Do Parents Understand?
Examining Sons’ and Mothers’ Perceptions on Parenting Practices

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Background
• Family is a central source of social support for youth, and research consistently demonstrates the importance of family dynamics to many aspects of adolescent well-being, adjustment, and development (Hair et al., 2008).

• Supportive Mother-adolescent relations can act as a protective factor for mental health difficulties that typically have onset during adolescence (Whittle et al., 2014).

• Positive parenting practices (e.g., “eating meals together as a family”) and family involvement are important aspects associated with adolescents development of strengths, such as self-efficacy (Leidy et al., 2012; Gordon & Cui, 2012; Knerr et al., 2013).

• Still, disagreements are part of parent-adolescent relations as youth seek autonomy and make claims regarding self and identity (Smetana, 2008).

• Across adolescence, continued parental involvement – in the context of joint decision-making over multifaceted issues — is optimal for black adolescents’ well-being, adjustment, and development (Hair et al., 2008).

• Occasional arguments that occur during adolescence are seen as evidence of a gradual realignment of parent-child relationships to accommodate the increasingly mature and competent adolescent (Smetana, 2008).

• Parents’ cognitions are often hypothesized to directly impact parents’ practices and ultimately, youth development (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Sigel & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 2002). However, to date, most studies have not considered both perspectives of youth and their parents’ when investigating parenting practices.

Purpose
• The current study examines sons’/mothers’ perspectives in parenting practices and family functioning to determine if differences or similarities in perspectives is associated with positive family factors and youth development outcomes among adolescent boys.

Research Questions
• RQ1 Do sons and mothers agree on family’s parenting practices?
• RQ2 Are agreements on parenting practices related to family beliefs, cohesion, and support?
• RQ3 Do family agreements on parenting practices predict adolescents’ positive development?

Method
Sample: 255 male adolescents from Chicago Youth Developmental Study, (ages: 10-15; M =12.44; S.D. = 1.7); and their corresponding mother who was their caregiver.
• From Black & Latino ethnic backgrounds. (Fig. 1)
• Majority of mothers level of education had not finished High School. (Fig. 2)

Table 1. Regression Coefficients for Sons’ Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs about Family Purpose (β)</th>
<th>Family Cohesion (β)</th>
<th>Family Support (β)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.054</td>
<td>-0.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>-1.24</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Involvement</td>
<td>-226*</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Parenting</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Regression Coefficients for Mothers’ Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs about Family Purpose (β)</th>
<th>Family Cohesion (β)</th>
<th>Family Support (β)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.095</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Involvement</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>-1.54*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Parenting</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.054</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analyses
• Frequency of absolute value of difference scores in family involvement and positive parenting were used to examine family’s sons’/mothers’ agreements.
• A multiple regression was used to analyze the relation between sons’ and mothers’ agreements of parenting practices on overall family functioning and youth development. Regression coefficients are reported in Table 1 and Table 2.

Results
• RQ1 Do sons and mothers agree on family’s parenting practices?
• The findings suggest that a large portion of the sample had high agreement levels between sons and mothers on parenting practices.

• RQ2 Are agreements on parenting practices related to family beliefs, cohesion, and support?
• Parenting family involvement agreements from sons’ view was associated with family beliefs about purpose. Mothers parenting views in their family involvement were significant with family cohesion.

• RQ3 Do family agreements on parenting practices predict adolescents’ positive development?
• Son/mother agreement frequencies were high, yet these family aspects were not significantly related to adolescents’ positive development outcomes.

Discussion/Implications
• Overall there were high agreements between Son/Mother parenting practices.
• Our findings suggest that from sons’ perspectives, agreements in family involvement are significantly associated with their family purpose beliefs.
• From moms’ view, family involvement was significantly associated with family cohesion.
• While Son/Mother agreements on parenting practices were significantly high, this aspect was not related to positive youth development outcomes.
• Further research might explore if this is associated to parent-child gender differences, since we only considered sons and mothers. Sample selection is a limitation to this study. The sample was small and restricted to those individuals who were at a high risk for aggression.
• We did not differentiate between disclosure to mothers and fathers, which has been shown to differ (Laursen & Collins, 2009; Smetana et al., 2006).
• However, mothers determine when and how much autonomy adolescents can be allowed (Daddis & Smetana, 2005) and thus provide a valuable perspective on autonomy development in family contexts.

Acknowledgements
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Figure 1. Ethnicity
Figure 2. Mother’s level of education

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