sizes.

Shared Parenting and Coparent Support.

Correlational analyses regarding mothers' reports of shared parenting and coparent support suggest that mothers who report engaging in higher levels of shared parenting rate their general alliance with their children's other parent less positively (r = -.54, $p < .001$). These mothers who report engaging in higher levels of shared parenting also report fewer positive

reinforcement ($r = -.43$, $p < .001$) and criticism behaviors ($r = -.37$, $p < .01$) from their children's other parent. Furthermore, mothers who report higher levels of shared parenting also report more denigration by their children's other parent ($r = .26$, $p < .05$). In contrast, correlational analyses regarding fathers' reports of shared parenting and coparent support do not reveal any significant relationships. Thus, mothers engaging in more childcare perceive less of an alliance, report fewer positive reinforcement behaviors from their children's other parent, and report fewer criticism behaviors from their children's other parent. Fathers did not have significant relationships between the amount of childcare in which they engage and coparent support.

<u>Shared Parenting and Parental Satisfaction.</u>

When examining mothers' reports of shared parenting and parental satisfaction, significant correlational relationships are found. Specifically, mothers who report engaging in more shared parenting also report less satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($r = -.64$, $p < .001$), less parental satisfaction overall (i.e., PSS Total score; $r = -.36$, $p < .01$), less satisfaction with the distribution of childcare ($r = -.27$, $p < .05$), and less satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices ($r = -.46$, $p < .001$). Similarly, correlational analyses of fathers' reports of shared parenting and parental satisfaction reveal that fathers who report engaging in more shared parenting also report less satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($r = -.60$, $p < .01$). Overall, mothers who engage in more childcare experience lower levels of satisfaction with a broad range of coparenting behaviors and their parent-child relationship. For fathers, engaging in more childcare is related to less satisfaction with their coparent's parenting performance.

Shared Parenting and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.

With regard to children's emotional and behavioral functioning, correlational analyses reveal that mothers' and fathers' reports of shared parenting are not related significantly to children's internalizing or externalizing behavior problems.

Coparent Support and Parental Satisfaction.

Examination of correlational analyses of mothers' reports of coparent support and parental satisfaction reveal a large number of significant relationships. Specifically, mothers who report a greater general alliance with their children's other parent also endorse higher ratings on every measure of parental satisfaction except for satisfaction with their parent-child relationship (i.e., satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, $r = .86$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with their own parenting performance, $r = .27$, $p < .05$; total satisfaction, $r = .71$, $p < .001$; perceived parenting competence, $r = .43$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of childcare, $r = .46$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, $r = .46$, $p < .001$; and satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices, $r = .69$, $p < .001$). Mothers who report receiving more positive reinforcement from their children's other parent also report greater satisfaction with every aspect of parental satisfaction except for satisfaction with their parent-child relationship (i.e., satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, $r = .58$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with their own parenting performance, $r = .27$, $p < .05$; total satisfaction, $r = .50$, $p < .001$; perceived parenting competence, $r = .35$, $p < .01$; satisfaction with the distribution of childcare, $r = .31$, $p < .01$; satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, $r = .38$, $p < .01$; and satisfaction with the amount of support

46

that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices, $r = .46$, $p < .001$).

Mothers who report greater feelings of denigration by their children's other parent also report less satisfaction with every aspect of parental satisfaction (i.e., satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, $r = -.63$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with their parent-child relationship, $r = -.46$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with their own parenting performance, $r = -.50$, $p < .001$; total satisfaction, $r = -.75$, $p < .001$; perceived parenting competence, $r = -.63$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of childcare, $r = -.41$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, $r = -.43$, $p < .001$; and satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices, $r = -.57$, $p < .001$). Mothers who report receiving more criticism from their children's other parent also report less satisfaction with their parent-child relationship ($r = -.33$, $p < .01$), less satisfaction with their own parenting ($r = -.34$, $p < .01$), and lower perceived parenting competence ($r = -.36$, $p < .01$). Finally, mothers who endorse higher levels of overt hostility are less satisfied with every aspect of parental satisfaction except for satisfaction with their perceived parenting competence (i.e., satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, $r = -.50$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with their parent-child relationship, $r = -.36$, $p < .01$; satisfaction with their own parenting performance, $r = -.61$, $p < .001$; total satisfaction, $r = -.68$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of childcare, $r = -.44$, $p < .001$; satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, $r = -.51$, $p < .001$; and satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices, $r = -.40$, $p < .001$).

Correlational analyses of fathers' reports of coparent support and parental satisfaction reveal different relationships from the relationships for mothers. Specifically, fathers who report a greater general alliance with their children's other parent report greater satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($r = .83$, $p < .001$), their satisfaction overall (PSS total score; $r = .58$, $p < .01$), and their satisfaction with the distribution of childcare ($r = .57$, $p < .01$), household-related responsibilities ($r = .62$, $p < .01$), and the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices ($r = .78$, $p < .001$). In addition, fathers who report receiving positive reinforcement from their children's other parent report greater satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($r = .64$, $p < .001$), their satisfaction overall (PSS total score; $r = .40$, $p < .05$), and the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices ($r = .53$, $p < .01$).

Fathers who report feeling denigrated by their children's other parent also report less satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($r = -.68$, $p < .001$), their satisfaction overall (PSS total score; $r = -.46$, $p < .05$), their satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities ($r = -.50$, $p < .01$), and the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices ($r = -.81$, $p < .001$). Fathers who report receiving more criticism from their children's other parent report less satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities ($r = -.44$, $p < .05$) and the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices ($r = -.46$, $p < .05$). Finally, fathers who report higher levels of overt hostility also report less satisfaction with every aspect of parental satisfaction except for satisfaction with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance and satisfaction with the distribution of childcare (i.e., satisfaction with

their parent-child relationship, $r = -.63$, $p < .01$; satisfaction with their own parenting performance, $r = -.64$, $p < .01$; total satisfaction, $r = -.63$, $p < .01$; perceived parenting competence, $r = -.46$, $p < . 05$; satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, $r = -.51$, $p < .05$; and satisfaction with the support that they receive for parenting and discipline practices, $r = -.47$, $p < .05$).

Overall, these results suggest that, for mothers, more coparent support is related to greater satisfaction in a broad range of contexts but is not related to satisfaction with the parent-child relationship. Perceptions of less support (i.e., denigration) are related to less satisfaction with all measured aspects of parental satisfaction, including satisfaction with the parent-child relationship. Overt unsupportive behaviors (i.e., criticism and hostility) also are related to less satisfaction with the parent-child relationship and have unique relationships with the other measured aspects of parental satisfaction (i.e., criticism is related to less satisfaction with mothers' own parenting performance and lower perceived competence, whereas hostility is related to all measured aspects of parental satisfaction except perceived parenting competence). With regard to fathers, fewer relationships among coparent support and parental satisfaction are found. Specifically, more coparent support is related to fathers having more satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent, total parental satisfaction, and satisfaction with the support received for parenting and discipline practices. Perceptions of less support (i.e., denigration) are related to fathers' satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent, total parental satisfaction, satisfaction with the distribution of household-related responsibilities, and satisfaction with the support received for parenting and discipline practices. Overt criticism is related to satisfaction with household related responsibilities and satisfaction

with the support received for parenting and discipline practices, whereas hostility is related to all measured aspects of parental satisfaction except for fathers' satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent and satisfaction with the distribution of childcare. Thus, in contrast to mothers, fathers' reports of coparent support are not related to satisfaction with the other parent or their own parenting. Also unique to fathers, the only measure of coparent support that is related to their satisfaction with the parent-child relationship is hostility.

<center>Coparent Support and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.</center>

Correlational analyses of coparent support and children's emotional and behavioral functioning reveal that mothers who endorse a greater general alliance with their children's other parent also rate their children as having lower levels of internalizing ($r = -.29$, $p < .05$) and externalizing ($r = -.32$, $p < .05$) behavior problems. Furthermore, mothers who endorse feeling denigrated by their children's other parent rate their children as having higher levels of externalizing ($r = .33$, $p < .05$) behavior problems. Finally, mothers who report being criticized by their children's other parent rate their children as having higher levels of internalizing behavior problems ($r = .25$, $p < .05$). Correlational analyses of fathers' reports of coparent support and children's emotional and behavioral functioning reveal that fathers who report more overt hostility rate their children as having more internalizing behavior problems ($r = .45$, $p < .05$). Thus, overall, mothers' general alliance is related to both types of children's behavior problems, whereas mothers' ratings of denigration are related to children's externalizing behavior problems and ratings of criticism are related to children's internalizing behavior problems. For fathers, only overt hostility was related significantly to children's internalizing behavior problems.

<center>50</center>

Parental Satisfaction and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning.

With regard to mothers' reports of parental satisfaction and children's emotional and behavioral functioning, correlational analyses reveal that mothers who are more satisfied with their spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance rate their children has having fewer internalizing ($r = -.29$, $p < .05$) and externalizing ($r = -.37$, $p < .01$) behavior problems. Mothers who are more satisfied with their parent-child relationship ($r = -.25$, $p < .05$) and mothers who are more satisfied with their own parenting performance ($r = -.26$, $p < .05$) rate their children as having fewer externalizing behavior problems. Finally, mothers who are more satisfied in general, as measured by the PSS total score, also rate their child as having fewer internalizing ($r = -.34$, $p < .01$) and externalizing ($r = -.46$, $p < .001$) behavior problems. Finally, mothers who report greater levels of perceived parenting competence rate their children as having fewer externalizing ($r = -.28$, $p < .05$) behavior problems.

Correlational analyses of fathers' reports of parental satisfaction and children's emotional and behavioral functioning reveal that fathers who are more satisfied with their parent-child relationship rate their children as having significantly fewer internalizing behavior problems ($r = -.51$, $p < .05$). In addition, fathers who are more satisfied with their own parenting performance rate their children as having fewer internalizing ($r = -.53$, $p < .01$) and externalizing ($r = -.43$, $p < .05$) behavior problems. Fathers who report greater parental satisfaction in general, as measured by the PSS total score, also rate their children as having fewer internalizing ($r = -.54$, $p < .01$) behavior problems. Finally, fathers who report greater perceived parenting competence rate their children has having fewer externalizing ($r = -.44$, $p < .05$) behavior problems. Thus, in general,

for both mothers and fathers, parental satisfaction is related to fewer emotional and behavioral problems for children.

Moderation Regression Analyses

One goal of the current study is to examine the moderating effects of coparent support and parental satisfaction in the relationship between shared parenting and children's emotional and behavioral functioning. For a variable to be considered as a moderator, a significant relationship must be found among the predictor and outcome variables. In particular, the predictor variables, both independently and as part of an interaction with each other, should be significant predictors of the outcome variable (Baron and Kenny, 1986). Shared parenting, however, is not related significantly to children's internalizing or externalizing behavior problems. As a result, moderational analyses are not conducted, as moderation would not be possible based on these criteria.

Hierarchical Regression Analyses

To address the last hypothesis for this study, hierarchical regression analyses are used to examine the predictive value of coparent support (i.e., denigrate spouse, positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility) and parental satisfaction (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence) on the dependent variables (i.e., children's internalizing and externalizing behavior problems). As a result of the correlational differences found between overt support behaviors and perceptions of support, separate regression analyses are conducted for each. Separate hierarchical regression analyses also are conducted for mothers

52

and fathers. Hierarchical regression analyses for mothers and fathers are included in Tables 3

and 4, respectively. To correct for multicollinearity, independent variables are standardized, and

specific subscales are removed from the analyses (i.e., general alliance, the PSS total scale score,

and satisfaction with the distribution of childcare, household-related responsibilities, and support

received for parenting and discipline practices) due to overlap among the individual items.

<center>Mothers' Hierarchical Results</center>

Children's Internalizing Behavior Problems.

To examine the predictive value of mothers' perceptions of coparent support and parental

satisfaction for children's internalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are

conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the

analyses. Block 2 consists of the coparent support variable that assesses perceptions of support

from the children's other parent (i.e., denigrate spouse). Block 3 consists of the parental

satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction

with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting

performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that

shared parenting does not predict significantly mothers' ratings of children's internalizing

behavior problems in Block 1, $F(1, 61) = .05, p < .83$. With the addition of the coparent support

variable in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach statistical significance, $F(2, 61) =$

$1.84, p < .17$. The addition of the variables in Block 3 results in a marginally significant

regression equation, $F(6, 61) = 2.02, p < .08$, but does not result in a significant r^2 change.

Thus, perceived coparent support and parental satisfaction do not predict children's internalizing behavior problems.

To examine the predictive value of mothers' ratings of <u>overt</u> coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's internalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of overt coparent support variables (i.e., positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly mothers' ratings of children's internalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F(1, 61) = .05$, $p < .83$. With the addition of the variables in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach significance, $F(4, 61) = 1.45$, $p < .23$. The addition of the variables in Block 3, however, results in a significant regression equation, $F(8, 61) = 2.67$, $p < .05$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .05$). In this block, criticism ($p < .05$), hostility ($p < .05$), and satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($p < .01$) add significantly to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems. Thus, parental satisfaction makes a significant addition to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems. Additionally, when entered with coparent support variables, criticism, hostility, and satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance contribute uniquely to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems.

<u>Children's Externalizing Behavior Problems.</u>

To examine the predictive value of mothers' <u>perceptions</u> of coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's externalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of the coparent support variable that assesses perceptions of support from the children's other parent (i.e., denigrate spouse). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problem scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly mothers' ratings of children's externalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F(1, 61) = 1.08$, $p < .30$. The addition of the coparent support variable in Block 2 results in a significant regression equation, $F(2, 61) = 5.51$, $p < .01$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .01$), however. In this block, shared parenting ($p < .07$) becomes marginally significant, and denigrate spouse ($p < .01$) adds significantly to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems. The addition of the variables in Block 3 also results in a significant regression equation, $F(6, 61) = 5.34$, $p < .001$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .01$). In this block, shared parenting ($p < .001$) and satisfaction with the spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($p < .001$) are significant individual predictors of children's externalizing behavior problems. Thus, perceived coparent support and parental satisfaction make significant additions to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems. Additionally, when entered together, shared parenting and satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance add uniquely to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems.

To examine the predictive value of mothers' ratings of <u>overt</u> coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's externalizing behavior problems, a hierarchical regression analysis is conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable can be controlled in the analysis. Block 2 consists of overt coparent support variables (i.e., positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). The regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly mothers' ratings of children's externalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F(1, 61) = 1.08$, $p < .30$. With the addition of the variables in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach statistical significance, $F(4, 61) = 1.95$, $p < .12$. The addition of the variables in Block 3 results in a significant regression equation, $F(8, 61) = 6.38$, $p < .001$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .001$). In this block, shared parenting ($p < .001$), hostility ($p < .01$), and satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($p < .001$) are significant individual predictors of children's externalizing behavior problems. Thus, parental satisfaction makes a significant addition to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems. Additionally, when added to coparent support variables, shared parenting, hostility, and satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance contribute uniquely to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems.

<div align="center">Fathers' Hierarchical Results</div>

<u>Children's Internalizing Behavior Problems.</u>

To examine the predictive value of fathers' <u>perceptions</u> of coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's internalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of the coparent support variable that assesses perceptions of support from the children's other parent (i.e., denigrate spouse). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly fathers' ratings of children's internalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F(1, 17) = .04$, $p < .85$. With the addition of the coparent support variable in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach statistical significance, $F(2, 17) = .11$, $p < .89$. The addition of the variables in Block 3 also does not reach statistical significance, $F(6, 17) = 1.14$, $p < .40$. Thus, perceived coparent support and parental satisfaction do not predict children's internalizing behavior problems.

To examine the predictive value of fathers' ratings of <u>overt</u> coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's internalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of overt coparent support variables (i.e., positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict

significantly fathers' ratings of children's internalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F (1, 17) =$ .04, $p < .85$. With the addition of the variables in Block 2, the regression equation becomes significant, $F (4, 17) = 10.12$, $p < .01$, and results in a significant change in r^2 ($p < .001$). In this block, shared parenting ($p < .05$), criticism ($p < .001$), and hostility ($p < .001$) are significant individual predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. The addition of the variables in Block 3, however, is not computed in SPSS, likely as a result of multicollinearity among the parental satisfaction variables.

As a result, two of the parental satisfaction variables are removed (i.e., satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance and satisfaction with parenting performance) as s result of their high multicollinearity statistics. Thus, in the new regression equation, shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of overt coparent support variables (i.e., positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility). Block 3 consists of two parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems (i.e., satisfaction with the parent-child relationship and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly fathers' ratings of children's internalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F (1, 17) =$ .04, $p < .85$. With the addition of the variables in Block 2, the regression equation becomes significant, $F (4, 17) = 10.12$, $p < .01$, and results in a significant change in r^2 ($p < .001$). In this block, shared parenting ($p < .05$), criticism ($p < .001$), and hostility ($p < .001$) add significantly to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems. The addition of the variables in Block 3 results in a significant regression equation, $F (6, 17) = 11.69$, $p < .001$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .05$). In this block, shared parenting, ($p < .01$), positive reinforcement ($p < .05$),

criticism ($p < .001$), hostility ($p < .001$), and satisfaction with the parent-child relationship ($p < .05$) add significantly to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems. Thus, parental satisfaction makes a significant addition to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems. Additionally, when entered with coparent support variables, shared parenting, positive reinforcement, criticism, hostility, and satisfaction with the parent-child relationship contribute significantly to the prediction of children's internalizing behavior problems.

Children's Externalizing Behavior Problems.

To examine the predictive value of fathers' perceptions of coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's externalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses are conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable is controlled in the analyses. Block 2 consists of the coparent support variable that assesses perceptions of support from the children's other parent (i.e., denigrate spouse). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problem scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). This regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly fathers' ratings of children's externalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F (1, 17) = .08$, $p < .78$. With the addition of the coparent support variable in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach statistical significance, $F (2, 17) = .18$, $p < .84$. The addition of the variables in Block 3 also does not reach statistical significance, $F (6, 17) = 1.11$, $p < .41$. Thus, perceived coparent support and parental satisfaction do not predict children's externalizing behavior problems.

To examine the predictive value of fathers' ratings of <u>overt</u> coparent support and parental satisfaction for children's externalizing behavior problems, a hierarchical regression analysis is conducted. Shared parenting is entered in Block 1 so that this variable can be controlled in the analysis. Block 2 consists of overt coparent support variables (i.e., positive reinforcement, criticism, and hostility). Block 3 consists of the parental satisfaction variables that correlate with children's behavior problems scores (i.e., satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse, satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence). The regression analysis demonstrates that shared parenting does not predict significantly fathers' ratings of children's externalizing behavior problems in Block 1, $F (1, 17)$ = .08, $p < .78$. With the addition of the variables in Block 2, the regression equation does not reach statistical significance, $F (4, 17) = .32$, $p < .86$. The addition of the variables in Block 3 results in a significant regression equation, however, $F (8, 17) = 152.66$, $p < .001$, and a significant change in r^2 ($p < .001$). In this block, shared parenting ($p < .001$), positive reinforcement ($p < .001$), criticism ($p < .001$), hostility ($p < .05$), satisfaction with a spouse/ex-spouse's parenting performance ($p < .001$), satisfaction with parenting performance ($p < .001$), and perceived parenting competence ($p < .001$) are significant individual predictors of children's externalizing behavior problems. Thus, parental satisfaction makes a significant addition to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems. Additionally, when added to coparent support variables, shared parenting, positive reinforcement, criticism, hostility, fathers' satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent, satisfaction with parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence contribute significantly to the prediction of children's externalizing behavior problems.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to examine mothers' and fathers' ratings regarding shared parenting, coparent support, and parental satisfaction in relation to children's emotional and behavioral functioning. Results of this study provide insight into current trends of parental involvement and the division of childcare-related responsibilities. Consistent with previous research and traditional parenting roles (Phares, 1999; Renk et al., 2003), the parents in this study report an unequal distribution of childcare, with mothers engaging in higher levels of involvement and responsibility for childcare activities than fathers. Inconsistent with previous research (Cabrera et al., 2000; Lamb, 1997), however, is the finding that greater involvement is not related to children's emotional and behavioral functioning. Instead, complex relationships among the variables suggest that discrepancies in parental involvement (i.e., as measured by different percentages of shared parenting between mothers and fathers) are related to coparent support and parental satisfaction. In fact, it is these relationships that predict children's behavior problems. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that different aspects of coparent support (i.e., overt support behaviors and perceived coparent support) and parental satisfaction predict uniquely children's emotional and behavioral functioning. Implications from these findings highlight the importance of examining, and ultimately targeting, parents' perceptions of support versus actual support behaviors, as these variables are related to parental satisfaction and children's behavior problems in different ways.

Descriptives and Correlational Findings

Shared Parenting

Similar to previous research regarding coparenting trends, it appears that mothers are still doing more in terms of childcare. Mean comparisons using *t*-test analyses suggest that the mothers and fathers in this sample differ significantly in the amount of time that they spend interacting with and being responsible for childcare-related activities. Specifically, mothers report spending more time interacting with their children and taking responsibility for discipline, schoolwork, daily care, and extracurricular activities. Mothers and fathers do not differ significantly in the amount of responsibility taken for fun family activities, however. These findings are consistent with previous research noting that fathers may be as involved as mothers when fun, playful activities are assessed (McBride & Mills, 1993; Phares, 1999; Renk et al., 2003). Mothers and fathers also do not differ significantly in reported levels of accessibility, reflecting previous notions that fathers' levels of accessibility may be higher when children are younger (Pleck, 1997).

Although not directly assessed in this study, it should be mentioned that 64 of the 80 mothers in this study also report working outside of the home and/or that they are undergraduate or graduate students. In contrast, only one of the 27 fathers in this sample reports being unemployed, and none of the fathers report being a stay-at-home father. This distribution further supports previous research regarding parenting trends in which mothers continue to take on more childcare-related activities and responsibilities, regardless of employment outside of the home (Aldous et al., 1998). Given these findings, this sample of parents appears to represent contemporary parental units in which mothers are working outside of the home but continuing to

take on more childcare activities and responsibilities relative to fathers. It is important to note, however, that the mothers in this sample, on average, report taking on approximately 63% of shared parenting duties (i.e., these mothers report that fathers are taking on 37% of shared parenting duties). Thus, although these mothers are involved in the majority of childcare, this sample of fathers appears to be relatively involved. This finding also is consistent with previous research that fathers' involvement remains less in comparison to mothers' involvement but tends to increase in relation to mothers' outside employment (Aldous et al., 1998; Deutsch et al., 1993). It also suggests that mothers and fathers continue to have different parental roles, whereby fathers' roles are defined less clearly.

Contrary to previous findings (Cabrera et al., 2000; Lamb, 1997; Pleck, 1997) and the proposed hypotheses, higher levels of shared parenting (i.e., parents engaging in a variety of different parenting responsibilities) do not predict children's emotional and behavioral functioning. Although previous research suggests that, when fathers are more involved, children often demonstrate fewer behavior problems (Lamb, 1997; Pleck, 1997), results are not always consistent. Furthermore, when these results are found, possible explanations for children's behavior reflect mechanisms underlying the coparental unit (e.g., greater amounts of supervision, more opportunities for modeling, Cabrera et al., 2000; less stress for each parent and more support in other daily roles, Aldous & Mulligan, 2002) rather than just the amount of time that parents spend with their children. Results of this study support this notion, in that discrepancies in shared parenting are not the most important predictor of children's behavior problems. Instead, discrepancies in shared parenting are related to less coparent support and parental

satisfaction. Overall, lower levels of coparent support and parental satisfction predict negative

outcomes for children in unique ways.

<div align="center">Shared Parenting and Coparent Support</div>

The degree to which the mothers and fathers in this sample engage in shared parenting

appears to be related to their unique perceptions of coparent support. For example, mothers who

engage in more shared parenting report less support overall (i.e., general alliance), greater

perceptions of denigration from their children's other parent, and fewer overt support behaviors

(e.g., positive reinforcement) from their children's other parent. Interestingly, these mothers also

report receiving fewer overtly critical behaviors from their children's other parent. In contrast,

fathers who engage in more shared parenting do not report less perceived or overt coparent

support from their children's other parent. These findings may reflect the difference in mothers'

and fathers' roles. For example, even when fathers are more involved, this involvement is likely

to reflect more fun, playful activities (McBride & Mills, 1993; Phares, 1999). As a result,

mothers may feel less inclined to engage in overt supportive behaviors if they consider the

behavior of their children's other parent to be focused on only fun activities. Similarly, fathers

may be less inclined to expect reinforcement for their parenting efforts if they are spending more

time playing with their children, as opposed to engaging in other parenting behaviors (e.g.,

discipline, caregiving). Interestingly, the fathers in this sample report being criticized by their

children's other parent significantly more than mothers. This finding reflects previous research

suggesting that mothers engage in "gatekeeping," or the negative feelings and reactions mothers

have to fathers' taking over more traditional maternal roles (Gable et al., 1992). If this is the

case, lower levels of father involvement may be created or exacerbated when fathers feel as if

<div align="center">64</div>

their parenting efforts are not supported or as if they are being criticized. As father involvement can have positive effects on children's behavior (Cabrera et al., 2000; Lamb, 1997) and the coparent unit (Aldous et al., 1998), this important aspect of coparenting warrants more research.

Mothers' reports of coparent support show a different pattern of findings. In particular, as mothers report engaging in more shared parenting, they also report fewer overtly critical behaviors from their children's other parent but feel less supported (i.e., they report greater denigration). Furthermore, mothers' reports of positive reinforcement are not related to their reports of criticism. Thus, mothers may feel unsupported and criticized even when their children's other parent is not overtly critical, particularly if they believe that they are not being reinforced for their parenting efforts. These findings suggest the importance of examining perceptions of support and overt support behaviors as separate constructs, particularly in relation to the parent-child relationship. Finally, both mothers' and fathers' reports of shared parenting are not related to ratings of hostility. Hostility, however, is related to the other dimensions of coparent support. Therefore, discrepancies in shared parenting do not relate directly to more hostile interchanges, but hostility within the coparent unit is related to more overtly critical exchanges, fewer positive reinforcement behaviors, and less perceived support.

Shared Parenting and Parental Satisfaction

With regard to parental satisfaction, both mothers and fathers who report engaging in more shared parenting also report less satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent. This finding simply may reflect the fact that these mothers and fathers are unhappy with the lack of parental involvement of their children's other parent. Alternatively, these mothers and fathers may be less satisfied with the actual parenting practices of their

65

children's other parent. Although directionality cannot be determined, it is possible that mothers and fathers who are unsatisfied with the parenting practices of their children's other parent may also engage in gatekeeping, preventing the other parent from engaging in more parenting. In fact, mothers', but not fathers', reports of shared parenting also are related to lower ratings of satisfaction with the division of childcare and satisfaction with the amount of support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices. Thus, parental satisfaction is related directly to discrepancies in shared parenting, particularly satisfaction with coparents' parenting performance. This finding is an important and unique addition to the literature, as parental satisfaction often spills over into parent-child interactions (Perrone et al., 2007) and results in positive outcomes for children (Thompson & Zuroff, 1999). That mothers feel less satisfied with the distribution of childcare and the support that they receive from their children's other parent for parenting and discipline practices further supports the importance of targeting dynamics within the coparent unit, particularly when parental involvement is discrepant.

Fortunately, for this sample of parents, discrepancies in shared parenting do not appear to be related to mothers' or fathers' satisfaction with the parent-child relationship. Perceived parenting competence is the only satisfaction measure related to satisfaction with the parent-child relationship. This relationship may be particularly important as feelings of competence are related to greater involvement and parental satisfaction (Bouchard et al., 2007). In fact, results of the current study demonstrate that perceived parenting competence is related to satisfaction with both mothers' and fathers' own parenting performance. Therefore, it appears that satisfaction in one area of parenting spills over into other areas of parenting. Because

66

satisfaction and competence are related to positive outcomes for children (Bouchard et al., 2007; Perrone et al., 2007), it is likely that the spillover effects from each create an even more harmonious environment for children. As such, determining what predicts parental satisfaction and competence is an important area to explore further.

A final unique relationship among measures of parental satisfaction is the finding that greater satisfaction with the parenting performance of children's other parent is related to both mothers' and fathers' satisfaction with their own parenting performance. Although this finding may reflect greater parental involvement, and thus a more even distribution of childcare, correlational analyses of coparent support and parental satisfaction suggest that satisfaction in both of these domains is likely the result of coparent support between mothers and fathers.

<u>Coparent Support and Parental Satisfaction</u>

Regarding the relationship between coparent support and parental satisfaction, the majority of the measures are related in the expected direction. In general, for both mothers and fathers, higher ratings of coparent support are related to greater parental satisfaction, but not to satisfaction with the parent-child relationship. One exception occurs for mothers, however, in that both perceptions of feeling denigrated as well as reports of overtly critical behaviors are related to mothers' satisfaction with the parent-child relationship, their perceived parenting competence, and their satisfaction with their own parenting performance. These relationships are not found for fathers. Although directionality cannot be determined, it appears that criticism has a strong relationship to how mothers feel about their relationships with their children and their own parenting. It would make sense that mothers who feel unsupported and who doubt that their parenting efforts are good enough may internalize these feelings, making them feel less confident

in their parenting practices and less satisfied with their relationship with their children. As

discussed above, lower parental satisfaction spills over into parent-child relationships (Perrone et

al., 2007) and is related to poor outcomes for children (Thompson & Zuroff, 1999). This

finding, therefore, is highly important, as it suggests a specific aspect of the coparent unit to

target (i.e., criticism) when helping parents of children with behavior problems. Interestingly,

mothers' reports of overt positive reinforcement are not related to their satisfaction with the

parent-child relationship. Thus, it appears that negative supportive behaviors have a unique

influence on parental satisfaction, particularly for mothers.

Coparent Support and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning

Different relationships are found between mothers' and fathers' reports of coparent

support and their ratings of their children's emotional and behavioral functioning. For mothers, a

greater general alliance with their children's other parent is related to fewer internalizing and

externalizing behavior problems. Interesting differential relationships emerge, however, when

examining mothers' reports of overt undermining behaviors. Specifically, mothers' reports of

feeling denigrated are related to children's externalizing behavior problems, whereas their

reports of being subject to overtly critical behaviors from their children's other parent are related

to children's internalizing behavior problems. Previous research often suggests that a lack of

coparent support may decrease chances for modeling positive behaviors as well as create an

unstable and inconsistent environment for children. These conditions may result in children

struggling to regulate their emotions (McHale & Rasmussen, 1998). Furthermore, negative overt

behaviors (e.g., hostility) displayed in front of children are related to children's internalizing

behavior problems (i.e., child-reported anxiety in boys, McConnell & Kerig, 2002). In fact, in

68

the current study, fathers' reports of hostility are related to their reports of children's

internalizing behavior problems. When parental conflict is not displayed in front of children,

however, such outcomes are not always the case (Feinberg, 2003; Jouriles et al., 1991; Mahoney

et al., 1997). Similar to hostility, it may be that, when children witness overt displays of

criticism, they may experience feelings of helplessness, self-blame, sadness, or even fear

(Shelton & Harold, 2008). Such emotions, and feelings of a lack of control, may lead children to

retreat and/or internalize their feelings. Thus, the differential relationships found in children's

outcomes in the current study suggest that there is a unique relationship between overt negative

coparent interactions and children's outcomes. Given these findings, further exploration of the

relationship between criticism, particularly overt criticism, and children's emotional and

behavioral functioning is warranted.

<center>Parental Satisfaction and Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning</center>

In general, mothers' and fathers' reports of satisfaction in all domains assessed are related

to children's externalizing behavior problems. Of course, these relationships are likely

bidirectional, with both parents and children exerting influence on one another. Mothers' reports

of satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent and their

satisfaction overall (as measured by the PSS total score) also are related to reports of children's

internalizing behavior problems. For fathers, satisfaction with the parenting performance of their

children's other parent is not related significantly to their ratings of their children's behavior

problems. The differential relationships between mothers' and fathers' ratings further highlight

the varying parental roles that mothers and fathers may have. For mothers, their satisfaction with

their coparent is related to their children's behavior problems. In contrast, for fathers, only their

<center>69</center>

satisfaction with aspects of the parent-child relationship and their own parenting competence are related to children's behavior problems. Future research would benefit from examining these relationships more closely.

For both mothers and fathers, perceived parenting competence is related to children's externalizing behavior problems. Lower perceived parenting competence may reflect actual difficulties with parenting and/or may be the result of parenting children who exhibit more difficult behaviors. Perceived parenting competence, however, also is related to parents' motivation for their involvement with their children (Bouchard et al., 2007). Given this previous finding, it may be that feeling incompetent as a parent is related to less involvement or more negative interactions with their children. It may be this lack of involvement or these interactions that then are related to children's more problematic behavior. As such, perceived parenting competence is an important aspect of parental satisfaction in the context of children's emotional and behavioral functioning, suggesting another potential target for treatment.

Overall, these findings support the notion that satisfaction often spills over from one area of family functioning to another. Unique to the current study is the finding that parental satisfaction is related to children's emotional and behavioral functioning. The fact that there are differential relationships between different aspects of parental satisfaction and the type of problematic behaviors (i.e., internalizing and externalizing behavior problems) that children may exhibit suggests that the coparenting relationship is complex. Further, the interplay among coparent support and satisfaction is a crucial aspect to examine when predicting children's emotional and behavioral functioning.

Predicting Children's Emotional and Behavioral Functioning

Because the shared parenting reported by parents in this study (i.e., the amount and type of childcare activities in which they engage) does not predict children's emotional and behavioral functioning, coparent support and parental satisfaction could not act as moderators in the relationship between shared parenting and children's behavior problems. Correlational analyses, however, demonstrate unique relationships among the independent variables, suggesting that these variables warrant further examination. Specifically, the differential relationships between perceived coparent support and overt coparent support behaviors (or the lack thereof, as the case may be) in relation to parental satisfaction and children's emotional and behavioral functioning suggest that both parents' perceptions of and the actual support that they receive may be important. As a result, separate hierarchical regression analyses are conducted for perceived coparent support and overt coparent support. Separate hierarchical regression analyses also are conducted for mothers and fathers. As a result of a small sample size of fathers, however, regression analyses for fathers should be interpreted cautiously.

Mothers' Hierarchical Regressions

Internalizing Behavior Problems.

With regard to children's internalizing behavior problems, mothers' reports of shared parenting are not a significant predictor. Mothers' perceptions of coparent support as well as their reports of parental satisfaction also are not significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. Often, internalizing behavior problems do not receive as much attention from parents as externalizing behavior problems. As such, mothers may not feel an additional

71

need for support when their children have such difficulties, or they may not even notice that their children are exhibiting such difficulties. Additionally, it may be that feeling supported and satisfied in the coparent relationship reflects a dynamic independent of the child. In fact, previous research suggests that certain aspects of coparenting (i.e., undermining, a lack of support) may not be obvious to children in families (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004) and, as a result, may not impact children directly.

Similar to perceptions of support, mothers' reports of overt coparent support are not a significant predictor of children's internalizing behavior problems. Parental satisfaction variables in conjunction with overt coparent support are significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. Specifically, mothers' reports of criticism, hostility, and satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent serve as unique predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. Thus, it appears that overt coparent support behaviors do not predict children's internalizing behavior problems directly but do contribute to the overall parenting picture when combined with parental satisfaction. The fact that perceptions of coparent support do not predict internalizing behavior problems individually further supports the notion that there is a unique relationship between overt coparent support behavior and internalizing behavior problems.

Externalizing Behavior Problems.

With regard to children's externalizing behavior problems, mothers' reports of shared parenting are not a significant predictor. Mothers' perceptions of coparent support, however, are a significant predictor of children's externalizing behavior problems. Specifically, mothers' reports of feeling denigrated by their children's other parent predict children's externalizing

72

behavior problems. Feeling unsupported may reflect an actual lack of help with childcare and father absence. If so, it may be that these children have more externalizing behavior problems as a result of having only one parent in charge of monitoring behavior and disciplining problematic behaviors (Cabrera et al., 2000). It also may be that children's externalizing behavior problems create additional stress for mothers, and perceptions of feeling unsupported reflect a greater need for help. The addition of parental satisfaction variables also serves as a significant predictor of children's externalizing behavior problems. In particular, mothers' reports of shared parenting and satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent also predict children's externalizing behavior problems. As previously discussed, mothers' satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent may reflect greater involvement and support for their own parenting practices.

When examining the predictive power of overt coparent support on children's externalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses reveal that overt coparent support is not a significant predictor. The addition of parental satisfaction, however, is a significant predictor of children's externalizing behavior problems. In particular, mothers' reports of shared parenting, hostility, and satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent predict children's externalizing behavior problems. Taken together, these findings suggest that, in general, perceived coparent support may have stronger implications for children's externalizing behavior problems than overt coparent support. It may be that mothers' perceptions of support are related to their parenting practices and, in turn, to children's behavior. Additionally, hostility displayed in front of children may demonstrate a poor model of appropriate behavior, resulting in observable problematic behaviors. That hostility predicts

73

children's externalizing behavior problems and criticism predicts internalizing behavior problems suggests that these overt coparent behaviors create different feelings for children leading to different outcomes. Although the directionality of these relationships cannot be determined, they warrant future study.

<div align="center">Fathers' Hierarchical Regressions</div>

Internalizing Behavior Problems.

With regard to children's internalizing behavior problems, fathers' reports of shared parenting are not a significant predictor. Fathers' perceptions of coparent support as well as their reports of parental satisfaction also are not significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. As suggested above, internalizing behavior problems often do not receive as much attention from parents as externalizing behavior problems. As such, fathers may not feel an additional need for support when their children have such difficulties, or they may not even notice that their children are exhibiting such difficulties. This hypothesis may be especially true if fathers' are less involved in general. Additionally, it may be that feeling supported and satisfied in the coparent relationship reflects a dynamic that is independent of the children in the family.

With regard to overt coparent support, overt coparent support is a significant predictor of children's internalizing behavior problems. Specifically, shared parenting, criticism, and hostility are significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. Furthermore, parental satisfaction variables in conjunction with overt coparent support are significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. In particular, fathers' reports of shared parenting, positive reinforcement, criticism, hostility, and satisfaction with the parent-child

relationship serve as significant predictors of children's internalizing behavior problems. Thus, it appears that, for fathers, overt coparent support behaviors do predict children's internalizing behavior problems directly as well as contribute to the overall parenting picture when combined with parental satisfaction.

Externalizing Behavior Problems.

With regard to children's externalizing behavior problems, fathers' reports of shared parenting are not a significant predictor. Fathers' perceptions of coparent support and parental satisfaction also are not significant predictors of children's externalizing behavior problems. Therefore, for fathers, feeling supported does not appear to be related to parental satisfaction or children's externalizing behavior problems. It may be that, for fathers, feeling supported in their parenting practices is not as important as it is for mothers. This hypothesis may be especially true for fathers who are less involved or who engage in more playful behaviors, rather than other parenting practices that may benefit from additional coparent support (i.e., discipline, caregiving).

When examining the predictive power of overt coparent support on children's externalizing behavior problems, hierarchical regression analyses reveal that fathers' reports of overt coparent support are not a significant predictor. The addition of parental satisfaction is a significant predictor of children's externalizing behavior problems, however. In particular, fathers' reports of shared parenting, positive reinforcement, criticism, hostility, satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent, satisfaction with their own parenting performance, and perceived parenting competence predict children's externalizing behavior problems. Thus, it appears that overt coparent support behaviors do not predict children's

75

externalizing behavior problems directly but do contribute to the overall parenting picture when combined with parental satisfaction.

<center>Overall Regression Results</center>

Taken together, these findings suggest that, for mothers, feeling supported may have stronger implications for children's externalizing behavior problems than overt coparent support behaviors. It may be that mothers' perceptions of support are related to their parenting practices and, in turn, to children's behavior. It also may be that mothers' perceptions of support reflect a lack of involvement of their children's other parent and the discrepancy in involvement is what leads to greater externalizing behavior problems in children. For fathers, perceptions of support do not predict children's internalizing or externalizing behavior problems. Thus, feeling supported appears to be particularly important for mothers.

For both mothers and fathers, overt coparent support does not predict children's externalizing behavior problems directly but becomes important when combined with parental satisfaction. This finding is contrary to previous findings that overt coparent support behaviors (i.e., hostility) may lead to children's externalizing behaviors (McHale & Rasmussen, 1998) and suggests that overt coparent support may be related indirectly to children's behavior via a more direct relationship with parental satisfaction.

Another interesting finding is that overt coparent support predicts children's internalizing behavior problems for fathers, but not for mothers. When overt coparent support is combined with parental satisfaction, however, criticism and hostility serve as significant predictors for mothers, and positive reinforcement, criticism, hostility, and satisfaction with the paren-child relationship serve as significant predictors for fathers. Thus, for fathers, overt coparent support

<center>76</center>

behaviors from their children's other parent appear to have a particularly important direct relationship to children's internalizing behavior problems. It may be that, for fathers, overt coparent support influences their actual parenting practices, which then is related to children's internalizing behavior problems. It also may be that negative overt coparent support behaviors serve a gatekeeping function, decreasing father involvement, and thus being related to children's internalizing behavior problems. This notion is further supported by the fact that, for fathers only, positive reinforcement serves as a significant predictor of children's internalizing behavior problems. This relationship suggests that positive reinforcement may increase fathers' involvement with their children and/or improve the way in which fathers' interact with their children. For mothers, overt coparent support behaviors may not have as direct of a relationship, particularly if mothers are the primary caregiver. In such cases, overt coparent support is less likely to impact mothers' involvement with their children. In contrast, for mothers, overt coparent support, particularly criticism and hostility, are related to children's internalizing behavior indirectly through the relationship with parental satisfaction, particularly satisfaction with the parenting practices of their children's other parent.

Finally, the fact that overt coparent support behaviors predict children's internalizing, but not externalizing, behavior problems is important, and suggests that such behaviors displayed in front of children have a unique and powerful influence over the way children handle the dynamics between their parents. When children observe conflict between their parents, especially when the conflict is in relation to coparenting, they may feel responsible and as if they have no control. Such responses will likely cause anxiety and insecurity for children. As such, the mechanisms by which overt coparent support behaviors predict children's internalizing

behavior problems warrants further research. This finding also supports the importance of examining covert and overt coparent support as independent constructs.

Limitations and Future Research

The findings of this study should be viewed within the context of its limitations. First, the 80 mothers and 27 fathers who completed and returned a questionnaire packet comprise approximately one-third of the total number of packets sent out. As such, the sample of parents examined in this study likely exhibits unique characteristics, in that they were willing to complete the research packet without compensation. Additionally, the parents in this sample are quite homogenous demographically (i.e., mostly Caucasian, educated, and employed), with their children attending private schools and daycares in a specific geographic area (i.e., Central Florida). Therefore, the results from this sample may not generalize to other families, particularly those of a lower socioeconomic status. Future research would benefit from including a greater and more culturally diverse sample. Second, obtaining a low number of father respondents limits the power of the analyses and the ability to examine differences between mothers' and fathers' ratings. Additionally, regression analyses for fathers included a fair amount of multicollinearity among the variables, warranting further caution when examining and interpreting these results. Third, liberal versus conservative beliefs may influence how parents feel about distribution of childcare and the amount of support that they provide for their children's other parent. Future research would benefit from examining the relationship of such beliefs to coparent support and parental satisfaction. Finally, all data obtained in this study reflect mothers' and fathers' self-reports and ratings of their children. Although a distinction is

made between perceived and overt coparent support, future studies should use observational methods to measure behaviors related to these types of support as well.

Additionally, although some conclusions are made regarding mothers and fathers, this study did not directly examine differences between families that consist of married parents and those that consist of different marital status descriptions. Brief examination of married parents compared to those with other marital status descriptions demonstrates that there are statistically significant differences on measures of shared parenting, general alliance, satisfaction with the other parent's parenting, criticism, and satisfaction with the amount of support received for parenting and discipline practices. Even in light of these differences between married parents and those who have other marital status descriptions, hierarchical regression analyses for married mothers only demonstrate similar results as those reported for the full sample of mothers in this study. Thus, although mothers with other marital status descriptions (e.g., single) report significantly more parenting, less satisfaction with their children's other parent, a lower general alliance, and less satisfaction with the support that they receive relative to married mothers, the unique contribution of coparent support and parental satisfaction to children's emotional and behavioral functioning appears to function in similar ways for these mothers. Unfortunately, hierarchical regression analyses could not be examined for married fathers as a result of their low sample size (i.e., 21 married fathers). Future research would benefit from examining different types of families, such as intact versus divorced coparent units.

Overall Summary

Despite the limitations of this study, unique findings are presented that contribute to the existent literature. First, this sample of parents appears to represent contemporary parental units in which mothers continue to engage in more childcare than fathers, despite studying and/or working outside of the home. Contrary to expectation, discrepancies in shared parenting do not predict children's emotional and behavioral functioning directly. Instead discrepancies in shared parenting may be related to parents not feeling supported and being unsatisfied with various aspects of their parenting and that of their coparent. Therefore, when targeting parents of children with behavior problems, changing how parents divide childcare in families that are well-educated may not be an important target. Instead, helping parents support one another in their parenting practices may lead to greater satisfaction and a more effective coparent unit. Furthermore, encouraging parents, particularly mothers, to support their coparent's parenting efforts should decrease gatekeeping behaviors, increase parental participation, and, hopefully, increase parenting competence and satisfaction.

Previous research is discrepant in defining coparent support and the ways in which it is examined (Van Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Results of this study support the notion that perceptions of coparent support and overt coparent support behaviors should be examined as separate constructs, as each relate to parental satisfaction and children's behavior problems in different ways. In particular, overt coparent support behaviors (i.e., criticism and hostility) predict children's internalizing behavior problems. In contrast, perceived coparent support and hostility, not criticism, predict children's externalizing behavior problems. These findings are

beneficial because they suggest specific behaviors to target when helping parents of children

with emotional and behavioral problems. Finally, the importance of parental satisfaction,

particularly parents' satisfaction with the parenting performance of their children's other parent,

appears to be a crucial component of the coparent unit as well as to the prediction of children's

emotional and behavioral problems. Interventions, therefore, may benefit from helping parents

identify the aspects of their parenting practices with which they are not satisfied and targeting

these practices in treatment.

Table 1 Differences Among Mothers' and Fathers' Ratings

	Mothers		Fathers		
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	t
Shared Parenting					
Interaction	51.48	41.04	24.90	18.28	-3.19**
Accessibility	32.58	39.32	26.2	25.26	-.76
Responsibility	6.37	1.53	4.47	1.54	-5.27***
Shared Parenting	67.32	15.53	47.14	16.73	-5.20***
Coparent Support					
General Alliance	96.61	21.72	103.00	17.81	1.31
Denigrate Spouse	15.92	4.86	17.04	5.33	.98
Positive Reinforcement	18.45	7.09	19.37	7.25	.58
Criticism	17.75	7.74	23.58	9.43	3.12**
Hostility	19.97	5.72	21.6	5.77	1.23
Parental Satisfaction					
Sat. with spouse/ex-spouse	44.72	10.94	49.04	8.61	1.84
Sat. with parent-child relationship	52.07	5.09	50.70	6.11	-1.13
Sat. with own parenting	42.90	6.01	42.50	6.58	-.29
PSS Total	140.38	16.69	142.92	16.57	.66
Sat. with Childcare Responsibilities	5.75	2.61	6.54	2.32	1.37
Sat. with Household Responsibilities	5.73	2.58	6.35	2.31	1.08
Sat. with support for parenting	6.87	2.44	6.92	1.98	.97
Perceived Competence	44.56	6.09	42.37	6.47	-1.56
Child Behavior Problems					
Internalizing Behavior Problems	44.78	9.53	43.13	9.37	-1.09
Externalizing Behavior Problems	44.78	9.84	42.25	9.75	-.74
Total Behavior Problems	44.72	9.38	41.96	8.75	-1.27

Note. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2 Correlations Among Variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Shared Parenting	-	-.32	.17	-.23	-.23	.05	-.60**	.08	-.14	-.29
2.	FEQ: General Alliance	-.54***	-	-.83***	.48*	-.41*	-.43*	.83***	.07	.35	.58**
3.	FEQ: Denigrate Spouse	.26*	-.81***	-	-.41*	.55**	.43*	-.68***	-.14	-.27	-.46*
4.	PRI: Positive Reinforcement	-.43***	.64***	-.56***	-	-.04	-.05	.64***	.18	.08	.40*
5.	PRI: Criticism	-.38**	-.19	.39**	.04	-	.77***	-.16	-.26	-.33	-.26
6.	O'Leary Porter: Hostility	.07	-.45***	.45***	-.28*	.39**	-	-.34	-.63**	-.64**	-.63**
7.	PSS: Spouse/Ex-Spouse	-.64***	.86***	-.63***	.58***	.08	-.50***	-	.26	.42*	.78***
8.	PSS: Parent-Child	.07	.18	-.46***	.13	-.33**	-.36**	.22	-	.74***	.87***
9.	PSS: Own Parenting	-.02	.27*	-.50***	.28*	-.34**	-.61***	.38**	.54***	-	.86***
10.	PSS: Total	-.36**	.71***	-.75***	.50***	-.21	-.68***	.84***	.64**	.77***	-
11.	FEQ: Competence	.06	.43***	-.63***	.35**	-.36**	-.51***	.31*	.62**	.79***	.68**
12.	Satisfaction with Childcare	-.27*	.46***	-.41***	.31**	-.17	-.44***	.48***	.04	.28*	.43***
13.	Satisfaction with Household	-.22	.46***	-.43***	.38**	-.19	-.51***	.43***	.07	.25*	.37**
14.	Satisfaction with Support	-.46***	.69***	-.57***	.46***	-.16	-.40***	.66***	.03	.32**	.56***
15.	CBCL: Externalizing	-.13	-.32*	.33**	-.21	.21	.11	-.37**	-.25*	-.26*	-.46***
16.	CBCL: Internalizing	-.03	-.29*	.23	-.15	.25*	.09	-.29*	-.14	-.19	-.34**
17.	CBCL: Total	-.09	-.35**	-.32**	-.21	.22	.15	-.39**	-.24	-.32*	-.49***

Note. Correlations for mothers are below the diagonal; correlations for fathers are above the diagonal. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

Table 2 *continued*

		11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1.	Shared Parenting	-.12	-.19	-.13	-.33	.07	-.05	-.01
2.	FEQ: General Alliance	.04	.57**	.62**	.78***	.14	-.03	.09
3.	FEQ: Denigrate Spouse	-.28	-.37	-.50**	-.81***	-.12	-.12	-.12
4.	PRI: Positive Reinforcement	.14	.33	.38	.53**	-.19	-.17	-.20
5.	PRI: Criticism	-.26	-.38	-.44*	-.46*	.04	-.04	-.05
6.	O'Leary Porter: Hostility	-.46*	-.33	-.51*	-.47*	.18	.45*	.26
7.	PSS: Spouse/Ex-Spouse	.12	.57**	.56**	.73***	.12	-.03	.06
8.	PSS: Parent-Child	.56**	.27	.38	.11	-.30	-.51*	-.45*
9.	PSS: Own Parenting	.70***	.47*	.57**	.29	-.43*	-.53**	-.52*
10.	PSS: Total	.63**	.54**	.61**	.48*	-.32	-.54**	-.47*
11.	FEQ: Competence	-	.31	.40*	.22	-.44*	-.38	-.47*
12.	Satisfaction with Childcare	.10	-	.78***	.45*	.07	-.07	.02
13.	Satisfaction with Household	.20	.78***	-	.62**	.05	-.12	-.07
14.	Satisfaction with Support	.11	.59***	.48***	-	.12	.13	.11
15.	CBCL: Externalizing	-.28*	-.01	.05	-.14	-	.65**	.92***
16.	CBCL: Internalizing	-.24	-.06	-.15	-.08	.52***	-	.84***
17.	CBCL: Total	-.34**	-.07	-.06	-.12	.90***	.79***	-

Note. Correlations for mothers are below the diagonal; correlations for fathers are above the diagonal. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, ***p < .001

Table 3 Mothers' Hierarchical Regression Analyses

Variables	B	SE B	β
Internalizing Behavior Problems			
Perceived Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 61) = .05, p < .83, r^2 = .00$			
Shared Parenting	-.02	.08	-.03
Block 2. $F(2, 61) = 1.84, p < .17, r^2 = .06$			
Shared Parenting	-.06	.08	-.09
Denigrate Spouse	2.38	1.25	.25
Block 3. $F(6, 61) = 2.02, p < .08, r^2 = .18$			
Shared Parenting	-.22	.11	-.35
Denigrate Spouse	-1.12	1.91	-.12
Satisfaction with Spouse/ex-spouse	-5.46	2.01	-.57
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	.26	1.51	.03
Satisfaction with Own Parenting	1.20	1.98	.13
Perceived Parenting Competence	-2.22	2.28	-.23
Overt Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 61) = .05, p < .83, r^2 = .00$			
Shared Parenting	-.02	.08	-.03
Block 2. $F(4, 61) = 1.45, p < .23, r^2 = .09$			
Shared Parenting	.01	.10	.01
Positive Reinforcement	-1.62	1.39	-.17
Criticism	2.79	1.46	.29
Hostility	-.67	1.40	-.07
Block 3. $F(8, 61) = 2.67, p < .05, r^2 = .29$			
Shared Parenting	-.20	.11	-.32
Positive Reinforcement	.65	1.45	.07
Criticism	3.05	1.38	.32*
Hostility	-3.95	1.64	.42*
Satisfaction with Spouse/ex-spouse	-7.02	1.96	.74**
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	.88	1.45	.09
Satisfaction with Own Parenting	.04	1.97	.00
Perceived Parenting Competence	-1.66	2.05	-.17

*Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001*

Table 3 *continued*

Variables	*B*	SE *B*	*B*
Externalizing Behavior Problems			
Perceived Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 61) = 1.08, p < .31, r^2 = .02$			
Shared Parenting	-.09	.08	-.13
Block 2. $F(2, 61) = 5.51, p < .01, r^2 = .16$			
Shared Parenting	-.15	.08	-.24
Denigrate Spouse	3.81	1.22	.39**
Block 3. $F(6, 61) = 5.34, p < .001, r^2 = .37$			
Shared Parenting	-.40	.10	-.62***
Denigrate Spouse	-.17	1.73	-.02
Satisfaction with Spouse/ex-spouse	-7.63	1.83	-.78***
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	-.57	1.34	-.06
Satisfaction with Own Parenting	.67	1.80	.07
Perceived Parenting Competence	-.33	2.07	-.03
Overt Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 61) = 1.08, p < .31, r^2 = .02$			
Shared Parenting	-.09	.08	-.13
Block 2. $F(4, 61) = 1.95, p < .12, r^2 = .12$			
Shared Parenting	-.13	.10	-.20
Positive Reinforcement	-3.00	1.41	-.31
Criticism	1.53	1.48	.16
Hostility	-.22	1.42	-.02
Block 3. $F(8, 61) = 6.38, p < .001, r^2 = .49$			
Shared Parenting	-.44	.10	.69***
Positive Reinforcement	-.24	1.26	-.02
Criticism	1.80	1.20	.18
Hostility	-5.05	1.43	-.51**
Satisfaction with Spouse/ex-spouse	-9.94	1.71	-1.01***
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	-.35	1.26	-.04
Satisfaction with Own Parenting	-1.13	1.72	-.12
Perceived Parenting Competence	-.04	1.79	-.00

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 4 Mothers' Hierarchical Regression Analyses

Variables	B	SE B	B
Internalizing Behavior Problems			
Perceived Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 17) = .04, p < .85, r^2 = .85$			
Shared Parenting	-.03	.14	-.05
Block 2. $F(2, 17) = .11, p < .89, r^2 = .67$			
Shared Parenting	-.02	.15	-.03
Denigrate Spouse	-.97	2.22	-.11
Block 3. $F(6, 17) = 1.14, p < .40, r^2 = .23$			
Shared Parenting	-.03	.25	-.05
Denigrate Spouse	-2.26	4.07	-.26
Satisfaction with Spouse/ex-spouse	.05	8.06	.00
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	-1.60	3.12	-.21
Satisfaction with Own Parenting	-3.63	4.22	-.43
Perceived Parenting Competence	-.43	4.28	-.05
Overt Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 17) = .04, p < .85, r^2 = .85$			
Shared Parenting	-.03	.14	-.05
Block 2. $F(4, 17) = 10.12, p < .01, r^2 = .00$			
Shared Parenting	-.26	.09	-.47*
Positive Reinforcement	-2.24	1.30	-.24
Criticism	-9.64	1.83	-1.25***
Hostility	13.22	2.14	1.43***
Block 3. $F(6, 17) = 11.69, p < .001, r^2 = .04$			
Shared Parenting	-.39	.08	-.70**
Positive Reinforcement	-3.20	1.13	-.35*
Criticism	-12.89	1.92	-1.68***
Hostility	18.61	2.82	2.01***
Satisfaction with P-C Relationship	4.63	1.63	.59*
Perceived Parenting Competence	-2.38	1.24	-.27

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 4 *continued*

Variables	*B*	SE *B*	*β*
Externalizing Behavior Problems			
Perceived Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 17) = .08$, $p < .78$, $r^2 = .78$			
Shared Parenting	.04	.15	.07
Block 2. $F(2, 17) = .18$, $p < .84$, $r^2 = .60$			
Shared Parenting	.06	.15	.09
Denigrate Spouse	-1.22	2.31	-.14
Block 3. $F(6, 17) = 1.11$, $p < .41$, $r^2 = .25$			
Shared Parenting	.26	.26	.45
Denigrate Spouse	1.55	4.25	.18
Satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse	9.81	8.42	.80
Satisfaction with p-c relationship	-.73	3.26	-.09
Satisfaction with own parenting	-5.69	4.41	-.64
Perceived Parenting Competence	.64	4.42	.07
Overt Coparent Support			
Block 1. $F(1, 17) = .08$, $p < .78$, $r^2 = .78$			
Shared Parenting	.04	.15	.07
Block 2. $F(4, 17) = .32$, $p < .86$, $r^2 = .75$			
Shared Parenting	-.03	.18	-.06
Positive Reinforcement	-1.84	2.61	-.19
Criticism	-2.22	3.68	-.28
Hostility	3.70	4.30	.38
Block 3. $F(8, 17) = 152.66$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .00$			
Shared Parenting	.67	.03	1.15***
Positive Reinforcement	-13.60	.50	-1.43***
Criticism	3.88	.54	.49***
Hostility	-2.41	.77	-.25*
Satisfaction with spouse/ex-spouse	29.26	.98	2.37***
Satisfaction with p-c relationship	.47	.48	.06
Satisfaction with own parenting	-16.19	.64	-1.82***
Perceived Parenting Competence	8.06	.51	.88***

Note. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

APPENDIX: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

EXPEDITED CONTINUING REVIEW APPROVAL NOTICE

From : **UCF Institutional Review Board**
FWA00000351, Exp. 10/8/11, IRB00001138

To : **Melissa Middleton** and Co-PI: **Samantha Scott**

Date : **March 18, 2009**

IRB Number: **SBE-08-05571**

Study Title: **Parental Perceptions, Parenting Behavior, and Child Behavioral Outcomes**

Dear Researcher,

This letter serves to notify you that the continuing review application for the above study was reviewed and approved by the IRB designated reviewer on **3/18/2009** through the expedited review process according to 45 CFR 46 (and/or 21 CFR 50/56 if FDA-regulated).

Continuation of this study has been approved for a one-year period. The expiration date is 3/17/2010. This study was determined to be no more than minimal risk and the category for which this study qualified for expedited review is:

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Use of the approved, stamped consent document(s) is required. The new form supersedes all previous versions, which are now invalid for further use. Only approved investigators (or other approved key study personnel) may solicit consent for research participation. Subjects or their representatives must receive a copy of the consent form(s).

All data must be retained in a locked file cabinet for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Additional requirements may be imposed by your funding agency, your department, or other entities. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

To continue this research beyond the expiration date, a Continuing Review Form must be submitted 2 – 4 weeks prior to the expiration date.   Use the Unanticipated Problem Report Form or the Serious Adverse Event Form (within 5 working days of event or knowledge of event) to report problems or events to the IRB. Do not make changes to the study (i.e., protocol methodology, consent form, personnel, site, etc.) before obtaining IRB approval. Changes can be submitted for IRB review using the Addendum/Modification Request Form. An Addendum/Modification Request Form **cannot** be used to extend the approval period of a study.   All forms may be completed and submitted online at https://iris.research.ucf.edu .

On behalf of Tracy Dietz, Ph.D., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 03/18/2009 01:12:08 PM EST

IRB Coordinator

REFERENCES

Abidin, R. R., & Brunner, J. F. (1995). Development of a parenting alliance inventory. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 24*, 31-40.

Achenbach, T. M., & Rescorla, L. A. (2000). *Manual for the ASEBA preschool forms & profiles.* Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Department of Psychiatry.

Achenbach, T.M., & Rescorla, L. A. (2001). *Manual for the ASEBA school-age forms & profiles.* Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Research Center for Children, Youth, and Families.

Aldous, J., & Mulligan, G. M. (2002). Fathers' child care and children's behavior problems: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Family Issues, 23,* 624-647.

Aldous, J., Mulligan, G. M., & Biarnason, T. (1998). Fathering over time: What makes the difference? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60,* 809-820.

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51,* 1173-1182.

Beitel, A. H., & Parke, R. D. (1998). Paternal involvement in infancy: The role of maternal and paternal attitudes. *Journal of Family Psychology, 2*, 268-288.

Belsky, J., Crnic, K., & Gable, S. (1995). The determinants of coparenting in families with toddler boys: Spousal differences and daily hassles. *Child Development, 66,* 629-642.

Bouchard, G., Lee, C. M., Asgary, V., & Pelletier, L. (2007). Fathers' motivation for involvement with their children: A self-determination theory perspective. *Fathering, 5,* 25-41.

Brody, G. H., & Flor, D. L. (1996). Coparenting, family interactions, and competence among

      African American youths. In J. P. McHale & P. A. Cowen (Eds.), *Understanding how*

      family-level dynamics affect children's development: Studies of two-parent families (pp.

      77-91). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brody, G. H., Pellegrini, A. D., & Sigel, I. E. (1986). Marital quality and mother-child and

      father-child interactions with school-aged children. *Developmental Psychology, 3,* 291-

      296.

Bulanda, R. E. (2004). Paternal involvement with children: The influence of gender ideologies.

      Journal of Marriage and Family, 66, 40-45.

Cabrera, N. J., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Bradley, R. H., Hofferth, S., & Lamb, M. E. (2000).

      Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development, 71,* 127-136.

Cummings, E. M., & O'Reilly, A. W. (1997). Fathers in family context: Effects of marital

      quality on child adjustment. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child*

      development (*3rd ed.*; pp.49-65). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Cowen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin, 112,* 15-159.

Davies, P. T., & Cummings, E. M. (1994). Marital conflict and child adjustment: An emotional

      security hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 116,* 387-411.

Deal, J. E., Halverson, Jr., C. F., & Smith Wampler, K. (1989). Parental agreement on child-

      rearing orientations: Relations to parental, marital, family, and child characteristics. *Child*

      Development, 60, 1025-1034.

Dehle, C., Larson, D., & Landers, J. E. (2001). Social support in marriage. *The American*

      Journal of Family Therapy, 29, 307-324.

Deutsch, F. M., Lussier, J. B., & Servis, L. J. (1993). Husbands at home: Predictors of paternal participation in childcare and housework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65,* 1154-1166.

Emery, R. E., & O'Leary, K. D. (1982). Children's perceptions of marital discord and behavior problems of boys and girls. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 10,* 11-24.

Feinberg, M. E. (2003). The internal structure and ecological context of coparenting: A framework for research and intervention. *Parenting Science and Practice, 3,* 93-131.

Floyd, F. J., Gilliom, L. A., & Costigan, C. L. (1998). Marriage and the parenting alliance: Longitudinal prediction of change in parenting perceptions and behaviors. *Child Development, 69,* 1461-1479.

Floyd, F. J., & Zmich, D. E. (1991). Marriage and the parenting partnership: Perceptions and interactions of parents with mentally retarded and typically developing children. *Child Development, 62,* 1434-1448.

Frank, S. J., Jacobson, S., & Avery, C. (1988). *The Family Experiences Questionnaire.* Unpublished manuscript, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Frone, M. R., Russell, M., & Barnes, G. M. (1996). Work-family conflict, gender, and health-related outcomes: A study of employed parents in two community samples. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 1,* 57-69.

Gable, S., Belsky, J., & Crnic, K. (1992). Marriage, parenting, and child development: Progress and prospects. *Journal of Family Psychology, 5,* 276-294.

Greenberger, E., & O'Neil, R. (1993). Spouse, parent, worker: Role commitments and role-

    related experiences in the construction of adults' well-being. *Developmental Psychology,*

    29, 181-197.

Guidubaldi, J. & Cleminshaw, H. K. (1994). *The manual for the Parenting Satisfaction Scale.*

    San Antonio: The Psychological Corporation.

Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (1989). *The second shift.* New York: Viking Press.

Johnson, V. K., Cowan, P. A., & Cowan, C. P. (1999). Children's classroom behavior: The

    unique contribution of family organization. *Journal of Family Psychology, 13*, 355-371.

Jouriles, E. N., Murphy, C. M., Smith, D. A., Richters, J. E., & Waters, E. (1991). Marital

    adjustment, parental disagreements about child rearing, and behavior problems in boys:

    Increasing the specificity of the marital assessment. *Child Development, 62,* 1424-1433.

Kitzmann, K. M. (2000). Effects of marital conflict on subsequent triadic family interactions and

    parenting. *Developmental Psychology, 36,* 3-13.

Lamb, M. E. (1997). Fathers in child development: An introductory overview and guide.

    In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (*3rd ed.*; pp.1-18). New

    York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Lavigueur, S., Saucier, J., & Trembley, R. E. (1995). Supporting fathers and supported mothers

    in families with disruptive boys: Who are they? *Journal of Child Psychological*

    Psychiatry, 36, 1003-1018.

Leary, A., & Katz, L. F. (2004). Coparenting, family-level processes, and peer outcomes:

    The moderating role of vagal tone. *Development and Psychopathology, 16*, 593-608.

Mahoney, A., Jouriles, E. N., & Scavone, J. (1997). Marital adjustment, marital discord over

    childrearing, and child behavior problems: Moderating effects of child age. *Journal of*

    Clinical Child Psychology, 26, 415-423.

Maurer, T. W., & Pleck, J. H. (2006). Fathers' caregiving and breadwinning: A gender

    congruence analysis. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 7,* 101-112.

McBride, B. A., Brown, G. L., Bost, K. K., Shin, N., Vaughn, B., & Korth, B. (2005). Paternal

    identity, maternal gatekeeping, and father involvement. *Family Relations, 54*, 360-372.

McBride, B. A., & Mills, G. (1993). A comparison of mother and father involvement with their

    preschool age children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 8,* 457-477.

McConnell, M. C., & Kerig, P. K. (2002). Assessing coparenting in families of school-age

    children: Validation of the coparenting and family rating system. *Canadian Journal of*

    Behavioural Science, 34, 44-58.

McHale, J. P. (1995). Coparenting and triadic interactions during infancy: The roles of marital

    distress and child gender. *Developmental Psychology, 31,* 985-996.

McHale, J. P., & Fivaz-Depeursinge, E. (1999). Understanding triadic and family group

    interactions during infancy and toddlerhood. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology*

    Review, 2, 107-127.

McHale, J. P., Johnson, D., & Sinclair, R. (1999). Family dynamics, preschoolers' family

    representations, and preschool peer relationships. *Early Education and Development, 10,*

    373-401.

McHale, J. P., Rao, N., & Krasnow, A. D. (2000). Constructing family climates: Chinese

mothers reports of their co-parenting behaviour and preschoolers' adaptation.

International Journal of Behavioral Development, 24, 111-118.

McHale, J. P., & Rasmussen, J. L. (1998). Coparental and family group-level dynamics during

infancy: Early family precursors of child and family functioning during preschool.

Development and Psychopathology, 10, 39-59.

Minton, C., & Pasley, K. (1996). Fathers' parenting role identity and father involvement: A

comparison of nondivorced and divorced, nonresident fathers. *Journal of Family Issues,*

17, 26-45.

Perrone, K. M., Webb, L. K., & Jackson, Z. V. (2007). Relationships between parental

attachment, work and family roles, and life satisfaction. *The Career Development*

Quarterly, 55, 237-248.

Perrone, K. M., & Worthington, Jr., E. L. (2001). Factors influencing ratings of marital quality

by individuals within dual-career marriages: A conceptual model. *Journal of Counseling*

Psychology, 48, 3-9.

Phares, V. (1999). *Poppa psychology.* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.

Pleck, J. H. (1997). Paternal involvement: Levels, sources, and consequences. In M. E. Lamb

(Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (*3rd ed.*; pp.66-103). New York: John

Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Pleck, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1997). Fatherhood ideals in the United States: Historical

dimensions. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (*3rd ed.*;

pp.66-103). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Porter, B., & O'Leary, K. D. (1980). Marital discord and child behavior problems. *Journal of*
Abnormal Child Psychology, 8, 287-295.

Purdom, C. L., Lucas, J. L., & Miller, K. S. (2006). Couple type, parental status, and the
mediating impact of social support. *North American Journal of Psychology, 8*, 1-12.

Rane, T. R., & McBride, B. A. (2000). Identity theory as a guide to understanding fathers'
involvement with their children. *Journal of Family Issues, 21,* 347-366.

Renk, K., Roberts, R., Roddenberry, A., Luick, M., Hillhouse, S., Meehan, C., Oliveros, A., &
Phares, V. (2003). Mothers, fathers, gender role, and time parents spend with their
children. *Sex Roles, 48,* 305-315.

Russell, G. (1978). The father role and its relation to masculinity, femininity, and androgyny.
Child Development, 49, 1174-1181.

Russell, G. (1986). Shared parenting: A new childrearing trend? *Early Child Development and*
Care, 24, 139-153.

Russell, A., & Russell, G. (1994). Coparenting early school-age children: An examination of
mother-father interdependence within families. *Developmental Psychology, 30*, 757-770.

Schoppe, S. J., Mangelsdorf, S. C., & Frosch, C. A. (2001). Coparenting, family process, and
family structure: Implications for preschoolers' externalizing behavior problems. *Journal*
of Family Psychology, 15, 526-545.

Shelton, K. H., & Harold, G. T. (2008). Pathways between interparental conflict and adolescent
psychological adjustment. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 28,* 555-582.

Sturge-Apple, M. L., Davies, P. T., & Cummings, E. M. (2006). Hostility and withdrawal in

marital conflict: Effects on parental emotional unavailability and inconsistent discipline.

Journal of Family Psychology, 20, 227-238.

Thompson, R., & Zuroff, D. C. (1999). Development of self-criticism in adolescent girls: Roles

of maternal dissatisfaction, maternal coldness, and insecure attachment. *Journal of Youth

and Adolescence, 28,* 197-210.

Van Egeren, L.A. (2000). *The Parental Regulation Inventory*. Unpublished manuscript:

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Van Egeren, L. A., & Hawkins, D. P. (2004). Coming to terms with coparenting: Implications

of definition and measurement. *Journal of Adult Development, 11,* 165-178.

Verlaan, P., & Schwartzman, A. E. (2002). Mother's and father's parental adjustment: Links to

externalizing behavior problems in sons and daughters. *International Journal of

Behavioral Development, 26,* 214-224.