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The Relations Among Parental Monitoring and Warmth, and Adolescent Externalizing and Internalizing Distress: The Effects of Parent and Adolescent Perception of Neighborhood Danger

Jonathan Goldner  
Loyola University Chicago

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THE RELATIONS AMONG PARENTAL MONITORING AND WARMTH, AND ADOLESCENT EXTERNALIZING AND INTERNALIZING DISTRESS: THE EFFECTS OF PARENT AND ADOLESCENT PERCEPTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD DANGER

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PROGRAM IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY
JONATHAN SETH GOLDNER, M.A.

CHICAGO, IL

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ABSTRACT

Parental monitoring and warmth have traditionally been studied in the context of white, middle-class families. This paper adds to recent research that has begun to explore what levels of these parenting behaviors are optimal for the prevention of adolescent psychopathology in impoverished, urban high crime areas. It also takes into account parent and child perceptions of neighborhood danger. This study employs a longitudinal design, with data collected at two times points one year apart, among a sample of 240 African American young adolescents and their parents in urban, high crime neighborhoods. It aims to study parental monitoring, parental warmth, parent perception of neighborhood danger, child perception of neighborhood danger, child internalizing distress, and child externalizing distress. Further, child internalizing and externalizing distress are measured both through retrospective questionnaire reports of psychopathology as well as in vivo accounts of daily distress through the use of the Experience Sampling Method (ESM), a time sampling technique.

Parents’ perception of neighborhood danger predicted an increase in adolescents’ externalizing behavior, but not internalizing distress. Contrary to expectation, parents’ awareness of danger did not relate to the degree to which they monitored their children. Parental monitoring was associated with children’s externalizing behavior, although a hypothesized quadratic relation between parents’ monitoring and externalizing did not exist. Both linear and quadratic relations were discovered between parental monitoring
and children’s internalizing distress. One of the most consistent predictors of adolescents’ distress, surprisingly, was their perception of neighborhood danger, which was associated with higher levels of both adolescent internalizing and externalizing symptoms. Adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger emerged as an equally strong predictor of internalizing and externalizing symptoms as parental monitoring and parental warmth. The rate of parent-child agreement regarding the presence of extreme levels of danger was lower than expected. Finally, differential relations existed between parental monitoring and parental warmth as they pertained to internalizing and externalizing. In general, parental monitoring more strongly predicted adolescent externalizing than parental warmth; however, parental warmth was a stronger predictor of adolescent internalizing than parental monitoring. Significant interactions are also discussed, as well as the implications of these findings and how they can serve as a guide to future research.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In her seminal work examining preschool children and their parents, Diana Baumrind (1967; 1971) devised a typology of parenting styles that she found to be associated with children’s behavior. This classification was based upon the study of the two orthogonal dimensions of parenting: 1) degree of control and demandingness and 2) warmth and openness, towards their children. Baumrind determined that when parents were high in control and warmth (deemed “authoritative”) their preschoolers were more independent, examined their surroundings more comfortably, and were more content generally. Parents who presented as controlling and colder were called “authoritarian” and had children who typically were more withdrawn and unhappy. Parents, who were warm towards their children but not demanding and set few restrictions, were named “permissive.” They had children who were the least independent and had the least self-control. Finally, “rejecting-neglectful” (later neglectful or disengaged) parents provided very little warmth towards the children, did not encourage independence, and did not place limits on their children (Baumrind, 1967; 1971).

Since this time, numerous studies have testified to the value of authoritative parenting as compared to authoritarian, permissive or disengaged. These beneficial findings have been extended beyond parenting of preschoolers into adolescence. Authoritative parenting has been shown to be linked to higher levels of self-control,
reliance, and worth (Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996). In his Presidential Address to the Society for Research on Adolescence, Steinberg (2001) declared authoritative parenting to be the most beneficial style universally. While adolescent problem behavior has been linked to a number of different components of parenting, the majority of studies have centered on the two overarching themes descended from the work of Baumrind, parental control (involving managing and supervision), and warmth and communication (Smetana, Crean, & Daddis, 2002).

One of the most consistent aspects of early methodology in studies of parenting has been the use of European American, often middle-class, families in samples (Garcia-Coll, Meyer, & Brillon, 1995). This has prompted researchers to examine the extent to which the dimensions of authoritative parenting are used among members of other ethnicities and socioeconomic statuses. One study of African American families determined that approximately half of single-parent households and fully 80% of two-parent families were, in fact, nonauthoritative (Taylor, Casten, & Flickinger, 1993). Baumrind (1972) herself examined a small subsample (16 families) of African American families from her original study and found different emphases of parenting and different correlates. These findings, as well as others like it (Steele, Nesbitt-Daly, Daniel, & Forehand, 2005; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991), have prompted some to try to develop typologies of parenting better suited to African American families and the contexts in which they live (Mandara & Murray 2002; McGroder, 2000; Weis, 2002).

Given the need for within group designs to better understand family processes in different cultures and settings (Garcia-Coll et al., 1995), the current study examines important components of authoritative parenting (i.e., behavioral control in the form of
parental monitoring and parental warmth) in an urban African American young adolescent sample to determine the extent to which they provide protection from daily externalizing and internalizing behavior. While some studies have examined patterns of parenting as a single construct (e.g., low hostility, high warmth) (Lamborn et al., 1996), this study follows the lead of others, that have separated constructs of parenting and found unique contributions of the components (Mistry et al., 2002; Taylor et al., 2004). Further, this study takes into account the parents’ and children’s perception of their neighborhood’s degree of danger, to examine how these beliefs influence both parents’ behavior and children’s responses. Finally, these independent variables are studied in relation to indications of the youths’ experience of internalizing (e.g., sadness and anxiety) and externalizing (e.g., anger and delinquency) gathered by questionnaire report of symptoms, and in vivo account of daily experience through the Experience Sampling Method (ESM).

Adolescent Behavior

According to theorists, early adolescence signals the beginning of young people’s attempts to develop their own identity apart from their family (Gilligan, 1982; Havinghurst, 1984). This process has been conceptualized as a developmental stage of adolescence by some and an unconscious drive fulfillment by psychoanalytic thinkers (Blos, 1967; Freud, 1946). Erikson (1967) established that this period of time marked the struggle between identity and identity diffusion with the establishment of a unique self being the ideal outcome. In fact, studies reveal that adolescents believe themselves to become increasingly individuated from their parents with age, both psychologically and
behaviorally (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986). During this same period, in a European American sample, the amount of time that young people spent with family decreased (Larson & Richards, 1991). In addition to less time with family, young European American adolescents begin to spend less time under the supervision of adults generally (Laird, Pettit, & Bates, 1998). African American young adolescents (in 5th through 8th grade), on the other hand, did not show declines in time spent with family over this period (Larson, Richards, Sims, & Dworkin, 2001). Larson and colleagues note that this is consistent with literature that points to greater emphasis in child rearing on interdependence found in research on African American families.

Along with the general trend toward greater independence, adolescence also is a period of marked increase in risk-taking behavior (He, Kramer, Houser, Chomitz, & Hacker, 2004). With less time under adult supervision, adolescents encounter new and potentially risky situations with which they have little or no experience to facilitate good decision-making (e.g., driving, experimenting with alcohol). Part of the tendency toward more reckless, impulsive behavior stems from the as yet incomplete myelination of the frontal lobes and still growing number of synapses in this region (Sowell, Thompson, Tessner, & Toga, 2001). In other words, the region of the brain responsible for impulse control and planning is still growing, both in capacity and speed of operation, during this period. Numerous studies also point to the harmful influence of deviant peers (for a review see Gifford-Smith, Dodge, Dishion, & McCord, 2005). Further as attachment to these peers grows, so too does the negative impact that they have (Agnew, 1991). Peer pressure to engage in misbehavior is a large component of the threat that comes from
these peers. For example, while fifteen year olds can make intelligent and healthy
decisions at a rate comparable to adults when alone, when placed in a room with age-
mates their ability to do so decreases notably (Steinberg, 2007). Finally, Feldman (2007)
also points to feelings of invulnerability that can be characteristic of adolescents’ thinking
at this time and leave them more prone to dangerous acts. Thus, while the individuation
process is generally deemed a critical component of adolescence, it is still incumbent
upon parents to provide and enforce parameters within which their children may develop
(Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992)

*Parental Behavioral Control and Parental Monitoring*

A number of different conceptualizations of parental control have been posited by
researchers (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). For example, while some have examined
restrictiveness (Baumrind & Black, 1967), others have looked at overprotection (Parker,
Tupling, & Brown, 1979) or direct/conventional, assertive, and supportive control
(Baumrind, 1991). Thus, the results of empirical studies regarding control have been
mixed, potentially due to the lack of clarity on the construct (Barber, Olsen, & Shagle,
1994). Barber and colleagues (1994) laid forth two primary components of control:
psychological and behavioral. Psychological control is evidenced by families’ attempts
to prevent children from individuating from other family members through the use of
manipulation, possessiveness, and stifling of opinions and desires. This is primarily seen
as harmful given the importance of children’s attempts to establish their own identities
(Erikson, 1968). Behavioral control encompasses parents’ efforts to restrict children’s
daily activities with rules, regulations and monitoring in order to provide safe boundaries
in which behavioral autonomy may develop. Consequently, deficits in parents’ ability
to engage in these activities are thought to be a risk factor for children’s externalizing
problems (Barber et al., 1994). In fact, in their general theory of crime, Gottfredson and
Hirschi (1990) place central importance on these parenting practices. In their view,
criminal nature is evenly distributed through the population. Further, the acting out of
deviant behavior (e.g., shoplifting, drinking, unprotected sexual activity, etc.) results in
immediate gratification (Pratt & Cullen, 2000). Thus, they propose, it is only through
parenting practices that instill self-control through monitoring and discipline that criminal
behavior is averted. All other factors thought to be related to criminal behavior beyond
this instilment of self-control (e.g., deviant peers, poor attachment to parents,
neighborhood factors, etc.) are deemed spurious (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Empirical studies have born out the importance of behavioral control as measured
through the use of parental monitoring. Dishion and McMahon (1998) describe the
purpose of monitoring as “to facilitate parental awareness of the child’s activities and to
communicate to the child that the parent is concerned about, and aware of, the child’s
activities” (p.65). Ary and colleagues (1999) declare that parental monitoring appears to
be “critical” in the prevention of problem behavior. Low levels of monitoring of
adolescents has been associated with a host of problem behaviors such as increases over
one year in adolescents’ alcohol use (Barnes, Hoffman, Welte, Farrell, & Dintcheff,
2006), early sexual activity (Wight, Williamson, & Henderson, 2006), aggression
(Graber, Nichols, Lynne, Brooks-Gunn, & Botvin, 2006), and delinquency generally
(Loeber & Dishion, 1983), as well higher levels, cross-sectionally, of drug sales (Little &
Steinberg, 2006) and gambling (Magoon & Ingersoll, 2006).
Still, findings are not always this robust. Smith and Krohn (1995) found an association of low parental control and poor monitoring with delinquency; however, these predictors accounted for very little of delinquency’s variance. Gray-Ray and Ray (1990) found no relation between monitoring and delinquency among African American male adolescents; however, in this study, monitoring was assessed with a single, somewhat confusingly worded question (i.e., “is parents’ not providing good supervision and control a problem for you?”). Aseltine (1995), in a three year study of 435 predominately European American high school students, found relatively weak relations of parental supervision and attachment to delinquency and marijuana use, but more substantial associations between peer influences and these outcomes. Finally, Weaver and Prelow (2005) determined that parental “demandingness” was not associated with problem behaviors or deviant peers. This construct, though, appeared to be more closely related to a domineering parenting style (e.g., parents’ rules must be followed) than the concern for adolescent well-being typically associated with parental behavioral control.

While numerous studies have linked parental monitoring strategies to externalizing difficulties in young people, far fewer have examined potential links with internalizing symptoms. Parents’ efforts to be aware of their children’s activities, whereabouts and companionship can be thought to stem from affection and a desire to protect their children (Simons et al., 2005). Thus, low levels may very well convey the opposite—that parents are not concerned about their children. When young people realize this fundamental message, they may experience feelings of sadness and anxiety at being left to fend for themselves. Yet this possibility has gone virtually unexplored in the literature. The evidence that does exist seems to support a link. A study of 752 low
income, Bahamian youth determined that those exhibiting symptoms of depression perceived significantly lower levels of parental monitoring than nondepressed young people (Yu, Clemens, Yang, Li, Stanton et al., 2006). However, given the cross-sectional nature of the study, it cannot be determined if the perception leads to more depressive symptoms or whether symptoms associated with depression (e.g., feelings of isolation and worthlessness) lead children to perceive less monitoring. Barber and colleagues (1994) found a significant negative association between behavioral control and internalizing symptoms. These results, though, were found in a suburban European American sample using cross-sectional data, which again leave the direction of effects uncertain. In a sample of 6 to 12 year old urban African American children, Klein & Forehand (2000) found no direct effect of parental monitoring on internalizing distress. However, monitoring did serve as a moderator of the relation between risk factors and children’s self-reported depressive mood such that risk factors were linked to depressive symptoms only in families who employed low levels of monitoring.

Alternatively, excessively high parental monitoring and control, when it is developmentally appropriate to gain more autonomy, is theorized to lead to decreased self-efficacy and, in turn, higher levels of anxiety (Wood, 2006). In the same vein, others speculate that when parents provide increasing levels of autonomy to young people to explore their environments, children become more confident in themselves and, thus, less anxious (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). In fact, a recent meta-analysis confirms a link between high levels of control and childhood anxiety (McLeod, Wood, & Weisz, 2007). Thus, moderate levels of control may be best and this study will employ curvilinear analyses to examine the relations between control and internalizing outcomes.
While a lack of parental monitoring is often linked to undersocialized behavior, among European American adolescents, difficulties are thought to stem from very high rates of control. This can be attributed, in part, to the fact that appropriate levels of behavioral control are generally thought to decrease with age (Mason, Walker-Barns, Tu, Simons, & Martinez-Arrue, 2004). Children are thought to need parents to step forward and closely regulate the time children spend alone or the types of peers with whom they associate. Still, exerting too much control inhibits the development of autonomy which is important for the establishment of self-control (Steinberg, 1990). Kurdek & Fine (1994) determined that while behavioral supervision was helpful in a population of European American 5th and 6th grade children at moderate levels, high levels of such control had no effect on grades and drug use.

African American parents have been thought by some to employ especially high levels of control of their children. Several studies have demonstrated higher rates of control among African American families (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987). Brody and Flor (1998) examined 156 6-12 year old African Americans and their single parents in an impoverished rural community. They found a parenting style composed of high levels of parent control, that incorporated using physical discipline in the context of demonstration of warmth, and characterized it as “no nonsense” parenting. The authors noted that while the greater control by parents could be conceived by members of some cultures as harsh or even rejecting, among African
Evidence exists that indicates that cultural differences may play an important role in parenting behaviors. Thomas (2000) found that African American’s racial identity influenced a host of parenting behaviors. Researchers have found particular import placed in harmony and communalism within African American families (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Garcia Toll et al., 1996). Simultaneously, researchers have also pointed to more hierarchical family structures among African Americans (Lanborn, Dornbusch, & Steinberg, 1996). This combination may lead to greater general acceptance by parents and children of a “stricter” parenting style that preserves parents’ places as head of the family, while maintaining order. When parental control was assessed in terms of unilateral parent, unilateral child and joint decision making, African American children in families across a range of SES groups benefited from unilateral parent decision making; European American youth, on the other hand, did not benefit from parent unilateral decision making, regardless of SES (Lamborn et al., 1996). McLloyd (1990) found that inner-city minority parents are generally more inclined to employ strategies that foster obedience and self-reliance. In one examination of inner-city African American young adolescents, researchers found that males and older youth were typically monitored less than females and younger youth (Richards, Miller, O’Donnell, Wasserman, & Colder, 2004). Richards and colleagues hypothesized that these differences may, in part, account for the greater levels of problem behavior that they also found among males than females. Smith and Krohn (1995) determined that parental control was more strongly associated
with lower levels of delinquency in African American than Latino early adolescent males in an urban setting. Further, they found that parental control mediated the relation between family process variables (such as parent-child attachment) and delinquency for African Americans and European Americans. For Latino adolescents on the other hand, parental involvement, not parental control, mediated this relation. However, African American parents were actually more autonomy granting and less controlling than Latino parents in another study of 10-15 year olds and their parents (Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1996). These studies appear to demonstrate the particularly beneficial impact of behavioral control and monitoring on adolescent outcomes among African American families.

Examination of cultural differences in behavioral control has extended into disciplinary practices among African American families. In a large nationwide study of attitudes towards corporal punishment, Flynn (1994) found that 8.8% of African American respondents opposed spanking, versus 22.2% of European American. In a study of middle class African American families, Bradley (1998) determined that parents favored nonphysical forms of punishment. In fact, “discuss matter” was the most commonly selected choice of responses to children’s misbehavior. Still, “order child not to” was a prevalent choice in the sample and more reflective of an authoritarian parenting style. Only when children acted in direct defiance of their parents did the parents endorse spanking as acceptable.

When physical punishment is used among African American families there is mixed evidence as to whether it has negative effects. Several studies have noted the lack
of association between nonabusive physical punishment and child externalizing difficulties in African American households, even while the relation exists for European Americans (Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1996; Gunnoe & Marriner, 1997). Deater-Deckard and colleagues (1996) speculated that African American children may not interpret this type of discipline as indicating a lack of warmth or concern and therefore may not exhibit externalizing behavior in response. In a sample of non-urban African American families a positive association existed between corporal punishment and child behavior problems only when such methods were not commonly used in the community. In neighborhoods where it was more prevalent, no relation existed, suggesting that children may not act out in response to harsher discipline when they perceive it to be commonplace in the community in which the family lives (Simons, Lin, Gordon, Brody, Murray, & Conger, 2002). However, a more recent study determined that an “exacerbating effect” of physical punishment existed for both African American and European American children (Lau, Litrownik, Newton, Black & Everson, 2006). Specifically, when young children already exhibited elevated externalizing, physical punishment was predictive of escalation of the problem behavior.

Parental Monitoring and SES/Neighborhood

The use and effectiveness of different parenting styles may also be a function of the environment in which families live. In her qualitative review of parenting strategies of African American youth in high crime, urban areas, Jarrett (1999) identified youth monitoring strategies as critical in promoting “conventional adolescent development.” In order to prevent children from succumbing to the many risks prevalent in their
communities, “effective parents…impose curfews and tight supervision, demanding to know their children’s whereabouts at all times” (p.46, Jarrett, 1999). Similarly, Furstenburg (1993) maintains that restrictive parenting is beneficial in neighborhoods where concerns about safety surpass desire for adolescent autonomy. Thus, he contends that this parenting emphasis may not only serve as a mediator between dangerous neighborhoods and child outcome, but also as a moderator in which higher levels of monitoring in these environments are most protective. In a study of residential mobility, when parents moved from low income neighborhoods to middle income communities they monitored their adolescents less than parents who remained in the old neighborhood (Briggs, 1997). This may have reflected lesser need for monitoring in potentially safer environments. In an analysis of the factor structure of a parenting scale in African American families who lived in low-income urban areas, parents reported higher amounts of over-reactivity and lower levels of laxness as compared to African American parents living in a rural area (Steele, Nesbitt-Daly, Daniel, & Forehand, 2005).

Empirical studies reveal that when in high-risk, urban areas, African American parents who maintain tighter control over their children appear to obtain beneficial outcomes (Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman, & Mason, 1996). Greater child competence was found in families that live in high-risk environments when high levels of control were used, while youth living in lower risk environments benefited most from lower levels of parental control (Baldwin, Baldwin, & Cole, 1990). McCabe, Clark, and Barnett (1999) determined that high parental demand of children was associated with the least amount of teacher reported externalizing behavior when children’s families exhibited a large
number of SES risk factors. In essence, those parents who reliably set unyielding limits when living with greater numbers of family stressors had children with lower levels of problem behaviors than such parents without these disadvantages.

Economic well being and perception of such standing have been examined extensively in relation to difficulty in parenting. Many studies demonstrate that financial strain is indirectly linked to both children’s (e.g., Jackson, Brooks-Gunn, Huang, & Glassman, 2000) and adolescents’ (McLoyd et al., 1994) well being through its effect on parenting. One study of African American and Latino elementary school children from single, mother-headed households determined that perceived economic hardship hindered mothers’ psychological well-being (Mistry, Vandewater, Huston, & McLoyd, 2002). Those mothers who experienced this distress felt less capable in disciplining and had children who exhibited more problem behavior. On the other hand, although examining a slightly different construct, Brody and Flor (1998) did not find a hypothesized association between parent perceptions of the adequacy of their financial resources and parental control in a primarily impoverished, rural sample of African Americans.

Studies on the impact of neighborhood on parenting have not always demonstrated a direct, linear relation between SES and levels or effectiveness of monitoring. Lamborn and colleagues (1996) determined that unilateral parental control (a proxy for less democratic, potentially stricter parenting) actually benefited African American youth regardless of SES. In contrast, Mason and colleagues (1996) found a curvilinear relation between behavioral control and adolescent misconduct. Mason et al. used the phrase “precision parenting” to describe how parents in an urban setting must
walk a delicate line between protecting their children from danger and stifling them.

When examining the relation between neighborhood characteristics and parenting practices among low income, African American 10-12 year olds, Simons and colleagues (2002) found an “evaporation effect” for parental control. Specifically, control was related to conduct problems across neighborhoods; however, when the rates of crime and other delinquent behaviors were high in communities, parental control was less effective in decreasing problem behavior. This finding is similar to Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker’s (2000) conceptualization of a “vulnerable-stable” moderating effect for parental control.

One prominent conceptualization of the relation between neighborhood, parenting, and child outcome is social disorganization theory. It holds that in low income communities, parental control may be less prevalent and effective than in areas with greater resources. Additionally, impoverished communities are believed to have less active participation in community organizations and narrower friendship networks (Sampson & Groves, 1989). The confluence of these factors “impedes the development of informal social control networks and consensus regarding norms and standards for youth behavior” (Brody et al., 2001, p. 1232). Thus, adults across the neighborhood will be less likely to supervise and monitor the youth in their community (Brody et al., 2001). This lack of collective control over young people has been associated with higher rates of crime and delinquency (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999). Additionally, social disorganization theory posits that the stressful experiences associated with resource deprivation (e.g., violence and crime) hinder adults’ abilities to parent effectively (Sampson & Laub, 1994).
Empirical support can be found for social disorganization theory. One study deliberately tested several of the tenets of social disorganization theory in a sample of European American and Mexican American 4th through 6th grade students and their families (Deng, Lopez, Roosa, Ryu, Burrell, et al. 2005). They determined that families residing in impoverished neighborhoods exhibited not only less collective efficacy with neighbors, but also less cohesion between family members. The lack of family cohesion, in turn, was associated with higher levels of internalizing distress for girls, though not boys. Similarly, Deng and colleagues found that perceived neighborhood quality mediated a relation between neighborhood disadvantage and parent-child conflict. Parent-child conflict was also linked to child internalizing; however, in these analyses, parents reported both conflict and internalizing, and parents’ report of parent-child conflict was not related to children’s report of internalizing. Child report of internalizing was linked to child report of parent-child conflict, but not linked to any of the neighborhood level variables.

Links can also be found between neighborhood disadvantage and supervision that are line with social disorganization theory. Sampson and Laub (1994), in a study of white male adolescents, found monitoring to be a mediator between poverty and delinquency. Specifically, greater poverty was linked to less effective monitoring which then was tied to adolescent delinquency. In a natural experiment among Native Americans, supervision served as the lone mediator, among a number of potential mediators tested, between poverty level and children’s externalizing behavior (Costello, Compton, Keeler, & Angold, 2003). In other words, Costello and colleagues found that as a subset of parents within the population rose out of poverty, they provided more
adequate supervision which, in turn, was linked to fewer symptoms of behavior disorders among their children. Rankin & Quane (2002) similarly found that parental monitoring was higher in urban neighborhoods that evidenced more collective efficacy, suggesting that parents alter their parenting style to fit in with neighborhood standards. However, in contrast to the “evaporation effect” mentioned earlier, Rankin and Quane found that monitoring was more effective in reducing problem behavior in neighborhoods with less collective efficacy and where other adults could not be relied upon as much.

**Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger**

Given the mixed evidence of how neighborhoods affect the type of parenting styles used, there may be another, more proximal determinant of parental monitoring: perception of neighborhood danger. One might expect that, within dangerous neighborhoods, parent perception of crime and safety are actually what drives the parents’ efforts to exert more or less control over children. While Jarrett’s (1999) qualitative observations indicate that good parents realize the dangers inherent in their neighborhood and react accordingly, empirical research examining the effect of parental perception of neighborhood danger on behavioral control and monitoring is sparse. Although not examined adequately to date, it may be that parents in high crime areas who are more attuned to the hazards in their neighborhoods have adolescents who are less apt to act out or feel distress due to their parents’ greater efforts to protect them from the danger. Conversely, parents who live in these same communities, but are not as cognizant of the threats around them, may be more likely to have adolescents who are more distressed, since they are less apt to try to protect their children. One study of low income urban African American single parent families determined that greater perception
of neighborhood violence was related to increases in monitoring over one year (Jones, Forehand, O’Connell, Armistead, & Brody, 2005). Further, the authors discovered that monitoring was even greater when mothers perceived more social support. However, the authors’ model did not include how parenting behavior related to child outcomes. Interestingly, Taylor (2000), in the only other known study that examines these variables, determined that mothers’ perceptions of neighborhood physical decay, but not of neighborhood crime, were linked to exertion of more firm control over adolescents. Also, the relation between parents’ perceptions of neighborhood and adolescent adjustment was not mediated by parenting behaviors. It should be noted that Taylor’s sample of African American young people was drawn from communities that were somewhat heterogeneous with regard to SES; therefore, they may not have had crime rates as substantial as families in primarily impoverished communities must face.

The current study examines Jarret’s (1999) explicit assumption that perception of danger drives efforts to monitor their children. Additionally, it tests linear and curvilinear relations of parental monitoring to externalizing and internalizing distress.

Youth and Exposure to Community Violence

The literature on urban African American adolescents’ experience of their neighborhoods has focused on their exposure to community violence. Young people in urban, low-income communities have been shown to be more at risk for violence exposure than other populations (Campbell & Schwartz, 1996; Gladstein, 1992). Singer, Aglin, Song, and Lunghofer (1995) reported that the most serious community violence exposure (both witnessing and victimization) was reported in large cities’ schools, followed by small-cities’ schools, then suburban schools. Campbell and Schwartz (1996)
examined prevalence rates of violence exposure in a suburban, primarily Caucasian school and an urban, primarily African-American school, in Philadelphia. They found that more preadolescent inner-city children than suburban children had witnessed someone get stabbed (55% vs. 13%), shot (47% vs. 8%), and killed (22% vs. 3%). Further, more students had been stabbed or shot in the urban school (24%) than in the suburban school (7%).

Over the years a compelling body of evidence has been gathered as to the negative psychological effects of exposure to community violence. Exposure to violence among urban adolescents has been linked to symptoms of depression and anxiety in urban young people age 7 to 15 (Cooley-Quille, Boyd, Frantz, & Walsh, 2001; Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Martinez & Richter, 1993; Mazza & Reynolds, 1999). In addition, it has been linked to symptoms of PTSD (Berton & Stab, 1996; Overstreet & Braun, 2000), externalizing symptoms (McCabe, Lucchini, Hough, Yeh, & Hazen, 2006; Scarpa & Hayden, 2006), and poorer academic functioning (Schwartz & Gorman, 2003). Overstreet and Braun (2000) further clarified the link between exposure to community violence and PTSD by demonstrating that family conflict and youth perceptions of safety served as mediators for the relationship.

The overall findings regarding exposure to community violence have become incontestable. Young people in impoverished, urban communities witness and become victimized by violence at an alarming rate. This violence is often unavoidable as it can occur in the middle of the day on the way to or from school and in parks where young people play or on street corners at the end of the blocks from their home. Researchers also now have a better understanding of the myriad ways that children’s psychological
health is impacted by this tragic problem. This research has broadened over the past decade to take into account how parent and peer factors can both serve to mitigate and exacerbate the harmful effects of exposure to violence (e.g., Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Tolan, 2004; Ozer & Weinstein, 2004; Rosario, Salzinger, Feldman, & Ng-Mak, 2008). Yet this research is typically based upon young peoples’ report of the type and frequency of violence to which they were exposed. This tally of experience does not capture the way that youth view and interpret their surroundings. The extent to which young people perceive their surroundings to be fundamentally unsafe and unpredictable may also have a large impact on their own mental health and the way that they respond to their parents’ caretaking efforts.

*Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger*

Young people’s views of their neighborhood have been examined in the literature, but to a lesser extent than parents’ perceptions and youths’ exposure to violence. Specifically, several studies have examined how adolescent perceptions are related to their health related behaviors and expectations. Perception of violence and drug activity in the neighborhood among 7th grade African American students was related to increased tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use in 9th grade (Lambert, Brown, Philips, & Ialongo, 2004). Perception of neighborhood violence was also significantly correlated with engagement in less physical activity in a sample of urban African American 9th grade girls; however, when entered into a regression equation with two factors that are likely more proximally related (i.e., family involvement in activities and family support), perception of neighborhood violence was no longer significant (Kuo, Voorhees, & Haythorhtwaite, 2007). Finally, urban adolescents’ perceptions of neighborhood quality
(e.g., vandalism, unemployment and drug use) were associated with their expectations of educational attainment and occupational success, but not personal expectations (e.g., being proud of oneself) (Mello & Swanson, 2007).

Living in dangerous communities also forces young people to be more vigilant in the community than they would otherwise need to be. In one sample of 1775 primarily African American urban adolescents living in an urban area, 85% of the young people had taken some kind of defensive action in their daily routines (Williams, Singh, & Singh, 1994). The most common action taken was not walking alone at night. Also, individuals whose perceived safety was lower were more likely to have learned some form of self-defense. Studies of African American urban adolescents have also determined that students who felt unsafe in their neighborhoods were more likely to carry a weapon for protection, get into physical fights, and be involved with the police (Dowdell, 2006; Howard, Kaljee, & Jackson, 2002). Lane, Cunningham and Ellen (2004) examined explicitly the fear of victimization among African American adolescents who live in dangerous neighborhoods and found that it was related to the intention to carry a gun, but not the intention to carry a knife. This fear of victimization makes sense given the potential for experiencing negative events in these urban communities. In a sample of urban Italian adolescents, negative neighborhood experiences were strongly related to feeling unsafe (Zani, Cicognani, & Albanesi, 2001). This was the case even though the items measuring negative experiences were somewhat benign (e.g., “realizing a stranger is staring at you,” “being alone in a dangerous place,” “being provoked by an older adolescent”) compared to what urban African Americans can face in the United States (e.g., gang activity, violence).
The abovementioned studies, though, examine the direct effects of perceptions either of their neighborhoods or of violence within their neighborhoods. They reveal that these perceptions of their neighborhoods appear to be important with regard to health and coping related behaviors as well as perceptions of the future. Also, viewing surroundings as dangerous is linked to young people’s desire to protect themselves in ways that are potentially counterproductive (e.g., carrying a weapon and getting into fights). Still, these perceptions have not been studied as moderators of the effects parenting behaviors on internalizing and externalizing distress. Thus, this paper will examine the role of child perception of neighborhood danger as a moderator of the effect of parental warmth on childhood well-being. Specifically, it will examine whether higher levels of child perception of neighborhood danger dampens the protection that warmth might provide against externalizing and internalizing distress. In addition, the existing literature does not take into account how children’s and parents’ perceptions of neighborhood danger might combine to affect child outcome. Young people’s perception of danger in high crime areas may very well affect how they react to parenting behavior aimed at protecting them from these hazards. This paper, therefore, will also examine how child agreement with parent perception of high levels of neighborhood danger may mitigate the potentially rebellious reaction to more extreme parent control.

*Parental Warmth and its Effects*

Warmth typically refers to the emotional atmosphere created by the caregiver. It “includes a mother’s responsiveness to her child’s needs, sensitivity to her child’s signals, [and] shared expressions of positive emotions and praise” (p. 143, Weis, 2002). This responsiveness has its origins in the first moments of life when the baby is completely
helpless and dependent upon the caregiver for all needs. Bowlby’s (1969) ethological-evolutionary attachment perspective holds that many species, including humans, have instinctive behaviors (e.g., crying) that draw the caregiver into close physical proximity and form an attachment. These behaviors are shaped over generations to insure that the caregiver figure is nearby to ward off danger and increase chances of survival of the species. It is the caregivers’ role to respond to these signals. Mary Ainsworth’s work appeared to support this. In examining parent-child relationships, Bell and Ainsworth (1972) noted that the contingency with which caregivers provided comfort in response to their infants’ signs of need led to secure attachments with caregivers and less child crying at the end of a year.

Others have looked at warmth as distinct from this type of attachment. After surveying the evolutionary literature, MacDonald (1992) concluded that warmth and affection in humans evolved as an independent system of motivation, which was distinct from the process of attachment that prevents harm or loss described by Bowlby. Rather than simply a behavioral contingency system at play, warmth appears to have its own separate mechanisms in a different affective system. He cites research (Panskepp, 1989) that demonstrates that opioid systems in the brain (responsible for feelings of pleasure) lie beneath the emotions of support and separation. Warmth, then, provides positive social reward that drives parent and child behavior over the course of their relationship (MacDonald, 1992). Indeed, Paulson, Hill and Holmbeck (1991) note that warmth can be understood as the degree to which “a positive, benevolent attitude permeates childrearing” and entails several beneficial components such as self-disclosure, expression of affection, and closeness (p. 277).
As young people develop through childhood, parental warmth is thought to play a crucial role in their socialization. Theoretical literature regarding the development of morality proposes that parental warmth promotes a concern for others because it provides the child with feelings of safety, control, and trust in surroundings that diminish worry about the self and leave space for concern for others (Radke-Yarrow, Zahn-Waxler, & Chapman, 1983). A recent 26 year prospective study among European Americans supports a link between parental warmth and feelings of wellbeing as parental warmth provided at age 5 was tied to fewer concerns about security at age 31, even when controlling for gender, and previous and concurrent SES (Kasser, Koestner, & Lekes, 2002). One longitudinal study of European American youth from second through seventh grade found a relation between observations of parental warmth and child empathy that was mediated by parents’ expressivity of positive emotions. In addition, warm and supportive parents are thought to increase the chances of children seeking more intimacy in their friendships and, thus, developing warm friendships (McDonald, 1992; Youngblade & Belsky, 1992). Finally, parental warmth is associated with better feelings about the self. College students who reported higher levels of warmth and nurturance in childhood endorsed higher levels of self-esteem, both explicit (i.e., conscious, more regulated views) and implicit (i.e., unconscious, largely unrestrained appraisals) (DeHart, Pelham, & Tennen, 2006).

Unlike parental control, which many theorize should diminish as the child moves through adolescence towards adulthood, warmth is thought not to need to change with time (Holmebeck, Paikoff, & Brooks-Gunn, 1995). As pubertal changes peak, however, researchers typically find less emotional closeness between parents and children than in
previous years (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Over the course of adolescence, while the rate of conflict between adolescent and parent decreases, the intensity of the affect of conflict increases (Laursen, Coy, & Collins 1998). Still, empirical research does not always reveal major breaks in warmth within parent-adolescent relationships. For example, in a sample of 4677 adolescents of European American, African American and Latino descent, Baer (2002) found only very slight decreases in overall family cohesion from 6th to 10th grades, which she deemed likely non-substantive.

The provision of warmth by parents has been shown to be effective in warding off child externalizing behavior. Research has shown that hostility and communication problems between European American mothers and their adolescents have adverse affects on child functioning (Conger et al., 1994). A long history of research traces the negative effects of lack of parental warmth on child aggressiveness (Olweus, 1980). Recent work revealed an interaction such that genetic influence on child antisocial behavior was greater when parenting was less warm (Feinberg, Button, Neiderhiser Reiss, & Hetherington, 2007). Vazsonyi, Pickering and Bolland (2006) examined separately early, middle, and late adolescent low-income, urban African Americans. They found that parental warmth (as well as consistent disciplinary practices) accounted for a significant amount of the variance in both health compromising behaviors and violence perpetration for each adolescent subgroup. Among African American lower income adolescent males, parental support moderated the relation between racial discrimination and violent delinquency (Simons, Simons, Burt, Drummond, Stewart et al., 2006). Their analyses suggested that the support lessened the anger associated with
discrimination as well as the potentially hostile views of the intentions of others which stem from such mistreatment.

Responsive parenting has been shown to protect against internalizing, as well. Yu and colleagues (2006) found impaired communication between parent and child was associated with higher rates of depressive symptoms. In a sample of African American 6th grade students and their parents, parental warmth was associated with lower levels of teacher reported shyness, sadness, anxiety and withdrawal (McCabe, Clarke, & Barnett, 1999). Interestingly, however, warmth showed no relation to acting out behavior in this sample. Taylor (2004) found an association between communication problems and internalizing distress for African American males, but not females. Anxiety, specifically, may be less affected by supportive parenting. In a recent meta-analysis, parental warmth had a very small effect (less than 1% of the variance) on childhood anxiety (McLeod, Wood, & Weisz, 2007). In fact, a large scale twin study revealed that approximately 50% of anxiety symptoms could be attributed to genetics, while roughly 30% were linked to non-shared environmental factors (e.g., perinatal complications and relationships with peers) (Eley et al., 2003). However, Eley and colleagues’ study assessed preschool aged children who have had significantly less time to be socialized by their parents. As such, as these children experience more parenting over time the proportion of anxiety attributable to the environment may increase by adolescence.

*Parental Warmth and Culture*

There is some debate within the literature as to whether or not African American parents display less warmth towards their children than do European American parents. Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn and Duncan (1994) found that African American parents were
significantly less warm towards their preschoolers than European American and Latino parents. In a comparison of African American and European American adolescent mothers of infants, African American mothers were more apt to believe that a great deal of praise and affection spoils children (Reis, 1993). In contrast, in attempts to create a typology of parenting within African American low-income urban families, several researchers found comparable conceptions of warmth and responsiveness in the sample to those found in middle-class European American samples (Weis, 2002). Dodge and colleagues (1994) found no difference between European American and African American parents with regard to provision of warmth once they controlled SES. Thus, the authors speculated that differences in parental warmth are actually an artifact of financial strain and stressors found disproportionately in African American families.

Social scientists have also examined the possibility of differential effects of parental warmth for African American versus other races/ethnicities. Smith and Krohn (1995) found that while attachment between parents and adolescent males was directly associated with greater problem behavior in African American and European American adolescent males, it was unrelated for Latino adolescent males. Some studies have viewed the effects of parental warmth in the context of families that use physical discipline. For these families, among African American adolescents, parental warmth did not reduce externalizing behavior; in fact, it was even harmful for children with higher baseline problem behavior (Lau, Litrownik, Newton, Black, & Everson, 2006). For European American adolescents, though, warmth was protective in families that used physical discipline (Lau et al., 2006). These authors concluded that it may be that warmth is most adaptively provided directly in response to positive behavior among
African American parents, rather than a more broad-based provision (which they had measured). Further, they noted the possibility that the authors did not adequately measure an African American construct of warmth. On the other hand, Amato and Fowler (2002) attempted to find differential effects of parental support on adjustment, grades and behavior problems among African American, European American and Latino families. They found no significant differences among ethnicities for children (age 5-11) or adolescents (age 12-18).

*Parental Warmth and SES/Neighborhood*

As mentioned earlier, lower SES is thought to potentially affect the amount of warmth that parents provide to their children. McLoyd (1990) describes how financial difficulties create hardship among parents and children. She posits that the psychological distress caused by daily stressors such as single parenthood, neighborhood violence, inability to pay bills, etc. adversely affects parents ability to be sensitive and responsive in their parenting. In ethnographic work, Furstenburg (1993) observed less parental warmth in impoverished and dangerous communities, but determined that, when present, it helps protect children from such environments.

Among families with younger children, some of the effect of SES on warmth has been demonstrated empirically to flow from financial struggle through parent perception of hardship and psychological distress. Lower SES has been associated with less parent-child communication in several studies (Bradley & Corwin, 2002; McLoyd, 1998). Mistry et al. (2002) found that parents’ perceived hardship was indirectly related to teachers’ view of children (age 5-12) as less socially competent and more apt to engage in problem behaviors through less parental warmth and affection towards their children.
In a sample of 585 young European American children (preschool-3rd grade), Dodge, Pettit and Bates (1994) tested parental warmth, among 7 other potentially important parenting variables, and determined that it helped to mediate the relation between economic hardship and teacher rated externalizing. However, when the authors separated the effects by gender, the relation between SES and parental warmth was significant for girls, but not boys. Roosa and colleagues (2005) did not find a hypothesized relation between family economic hardship and child report of stress, among low-income 4th through 6th grade students and their families. They speculated, though, that a link would more likely have been found between neighborhood level poverty and child stress in their sample because the neighborhoods in which they lived were impoverished enough that resources and opportunities available to students were limited, regardless of family economic condition. Consistent with this proposition, in one study of preschoolers and their parents, although family poverty was not related to maternal warmth, neighborhood level poverty (fraction of families with incomes below $10,000) was associated with it (Klebanov et al., 1994). The authors speculated that in more dangerous neighborhoods less warmth could be seen as adaptive as mothers must insure their children are prepared for a harsher environment. Alternatively, they suggest that in the face of danger, mothers may exude less warmth overall (to community members or family) and that this may, in fact, be adaptive in that it prevents them from being vulnerable and thus keeps them safe.

Links between lower SES, parental warmth and childhood distress have also been uncovered among adolescents. Lempers, Clarke-Lempers and Simons (1989) observed an indirect effect of financial hardship on European American adolescents’ feelings of loneliness and depression through declines in parents’ nurturing. A complex theoretical
model was tested and found to fit in an urban African American adolescent sample that followed from lower income to financial and neighborhood strain (Gutman, McLoyd, & Tokoyama, 2005). This stress, in turn, was associated with more parent psychological distress which was related to fewer positive and more negative interactions, which was tied to child’s internalizing distress; however, negative interactions were detrimental to males’, but not females’, internalizing. Any causative statements regarding these relations must be made tentatively as they were tested in cross-sectional data. Finally, in a study of European American adolescents and their parents, higher SES (parent education and income) predicted higher levels of supportive behavior towards their adolescents which, in turn, was associated with their children’s more supportive behavior towards a close friend four years later (Cui, Conger, Bryant & Elder, 2002).

Although studies have examined parent financial hardship, no known studies to date have examined child perception of neighborhood danger in relation to the effects of parental warmth on children. This study looks at the effects of parental warmth on externalizing and internalizing distress and the effects of child perception of neighborhood danger on this relation.

**Parental Monitoring vs. Parental Warmth**

While parental monitoring has been thought to be effective in curbing acting out behavior, recently several studies have placed an emphasis on the parent child relationship as potentially being a more important factor in these efforts. The majority of the extant literature indicates that parental monitoring is more strongly associated with problem behavior than warmth, while warmth is more closely linked to psychosocial development and internalizing distress (Fletcher, Steinberg, & Williams-Wheeler, 2004).
Stattin and Kerr (2000) assert that the importance of monitoring is principally due to the knowledge gained about the child’s location, company, and actions. In the literature, questions on measures of parental monitoring generally ask about how much parents know about the child’s life. Generally, this information is simply assumed to be derived from parents’ active attempts to determine this information, i.e. “parental monitoring” (for examples see Brown, Mounts, Lamborn, & Steinberg, 1993; Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates, & Criss, 2001). However, in a sample of 702 fourteen year old Swedish children, Stattin and Kerr (2000) determined that children’s reports of unsolicited disclosure of information (e.g., telling parents what they do at night or on weekends, and not keeping secrets from parents about what they do during their free time) provided parents with more information than parents’ own tracking and surveillance of their children. Moreover, child disclosure was more closely associated with measures of delinquency. In additional analyses, parental knowledge was linked to better child adjustment for both genders and, again, child’s disclosure accounted for more of this relation with knowledge than parents’ efforts (Kerr & Stattin, 2000). On a broader scale, parents who are warm and supportive are likely to have children that disclose more to them about their whereabouts and activities (Fletcher et al., 2004). In fact, warmth was highly correlated with disclosure ($r=.70$) in Kerr and Stattin’s own sample. However, Kerr and Stattin did not compare warmth, a broader construct that subsumes this disclosure, to behavioral control as a predictor of child problem behavior.

Several studies have looked at general parental warmth and communication, and parental monitoring in association with adolescent externalizing behavior. Studies in the
field of criminology with European American samples have shown that parental control is more effective with the addition of warmth and support in controlling externalizing behavior (Hays, 2001; Wright & Cullen, 2001). Fletcher and colleagues (2004) attempted to further examine Stattin and Kerr’s (2000) conclusions in two samples (totaling 2568) of predominantly middle and upper class European American adolescents. They separated measures of parental monitoring (parents’ efforts to obtain information), parental warmth (parents’ behavior reflecting warmth and engagement) and parental control (decisions made by parents versus adolescents). They then tested several models using these measures to predict delinquency. Fletcher and colleagues determined that parental monitoring and warmth both contributed to children’s report of how much knowledge parents really have about their activities. This knowledge was, in turn, related to both substance abuse and delinquency. However, they did not find that warmth had a stronger relation to knowledge than monitoring, as Stattin and Kerr found that disclosure did. In another study involving four samples of low income African American and Latino 14-16 year olds, when monitoring and general communication (not linked specifically to disclosure about activities) were examined simultaneously in regression equations as predictors of adolescent deviant behavior, only monitoring proved to be significantly related (Forehand, Miller, Dutra, & Chance, 1997). However, the authors of the study noted that in three of these four samples degree of communication did show significant bivariate correlations with problem behavior.

This paper aims to compare parental warmth to parents’ efforts at monitoring with regard to child externalizing. This will help to determine whether Stattin and Kerr’s (2000) findings (i.e., that parents’ warmth and subsequent increased disclosure of
children is more helpful in preventing adolescent problem behavior than parents’ monitoring strategies) remain true for families in high crime urban neighborhoods with their related dangers.

*Experience Sampling Method*

The Experience Sampling Method (ESM) allows for a novel approach to measuring psychological distress. Questionnaire report is certainly valuable in obtaining information about human experience, but it is also beset with potential flaws which could taint the accuracy of the information provided. In a review of a number of popular questionnaires assessing psychopathology, one study noted in each measure the likely possibility of state-bias: the tendency to have one’s current good mood generate more positive responses and bad mood produce more negative responses about the past (Blount, Evans, Birch, Warren, & Norton, 2002). Questionnaire report also runs the risk of being inaccurate due to response sets, like efforts to present oneself in a positive light (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Yet one commonality among all of the methodologies of the studies mentioned thus far in the literature is the preponderance of questionnaire reports, with the infrequent addition of interview and behavioral observation. Time sampling methodologies address many of the concerns about retrospective reports by gathering information within the course of subjects’ daily lives, thereby providing an ecologically valid way of obtaining data. Gershuny (2004) notes that time sampling techniques, which ask for immediate notation of feelings, eliminate the reporting of “affect-at-a-distance” that grows as the period of recall increases. The ESM technique, a time sampling method, involves respondents briefly recording a
number of different components of their experience each time they are signaled throughout the course of a week. These responses regarding location, companionship, feelings, etc. are then averaged to get an in vivo account of participants’ daily lives that is unhampered by recall bias. One study comparing ESM to questionnaire report of emotional experiences highlights an important discrepancy. Freeman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Larson (1986) examined the self reports of high school juniors who became seniors. A large majority of participants reported greater levels of happiness as seniors in questionnaire report than during their junior year, even though ESM reports from both years indicated no change in daily experience of happiness.

In previous studies, ESM has allowed researchers to help elucidate a range of research questions. ESM has been employed across topics from affective instability and suicidal ideation in subjects with borderline personality disorder (Links, Eynan, Heisel, Barr, Korzekwa et al., 2007) to the amount of time spent by husbands and wives doing housework (Lee & Waite, 2005). It has also been employed in the study of situations in which anxiety and depression arise in elderly people (Bergua Swendsen, & Bouisson, 2006). More relevantly, it has been used to examine normative adolescent development with regard to companionship in European American (Larson & Richards, 1991) and African American samples (Larson et al., 2001).

ESM has also been employed to examine daily feeling states. It helped elucidate mood across days and weeks, determining that affect is more elevated later in the day than in the mornings and on the weekends than on weekdays (Egloff, Tausch, Kohlmann, & Khrone, 1995). One study examined the emotional experiences of European American
and African American 18 to 94 year olds and determined that age was unrelated to the
experience of positive emotion (Vansteelandt, Van Mechelen, & Nezlek, 2005). In
addition, age showed a curvilinear relation to negative emotion such that negative
emotions declined until age 60, at which time they became level. Another investigation
examined the emotional experiences of European Americans across adolescence (5th
to 12th grade student) and found a slight trend of more negative average emotion
that leveled off by late adolescence (Larson, Moneta, Richards, & Wilson, 2002).

The experience sampling method has been used in several examinations of
psychopathology. For example, one study demonstrated that schizophrenic patients felt
better in smaller groups of 1-3 and most agitated when alone or in large groups (DeVries
& Delespaul, 1989). Other researchers have used ESM to determine how anti-
depressants impact the quality of everyday life among a sample with major depression
(Barge-Schaapveld & Nicolson, 2002). Another study employed ESM to test a
hypothesized link between state anxiety and cannabis use and found no relation between
the two (Tournier, Sorbara, Gindre, Swendsen, Verdoux, 2003). Finally, ESM data have
revealed that suicidal behavior was linked to negative mood intensity, but not reactivity,
dyscontrol or other components of affective instability in a sample with borderline
personality disorder (Links et al., 2007).

In addition to traditional questionnaire report, to capture more ecologically valid
experiences, this study will utilize ESM assessments of adolescent daily emotion states
that are relevant to internalizing and externalizing distress.
This work aims to address several significant gaps in the literature with regard to parenting behavior, perception of neighborhood danger, and child distress. Although parental monitoring appears to benefit adolescents by warding off acting out behavior, it remains unclear whether extreme (versus moderate) monitoring in African American families who reside in more dangerous, urban neighborhoods is effective or counterproductive. Also, the role of parental monitoring has not been studied adequately in relation to internalizing distress, although the few studies available seem to indicate possible benefits. In addition, while family and neighborhood SES, as well as parent perceptions of these variables, have been examined in relation to parenting practices, possible links between parent perceptions of neighborhood danger and parenting behavior, such as parental monitoring, have not been sufficiently explored. Finally, while some research has examined ways that children respond to their perceptions of neighborhood danger, no study to date has examined how these perceptions might temper their reaction to parents’ efforts to monitor them.

Areas of uncertainty also remain in the literature on parental warmth as it relates to children’s perceptions of their neighborhood and in comparison with parental monitoring. The importance of warmth has generally been established in relation to young people’s internalizing and externalizing distress. Additionally, associations have been made between child perceptions of neighborhood danger and poor coping behaviors. Not enough information is known about the effects of child perception of neighborhood danger in relation to parents’ provision of warmth and its effects. Research in a Swedish
sample indicated that the presence of parent-child relationships in which the child feels comfortable disclosing accurate information to parents about their lives is more predictive of decreased acting out behavior than parental monitoring. Yet, the only similar study performed in an urban African American sample found parental behavioral control to be more important than communication in warding off adolescent acting out behavior. Thus, it remains unclear whether parental warmth would have the same impact relative to parental monitoring on adolescent externalizing in a high crime, urban area as found in the European low crime area.

The final critical way in which this study breaks from previous work is through the addition of ESM measures assessing feelings related to internalizing and externalizing distress to questionnaire reports of symptoms of these difficulties. None of the parenting behaviors and perceptions reviewed in the above literature has been studied relative to time sampled reports of adolescents’ daily moods. These reports will provide immediate accounts of daily emotion that are unhampered by recall bias. Using both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses, this study will more clearly elucidate these relations between parental and child perception of neighborhood danger, parental monitoring, parental warmth, and child internalizing and externalizing distress.

In examining these relations, the following hypotheses are proposed. These hypotheses are expected to hold true cross-sectionally and longitudinally, regardless of whether internalizing and externalizing distress are measured by questionnaire or ESM report. The first set of hypotheses pertains to the relations between parent perception of neighborhood danger, parental monitoring, child perception of neighborhood danger, and
child internalizing and externalizing distress. First, parents who are more attuned to the
danger present in their neighborhoods (have greater perception of neighborhood danger)
are expected to have children who experience less distress than those parents who are not
as cognizant of it. Second, parents who perceive more danger in their communities are
expected to monitor their adolescents more closely. Third, parental monitoring is
expected to serve as a mediator of the relation between parent perception of
neighborhood danger and symptoms of externalizing and internalizing distress (Figure 1).
Fourth, parental monitoring is expected to show a curvilinear relation to child
internalizing and externalizing such that control will lead to decreases in distress, except
at the highest levels of monitoring where adolescents are expected to exhibit greater
distress in rebellion against such tight control. Fifth, child perception of neighborhood
danger is expected to moderate the relation between parental monitoring and child
internalizing and externalizing. Specifically, at the highest level of parental monitoring
children will exhibit greater sadness and anxiety as well problem behavior in rebellion,
except when the adolescents perceive especially high danger in their neighborhoods
(Figure 2). These young people who are attuned to the high levels of danger, and who
may then appreciate the need for more protection, will not feel anxious or depressed nor
exhibit externalizing behavior in response to the more extreme monitoring of their
parents.
Figure 1. The hypothesized role of parental monitoring as a mediator of the relation between parent perception of danger and child internalizing and externalizing.

![Diagram](image1)

Figure 2. The hypothesized relation between parental monitoring and child internalizing and externalizing, moderated by child perception of neighborhood danger.

![Diagram](image2)
With regard to parental warmth, it is hypothesized that high levels will be associated with less child psychological distress and behavioral difficulties. Child perception of neighborhood danger, however, will moderate this relation such that at the highest levels of child perception of danger, warmth will be less effective at warding off child distress. In other words, when children feel the most unsafe in their neighborhoods, even very high levels of parental warmth will not protect against children’s internalizing and externalizing (Figure 3). In comparison to parental monitoring, parental warmth will have a stronger impact on internalizing distress. With regard to adolescent acting out behavior, parental warmth and monitoring will both predict less of the problem behavior; however, parental monitoring will have a more substantial relation to this outcome than warmth, given the extreme nature of the environment these young people face.
Figure 3. The hypothesized relation between parental warmth and child internalizing and externalizing distress, moderated by child perception of neighborhood danger.
CHAPTER II

METHODS

Participants

A sample of 240 African American 7th grade students was drawn from six urban Chicago public schools. Chicago Police department statistics obtained in the year prior to the study’s inception reveal that these schools were in high crime neighborhoods. Fifty-eight percent of the students asked to take part in the study agreed to participate. Following Loyola University Institutional Review Board protocol, each young person had to return both a parent/guardian consent as well as a child assent form to be involved in the study. Students were made aware at the outset of games, gift certificates or sports equipment they would receive as a reward for participation.

The majority of the participants lived in lower-income households. Median family income was between $10,000 and $20,000 according to parents or guardians. Eighty-three percent of parents had, at minimum, a high school degree and 10% reported having a college or graduate/professional degree. Nearly half of the participants (48%) lived in single-parent households. The samples’ median household size was five people.

Two hundred twenty-one of the 240 initial participants who provided questionnaires, the time-sampling method, and parent/guardian questionnaires at Time 1 were found again the next year. The non-retained youth were not significantly different from the continuing youth in parental education, annual household income or parents’
marital status. The average age of the students was 11.6 years at Time 1 with 41% of them male; at Time 2 the average age was 13.6 and 41% were male.

Procedures

The Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was used to collect information from the participants about their location, activities, companionship, thoughts and emotions. Participants carried programmable watches and small notebooks with them over the course of a one-week period. When not in school the adolescents received random signals approximately every hour and a half on average. In order to minimize classroom disruption, only two signals were programmed during each school day. At each random signal point, participants were asked to record where they were, what they were doing, who they were with, and what they were thinking and feeling at that moment. Trained research assistants instructed participants on how to complete the forms properly and research staff members went to the school every day to answer participants’ questions and ensure compliance with ESM standards. Students received 51 signals throughout the week. If the adolescents responded to fewer than 15 of these signals, they were removed from the analysis. The median number of responses was 42 (82% of the total). This rate falls within established, satisfactory parameters of ESM responding (Larson, 1989).

Each day during the week of ESM data gathering, the children were asked to complete different small packets of questionnaires. These measures assessed a number of domains such as child functioning, family relationships and perceptions of neighborhood. Parents were also asked to answer several short questionnaires on similar topics as well as their own family’s socioeconomic status.
Measures

Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger: This scale was derived from the items most relevant to neighborhood danger from Mason, Cauce, Gonzales, Hiraga and Grove’s (1994) Neighborhood Environment Scale. Mason and colleagues’ (1994) measure has demonstrated good reliability and validity in a sample of young African American adolescents. Items include “Fighting without a weapon,” “Violent crime with a weapon” and “Kids belong to street gangs.” Responses fell on a four point scale from “never happens” to “happens very often.” Cronbach’s alpha was .93 at Time 1 and .93 at Time 2.

Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger: Items for this scale were adapted from Buckner’s (1988) measure of beliefs about the neighborhood and neighborhood cohesion. This measure has demonstrated good internal consistency, test-rest consistency and criterion related validity (Buckner, 1988). The scale included items from the measure that best assessed danger in the community and included items such as “Burglary is a problem in my neighborhood” and “Violent crime is a problem in my neighborhood.” Parents’ responses ranged from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” on a five point scale. Cronbach’s alphas were .74 at Time 1 and .88 at Time 2.

Parental Warmth: This scale was assessed using a 7 item adaptation of Blyth and Foster-Clark’s (1987) Feeling of Closeness Measure that assesses the adolescents’ relationship with the parent. This measure has demonstrated good internal reliability and validity (Blyth and Foster-Clark’s, 1987). Examples of questions are “How much do you go to your mother for advice?” and “How much do you share your inner feelings with your mother?” Youth provided answers on a 5 point scale from “not at all” to “very
much.” The same questions were asked regarding mother and father, separately. Reports of maternal warmth and paternal warmth were significantly correlated (Time 1 \( r = .33, p < .001 \); Time 2 \( r = .23, p = .001 \)). Thus, when both mother and father reports are available they will be averaged to obtain the parental warmth score. Internal consistency for the maternal warmth scale at Time 1 was .85 and at Time 2 was also .85. Internal consistency for the paternal warmth scale at Time 1 was .93 and at Time 2 was .91.

**Parental monitoring:** A parental monitoring and relationship questionnaire used 7 items to assess how much control parents tried to assert in monitoring, supervising and being aware of their children’s activities (Lamborn, Steinberg, Dornbusch, 1991). Items included such questions as “When you are not at home, does your child know how to get in touch with you?” and “How often do you know if your child comes home by curfew on weekend nights?” Participants responded on a 5 point scale from “Almost never” to “Almost always.” Cronbach’s alphas were .80 and .78 for Time 1 and Time 2, respectively.

**Internalizing symptoms (questionnaire report):** The internalizing measure was taken from two self-reported measures of adolescent distress: the Children’s Depression Inventory (CDI; Kovacs, 1985) and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC; Spielberger, 1973). Internalizing was measured using only child report due to the generally low correlations between parent and child report on this construct (Achenbach, McCaughney & Howell, 1987). The CDI was developed to measure children’s cognitive, social and behavioral symptoms of distress of young people age 8 through 17. The CDI has strong internal consistency (Reynolds & Paget, 1982) and test-retest reliability (Clarizio, 1984). Cronbach’s alphas for this measure were .88 at Time 1.
and .83 at Time 2. The STAIC is a 20 item questionnaire report that includes such statements as “It is hard for me to fall asleep at night” and “I worry too much.” It is answered on a 3 point scale from “hardly ever” to “often.” The STAIC has been shown to have strong internal consistency, high stability for trait anxiety, and sufficient validity (Spielberger et al., 1973). Cronbach’s alphas for this measure were .91 at Time 1 and .90 at Time 2. Because these two scales are correlated (Time 1 \( r = .51, p < .001 \); Time 2 \( r = .48, p < .001 \)), they were standardized and then averaged to form the internalizing distress scale.

**Externalizing symptoms (questionnaire report):** This scale was created using the externalizing scale of the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach, 1991) and the Juvenile Delinquency Scale (JDS; Tolan, 1988). The CBCL has been demonstrated to have good reliability and validity (Achenbach, 1991). Items on the externalizing scale of the CBCL include “gets in many fights” and “truancy, skips school.” These items are answered on a 3 point scale from “Not True” to “Very True or Often True.” The internal consistency for the externalizing scale of the CBCL was .94 at Time 1 and .91 at Time 2. The JDS is a 23 item scale that includes such statements as “I have bought, sold, or kept something that I knew was stolen,” and “I have used a weapon to rob someone.” Answer choices fell on a 6 point scale from “Never” to “5 times or more.” The internal consistency for the externalizing scale of the JDS was .88 at Time 1 and .83 at Time 2. Upon determining that the two subscales were significantly correlated (Time 1 \( r = .23, p < .01 \); Time 2 \( r = .28, p < .001 \)) they were then standardized and averaged to create the externalizing symptoms questionnaire report.
Daily internalizing (ESM report): This scale was derived from ESM report of emotional experience. At each signal, participants were asked to what extent they felt different emotions on a four point scale from “not at all” to “very much”. The emotion was considered present when respondents indicated they were feeling it more than “not at all.” This scale is composed of the averages of percent time in different internalizing-related feeling states: nervous, ignored, worried, disappointed, sad and embarrassed. Cronbach’s alphas for the scale were .69 at Time 1 and .80 at Time 2.

Daily externalizing (ESM report): This scale was derived from ESM report of emotional experience. At each signal participants were asked to what extent they felt different emotions on a four point scale from “not at all” to “very much”. The emotion was considered present when respondents indicated they were feeling it more than “not at all.” This scale is composed of the averages of percent time in different externalizing-related feeling states: grouchy, like hitting, angry, like yelling. Cronbach’s alphas for the scale were .66 at Time 1 and .77 at Time 2.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The following regressions were conducted using SPSS 11.5. Bivariate correlations among all variables, as well as means and standard deviations for each variable, are presented in Tables 1-3.

Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger and Parental Monitoring

The first set of hypotheses pertained to the possible role of parental monitoring mediating a relation between parent perception of neighborhood danger and child internalizing and externalizing distress. To fulfill Baron and Kenny’s (1986) first criteria for mediation, parent perception of neighborhood danger, the independent variable, was entered into regression equations to predict the dependent variables, questionnaire and ESM reports of child internalizing and externalizing distress. Analyses were conducted both in 7th and 8th grade, and longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. Parent perception of neighborhood danger predicted the dependent variables in two instances, once cross-sectionally and once longitudinally. Both of these relations were with questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms and in the opposite of the hypothesized direction. Specifically, higher levels of parent perception of neighborhood danger in 8th grade predicted greater levels of questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms among 8th grade students ($\beta = .20, p < .01$), rather than lower levels as expected. Similarly, in longitudinal analyses, higher levels of 7th grade parent perception of neighborhood
danger predicted an increase in questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms from 7th to 8th grade ($\beta = .16, p < .05$).
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\(^*\) p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

\(^a\) Variable was standardized and thus mean is 0
Table 2.
8\textsuperscript{th} grade variables: correlations, means, and standard deviations.

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* p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001
\textsuperscript{a} Variable was standardized and thus mean is 0
Table 3.
Longitudinal correlations (7th grade independent variables and 8th grade dependent variables).

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*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001
To fulfill Baron and Kenny’s (1986) second criteria for mediation, parent perception of neighborhood danger, the independent variable, was hypothesized to predict higher levels of linear parental monitoring and quadratic parental monitoring, the mediators. These relations were tested with regression equations. Contrary to expectation, no significant relations were found between parent perception of neighborhood danger and linear parental monitoring or quadratic monitoring, among either 7th or 8th grade students or longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. In other words, parents who noted more danger in their neighborhoods were not different in their monitoring of their children than those who did not perceive any danger. Because the independent variable, parent perception of neighborhood danger, was not associated with the hypothesized mediators, parental monitoring and quadratic parental monitoring, these monitoring variables could not serve as a mediator of the relation between parent perception of neighborhood danger and child distress variables in 7th or 8th grade.

**Parental Monitoring and Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger**

A quadratic relation was hypothesized to exist between parental monitoring and questionnaire and ESM report of externalizing symptoms in 7th and 8th grades, and longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. Increases in parental monitoring were expected to be linked to less externalizing, except at the highest levels of monitoring which were thought to be associated with levels of externalizing rising slightly. Further, child perception of neighborhood danger was hypothesized to moderate the relation between quadratic parental monitoring and child externalizing. Throughout the remainder of the results section, child perception of neighborhood danger is the only danger perception variable discussed, unless noted specifically otherwise. Thus, it will henceforth be referred to
only as perception of neighborhood danger. Step-wise regressions were conducted with
gender controlled in the first step, the linear parental monitoring in the next step, and
quadratic parental monitoring in the next step. These analyses revealed that, among 7th
grade students ($\beta = -.51, p < .01$) and 8th grade students ($\beta = -.30, p < .05$), higher levels of
linear parental monitoring were associated with lower levels of externalizing symptoms
on questionnaire report, as hypothesized; however, the expected relation between
quadratic parental monitoring and questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms was
not found. When testing the hypothesized interaction between quadratic parental
monitoring and perception of neighborhood danger, an interaction term was created by
centering the quadratic monitoring variable and perception of neighborhood danger
variable and multiplying them together. Then gender was controlled in the first step of a
regression, followed by the main effects of linear parental monitoring, quadratic parental
monitoring, and perception of neighborhood danger into the next step, followed by the
interaction term in the final step, to predict externalizing symptoms. In these analyses,
the main effect of perception of neighborhood danger emerged as a significant predictor
of questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms. Specifically, among 7th grade
students ($\beta = .23, p < .01$) and 8th grade students ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), perception of
neighborhood danger predicted greater levels of externalizing symptoms. In the case of
8th grade students (though not 7th grade students), the addition of perception of
neighborhood danger into the regression actually led to the non-significance of parental
monitoring variables in relation to questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms. This
suggests an importance of perception of neighborhood danger above and beyond
monitoring. Longitudinally, these relations were not found when predicting
questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms. These independent variables did not predict ESM report of externalizing symptoms, cross-sectionally or longitudinally.

Among 8th grade students, the hypothesized interaction between perception of neighborhood danger and quadratic parental monitoring in predicting questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms was found to be significant, but not as expected ($\beta = -.33$, $p<.001$) (Figure 4). Among those adolescents who perceived low levels of neighborhood danger, an increase in monitoring was hypothesized to lead to less externalizing except at the highest levels of monitoring, where the adolescents would act out in rebellion. Regressions revealed, though, that for those students who perceived low levels of danger in their community, increases in monitoring actually led to a curvilinear trend toward lower levels of externalizing ($t = 3.46$, $p<.001$) (Figure 4). It was also expected that adolescents who perceived the highest levels of danger would show consistent decreases in externalizing in response to increases in monitoring; however, this relation was not found ($t = -1.48$, $p=.14$).
**Figure 4.** Child perception of neighborhood danger as a moderator of the relation between quadratic parental monitoring and questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms, among 8th grade students.

A quadratic relation was also hypothesized to exist between parental monitoring and questionnaire and ESM report of internalizing distress in 7th and 8th grades, as well as longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. Further, child perception of neighborhood danger was hypothesized to moderate the relation between quadratic parental monitoring and child internalizing. Step-wise regressions were conducted with gender controlled in the first step, linear parental monitoring in the next step, and quadratic parental monitoring in the next step. Among 7th grade students higher levels of linear parental monitoring
initially predicted lower levels of ESM report of internalizing ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$) when entered into the first step of the regression equation. This relation was no longer significant in the second step when the quadratic term was entered and found to be significant such that at both the highest and lowest levels of parental monitoring, adolescents reported higher ESM levels of internalizing ($\beta = .40$, $p < .01$). In addition, an interaction existed between perception of neighborhood danger and quadratic parental monitoring, although not as hypothesized ($\beta = -.47$, $p < .01$). It was hypothesized that young people who perceived the most danger in their neighborhoods would exhibit a decreasing amount of internalizing in response to increasing monitoring, while adolescents who did not perceive high levels of danger would exhibit the most internalizing at high and low levels of monitoring. However, step-wise regressions revealed that for the adolescents who perceived both high and low levels of danger, as levels of parental monitoring rose so did ESM report of internalizing. As depicted in Figure 5, for the lowest danger perception group, there was a trend towards higher levels of ESM report of internalizing in response to greater levels of parental monitoring ($t = 3.49$, $p < .001$). For the highest danger perception group, there was a steeper slope towards higher levels of ESM report of internalizing in relation to greater levels of parental monitoring ($t = 3.37$, $p < .001$). Of note, though, the positive relation between parental monitoring and ESM internalizing for each danger perception group is at odds with both the bivariate correlation ($r = -.17$, $p < .05$), as well as the simple regression relations between monitoring and ESM internalizing ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$), which are both negative. In other words, correlations and regressions both indicate that as parental monitoring increases adolescents’ ESM report of internalizing decreases.
Figure 5. Child perception of neighborhood danger as a moderator of the relation between quadratic parental monitoring and ESM report of internalizing, among 7th grade students.

Neither linear parental monitoring nor quadratic parental monitoring predicted questionnaire report of internalizing in 7th grade as they were expected to do. Yet when perception of neighborhood danger was also entered into stepwise regressions in order to test for moderation, perception of neighborhood danger emerged as the lone significant predictor ($\beta = .18, p<.05$) and was linked to more internalizing. Among 8th grade students, as expected, parental monitoring predicted lower levels of questionnaire report of internalizing symptoms when entered into the first step of the regression equation ($\beta =$
However, this relation was no longer significant when a quadratic monitoring term was entered into the second step and emerged as significant, such that, as hypothesized, both the lowest and highest levels of parental monitoring predicted higher levels of questionnaire reported internalizing distress ($\beta = .32, p < .05$). Among these 8th grade students, when perception of neighborhood danger was entered into stepwise regressions with these two parental monitoring variables as main effects (when testing the interaction between perception of neighborhood danger and quadratic monitoring), higher levels of perceived danger significantly predicted higher levels of questionnaire reported internalizing symptoms ($\beta = .21, p < .01$). Longitudinally, 7th grade parental monitoring served as a predictor of a decrease in questionnaire report of internalizing from 7th to 8th grades ($\beta = -.34, p < .05$). Also, perception of neighborhood danger served as a longitudinal predictor of ESM report of daily internalizing.

Specifically, among 7th grade students, higher levels of perceived danger predicted an increase in ESM report of internalizing from 7th to 8th grade ($\beta = .18, p < .05$).

**Parental Warmth and Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger**

The next set of hypotheses pertained to the possible moderating effect of perception of neighborhood danger on the relation between parental warmth and child distress. It was hypothesized that parental warmth would be linked to lower levels of internalizing and externalizing distress. However, it was also expected that, among children who perceived the most danger, even high levels of parental warmth would not be enough to ward off child distress. To test this hypothesis, gender was controlled in the first step of a regression equation, the centered main effects of both parental warmth and perception of neighborhood danger were entered into the next step, and an
interaction term, comprised of the product of these two variables, was entered into the final step. In two instances, both involving internalizing distress, perception of neighborhood danger served to moderate the relation between parental warmth and child distress. Among 8th grade students, step-wise regressions revealed that higher levels of warmth ($\beta = -0.21, p<0.01$) predicted lower levels of questionnaire report of internalizing, while perception of neighborhood danger ($\beta = 0.16, p<0.05$) predicted higher levels. Additionally, among 8th grade students, an interaction existed between parental warmth and perception of neighborhood danger in predicting questionnaire report of internalizing symptoms, although not as hypothesized ($\beta = -0.13, p<0.05$) (Figure 6). For the highest danger perception group, as parental warmth increased, adolescents’ internalizing symptoms decreased precipitously ($t = -3.11, p<0.001$) (Figure 6). Among the low danger perception group, there was no significant relation between parental warmth and internalizing ($t=-1.58, p=.18$)

In longitudinal analyses, a significant relation existed such that 7th grade child perception of neighborhood danger predicted an increase in ESM report of internalizing distress from 7th to 8th grade ($\beta = 0.15, p<0.05$). Child perception of neighborhood danger also served as a moderator of the relation between parental warmth and ESM report of daily internalizing, although not as hypothesized ($\beta = -0.23, p<0.01$). Among adolescents who perceived the highest levels of perception of neighborhood danger, it was expected that high levels of parental warmth would not protect against high levels of daily internalizing. However, as shown in Figure 7, for the group of adolescents with the highest levels of perceived neighborhood danger, daily internalizing levels were highest when little parental warmth existed and decreased as levels of parental warmth increased.
It was predicted that adolescents who perceived the least amount of danger would show continuing decreases in internalizing as levels of warmth rose; however, no significant relation emerged between parental warmth and daily internalizing for this group ($t=1.16, p=.25$).

Figure 6. Child perception of neighborhood danger as a moderator of the relation between parental warmth and questionnaire report of internalizing symptoms, among 8th grade students.

![Graph showing the relation between parental warmth and child perception of danger and internalizing symptoms.](image-url)
Figure 7. 7th grade child perception of neighborhood danger as a moderator of the relation between 7th grade parental warmth and 8th grade ESM report of internalizing symptoms.

Parent and Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger

In order to test, more specifically, whether parent-child agreement or disagreement about the degree of danger in the community predicted distress, a more targeted set of analyses were conducted. First, child perception of neighborhood danger (4 point scale) was placed on the same metric as parent perception of danger (5 point scale) by multiplying by 5/4. Then, scores one standard deviation above the mean and
higher for both the child and parent scales were dummy-coded as high danger perception, and coded as a “1,” while scores below one standard deviation above the mean were coded as a “0.” Then two new variables, a disagreement variable and an agreement variable, were created. The disagreement variable captured each instance in which the parent endorsed high danger perception, while the child did not. These cases were given a code of “1” and all other cases were given a “0” in this variable. In another “agreement” variable, a “1” was coded for each set of parents and children who both endorsed high levels of perception of neighborhood danger, while a “0” was given for each instance in which this agreement did not occur. Independent samples t-tests were then conducted predicting each of the child distress dependent variables. Contrary to hypotheses that disagreement would be associated with worse child outcomes, when parents perceived high levels of danger and children did not, this did not relate to any of the child internalizing or externalizing variables in 7th or 8th grade or longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. Similarly, contrary to hypotheses that agreement would be associated with a better child outcome, when both parents and their children agreed that there was a high level of danger in their community, adolescents’ internalizing and externalizing distress was no different than when they did not both agree. Parents and their children only overlapped and agreed with each other about the presence of a high degree of danger in their communities in 4% of the sample in 7th grade and 2% of the sample in 8th grade. In 12% (7th grade) and 13% (8th grade) of parent-child dyads, parents endorsed high levels of danger in their community while children did not endorse high levels. Of note, though, adolescent and parent perceptions of neighborhood danger were correlated in both 7th ($r = .19, p < .05$) and 8th grade ($r = .25, p < .01$).
**Parental Monitoring vs. Parental Warmth**

With regard to comparisons between parental monitoring and warmth in the prediction of externalizing, the hypotheses were supported for questionnaire, but not ESM, report. Parental monitoring was hypothesized to be a stronger predictor of externalizing than parental warmth. To test this hypothesis, parental monitoring and parental warmth were both entered separately into a regression equation to predict child externalizing. Then these two variables were added together to create a sum variable that predicted externalizing in another regression equation. The difference of the F tests of these two regressions was then calculated to create an F with one degree of freedom that could then be analyzed to determine whether the two predictors were significantly different in size (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). Among 7th grade students, parental monitoring predicted less questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms ($\beta = -0.28$, $p<.001$), while warmth did not. The difference in the size of these relations was also significant ($F(1, 157) = 5.75$, $p<.05$), meaning that parental monitoring was a significantly stronger predictor of questionnaire report of externalizing behavior than parental warmth. Similarly, among 8th grade students, parental monitoring predicted less questionnaire report externalizing ($\beta = -0.28$, $p<.001$), while warmth did not and parental monitoring was a significantly stronger predictor than parental warmth ($F(1, 176) = 6.77$, $p<.01$). In longitudinal analyses, while neither parental monitoring nor parental warmth were significant predictors of an increase in questionnaire report of externalizing over one year, parental monitoring had a significantly larger effect than parental warmth on the increase in this dependent variable ($F(1,129) = 14.24$, $p<.001$).
Similar to report of externalizing hypotheses, the hypotheses regarding relative predictive power of parental monitoring versus warmth were largely supported for questionnaire, but not ESM, report of adolescent internalizing. Parental warmth was hypothesized to be a stronger predictor of child internalizing than parental monitoring. To test this hypothesis, parental monitoring and parental warmth were both entered separately into a regression equation to predict child internalizing. Then the monitoring and warmth variables were added together to create a sum variable that predicted internalizing in another regression equation. The difference of the F tests of these two regressions was then calculated to create an F with one degree of freedom that could then be analyzed to determine whether the two predictors were significantly different in size (Cohen et al., 2003). Among 7th grade students, parental warmth predicted questionnaire less report of internalizing ($\beta = -.32, p<.001$), while parental monitoring did not. Warmth was also a significantly stronger predictor of internalizing than parental monitoring ($F(1, 147) = 8.79, p<.001$). Among 8th grade students, though, both parental warmth ($\beta = -.22, p<.01$) and parental monitoring ($\beta = -.25, p<.01$) predicted less questionnaire report of internalizing and the difference between the size of these relations was not significant. Finally, one difference between parental monitoring and parental warmth existed longitudinally. While neither parental warmth nor parental monitoring were significant predictors of an increase in questionnaire report of internalizing over one year, parental warmth had a significantly larger effect than parental monitoring on the increase in this dependent variable ($F(1,120) = 8.70, p<.01$).
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

This study examined the effects of parents’ monitoring and warmth on their adolescents’ externalizing and internalizing distress, while taking into account the ramifications of both parties’ perceptions of neighborhood danger. Parents’ perception of neighborhood danger predicted an increase in adolescents’ externalizing behavior, but not internalizing distress. Contrary to expectation, parents’ perception of danger did not relate to the degree to which they monitored their children. Parental monitoring was associated with children’s externalizing behavior, although a hypothesized quadratic relation between parents’ monitoring and externalizing did not exist. Both linear and quadratic relations were discovered between parental monitoring and children’s internalizing distress.

One of the most consistent predictors of adolescents’ distress, surprisingly, was their perception of neighborhood danger, which was associated with higher levels of both adolescent internalizing and externalizing. In fact, adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger emerged as an equally consistent predictor of internalizing and externalizing as parental monitoring and parental warmth. In the case of parental warmth, while perception of neighborhood danger was expected to moderate a relation between warmth and adolescent internalizing, warmth actually appeared to serve as a moderator that protected against the harmful effects of neighborhood danger.
Specifically, as danger increased, it was high levels of warmth that protected adolescents from high levels of internalizing in response to increases in perceived neighborhood danger. Interestingly, the rate of parent-child agreement of these extreme levels of danger was lower than expected.

Finally, differential relations existed between parental monitoring and parental warmth as they pertained to internalizing and externalizing. These different relative strengths in relations emerged as hypothesized. In general, parental monitoring more strongly predicted adolescent externalizing than parental warmth. On the other hand, parental warmth was a stronger predictor of adolescent internalizing than parental monitoring.

Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger and Parental Monitoring

The first set of hypotheses pertained to parents’ perception of neighborhood danger being associated with their children’s internalizing and externalizing. Two such associations emerged, both in relation to 8th grade students’ questionnaire report of child externalizing. In each instance, parents’ perception of danger was linked to more child externalizing symptoms, rather than fewer, as expected. Specifically, cross-sectionally, when parents of 8th grade students perceived more danger, their children experienced higher levels of externalizing symptoms. Similarly, 7th grade students whose parents perceived more danger that year showed an increase in questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms from 7th to 8th grade.

Perception of danger appears to have an exacerbating effect on child externalizing symptoms, rather than serve as a cue for parents to enact more protective measures to insure that their children are kept safe. It was hypothesized that as parents sensed more
danger in their communities, they would increase the degree of monitoring they exerted over their children. In this framework, parental perception of danger would actually serve as a protective factor with regard to child distress, through the way that parents then related to their children. However, it may actually be the case that parents’ perception of neighborhood danger has a more similar impact on child outcome to family economic hardship than hypothesized. In prior studies, economic hardship was related to parents’ own distress, which in turn was linked to less effective monitoring and disciplining, as well as more child problem behavior (Costello et al., 2002; Mistry et al., 2002). The fact that children exhibited more externalizing symptoms in 8th grade and increases in externalizing symptoms over a year from 7th to 8th grade in response to parents perceiving more danger suggests that this attunement may share more in common with parents’ financial difficulties. In particular, perception of threats may also act as a stressor that negatively impacts parenting.

Additionally, it could be that parents’ perception of danger is more indicative of the danger present in the immediate surroundings of their neighborhoods, which drives the relation between it and adolescent externalizing. The hypotheses of this paper were premised upon the fact that these parents were living in very high crime areas with few, if any, truly safe living zones among the participants. However, it may be that the measure assessing parents’ perception of danger actually tapped into an attunement to subtle differences in the immediate surroundings of participants (e.g., more drug sales or gang activity on their particular street), rather than to a pervasive crime around them. In this case, it might actually be that the danger itself is responsible for the poorer child outcome. Greater danger on the corner of the block of an adolescent’s home, or in the
home’s alleyway, could come with more opportunity for the young person to become involved with delinquent activities, which would exacerbate externalizing symptoms. Many are beginning to recognize the need to provide urban adolescents with access to opportunities to engage in pro-social, structured activities in safe environments outside of school hours (Woodland, 2008). Consequently, this is fueling a movement to develop quality after-school programming for them (Woodland, 2008). Such programming has, in fact, been shown to decrease school discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions, as well as improve academic functioning, among urban African American males (Martin, Martin, Gibson, & Wilkins, 2007).

As mentioned above, one of the primary reasons that parents’ perception of danger in their neighborhoods was not associated with decreases in child distress may be that this perception did not influence their parenting style with regard to the monitoring of their children. Contrary to expectation, parents’ perception of neighborhood danger was unrelated to their use of monitoring in 7th grade, 8th grade, or longitudinally across that year. This finding remains difficult to explain fully. Several studies have noted the impact of objective factors, such as poverty level, on parental monitoring in both African American (Sampson & Laub, 1994) and Native American (Costello et al., 2003) populations. Parents’ belief about their neighborhood’s level of danger could have served as an even more proximal and immediate influence on the degree to which parents placed limits on their children. In fact, Jarret’s (1999) theoretical and qualitative work detailed the way in which parents in urban, high crime areas respond to their beliefs about their dangerous environments through more restrictive parenting. Jones and colleagues (2005) also found this relation quantitatively, noting an increase in monitoring over one
year among urban, African American single parents who perceived greater neighborhood violence.

Yet not all research has revealed a relation between parent perception of neighborhood danger and parental monitoring. Taylor (2000) found it was not parents’ perception of neighborhood crime, but parents’ perception of physical decay in their surroundings, that was associated with greater use of firm control over their adolescents. Taylor did not provide any suggestions for why this may have been the case; however, there are some plausible reasons as to why this relation may not exist. While social disorganization theory examines, in large part, community wide factors, it also posits that the stressful experiences associated with resource deprivation (such as violence and crime) hinder adults’ abilities to parent effectively (Sampson & Laub, 1994). Thus, it could be that while parents’ natural inclination would be to exert more control over their children due to the danger around them, the extreme stress placed on parents in these difficult circumstances is enough to prevent this from happening. This, in turn, would weaken the association between parents’ perceptions of danger and their efforts to monitor their children, which might have existed under less difficult circumstances.

Alternatively, it may also be that this relation does in fact exist, but could not be detected in this sample. As just mentioned, Jarrett (1999) observed in her qualitative data that parents react to their beliefs about the neighborhood and then parent accordingly. At the same time, though, Jarrett noted that some parents actually remove their children from the neighborhoods entirely, either by moving themselves or by sending their children to live with other family in less impoverished communities. These parents, according to Jarrett, do this precisely because they believe that their neighborhoods are
too unsafe and desire more opportunities for their children. It is likely that these parents would have monitored their children very closely had they kept them in the neighborhood. Consequently, to the extent to which this phenomenon is true, such parents would have removed themselves and their children from the population entirely, thereby making the association between parents’ danger perception and their monitoring weaker than had they remained.

In sum, the lack of a relation between parent perception of neighborhood danger and monitoring may reflect the heterogeneity of parents’ responses. As parents perceive more threats in their communities, some may monitor their children very closely, as hypothesized, to prevent their children from falling victim to the dangers that are around them. Other parents, though, may become overwhelmed by the risk and react in the opposite manner, as they are less capable of taking the time and effort to be mindful of their children’s whereabouts, companionship, and activities. A final subset of parents likely exists that does not monitor their adolescents any differently in response to their perception of danger. The amalgamation of these three different groups would lead to a lack of any significant relation between parents’ perceiving danger in their neighborhood and their monitoring of their children.

**Parental Monitoring**

The next set of hypotheses pertained to the way that the proposed mediator, parental monitoring, and the quadratic of parental monitoring, related to child externalizing and internalizing. A relation did exist in the hypothesized direction with greater parental monitoring predicting less questionnaire report of child externalizing symptoms in both 7th and 8th grades. However, contrary to expectation, a curvilinear
relation did not exist between parental monitoring and child externalizing distress. Thus, as parents’ monitoring increased so too did the protective effects on externalizing symptoms, even to the highest levels of monitoring. Mason and colleagues (1996) coined the term “precision parenting” to describe what they found to be a curvilinear relation between parents’ behavioral control and adolescent misconduct in an urban community. Their premise was that parents had to be very careful not to exert too much control over their children to prevent further externalizing in rebellion. However reasonable Mason’s and colleague’s explanation of their findings may be, it could be that their results were an anomaly. Many other studies have found a beneficial role of parental monitoring on child behavior problems without examining this quadratic component (e.g., Graber et al., 2006; Loeber & Dishion, 1983). This quadratic relation may not have existed had these researchers looked at it in many or all of the instances where it was not considered. In high crime urban areas, the benefit of greater levels of monitoring appears to outweigh the risk of any rebellion and acting out behavior that this tighter restriction may spawn.

It may also be the case that Mason’s and colleague’s (1996) measure of behavior control tapped into a slightly different construct than the measure used in this study or others. This study’s parental monitoring instrument examined the extent to which parents were confident that they knew who their children’s friends were, where their children were during the day, that their children abided by curfew, and other aspects pertaining to their children’s behavioral autonomy outside the home. Mason’s and colleagues’ behavior control measure examined the extent to adolescents felt that they alone, their parents alone, or a combination of themselves and their parents made daily decisions. While some of the items did pertain to curfews and similar topics, other items examined
more personal choices such as bed-times and what clothes they wore. The current study may have demonstrated that, in these neighborhoods, young people do not rebel against their parents when their parents take a more active role in insuring that they are cognizant of their children’s whereabouts and companionship. Yet, it may also be the case that some of these adolescents would act out in defiance of higher levels of the type of control measured by Mason and colleagues. Specifically, when parents make most household decisions about clothing, as well as other more personal choices, adolescents could then be more apt to exhibit problem behaviors.

While a quadratic relation did not exist between parental monitoring and externalizing symptoms, it did manifest itself in relation to internalizing distress. Specifically, among 7th grade students, both the lowest and highest levels of parental monitoring were associated with higher levels of ESM report of daily internalizing. Similarly, among 8th grade students, moderate amounts of parental monitoring were linked to lower levels of internalizing symptoms than very high or low levels of monitoring. The diminishing, and even counter-productive, effect of higher levels of monitoring for internalizing, but not externalizing, makes some sense intuitively. If a parent is successful in exerting very high levels of monitoring, their children will have less opportunity to engage in problem behavior. Even if these young people feel rebellious and want to act out in frustration or anger, they will have fewer opportunities to do so than children whose parents are more lax (Ary et al., 1999). This frustration could then be turned inward, manifesting itself in depressive or anxious symptoms.

The highest levels of monitoring also typically mean a great deal of time inside the home, under the watchful eye of parents or caretakers. For young adolescents, this
could lead to fewer opportunities to engage in unsupervised activities with peers whose parents are not as diligent. Given the crucial role that peers begin to take during the period of early adolescence, as they affirm adolescents’ identity separate from, and in relation to, a social reference group, significant limits on these opportunities may lead to lowered self-worth and feelings of sadness (Baumrind, 1991). At the same time, the very highest levels of parental monitoring may reduce the opportunity to explore the world independently, which may lead to less self-confidence and more anxiety (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). Some evidence exists that the highest levels of authoritarian control are specifically linked to greater internalizing symptoms. In a longitudinal prospective study, high levels of parents’ authoritarian control of their preschool children were linked to greater levels of depressive symptoms at the age of 18 (Gjerde, Block, & Block, 1991). This was only true among girls. Gjerde and colleagues (1991) speculated that these high levels of control prevented these girls from having sufficient opportunity to attempt to meet the challenges of individuation from their family. Thus, these girls formed fewer relationships and entered into fewer activities outside of the family. As a result, they did not gain self-esteem independently of their families.

In general, the relation between parental monitoring and internalizing distress has not been examined in any depth in the literature. The fact that parental monitoring is linked to internalizing distress builds on a small body of evidence that has examined the relation at all. A linear relation between monitoring and internalizing existed in both Bahamian (Yu et al., 2006) and European American (Barber et al., 1994) samples, but actually not in an urban, African American sample of early adolescents (Klein & Forehand, 2000). The previous studies that demonstrated a link between monitoring and
internalizing had aspects of their design that made causation difficult to assess. Both were cross-sectional and used youths’ report to assess monitoring. In this study, seventh grade students whose parents reported greater monitoring showed a decrease in daily internalizing distress from 7th to 8th grade. This longitudinal relation implies a degree of causation, with less parental monitoring actually leading to an increase in daily internalizing feelings. Also, parents reported the degree of monitoring in this study. Consequently, rather than adolescents feeling depressed and socially isolated, and then reporting that their parents do not bother to look after them, it appears that the lack of monitoring itself may play a role in the development of internalizing. Adolescents who experience a lack of monitoring by their parents may perceive that they are not a primary priority of their parents. This, in turn, could lead to decreased feelings of self-worth and sadness. Alternatively, a lack of parental oversight may allow youth the opportunity to become involved with, or exposed to, violence and other unsavory activities, which could generate depressive and anxious symptoms. Still, the inconsistent pattern in these relations to monitoring (i.e., that monitoring was linked ESM report in 7th year, but to questionnaire report in 8th grade or that quadratic relations existed cross-sectionally, while linear relations manifested longitudinally) make one comprehensive statement hard to make. What appears evident, though, is that parental monitoring is linked in some fashion to internalizing distress in these young people.

Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger

One of the most surprising findings to emerge from the analyses was the substantial impact of adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger on their psychological distress. This paper originally conceptualized child perception of
neighborhood danger as a moderator of the relation between parental monitoring and children’s outcomes; however, in several instances, child perception of danger appeared to be as strong as, or potentially even stronger than, parental monitoring itself in predicting externalizing and internalizing symptoms. A good example of this can be found in examining questionnaire report of externalizing symptoms. For both 7th grade and 8th grade students, their perception of neighborhood danger still emerged as a significant predictor of these symptoms when placed into a regression equation with parental monitoring and quadratic parental monitoring. Among 8th grade students, it actually served as the sole predictor of these symptoms. Remarkably, adolescents’ perception of high levels of danger in their communities weighs approximately as heavily as one of the most potent activities parents can engage in, monitoring, to reduce problem behavior among early adolescents.

This relation between adolescents’ beliefs about danger in their communities and their externalizing symptoms is consistent with previous research, which determined that feeling unsafe in one’s neighborhood is associated with more weapon carrying, and involvement in physical fights and with police (Dowdell, 2006). However, the direction of causation within these results remains unclear. Previous research has used the need to take defensive action in response to perceived danger as an explanation for more instances of carrying weapons (Lane et al., 2004). Yet, it may be that individuals who get into fights and carry weapons are already the ones exhibiting the most problem behavior. In other words, young people who carry weapons may already be involved in delinquent activities and then perceive the neighborhood as more dangerous because they select activities and companionship that make it so. Because the current findings are cross-
sectional in nature and longitudinal relations were not found, they cannot shed substantial light on the direction of causation. Limited longitudinal results suggest that believing there is danger and drug activity in the neighborhood increases substance use (Lambert et al., 2004). It is conceivable that the relation is transactional, as adolescents who perceive their environments to be more dangerous may in fact take more defensive actions, but they also may be hypervigilant towards threats and find themselves in preemptive fights more often (Dodge, 1991). At the same time, adolescents engaged in more delinquent activities are likely to find themselves in more threatening situations and, therefore, believe their environments to be more dangerous.

In one instance, parents’ monitoring interacted with their children’s perception of neighborhood danger to affect adolescents’ externalizing distress. Among 8th grade students, a significant difference existed between high and low danger perception groups in the way that parents’ monitoring was associated with their children’s externalizing symptoms. Among students who perceived the lowest levels of danger, when their parents’ monitoring increased they experienced a trend towards fewer externalizing symptoms. The relation between parents’ monitoring and adolescents’ externalizing was not significant for the group that perceived the highest levels of monitoring. This finding ran contrary to this paper’s hypothesis that externalizing would decrease in response to monitoring, except at the highest levels of monitoring where externalizing would increase due to rebellion. Then children’s high perception of neighborhood danger was expected to dampen the negative impact of high monitoring because these students would agree with their parents that danger was present and, therefore, not revolt. In this particular instance, it appears that even the highest levels of parental monitoring are effective in
preventing problem behavior among adolescents who do not perceive high levels of danger. In fact, these young people do not appear to rebel against their parents’ concerted efforts to monitor at very high levels and continue to benefit from some degree of protection from this parenting.

Child perception of neighborhood danger had a similar relation to adolescents’ internalizing distress as it did to their externalizing. This is a connection that, as of yet, has gone virtually unexplored in the literature. This association was not addressed, specifically, in the hypotheses of this paper and only became apparent when examining main effects of regressions in which child perception of neighborhood danger was part of an interaction. As noted above, previous research has primarily attempted to uncover links between young people’s perception of neighborhood danger and self-defense oriented behaviors such as carrying a gun (Howard et al., 2002). In addition, youths’ perception of the quality of their communities has been associated with lowered expectation of educational attainment and occupational success (Mellow & Swanson, 2007). Researchers have not yet examined how youths’ perceptions of the degree of violence, gang activity, and drug use and sales in the neighborhood might lead them to feel worried or depressed.

Adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger consistently predicted internalizing distress. In this sample, when adolescents perceived more danger in 7th and 8th grade, they exhibited more internalizing symptoms. Further, as 7th graders believed more danger was present in their neighborhoods, they showed greater increases in daily experience of internalizing over one year. There are several possible mechanisms that could explain why this would occur. First, and most evidently, awareness of chronic
sources of danger can raise levels of anxiety. For example, the literature on exposure to community violence has demonstrated a clear link between exposure to community violence and anxious and depressive symptoms (Edlynn, Gaylord-Harden, Richards, & Miller, 2008; Rosario, Salzinger, Feldman, & Ng-Mak, 2008). Adolescents’ awareness of danger in their communities can be thought to flow from this witnessing of and victimization by violence. In addition, their attunement might develop independently of the violence itself, through the recognition of the presence of gangs, drugs, and other neighborhood problems, which might be perceived as a threat to personal safety. All of these factors could then conspire to raise levels of internalizing. Additionally, the danger that is present in these young peoples’ communities is largely out of their control. This fact can potentially contribute to the hopelessness and helplessness that are present as cognitive symptoms of depression (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989).

One interaction, between the curvilinear of parental monitoring and child perception of neighborhood danger, emerged as a significant predictor of internalizing distress. Among 7th grade students, when child perception of neighborhood danger was low, ESM report of daily internalizing increased slightly across low, medium, and high levels of parental monitoring. When child perception of neighborhood danger was high, children exhibited steadily higher levels of internalizing distress with higher levels of monitoring. Thus, when adolescents believed that their neighborhoods were unsafe, they actually exhibited significantly more internalizing as monitoring increased. The general trend, among both low and high danger perception groups, towards higher levels of internalizing as monitoring increased is likely not accurate and simply an artifact of the partitioning of variance in the regression equation. Among 7th grade students, parental
monitoring was associated with less ESM report of daily internalizing in both a bivariate correlation and a simple regression. Thus, the apparent positive association of the variables within these stepwise regressions likely speaks more to the strength of the relation between child perception of neighborhood danger and daily internalizing than to the association between parental monitoring and daily internalizing. As variance in the regression equation was accounted for by perception of neighborhood danger, parental monitoring and the interaction term accounted for the remaining variance and likely misrepresented the direction of its influence of monitoring.

*Parental Warmth and Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger*

Child perception of neighborhood danger also had a significant impact on the relation between parental warmth and child internalizing. In these analyses, when 8th grade students perceived more danger in their communities, they experienced more internalizing symptoms. This relation was present even when adolescents’ danger perception was placed in the same regression equation as parental warmth. Additionally, 7th grade students who viewed their neighborhoods as dangerous actually exhibited increases over one year in ESM reports of daily internalizing feelings. This finding again points to the importance of adolescents’ perception of danger in their community in predicting internalizing. Although this longitudinal finding points to a potential causative effect of danger perception in the development of early adolescents’ internalizing distress, it is possible that this relation is transactional, since young people who are more anxious tend to be more fearful of their environment and magnify the dangers present around them (Muris, Rapee, Meesters, Shouten, & Geers, 2003; Suarez & Bell-Dolan, 2001).
High levels of child perception of neighborhood danger were expected to serve as a risk factor in the relation between parental warmth and child outcome, such that adolescents with high levels of perceived danger would still have higher levels of internalizing symptoms, even at the highest levels of parental warmth. Contrary to expectation, the results revealed that, among 8th grade students, as well as longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade, warmth actually seemed to serve as a moderator of a relation between adolescent perceived danger and internalizing. Rather than adolescents’ perceptions of substantial neighborhood danger overpowering the benefits of parental warmth, parents’ provision of warmth served to ward off the internalizing distress associated with adolescents’ heightened awareness of danger in their neighborhood. This finding speaks strongly to the negative impact that attunement to threat in the neighborhood has on young people in generating anxious and depressive symptoms. On the other hand, it also provides hope that parents can provide some degree of protection to their children against the effects of perception of neighborhood danger through the warmth they provide. In these analyses, warmth serves as a “protective-stabilizing” factor according to the criteria set forth by Luthar and colleagues (2000). Even as the adolescents perceived greater danger, parents’ warmth prevented greater levels of internalizing. Maternal support has already been shown to have a similar protective-stabilizing role in buffering the effects of witnessing violence on the development of anxiety (Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn, & Roy, 2004). While a recent meta-analysis revealed that warmth does not typically have strong direct effects on anxiety (McLeod et al., 2007), it has been shown consistently to have direct effects on sadness and worry in young people (e.g., Garber, Robinson & Valentiner, 1997; McCabe et al., 1999). Thus,
parental warmth in urban, high crime areas has the opportunity both to limit internalizing and buffer children from the harmful effects of the dangers around them.

Another surprising finding of this study was how infrequently parents and their children agreed that high levels of danger were present in their neighborhood. Four percent of parent-child dyads in 7th grade and two percent of dyads in 8th grade agreed on the presence of very high levels of danger. The original hypotheses predicted that when children agreed with their parents about high levels of danger in their communities, they would act out and internalize less. Not surprisingly, given the extremely small size of the agreement group, this agreement did not provide a protective effect against any of the child distress variables. It should be noted, though, that parent perception of neighborhood danger was correlated with child perception in both 7th and 8th grade. Thus, most of the parent-child agreement seems to have occurred about the presence of less extreme levels of neighborhood danger. Parents endorsed very high levels of danger when their children did not slightly more often than they agreed about high levels (12% 7th grade and 13% in 8th grade). While it was expected that this disagreement would lead to more internalizing and externalizing on the part of adolescents in rebellion, disagreement was not related to any of the adolescent internalizing or externalizing outcome variables. This makes sense given that this paper’s findings that as parents perceived more danger, they did not change their monitoring behavior to greater levels; thus, adolescents did not have anything against which to revolt.

**Parental Monitoring vs. Parental Warmth**

The current study also adds to the literature on the differential effects of parental monitoring and parental warmth. As hypothesized, parents’ warmth was more closely
related to their children’s internalizing symptoms than parental monitoring, while monitoring was more closely linked to their children’s externalizing symptoms than warmth. Among 7th grade students, warmth was a stronger predictor of internalizing symptoms than parental monitoring. Among 8th grade students, warmth was significantly associated with a decrease in internalizing, but not more strongly related than parental monitoring. Also of interest, although parental warmth was not a significant predictor of a decrease in internalizing symptoms over one year from 7th to 8th grade, it was still a stronger predictor of a decrease in symptoms over this year than parental monitoring. Consequently, adolescents who experienced relationships with parents whom they considered people they would go to for advice, with whom they would share their inner feelings, and who are important to them exhibited lower levels of internalizing symptoms. As hypothesized, these types of relationships had a stronger impact on internalizing symptoms than parents’ monitoring did. Of note, parental monitoring also predicted internalizing in 8th grade. So while parental monitoring may not be as crucial to warding off sadness and worry in children as parental warmth, it may provide the message to young people that their parents care and value them. Alternatively, as discussed earlier, more monitoring could prevent children from venturing into dangerous areas and risky experiences that might produce internalizing symptoms. For example, if a child is monitored more closely, he may be less able to witness or be victimized by violence on the street, both of which have been linked to higher levels of depression and anxiety (Cooley-Quille et al., 2001; Mazza & Reynolds, 1999).

Hypotheses regarding the relative impact of parental warmth and monitoring also held true with regard to adolescent externalizing. In both 7th and 8th grades, when placed
in the same regression equation, parental monitoring was associated with children’s externalizing symptoms, while warmth was not. Parental monitoring was also a stronger predictor of decreases in externalizing symptoms from 7th to 8th grade than parental warmth, although neither was significantly related to the decrease. This is consistent with Fletcher and colleagues’ (2004) review of the literature. They found that there is typically a stronger relation between warmth and internalizing symptoms, while monitoring is more strongly related to externalizing symptoms. This is also consistent with Forehand’s and colleagues’ (1997) work with a low income, African American and Latino, young adolescent population. They found that that communication in a parent-child relationship initially predicted deviant behavior in a regression equation; however, communication was no longer significant when they entered parental monitoring into the equation and parental monitoring became significant.

These findings run counter to papers published by Stattin & Kerr (2000) and Kerr & Stattin (2000) that challenged this conventional wisdom. These researchers determined that children’s disclosure of information to their parents is more closely related to children’s problem behavior than parents’ efforts to track and monitor their children. Stattin and Kerr’s sample was comprised of Swedish youth from a range of socioeconomic classes and, while they do not describe the rate of violence in the neighborhoods, it is likely that the young people in their sample face far less danger than in an American, urban high-crime area. Further, there are significantly more opportunities for youth to engage in delinquent activity (e.g., drug sales, gang activity) in the areas in which the current research was conducted. Thus, while parents’ warmth, and the trust and disclosure that it fosters in children, is a valuable part of the parent-child
relationship, its importance in warding off externalizing symptoms is likely contextual.

When there are more opportunities to follow deviant and dangerous trajectories, the imperative to contain children’s behavior becomes critical. Although knowledge gained from an open and honest relationship with one’s child is certainly important in both settings, its value is secondary to parents’ efforts to control and monitor their children’s whereabouts and activities in dangerous communities.

**Strengths and Limitations**

This study attempts to provide a description of the effects of parenting in an urban, high crime community that takes into account the ramifications of the degree of danger that both parents and their early adolescents perceive around them. Much of the literature thus far has examined parental monitoring and warmth separately or in combination, without addressing contextual factors within the analyses. A growing number of studies in recent decades have begun to examine the effects of neighborhood level variables as well as the impact of poverty on parenting. This study brings a new perspective as it examines how the neighborhood is perceived by its inhabitants. It also weaves this information together to test a comprehensive model of how the perception of one’s neighborhood may influence parenting style and how this might be linked to adolescents’ distress. Additionally, this research attempts to take into account adolescents’ view of their neighborhood not just in relation to distress, but also how it influences their response to parenting.

To examine these models, this study also employs data gathered from multiple methods and reporters across two different years. By employing the ESM technique, the
data benefits from an *in vivo* snapshot of young adolescents’ daily experience of sadness, worry, anger, grumpiness and other internalizing and externalizing related feelings. Additionally, the design allowed for analyses to be conducted cross-sectionally for 7th and 8th grade students and longitudinally from 7th to 8th grade. Finally, the study was conducted in a low-income urban African American community whose high crime rates make perception of neighborhood danger a particularly salient topic to study.

Despite many strengths, several limitations exist. First, the data were analyzed across one year from 7th to 8th grade. Ideally, to test for full mediation the analyses would examine the relations across three time points. Second, parental monitoring is measured from the parents’ point of view. This avoids a potential bias of adolescents’ report of monitoring due to their moods or feelings towards parents. However, adolescents’ views of the extent to which their parents know who their friends are or where they are when they are not at home might, at times, be very different from their parents’. This discrepancy could be very meaningful as young people may purposefully misinform their parents about their activities, companionship, and whereabouts as they attempt to acquire greater independence. Furthermore, the parental monitoring measure may have pulled for a social desirability effect from parents, which could have skewed the data and created a ceiling effect. Specifically, the questions asked may imply a “correct” answer (e.g., “how often do you know if your child comes home by [curfew] on school days?”). The high means and standard deviations may be indicative of this, rather than high levels of monitoring by parents. Additionally, parents’ and adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger were measured on different scales with different metrics from each
other. This makes it difficult to be certain whether or not parents and their children are addressing the exact same construct in the same way. Finally, the data pertain directly to young adolescents in the urban community where the study was conducted; therefore, results need to be replicated in other communities and among different populations.

**Implications**

These findings have several implications for how interventions might be developed to help parents negotiate the difficult circumstances inherent in impoverished communities. Parents’ perception of neighborhood danger was, contrary to expectation, related to greater externalizing symptoms in young people. At the same time, this perception was not related to their parenting behavior with regard to monitoring. If, in fact, parents’ perception of danger is not related to their parenting behavior, an intervention aimed at helping parents recognize where danger exists in their community, pathways that early adolescents take to become involved in it, and how to divert adolescents’ courses towards constructive activities may be of great utility in preventing the development of externalizing symptoms. Also, this study points to the importance of carefully considering which monitoring techniques will best walk the line between preventing adolescents’ externalizing and still allowing enough autonomy to prevent their internalizing.

One of the clearest messages to emerge from this paper is the negative impact of perceived danger on young people. It emerged as similar in strength, or even stronger, than parental warmth and monitoring. As such, efforts must be made at the local, state, and national levels to prevent the conditions that foster the development of violence in
communities. Adolescents have little choice in where they are raised. The fact that they
must be burdened by poverty, crime, and violence is fundamentally unjust in a country
that prides itself on equal opportunity. Programs ought to be aimed at decreasing overall
crime rates by eliminating the perceived need to commit crimes through jobs programs,
community business growth incentives, and other neighborhood level programs.
Community-level initiatives that bolster the collective efficacy of the community would
also be helpful to this end (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997).

Future Directions

Future research could expand upon the current project in several ways. This
research points to the importance of parental monitoring. But it also appears to indicate
that there may be certain monitoring amounts or techniques that are optimal. Further
examination of where optimal levels might be in preventing externalizing and
internalizing are warranted, as well as if certain aspects of monitoring are especially
helpful or even possibly counterproductive. In addition, research is needed to clarify the
impact of parents’ and adolescents’ perception of neighborhood danger, as well as the
impact of agreement and disagreement about their surroundings in this regard. The
existing body of research has indicated that parents report that their children have been
exposed to less violence than their children report; however, this research focused on the
amount of violence to which children were believed to have been exposed (Ceballo,
Dahl, Aretakis, & Ramirez, 2001). Previous research has not examined both child and
parent perceptions of their neighborhoods simultaneously. Having both of these
perspectives in later work would enhance researchers’ ability to understand the
experience of families living in very dangerous neighborhoods by enabling them to
develop more intricate and nuanced models of family life. Also, gender differences were
not examined in this study. Later work could examine the impact of gender on the
perception of neighborhood danger and parenting behaviors, as well as their interaction.
Finally, qualitative research that allows members of inner-city communities to have their
voices heard and utilizes the wealth of knowledge gained by these citizens would help
inform work and bridge the gap between researchers and community members.
APPENDIX A:

MEASURES
Parental Warmth

Circle one answer for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you go to your mother for advice?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Do you want to be like your mother?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Does your mother understand what you are like?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Do you share your inner feelings with your mother?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Is your mother important to you?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Do you talk or do things with her?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. How satisfied are you with the relationship you have with your mother?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circle one answer for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. Do you go to your father for advice?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Do you want to be like your father?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Does your father understand what you are like?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Do you share your inner feelings with your father?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Is your father important to you?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Do you talk or do things with him?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. How satisfied are you with the relationship you have with your father?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parental Monitoring

Parent Knowledge

ID:____________________

Please answer the following questions:

1) Does your child have a set time to be home on school nights?
   
   _____ Yes    _____ No    If yes, what is that time?_______

2) How often do you know if your child comes home by this time on school nights? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

3) Does your child have a set time to be home on weekend nights?
   
   _____ Yes    _____ No    If yes, what is that time?_______

4) How often do you know if your child comes home by this time on weekend nights? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

5) How often do you know where your child is during the day? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

6) If you or another adult are not at home, does your child leave you a note or call you to let you know where she/he is going? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

7) When you are not home, does your child know how to get in touch with you? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

8) Is it important to you to know what your child is doing when she/he is outside of the home?

   _____ Yes, very important   _____ Somewhat important   _____ No, not important

9) How often do you know who your child is with when she/he is not at home? (Circle one response)
   
   Almost never  Occasionally  About half the time  Sometimes  Almost always
   
   1           2           3           4           5

10) How many of your child's friends do you know?

   _____ None    _____ Some    _____ Most    _____ All
Child Perception of Neighborhood Danger

Neighborhood Environment Survey -- Children's Perceptions

Please use the NUMBERS from the scale (0-3) below to let us know how often these events happen in your neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Hardly Ever</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Happens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Kids Drink Beer or Alcohol.
2. Use of Pot, Marijuana.
3. Use of Drugs such as Crack or Cocaine.
4. Sale of Drugs.
5. Kids turn to adults (other than parents) when they are in trouble.
6. Street gang activity.
7. Kids belong to street gangs.
8. Stealing.
9. Kids going to school while high on drugs.
10. Fighting without a weapon.
11. Kids talk about thoughts and feelings with neighbors, friends' parents, and friends of the family.
13. Violent crime with a weapon.
15. Kids skipping school.
16. Kids failing classes.
17. Families in the neighborhood get together for events and activities.
18. Different families move in and out the neighborhood.
22. Adults watch out for the safety of the neighborhood children.
Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger

ID: ______________________

Community Survey

CASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER THAT SAYS HOW MUCH YOU AGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel like I belong to the neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Burglary is a problem in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel loyal to the people in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Abandoned or boarded-up homes are a problem on my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Homelessness is a problem in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Night noise is quite irritating on my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Overall, I am very attracted to living in this neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Dirty or unkempt yards are a problem on my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. There is a public park near to my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Vacant lots are a problem on my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I visit with my neighbors in their homes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. If I needed advice about something I could go to someone in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Vandalism is a problem in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Drugs are a problem in my neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I know most of the names of people on my block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Given the opportunity, I would like to move out of this neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent Perception of Neighborhood Danger (page 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Violent crime is a problem in my neighborhood.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I would feel comfortable asking to borrow some food or a tool from people on my block.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Graffiti is a problem in my neighborhood.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I would feel comfortable asking people on my block to watch my home while I was away.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Gangs are a problem in my neighborhood.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Crime has gotten worse in my neighborhood in the last few years.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)

Below is a list of items that describe children and youth. For each item that describes your child now or within the past 6 months, please circle the 2 if the item is very true or often true of your child. Circle the 1 if the item is somewhat or sometimes true of your child. If the item is not true of your child, circle 0. Please answer all items as well as you can, even if some do not seem to apply to your child.

- **0** = Not True (as far as you know)
- **1** = Somewhat or Sometimes True
- **2** = Very True or Often True

#### Items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Acts too young for his/her age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Allergy (describe):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Argues a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Asthma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Behaves like opposite sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Bragging, boasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Can't concentrate, can't pay attention too long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions (describe):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Can't sit still, restless, or hyperactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Clings to adults or too dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Complains of loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Confused or seems to be in a fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Cries a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Cruel to animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Cruelty, bullying, or meanness to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Day-dreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Demands a lot of attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Destroys his/her own things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Destroys things belonging to family or others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Disobedient at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Disobedient at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Doesn't eat well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Doesn't get along with other kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Easily jealous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Eats or drinks things that are not food-don't include sweets (describe):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Fears certain animals, situations, or places, other than school (describe):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Fears going to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels he/she might think or do something bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels he/she has to be perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels or complains that no one loves him/her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels others are out to get him/her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels worthless or inferior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Gets a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Gets teased a lot</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Hangs around with others who get in trouble</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Hears sounds or voices that aren't there (describe):</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Impulsive or acts without thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Would rather be alone than with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Lying or cheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Bites fingernails</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Nervous, high-strung, or tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Nervous movements or twitch (describe):</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Nightmares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Not liked by other kids</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Too fearful or anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Feels dizzy</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Too guilty</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Overeating</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Overtired</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Overweight</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>Physical problems without known medical cause:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>a. Aches or pains (not headaches)</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>b. Headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>c. Nausea, feels sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>d. Problems with eyes (describe):</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>e. Rashes or other skin problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>f. Stomachaches or cramps</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>g. Voriting, throwing up</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-1-2</td>
<td>h. Other (describe):</td>
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Go on to the next page...
Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (page 2)

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<td>84. Strange behavior (describe):</td>
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<td>85. Strange ideas (describe):</td>
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<td>86. Stubborn, sullen, or irritable</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>87. Sudden changes in mood or feelings</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>88. Sucks a lot</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>89. Suspicious</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>90. Swearing or obscene language</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>91. Talks about killing self</td>
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<td>92. Talks or walks in sleep (describe):</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>93. Talks too much</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>94. Teases a lot</td>
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<td>95. Temper tantrums or hot temper</td>
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<td>96. Thinks about sex too much</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>97. Threatens people</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>98. Thumb-sucking</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>99. Too concerned with neatness or cleanliness</td>
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<td>100. Trouble sleeping (describe):</td>
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<td>101. Truancy, skips schools</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>102. Underactive, slow moving, or lacks energy</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>103. Unhappy, sad, or depressed</td>
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<td>104. Unusually loud</td>
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<td>105. Uses alcohol or drugs for nonmedical purposes (describe):</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>106. Vandalism</td>
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<td>107. Wets self during the day</td>
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<td>108. Wets the bed</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>109. Whining</td>
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<td>110. Wishes to be of opposite sex</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>111. Withdrawn, doesn’t get involved with others</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>112. Worries</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>113. Please write in any problems your child has that were not listed above:</td>
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</table>
State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC)

HOW I FEEL (ANXIETY) QUESTIONNAIRE
STAIC FORM C-2

Choose the word which seems to describe how you usually feel:

1. I worry about making mistakes
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
2. I feel like crying
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
3. I feel unhappy
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
4. I have trouble making up my mind
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
5. It is difficult for me to face my problems
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
6. I worry too much
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
7. I get upset at home
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
8. I am shy
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
9. I feel troubled
   □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
10. Unimportant thoughts run through my mind and bother me
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
11. I worry about school
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
12. I have trouble deciding what to do
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
13. I notice my heart beats fast
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
14. I am secretly afraid
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
15. I worry about my parents
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
16. My hands get sweaty
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
17. I worry about things that may happen
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
18. It is hard for me to fall asleep at night
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
19. I get a funny feeling in my stomach
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often
20. I worry about what others think of me
    □ hardly-ever □ sometimes □ often

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Child Depression Inventory (CDI)

**Item 1**
- □ I am sad once in a while.
- □ I am sad many times.
- □ I am sad all the time.

**Item 2**
- □ Nothing will ever work out for me.
- □ I am not sure if things will work out for me.
- □ Things will work out for me O.K.

**Item 3**
- □ I do most things O.K.
- □ I do many things wrong.
- □ I do everything wrong.

**Item 4**
- □ I have fun in many things.
- □ I have fun in some things.
- □ Nothing is fun at all.

**Item 5**
- □ I am bad all the time.
- □ I am bad many times.
- □ I am bad once in a while.

**Item 6**
- □ I think about bad things happening to me once in a while.
- □ I worry that bad things will happen to me.
- □ I am sure that terrible things will happen to me.

**Item 7**
- □ I hate myself.
- □ I do not like myself.
- □ I like myself.

**Item 8**
- □ All bad things are my fault.
- □ Many bad things are my fault.
- □ Bad things are not usually my fault.

**Item 9**
- □ I do not think about killing myself.
- □ I think about killing myself but I would not do it.
- □ I want to kill myself.

**Item 10**
- □ I feel like crying every day.
- □ I feel like crying many days.
- □ I feel like crying once in a while.

**Item 11**
- □ Things bother me all the time.
- □ Things bother me many times.
- □ Things bother me once in a while.

**Item 12**
- □ I like being with people.
- □ I do not like being with people many times.
- □ I do not want to be with people at all.

**Item 13**
- □ I cannot make up my mind about things.
- □ It is hard to make up my mind about things.
- □ I make up my mind about things easily.

**Item 14**
- □ I look O.K.
- □ There are some bad things about my looks.
- □ I look ugly.

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Child Depression Inventory (CDI) (page 2)

Remember, describe how you have been in the past two weeks.....

**Item 15**  
☐ I have to push myself all the time to do my schoolwork.  
☐ I have to push myself many times to do my schoolwork.  
☐ Doing schoolwork is not a big problem.

**Item 16**  
☐ I have trouble sleeping every night.  
☐ I have trouble sleeping many nights.  
☐ I sleep pretty well.

**Item 17**  
☐ I am tired once in a while.  
☐ I am tired many days.  
☐ I am tired all the time.

**Item 18**  
☐ Most days I do not feel like eating.  
☐ Many days I do not feel like eating.  
☐ I eat pretty well.

**Item 19**  
☐ I do not worry about aches and pains.  
☐ I worry about aches and pains many times.  
☐ I worry about aches and pains all the time.

**Item 20**  
☐ I do not feel alone.  
☐ I feel alone many times.  
☐ I feel alone all the time.

**Item 21**  
☐ I never have fun at school.  
☐ I have fun at school only once in a while.  
☐ I have fun at school many times.

**Item 22**  
☐ I have plenty of friends.  
☐ I have some friends but I wish I had more.  
☐ I do not have any friends.

**Item 23**  
☐ My schoolwork is alright.  
☐ My schoolwork is not as good as before.  
☐ I do very badly in subjects I used to be good in.

**Item 24**  
☐ I can never be as good as other kids.  
☐ I can be as good as other kids if I want to.  
☐ I am just as good as other kids.

**Item 25**  
☐ Nobody really loves me.  
☐ I am not sure if anybody loves me.  
☐ I am sure that somebody loves me.

**Item 26**  
☐ I usually do what I am told.  
☐ I do not do what I am told most times.  
☐ I never do what I am told.

**Item 27**  
☐ I get along with people.  
☐ I get into fights many times.  
☐ I get into fights all the time.

Remember to fill out the other side

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Juvenile Delinquency Scale-SR

JDS-SR

ID: ____________________________

Please write 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 to let us know which of these statements are true for YOU. No one, not even your parents or the people at your school, will be asked to see what you write here. Please be totally honest. There are no right or wrong answers.

Never  Once  2 times  3 times-  4 times-  5 times or more

1. I have skipped school or classes without permission from a parent or a teacher.
2. I have attacked someone with a weapon in order to hurt or kill them.
3. I have purposefully damaged or destroyed property that was not mine (e.g., spray painting, breaking windows, or marking on walls.)
4. I have used a weapon to rob someone.
5. I have stolen (or tried to steal) a bike, a car, or a motorcycle.
6. I have smoked cigarettes or cigars.
7. I have used marijuana or other drugs.
8. I have sold marijuana or other drugs.
9. I have carried a weapon.
10. I have been to court for something that I did.
11. I have run from the police.
12. I have taken something from a store without paying for it.
13. I have forcibly taken a purse or wallet from someone without using a weapon.
14. I have bought, sold, or kept something that I knew was stolen.
15. I have gotten drunk on beer, wine, or liquor.
16. I have hit, kicked, or thrown things at someone in my family in order to hurt them.
17. I have been involved in a gang fight or have participated in jumping someone.
18. I have hit, kicked, or thrown things at someone that was not in my family in order to hurt them.
19. I have used force or the threat of force on someone in order to have sexual contact with them.
20. I have been arrested by the police.
21. I have run away from home and stayed away over night.
22. I have purposely set fire to a house, building, car, or vacant lot.
23. I have stolen something of value like a purse or wallet from someone.
Experience Sampling Method (ESM) Record Form

**ESM**

Date: ___________ Time Signed: ___________ Amount Time Filled Out: ___________

**JUST BEFORE YOU WERE SIGNaled:**

WHERE WERE YOU? ____________________________________________

WHAT WERE YOU DOING? ______________________________________

**__________________________**

WERE YOU IN A SITUATION WHERE YOU FELT SCARED OR WHERE BAD THINGS COULD HAPPEN TO YOU?

( ) NO ( ) SORT OF ( ) MAYBE ( ) YES

WHO WERE YOU WITH? CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.

ALONE, OTHER PEOPLE NEARBY

MOTHER/STEPMOTHER/FOSTER MOTHER

FATHER/STEPFATHER/FOSTER FATHER

GRANDMOTHER/GRANDFATHER

IN CLASS (WITH CLASSMATES & TEACHER)

TALKING ON THE PHONE WITH

ALONE, NO ONE AROUND

SISTER/BROTHER

UNCLE/AUNT

COUSIN/NEPHEW/NIECE

KIDS

OTHER ADULT

**__________________________**

IF YOU WERE WITH KIDS, WERE THEY: CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.

FRIENDS

ASSOCIATES

OTHER KIDS

WERE THE KIDS:

A BOY

BOYS

A GIRL

GIRLS

MIXED BOYS AND GIRLS

BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND

**__________________________**

IF YOU WERE WITH PEOPLE, WERE THEY:

SAME

VERY

A

LITTLE

NEITHER

A LITTLE

SAME

VERY

FRIENDLY

UNHELPFUL

TRUSTWORTHY

DANGEROUS

IF YOU WERE WITH FRIENDS, HOW MUCH PRESSURE DID YOU FEEL TO DO WHAT THEY WANTED YOU TO?

( ) NONE ( ) A LITTLE ( ) SOME ( ) A LOT
AT THIS TIME, IS ANY ADULT KEEPING TRACK OF YOU?  
( ) YES  ( ) NO

IF YES, WHO?  
( ) MOTHER  
( ) FATHER  
( ) OTHER ADULT

DOES THIS PERSON KNOW:  
WHAT YOU ARE DOING?  
( ) YES  ( ) NO
WHERE YOU ARE?  
( ) YES  ( ) NO
WHO YOU ARE WITH?  
( ) YES  ( ) NO

******************************************************************************

HOW MUCH CHOICE DID YOU HAVE ABOUT WHAT YOU WERE DOING?  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

HOW HARD WAS IT TO PAY ATTENTION?  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

******************************************************************************

HOW WERE YOU FEELING WHEN YOU WERE SIGNALED? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH FEELING)

CALM  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

NERVOUS  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

LIKE YELLING AT SOMEONE  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

DISAPPOINTED  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

ANGRY  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

TOUGH  
O  A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL  
VERY MUCH  
SOME WHAT  
A LITTLE  
NOT AT ALL

OVERALL, HOW WERE YOU FEELING? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE FOR EACH SET OF FEELINGS)

HAPPY  
O  A LITTLE  
NEITHER  
SOME WHAT  
VERY

FRIENDLY  
O  A LITTLE  
NEITHER  
SOME WHAT  
VERY

GROUCHY/CRAZY  
O  A LITTLE  
NEITHER  
SOME WHAT  
VERY

SCARED  
O  A LITTLE  
NEITHER  
SOME WHAT  
VERY

RESPECTED  
O  A LITTLE  
NEITHER  
SOME WHAT  
VERY

IF YOU WERE FEELING A LOT OF SOMETHING, WHY DID YOU FEEL THAT WAY?  
(CIRCLE A FEELING OR FILL IN THE BLANK AND TELL US WHY)

I FELT SAFE, SCARED, ANGRY, HAPPY, OR

BECAUSE:

SHARE ANY GREAT THOUGHTS, NASTY CRACKS, CARTOONS & JOKES, ETC.
REFERENCE LIST


VITA

The author, Jon Goldner, received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Georgetown University in the spring of 2001. After graduating, Mr. Goldner remained in the Washington, DC area for the next two years. While there he worked part-time as a Child Care Specialist at Devereux Children’s Center, a home for emotionally disturbed children. Also during this period, he worked part-time as a Research Assistant for Dr. Ken Rubin at the University of Maryland, College Park studying children’s friendships and outcomes associated with shyness, aggression, and social competence in children. In the fall of 2003, Mr. Goldner entered the doctoral program at Loyola University Chicago on the Child and Family Track. Mr. Goldner has conducted his research at Loyola with Dr. Maryse Richards and with a focus on parenting and peer relationships, as well as exposure to community violence among urban African American adolescents. His Master’s Thesis examined parents’ awareness of their children’s experiences and deviant peer affiliations as predictors of exposure to community violence. While at Loyola, Mr. Goldner also taught undergraduate courses in Child Development and Counseling. He received his clinical training at the Loyola University Wellness Center, The University of Chicago Pediatric Neuropsychology Service, and John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County’s Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinic. Mr. Goldner is currently completing his internship at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the Bronx, New York.
The dissertation submitted by Jonathan Seth Goldner has been read and reviewed by the following committee:

Maryse Richards, Ph.D.
Professor, Psychology
Loyola University Chicago

Noni Gaylord-Harden, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Psychology
Loyola University Chicago

Tracy DeHart, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Psychology
Loyola University Chicago

Margaret Griffiths, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature that appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given full approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

_______________________    _______________________
Date              Director’s Signature