

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES

Coparenting and Youth Adjustment During the Covid-19 Pandemic

CAITLIN GEAMAN
SPRING 2022

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for a baccalaureate degree in Human Development and Family Studies
with honors in Human Development and Family Studies

Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Susan McHale, PhD
Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Studies
Thesis Supervisor

Alyssa A. Gamaldo, PhD
Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies
Honors Advisor

* Electronic approvals are on file.

ABSTRACT

Coparenting, or the ways that parents relate to their partners in their childrearing roles and responsibilities, has been linked to youth adjustment outcomes. Current research shows, for example, that more coparenting support is linked to fewer child internalizing adjustment problems and externalizing adjustment problems. Research has also shown that families' experiences of external stressors may have negative implications for family life. An example of an external stressor on families was the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal of this study was to measure the links between coparenting and youth adjustment during the first three months of Covid-19 after school closures in order to understand a key family dynamic—coparenting—in a potentially stressful time. Further, findings may provide groundwork for future research on the impact of external stressors on families. Building on prior literature, the current study focused on three coparenting dimensions, coparenting support, division of childcare, and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare, and their associations with youth adjustment among school-aged children and adolescents during the early months of the pandemic following school closures. The sample consisted of 208 predominantly middle- and upper-middle class, married adults who were living with at least one child between 5 and 18 years of age. The majority of these parents were female (73.9%), the mean age of parents was 44.9 years ($SD= 6.66$), approximately half of the children were female (50.6%), and the mean age of children was 11.1 years ($SD= 3.35$). As part of a larger study, parents completed a 30-minute online survey that contained items about their coparenting and their child's adjustment throughout the first three months after school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Descriptive results revealed that half of the parents in the sample reported high levels of coparenting support, that one parent performed somewhat more or an equal division of childcare and that more than half of the parents perceived the division of childcare as fair. Results also showed that coparenting support was positively correlated with a more equal division of childcare and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare, and that a more equal division of childcare was positively correlated with

perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare. Other results revealed more coparenting support was associated with fewer child internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Similarly, the more parents perceived the division of childcare to be fair, the fewer externalizing behaviors (but not internalizing behaviors) were exhibited by their children. The inter-parental division of childcare was not associated with child adjustment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
<i>Coparenting and Child Adjustment</i>	3
<i>The Implications of the Covid-19 Pandemic for Families and Children</i>	5
<i>The Current Study</i>	8
Chapter 2 Methods	9
<i>Participants</i>	9
<i>Measures</i>	10
<i>Analyses</i>	12
Chapter 3 Results	13
<i>Study Goal 1</i>	13
<i>Study Goal 2</i>	14
Chapter 4 Discussion	17
<i>Dimensions of Coparenting</i>	18
<i>Coparenting and Youth Adjustment</i>	19
<i>Strengths, Limitations and Future Directions</i>	21
Appendix A Tables	23
References	28

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 1</i>	23
<i>Table 2</i>	24
<i>Table 3</i>	25
<i>Table 4</i>	26
<i>Table 5</i>	27

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful for Dr. Susan McHale for all her help throughout the entirety of this project and for helping me gain research experience in a lab setting. I would like to also thank Anna Hochgraf, who is a graduate student that has been a tremendous help with the statistical analysis portion of my study and helping with reviewing and editing my paper. This project would not have been possible without Dr. McHale's and Anna's efforts. I would also like to add a personal thank you to all my family and friends who were supportive through my journey in writing my thesis.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Coparenting is a common family dynamic that emerges when parental figures share the responsibilities for nurturing a child. Coparenting can take many forms, including setting and enforcing the same standards for child behavior and sharing childcare activities. It encompasses the range of ways that adults—often but not always, mother and father figures—relate to each partner in their roles as parents and the triadic functioning of mother-father interactions and activities in relation to their child (Stright & Neitzel, 2003). In some families, the roles of two parental figures may be coordinated, but in other families, the child rearing activities of two parents may be uncoordinated or even in conflict with each other. In other words, families differ in whether and how parental figures work harmoniously together to rear their children (Belsky et al., 1995; Feinberg, 2003). A body of research shows that how well parents work together in childrearing—the quality of the coparenting relationship—is linked to other family dynamics and youth adjustment (Cowan & McHale, 1996; Teubert & Pinquart, 2010).

Prior research on coparenting has identified several key dimensions that may be linked in different ways to child and adolescent adjustment (Feinberg et al., 2007; Riina & McHale, 2014). First, coparenting support refers to one parents' assurance of the other's competency as a parent, including showing respect and appreciation for the other's contributions and validating the other's parenting decisions and authority (Belsky et al., 1996; McHale, 1995; Weissman & Cohen 1985). Indeed, coparenting support has been very well studied and has been linked to youth adjustment (Ahmadi-Kashani, 2020; Campbell et al., 2021; Farr et al., 2019; Luthar et al.,

2000; McHale et al., 2019; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2009; Teubert & Pinquart, 2010). For example, a study of 67 mother-father families with children in middle childhood found positive associations between unsupportive coparenting and children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Kerig & McConnell, 2002). A second dimension of coparenting, the division of childcare, refers to the relative amounts of time each parent spends on caregiving tasks. In a study of 46 families with school aged children, however, although a more equal division of childcare was linked to youth's positive adjustment, parents' satisfaction with the division of childcare proved to be more closely linked than did the actual division of childcare to children's externalizing behavior problems (Chan et al., 1998). Likely related to satisfaction with the division of childcare is coparents' perceptions that the allocation of childcare tasks is fair (Egeren & Hawkins, 2004). Little is known, however, about parents' fairness perceptions and their links with child adjustment.

Importantly, families and their dynamics, including coparenting, are embedded in a larger context. In the year 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic changed the world—including family life (Prime et al., 2020): The pandemic may have served as a multifaceted stressor, which, from both family systems and family stress perspectives, may have implications for family processes and in turn, affect youth adjustment (Minuchin, 1985; Masarik & Conger, 2017). Such potential family stressors include policies and practices such as those pertaining to quarantining and social distancing (Schneider et al., 2015, 2017) and their associated social confinement (Statistics Canada, 2020), financial stressors due to unemployment (Schneider et al., 2015, 2017), changes in parents' work routines, and school closures (Galea et al., 2002; Vetter et al., 2008). With respect to school closures, research suggests that the demands of parents' daily involvement in their children's education due to school closure may have negative implications. For example,

recent research showed when children stayed home due to pandemic-related school closures, parental stress increased (Giannotti et al., 2021; Hiraoka & Tomoda, 2020). Consistent with both family systems and stress perspectives, previous research documents that parental stressors are correlated with child adjustment (Neppel & Donnellan, 2016).

Leveraging prior research on coparenting and the limited work on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic for family life and child adjustment, the present study examined coparenting and its links to child adjustment during the three-month period following school closures that began in March 2020. The specific aims were: (1) to describe coparenting during the three months following school closures in the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically, coparenting support, the inter-parental division of childcare responsibilities and parents' perceptions of the fairness of the division of childcare; and (2) to assess the links between coparenting support, the division of childcare and perceptions of fairness in the division of childcare and child adjustment, specifically children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors during the period following school closure.

Coparenting and Child Adjustment

Supportive coparenting is an important predictor of youth adjustment. For example, this dimension of coparenting was linked to child externalizing behaviors in a longitudinal study of preschool aged children. The investigators suggested that coparenting support may have a protective, stabilizing effect including in the face of risk (Luthar et al., 2000; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2009). Specifically, these studies showed that supportive coparenting in early childhood predicted fewer behavior problems in middle childhood. In another study of 67 mother-father

families of boys and girls ages ranging from 7-11 years old, linked unsupportive, competitive coparenting with their children experiencing increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Kerig & McConnell, 2002). Additionally, a three-year longitudinal study of 720 mother-father families with adolescents ages 9-18 years examined coparenting conflict (disagreement over childrearing issues or unsupportive coparenting) and its association with adolescent externalizing behaviors, specifically, antisocial behavior. Results revealed links between increases in coparenting conflict and increases in youth antisocial behavior, though only for youth whose antisocial behavior was low to begin with (Feinberg et al., 2007). Moreover, supportive coparenting is thought to be important for adolescent adjustment (Campbell et al., 2021; Riina & McHale 2012; Teubert & Pinquart, 2010) but since research about associations of coparenting and adolescent adjustment is limited (Feinberg et al., 2007), the current study will include a focus on adolescents.

Only a few studies have examined coparents' division of childcare. For example, parents' satisfaction with the division of childcare was positively correlated with emotional adjustment in young children (Chan et al., 1998). Specifically, couples who were more satisfied with their division of childcare had school aged children who experienced fewer externalizing behavior problems. Also, parental satisfaction with the division of childcare proved to be more closely linked than did the actual division of childcare to children's externalizing behavior problems. The investigators suggested that these results were due to the quality of the inter-parental relationship (Chan et al., 1988). In contrast, Farr and colleagues' (2019) longitudinal study of adopted children ages 3-12 from 106 two-parent families (same sex and heterosexual) examined the division of childcare using *The Who Does What?* (Cowan & Cowan, 1990) scale, which measures how equally childcare is divided as well as parents' satisfaction with the division of

childcare. This study stated that there was no association between the division of childcare and either children's internalizing or externalizing behaviors.

Like research on the extent to which coparents divide the tasks of childcare and their satisfaction with its division, we know little about whether and how parents' perceptions of its fairness are linked to child adjustment. Equity theory, however, provides for a prediction about such potential linkages. Specifically, equity theory focuses on how fair the relationship feels for each relationship partner (DeMaris & Mahoney, 2017), and holds that if one or both partners feel that what they give versus receive in the context of their relationship is inequitable, they may experience psychological distress, relationship conflict, and ultimately, become less satisfied with their relationship. From a family systems perspective, in turn, less satisfaction in the interparental relationship may be linked to less positive child adjustment (Minuchin, 1985). Thus, grounded in equity theory, this study explored the links between coparents' perceptions of the fairness of the division of childcare and children's internalizing and externalizing symptoms.

The Implications of the Covid-19 Pandemic for Families and Children

Family stress theory holds that stressors from the outside world can have negative effects on family relationships (Browne et al., 2015; Masarik & Conger, 2017). In previous research, external stressors have been linked to parental mental health problems (Galea et al., 2002; Vetter et al., 2008), poor marital quality (Solantaus, Lenionen, & Punamaki, 2004) and less supportive coparenting (Masarik & Conger, 2017). An example of an external stressor is economic hardship, which has been linked to parental psychological distress (Masarik & Conger, 2017), unsupportive parenting practices (Newland et al., 2013), and lower quality coparenting (Landers-

Potts et al., 2015; Prime et al., 2020). Relatedly, family systems theory states that relationships within families are interdependent with implications for how children develop (Minuchin, 1985). Thus, stressors emanating from the world beyond the family may have implications for parents' mental health, and in turn, implications for coparenting and child adjustment (Chemtob et al., 2010), such as children's emotional and behavioral outcomes (Prime et al., 2020; Hertzman & Boyce, 2010; Repetti et al., 2002). Economic hardship has negative effects on family relationships and parenting practices. Concurrently, these negative effects have been linked to externalizing (Neppl et al., 2015) and internalizing problems (Zhang, 2014) in early childhood (Neppl et al., 2015) and adolescence (White et al., 2018).

During the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, pandemic-related closures were an immense outside stressor on families which, according to family stress theory, could impact family processes and child adjustment. For instance, a recent survey of 3,617 adults with children under the age of 18 conducted by the American Psychological Association (2020) revealed economic and employment concerns: 70% of these parents reported stressors about their basic needs such as shelter, food scarcity and safety. In addition, 74% of parents reported that their normal family routines were disrupted, and others reported decreases in social support due to social isolation and quarantine requirements. Finally, these parents reported increases in the demands of childrearing due to school closures, such as meeting children's socialization and educational needs. For example, 71% reported difficulties in managing online schooling for their children (American Psychological Association, 2020). This evidence provided a basis for the current study's focus on links between coparenting and youth adjustment following pandemic-driven school closures.

Although there has been minimal research during the pandemic on the links between coparenting and youth adjustment, the few available studies provided a basis for the current study's hypotheses. First, a study of 602 Italian parents (526 mothers and 76 fathers) of children ages 3-11 years old conducted during the early months of the pandemic focused on the effects of the pandemic on parental stress, coparenting, and child adjustment in comparison to pre-pandemic life (Giannotti et al., 2021). Participants were asked to answer questions about their coparenting relationship quality, including child-rearing agreement, coparental support/undermining, division of labor and joint management of family dynamics, parental stressors, and child externalizing behavior twice--first, in the month before Covid-19-related home confinement and second, in May 2020. The researchers found a significant increase in child externalizing behaviors across these two time points; significant predictors of increases in children's externalizing behaviors, which were more common in boys were parental stress and children's remote learning. The investigators concluded that parental stress affected the overall quality of coparenting relationships which, in turn, affected child and adolescent externalizing behaviors. Importantly, the researchers mentioned that the direct effect of coparenting on youth adjustment during Covid-19 has yet to be examined (Giannotti et al., 2021).

Feinberg et al. (2021) also studied coparenting during the pandemic, conducting a longitudinal study of 129 predominantly White families with children averaging 9.9 years old. This study compared overall coparenting quality, which included child-rearing agreement, coparental support/undermining, division of labor and joint management of family dynamics, as well as parent (122 mothers and 84 fathers) mental health and child adjustment (internalizing and externalizing) using measures collected prior to the pandemic (in 2017) and measures collected in April and May, 2020. The investigators found a significant increase in parent depression and

children's adjustment problems in comparison to pre-pandemic levels. For example, children's externalizing and internalizing symptoms were 2.5-4 times more frequent compared to pre-Covid-19 levels. Additionally, overall coparenting quality declined significantly. The study, however, did not examine direct links between coparenting and child adjustment. Building on Feinberg et al. (2021), the current study will examine the links between three dimensions of coparenting—support, the division of childcare and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare—and children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors in the context of Covid-19.

The Current Study

This study addressed two goals. The first goal was to describe three dimensions of coparenting, namely coparenting support, the inter-parental division of childcare responsibilities and parents' perceptions of the fairness of the division of childcare, during three early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, following school closures. The second goal was to assess the links between these dimensions of coparenting and child adjustment, specifically children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors during the period following school closures. Specifically, analyses tested the hypotheses that, during the early months of the pandemic, coparenting support, a more equal division of childcare, and perceptions that the childcare division was fair would be negatively associated with child adjustment problems.

Chapter 2

Methods

Participants

Data from this study came from the Data-4-Action project, an investigation of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, including measures of coronavirus exposure via serum data collection and spillover effects of the pandemic to individual well-being and family relationships.

Participants were permanent residents of a single county in a northeastern state that was home to a large research university. The sample for the present analyses was comprised of 208 adult volunteers (age 18 years and older) who reported that they were married and were living with one or more of their children, ages 5-18 years. This study was reviewed by the University's Institutional Review Board, and participants gave written consent before participating in the study and were given a \$25 gift card.

A screening questionnaire was sent to 604 participants between August and October, 2020; for this study, the analytic sample included 208 parents who completed a 30-minute online survey that included items about their parenting and their child's adjustment, focusing on the early months of the pandemic following school closure, that is, from March through July, 2020. This sample included families who were predominantly middle- and upper-middle class based on family income and parents' education. Most parents had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education, and the family incomes ranged from \$25,000 to over \$200,000 (see Table 1 for more details). For parents, 73.88% were female and 26.12% were male, and parents' mean age was 44.90 years ($SD= 6.66$). For children, 50.61% were female and 49.39% were male and children

averaged 11.07 years of age ($SD= 3.35$). Demographic characteristics for the sample are detailed in Table 1.

Measures

Coparenting support was assessed via parents' ratings of 6 items adapted from the Coparenting Relationship Scale (Feinberg et al., 2012) to focus on coparenting support during the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, parents were asked to think about the period from March through July 2020 in rating their partner on a 6-point scale (0= *Not true at all*; 1= *Rarely true*; 2= *Seldom true*; 3= *Sometimes true*; 4= *Occasionally true*; 5= *Often true*; 6= *Very true*). Example items are: “[coparent_name] and I have different ideas about how to raise our child(ren) during the pandemic” and “[coparent_name] has often undermined my parenting during the pandemic”. A mean score was calculated such that higher scores signify more coparenting support. The Cronbach alpha for this sample was 0.84, indicating acceptable internal consistency, and 2.86% of total observations were missing.

Division of Childcare was assessed with the U.S. Couples' Divisions of Childcare during Covid-19 pandemic measure (Carlson et al., 2020). Parents rated how they and their partner divided childcare activities between March, 2020 through July 31, 2020 using a 5-point scale (1= *I do it all*; 2= *I do more of it*; 3= *We share it equally*; 4= *My partner does more of it*; 5= *My partner does it all*). Examples from this 8-item scale are: “Talk/listen to child” and “Monitor child's whereabouts.” Ratings were recoded such that a score of 3 signified an equal division of labor for any given item, a score of 2 signified that division of labor was sometimes unequal, and a score of 1 signified that one partner did all the childcare (i.e., a very unequal division of labor).

A mean across all items was calculated such that high scores signified that childcare was more equally divided. Cronbach alpha for this sample was 0.78, indicating acceptable internal consistency and 6.12% of total observations were missing.

Perceived Fairness of Division of Childcare—using an item adapted from a measure of perceptions of parents' fair treatment of their children (McHale et al., 2000), parents rated one item on the extent to which they saw the division of childcare tasks and responsibilities as fair during the period from March through July 2020. On this 5-point scale (1= *Very unfair to me*; 2= *Somewhat unfair to me*; 3= *fair to both of us*; 4= *somewhat unfair to my partner*; 5= *very unfair to my partner*"), high scores signified a division of labor that favored the participant (versus the coparent). Ratings were recorded such that a score of 3 meant that the participant perceived the divided childcare tasks as fair, a score of 2 signified that the participant perceived the division of childcare as somewhat fair, and a score of 1 signified that the participant perceived the division as unfair for either themselves or their spouse. A total of 6.53% of observations were missing.

Child Adjustment was assessed with the internalizing and externalizing scales from the Pediatric Symptoms Checklist (PSC)-Short Form. (Gardner et al., 1999). Parents rated child behaviors during the period from March 2020 through July 2020 using a 3-point Likert scale (0= *Never*; 1= *Sometimes*; 2= *Often*). Examples from the 6-item internalizing subscale are: "Feels sad, unhappy" and "Feels hopeless." Examples from the 6-item externalizing scale are: "Refuses to share" and "Fights with other children." For each subscale, the mean across items was calculated such that high scores signify more symptoms. Cronbach's alphas for this sample were 0.82 for externalizing and 0.81 for internalizing problems, indicating acceptable internal consistency and 5.62% of total observations of externalizing and internalizing problems were missing.

Covariates. Child gender was reported by parents.

Analyses

Descriptive statistics were examined for all variables within the study. For coparenting variables and child adjustment variables, skewness and kurtosis were examined. To address the first study goal, which was to describe coparenting support during the pandemic, the current study examined the means, standard deviations, and ranges for coparenting support, division of childcare responsibilities, and perceptions of fairness of division of childcare for mothers and fathers reports. This study also examined correlations between the three coparenting measures, and correlations between internalizing and externalizing adjustment.

The second study goal, which was to assess the links between the three dimensions of coparenting and child adjustment, was addressed with regression analyses. Specifically, the regression models for child internalizing and externalizing problems were estimated one at a time. As a first step, the three dimensions of coparenting were entered into the model simultaneously, and then nonsignificant effects were removed to estimate the final regression model. Finally, no covariates were included in the regression models.

Chapter 3

Results

Study Goal 1

Coparenting support had a mean of 4.76 ($SD = 1.12$, Possible Range = 0.00-6.00; Sample Range = 0.00-6.00) and 50% of parents reported a score of 5.00 or higher, indicating that half of the parents in the sample reported very high levels of coparenting support. Coparenting support had a left skew of -1.45 and a kurtosis of 2.72. Division of childcare had a mean of 2.37 ($SD = 0.40$, Possible Range = 1.00-3.00; Sample Range = 1.17-3.00), and 50% of parents reported a score of 2.43 or higher, indicating that, across the activities they reported on, the division of labor was close to equal. Division of childcare had a left skew of -0.47 and a kurtosis of -0.17 . Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare had a mean of 2.60 ($SD = 0.59$, Possible Range = 1.00-3.00; Sample Range = 1.00-3.00) and 50% of parents reported a score of 3, indicating that half of parents perceived the division of childcare as fair. Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare had a left skew of -1.19 and a kurtosis of 0.41. Means, standard deviations, and ranges for the three coparenting dimensions are presented in Table 2.

Correlations between the coparenting variables are presented in Table 3. Coparenting support was positively correlated with the division of childcare ($r = 0.48$, $p < .001$), and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare ($r = 0.45$, $p < .001$), such that more support was associated with a more equal division of childcare and perceptions that the division of childcare was more fair. Division of childcare was positively correlated with perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare ($r = 0.46$, $p < .001$), such that a more equal division of childcare was associated with perceptions that the division of childcare was more fair.

Additional descriptive results showed that child gender was not correlated with coparenting support ($r = 0.09, p = 0.18$), division of childcare ($r = 0.06, p = 0.37$), or perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare ($r = 0.00, p = 0.95$).

Study Goal 2

As shown in Table 2, children were generally well-adjusted, with mean scores indicative of low levels of both internalizing and externalizing problems. The sample mean for externalizing problems was 0.44 ($SD = 0.37$, Possible Range = 0.00-2.00; Sample Range = 0.00-1.71), indicating that this sample had relatively low levels of externalizing problems, on average. The sample mean for internalizing problems was 0.72 ($SD = 0.47$, Possible Range = 0.00-2.00; Sample Range = 0.00-2.00), indicating that this sample had relatively low to moderate levels of internalizing problems. Further, child gender was not correlated with either of these problems (Table 3). Preliminary correlational analyses (see Table 3) also revealed that: Coparenting support was negatively correlated with child internalizing problems ($r = -0.32, p < .001$) and externalizing problems ($r = -0.30, p < .001$), such that higher levels of coparenting support were associated fewer internalizing and externalizing problems. Division of childcare was negatively correlated with children's internalizing problems ($r = -0.20, p < .01$) and externalizing problems ($r = -0.16, p = 0.02$), such that the more equal division of childcare was associated with fewer internalizing and externalizing problems. Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare was negatively correlated with child internalizing ($r = -0.27, p < .001$) and externalizing problems ($r = -0.33, p < .001$), such that perceptions that the division of childcare was more fair were associated with fewer internalizing and externalizing problems. Externalizing problems were

positively correlated with internalizing problems ($r = 0.32, p < .001$). Child gender was not correlated with child externalizing problems ($r = 0.06, p = 0.38$), or internalizing problems ($r = 0.02, p = 0.71$).

Results from the linear regression models testing associations between coparenting dimensions and internalizing problems are presented in Table 4. The overall model for internalizing problems with all three coparenting dimensions included (“Full Model”) was statistically significant ($F(3) = 10.79, p < .001, Adjusted R-squared = 0.12$), and the Adjusted R-squared value suggested that the predictors explained 12% of the variance in internalizing problems. There was a statistically significant main effect for coparenting support ($\beta = -0.13, t = -3.17, p = .00$), such that the more coparenting support adults reported, the fewer internalizing problems were exhibited by children. Division of childcare ($\beta = -0.03, t = -0.28, p = .78$) and perceptions of fairness of childcare ($\beta = -0.09, t = -1.43, p = .16$) were not significant predictors of internalizing behaviors, therefore, these were omitted from the final model. In the final model for internalizing problems, the overall model was again statistically significant ($F(1) = 27.44, p < .001, Adjusted R-squared = 0.10$), and there was a main effect of coparenting support ($\beta = -0.13, t = -5.24, p < .001$).

Results from the linear regression models testing associations between coparenting dimensions and externalizing problems are presented in Table 5. The overall model for externalizing problems with all three coparenting dimensions included (“Full Model”) was statistically significant ($F(3) = 12.45, p < .001, Adjusted R-squared = 0.14$), and the Adjusted R-squared value suggested that the predictors explained 14% of the variance in externalizing problems. There was a statistically significant main effect for coparenting support ($\beta = -0.09, t = -3.25, p = .01$), such that the more coparenting support adults reported, the fewer externalizing

problems children exhibited. Division of childcare ($\beta = 0.02, t = 0.21, p = .83$) was not a significant predictor of externalizing behaviors, therefore, this was omitted from the final model. There was a statistically significant main effect for perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare ($\beta = -0.13, t = -2.86, p = .005$), such that the more parents perceived the division of childcare to be fair, the fewer externalizing behaviors were exhibited by children. In the final model for externalizing problems, the overall model was statistically significant ($F(2) = 20.05, p < .001, Adjusted R-squared = 0.15$) and there were main effects for coparenting support ($\beta = -0.09, t = -3.50, p = .001$) and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare ($\beta = -0.14, t = -3.16, p = .002$).

Chapter 4

Discussion

The first aim of this study was to describe coparenting support, division of childcare, and the perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare during the first three months following the Covid-19 pandemic school closures. The second aim of the current study was to assess the associations between the three coparenting dimensions and youth adjustment, specifically children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors. It was hypothesized that coparenting support, more equal division of childcare, and perceptions that the division of childcare was fair would be negatively associated with youth's internalizing and externalizing behaviors during the first three months following school closures. This was hypothesized based on family systems theory, which holds that the family works as a unit and is interconnected (Minuchin, 1985). Thus, more satisfaction in the inter-parental relationships may be linked to less child adjustment problems. Results of prior research support that positive coparenting support and more equal division of childcare were protective against child externalizing and internalizing behaviors (Chan et al., 1998; Feinberg et al., 2007; Kerig & McConnell, 2002), particularly during a major external stressor such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare were hypothesized to be negatively associated with youth adjustment problems, consistent with equity theory, which holds that if one or both partners feel that what they offer versus obtain in their relationship is inequitable then they will experience lower satisfaction and higher psychological distress (DeMaris & Mahoney, 2017). Results showed that for all coparenting measures half of the sample reported high levels of positive coparenting, including support, equality in childcare and perceptions that the division of childcare was fair. This study also found the measures of coparenting were correlated. With respect to the second study goal, findings

revealed that coparenting support was negatively associated with child internalizing and externalizing behaviors and perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare were negatively associated with child externalizing behaviors. Overall, this study added to the limited research on linkages between coparenting dimensions and youth adjustment during Covid-19 and it provided a groundwork for future research.

Dimensions of Coparenting

To describe coparenting during the first few months of the Covid-19 pandemic, this study examined descriptive statistics for each of the three coparenting dimensions. First for coparenting support, half of the parents reported high levels of coparenting support and it was positively correlated with the division of childcare such that more coparenting support corresponded to a more equal division of childcare. Second, for the division of childcare, half of the parents reported that one of the parents was doing somewhat more or that the division was equal. Also, the division of childcare and the perceptions of fairness of the divisions of childcare were positively correlated such that the more equal the inter-parental division of childcare, the more the division of childcare was perceived as fair. Then, for the perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare half of the parents perceived the division of childcare as fair. Feinberg et al. (2003) suggested that social support might relieve some pressure on the division of labor and improve overall coparenting relations and in turn, child adjustment. The families in this sample may have experienced such social support—which may have explained why this study reported relatively high levels of positive coparenting. Overall, during the early months of the pandemic

following school closures, the findings suggested that families were functioning well, on average, in this key domain of family dynamics.

Coparenting and Youth Adjustment

The current study used regression analyses to examine the associations between coparenting support and youth adjustment. This study found that, with all three coparenting measures in the models, coparenting support was associated with fewer internalizing problems and externalizing problems among children and adolescents, suggesting a possible protective effect of coparenting support. This result is consistent with prior research on supportive coparenting in early childhood being associated with fewer child externalizing behaviors in middle childhood (Luthar et al., 2000; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2009). It is also consistent with findings suggesting that unsupportive coparenting was associated with increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors in middle aged children (Kerig & McConnell, 2002). Further, this study's finding is in line with findings from Feinberg et al.'s (2021) longitudinal study, which found overall coparenting (child-rearing agreement, coparental support/undermining, division of labor and joint management of family dynamics) to be linked with more externalizing problems in adolescence during Covid-19. However, this study extended on Feinberg et al.'s (2021) and other prior research by demonstrating a negative association between supportive coparenting and adolescent adjustment during a time of stress—the Covid-19 pandemic. As this is one of the few studies that focused on the links between coparenting and adolescent adjustment outcomes, future research should continue to evaluate these associations among adolescents.

This study also found that division of childcare was not associated with youth internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Although prior research on the division of childcare is limited, this finding is consistent with results from Farr et al. (2019). A possible explanation is that previous research, for example Chan et al. (1998), found satisfaction with the division of childcare to be more closely correlated with youth adjustment than the actual division of childcare. However, considering there is minimal research on this finding, it is not clear why the division of childcare did not associate with youth adjustment problems.

Finally, this study found that perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare were negatively associated with youth externalizing behaviors, such that the more the parents perceived the division of childcare to be fair, the fewer externalizing behaviors exhibited by children. This may suggest that fairness perceptions served as a protective factor during the stressors of the Covid-19 pandemic. Family systems theory and prior research suggest that extrafamilial social support during times of stress can be a protective factor for the coparenting relationship (Johnson & Sarason, 1978).

The link between coparents' fairness perceptions and youth adjustment is consistent with both equity theory and family system theory. According to equity theory, if one or both partners feel that what they give versus receive in their relationship is inequitable then they will experience lower satisfaction and more psychological distress (Demaris & Mahoney, 2017). In turn—this effect on the parents' relationship may have negative implications on child adjustment. Turning to the family systems perspective, family subsystems are interconnected and thus less satisfaction in the inter-parental relationship may be associated with more child adjustment issues (Minuchin, 1985). Therefore, based on the negative association between perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare and externalizing behaviors, the equity theory and family

systems perspective may explain why there were fewer externalizing behaviors with this coparenting dimension. Finally, there was no association between perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare and internalizing behaviors. Considering there is very minimal research on perceptions of the division of childcare and child adjustment behaviors it is not clear why this association was not found.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Directions

This study has many strengths that can help lead to future research. First, the findings provide new information about coparenting-youth adjustment associations. In addition, majority of the study variables had a very strong internal consistency which means that the variables used were reliable. A final strength of this research is that a survey was used which allowed the parents to answer questions for themselves and their children. This is a strength because it allowed the study to get their psychological data from their parents and the children without having the children take a survey.

Although there were notable contributions from the current study, future research is suggested. First, this is a cross-sectional, correlational design which means that we do not know the direction of effects and we cannot make causal inferences. In future research, this study could conduct an experiment with families assigned at random to an intervention to improve their coparenting versus a control (no intervention) condition and then, assess group differences in youth adjustment following the intervention. Second, this study collected retrospective reports of the first three months following school closures, which means that they may not be accurate because participants had to remember what they were experiencing and feeling months earlier.

This is also a limitation because the pandemic was a significant stressor for many people, and this may have impaired the accuracy of the retrospective reports. Finally, the findings are limited in their generalizability to middle- and upper- middle class and bachelor's degree or higher families who had parents that were married and lived with one or more of their children ages 18 or younger.

In sum, the current study contributes new information about coparenting during a pandemic and its associations with child and adolescent adjustment. This study improved our understanding of family functioning in terms of coparenting dynamics and youth psychological wellbeing in the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is important to continue researching the associations between coparenting dimensions and youth adjustment to better understand coparenting and the external conditions that may affect coparenting quality and its links with youth adjustment.

Appendix A

Tables

Table 1

Background Statistics

Variable	N (%)	Partner
Household Income		
>\$25,000	2 (0.82)	-
\$25,000-\$49,999	5 (2.04)	-
\$50,000-\$74,999	13 (5.31)	-
\$75,000-\$99,999	28 (11.43)	-
\$100,000-\$149,999	97 (39.59)	-
\$150,000-\$199,999	46 (18.78)	-
<\$200,000	36 (14.69)	-
Parent Education		
High School Diploma/GED	7 (2.88)	14 (6.33)
Associates Degree/Vocational Training	6 (2.47)	11 (4.98)
Bachelor's Degree	82 (33.74)	76 (34.39)
Master's Degree	74 (30.45)	57 (25.79)
Graduate/Professional Degree	74 (30.45)	63 (28.51)
Parent Gender		
Male	64 (26.12)	-
Female	181 (73.88)	-
Child Gender		
Male	121 (49.39)	-
Female	124 (50.61)	-

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Possible Range	Sample Range
Coparenting Support	4.76	1.12	0.00 - 6.00	0.00 - 6.00
Division of Childcare	2.37	0.40	1.00 - 3.00	1.17 - 3.00
Perceptions of Fairness¹	2.60	0.59	1.00 - 3.00	1.00 - 3.00
Externalizing Problems	0.44	0.37	0.00 - 2.00	0.00 - 1.71
Boys	0.46	0.40	-	0.00 - 1.71
Girls	0.41	0.36	-	0.00 - 1.43
Internalizing Problems	0.72	0.47	0.00 - 2.00	0.00 - 2.00
Boys	0.73	0.51	-	0.00 - 2.00
Girls	0.71	0.42	-	0.00 - 1.80

Note. ¹Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare.

Table 3

Correlations between Study Variables ($N = 208$)

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.Coparenting Support						
2.Division of Childcare	.48***					
3.Perceptions of Fairness¹	.45***	.46***				
4.Externalizing Problems	-.30***	-.16*	-.33***			
5.Internalizing Problems	-.32***	-.27**	-.27***	.32***		
6.Child Gender	.09	.06	.00	.06	.02	

Note. ¹Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Results from Regression Analyses Predicting Child Internalizing Behavior ($N = 208$)

	Full Model			Final Model		
	β	SE	t	β	SE	t
Intercept	1.62***	0.20	8.01	1.37***	0.13	10.86
Coparenting Support	-0.13**	0.03	-3.17	-0.13***	0.03	-5.24
Division of Childcare	-0.03	0.10	-0.28	-	-	-
Perceptions of Fairness¹	-0.09	0.06	-1.43	-	-	-
Adjusted R-Squared		0.12			0.10	

Note. ¹Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. β represents parameter estimate. SE represents standard error. t represents t value.

Table 5

Results from Regression Analyses Predicting Child Externalizing Behavior ($N = 208$)

	Full Model			Final Model		
	β	SE	t	β	SE	t
Intercept	1.19***	0.16	7.46	1.22***	0.12	9.86
Coparenting Support	-0.09**	0.03	-3.25	-0.09**	0.02	-3.50
Division of Childcare	0.02	0.08	0.21	-	-	-
Perceptions of Fairness¹	-0.13**	0.05	-2.86	-0.14**	0.04	-3.16
Adjusted R-Squared		0.14			0.15	

Note. ¹Perceptions of fairness of the division of childcare. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. β represents parameter estimate. SE represents standard error. t represents t value.

References

- Ahmadi-Kashani, Y. (2020). The Impact of Child's Inhibitory Control on Marital Satisfaction and Coparenting. *Department of Special Education and Clinical Science and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon*, 1–39.
- Baril, M. E., Crouter, A. C., & McHale, S. M. (2007). Processes linking adolescent well-being, marital love, and coparenting. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *21*(4), 645-654.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.21.4.645>
- Belsky, J., Crnic, K., & Gable, S. (1995). The determinants of coparenting in families with toddler boys: Spousal differences and daily hassles. *Child Development*, *66*(3), 629.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1131939>
- Belsky, J., Woodworth, S., & Crnic, K. (1996). Trouble in the second year: Three questions about family interaction. *Child Development*, *67*(2), 556–578.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1996.tb01751.x>
- Browne, D. T., Plamondon, A., Prime, H., Puente-Duran, S., & Wade, M. (2015). Cumulative risk and developmental health: An argument for the importance of a family-wide science. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, *6*(4), 397–407.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.1349>
- Carlson, D. L., Petts, R. J., & Pepin, J. R. (2021). Changes in US parents' domestic labor during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sociological Inquiry*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12459>
- Chan, R. W., Brooks, R. C., Raboy, B., & Patterson, C. J. (1998). Division of labor among lesbian and heterosexual parents: Associations with children's adjustment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *12*(3), 402–419. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.12.3.402>

- Chemtob, C. M., Nomura, Y., Rajendran, K., Yehuda, R., Schwartz, D., & Abramovitz, R. (2010). Impact of maternal posttraumatic stress disorder and depression following exposure to the September 11 attacks on preschool children's behavior. *Child Development, 81*(4), 1129–1141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01458.x>
- Cowan, C. P., & Cowan, P. A. (1990). Who does what? In J. Touliatos, B. F. Perlmutter, & M. A. Straus (Eds.), *Handbook of Family Measurement Techniques* (pp. 447–448). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- DeMaris, A., & Mahoney, A. (2017). The perception of fairness in infant care and mothers' postpartum depression. *Social Science & Medicine, 190*, 199–206. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.08.030>
- Egeren, L. A., & Hawkins, D. P. (2004). Coming to terms with coparenting: Implications of definition and measurement. *Journal of Adult Development, 11*(3), 165–178. <https://doi.org/10.1023/b:jade.0000035625.74672.0b>
- Farr, R. H., Bruun, S. T., & Patterson, C. J. (2019). Longitudinal associations between coparenting and child adjustment among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive parent families. *Developmental Psychology, 55*(12), 2547–2560. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000828>
- Feinberg, M. E. (2003). The internal structure and ecological context of coparenting: A framework for research and Intervention. *Parenting, 3*(2), 95–131. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327922par0302_01
- Feinberg, M. E., Brown, L. D., & Kan, M. L. (2012). A multi-domain self-report measure of coparenting. *Parenting, 12*(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295192.2012.638870>

- Feinberg, M. E., Mogle, J., Lee, J. K., Tornello, S. L., Hostetler, M. L., Cifelli, J. A., Bai, S., & Hotez, E. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on parent, child, and family functioning. *Family Process*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12649>
- Galea, S., Ahern, J., Resnick, H., Kilpatrick, D., Bucuvalas, M., Gold, J., & Vlahov, D. (2002). Psychological sequelae of the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City. *New England Journal of Medicine*, *346*(13), 982–987. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmsa013404>
- Gardner, W.; Murphy, M.; Childs, G.; Kelleher, K.; Pagano, M.; Jellinek, M.; McInerney, T. K.; Wasserman, R. C.; Nutting, P.; Chiappetta, L. (1999). The PSC-17: A brief pediatric symptom checklist with psychosocial problem subscales. A report from PROS and ASPN. *Ambulatory Child Health*, *5*(3): 225–236.
- Giannotti, M., Mazzoni, N., Bentenuto, A., Venuti, P., & Falco, S. (2021). Family adjustment to Covid-19 lockdown in Italy: Parental stress, coparenting, and child externalizing behavior. *Family Process*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12686>
- Hertzman, C., & Boyce, T. (2010). How experience gets under the skin to create gradients in Developmental Health. *Annual Review of Public Health*, *31*(1), 329–347. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.012809.103538>
- Hiraoka, D., & Tomoda, A. (2020). Relationship between parenting stress and school closures due to the covid -19 pandemic. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, *74*(9), 497–498. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.13088>
- Johnson, J. H., & Sarason, I. G. (1978). Life stress, depression and anxiety: Internal-external control as a moderator variable. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, *22*(3), 205–208. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-3999\(78\)90025-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-3999(78)90025-9)

- Landers-Potts, M. A., Wickrama, K. A., Simons, L. G., Cutrona, C., Gibbons, F. X., Simons, R. L., & Conger, R. (2015). An extension and moderational analysis of the family stress model focusing on African American adolescents. *Family Relations, 64*(2), 233–248.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12117>
- Lewis, F. C., Reeve, R. A., Kelly, S. P., & Johnson, K. A. (2017). Evidence of substantial development of inhibitory control and sustained attention between 6 and 8 years of age on an unpredictable go/no-go task. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 157*, 66–80.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2016.12.008>
- Liu, Q., Zhu, X., Ziegler, A., & Shi, J. (2015). The effects of inhibitory control training for preschoolers on reasoning ability and neural activity. *Scientific Reports, 5*(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/srep14200>
- Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development, 71*(3), 543–562.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00164>
- Masarik, A. S., & Conger, R. D. (2017). Stress and child development: A review of the family stress model. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 13*, 85–90.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.05.008>
- McConnell, M. C., & Kerig, P. K. (2002). Assessing coparenting in families of school-age children: Validation of the Coparenting and Family Rating System. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue Canadienne Des Sciences Du Comportement, 34*(1), 44–58.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0087154>

- McHale, J. P. (1995). Coparenting and triadic interactions during infancy: The roles of marital distress and child gender. *Developmental Psychology, 31*(6), 985–996.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.31.6.985>
- McHale, S. M., Updegraff, K. A., Jackson-Newsom, J., Tucker, C. J., & Crouter, A. C. (2000). When does parents' differential treatment have negative implications for siblings? *Social Development, 9*(2), 149–172. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9507.00117>
- Minuchin, P. (1985). Families and individual development: Provocations from the field of family therapy. *Child Development, 56*(2), 289. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1129720>
- Neppl, T. K., Senia, J. M., & Donnellan, M. B. (2016). Effects of economic hardship: Testing the family stress model over time. *Journal of Family Psychology, 30*(1), 12–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000168>
- Newland, R. P., Crnic, K. A., Cox, M. J., & Mills-Koonce, W. R. (2013). The family model stress and maternal psychological symptoms: Mediated pathways from economic hardship to parenting. *Journal of Family Psychology, 27*(1), 96–105.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031112>
- Prime, H., Wade, M., & Browne, D. T. (2020). Risk and resilience in family well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. *American Psychologist, 75*(5), 631–643.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000660>
- Powe, F., Mallise, C.A. & Campbell, L.E. A first step to supporting the coparenting Relationship and reducing child behavior problems: A Delphi Consensus Study. *J Child Fam Stud* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02090-3>

- Repetti, R. L., Taylor, S. E., & Seeman, T. E. (2002). Risky families: Family social environments and the mental and physical health of offspring. *Psychological Bulletin*, *128*(2), 330–366. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.128.2.330>
- Riina, E. M., & McHale, S. M. (2013). Bidirectional influences between dimensions of coparenting and adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *43*(2), 257–269. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-9940-6>
- Risk and Resilience in Family Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic Statistics Canada. (2020). Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 1: Impacts of COVID-19. Retrieved April 18, 2020, from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/200408/dq200408c-eng.pdf?st_QdNFbXIA
- Schneider, W., Waldfogel, J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2015). The great recession and behavior problems in 9-year old children. *Developmental Psychology*, *51*(11), 1615–1629. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000038>
- Schneider, W., Waldfogel, J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2017). The great recession and risk for child abuse and neglect. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *72*, 71–81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2016.10.016>
- Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., Weldon, A. H., Claire Cook, J., Davis, E. F., & Buckley, C. K. (2009). Coparenting behavior moderates longitudinal relations between effortful control and preschool children's externalizing behavior. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *50*(6), 698–706. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2008.02009.x>
- Solantaus, T., Leinonen, J., & Punamäki, R.-L. (2004). Children's mental health in times of economic recession: Replication and extension of the family economic stress model in

Finland. *Developmental Psychology*, 40(3), 412–429. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.40.3.412>

Stress in America 2020: Stress in the time of COVID-19. (2020). *American Psychological Association*, 1, 1–3.

<https://doi.org/https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2020/stress-in-america-covid.pdf>

Stright, A. D., & Neitzel, C. (2003). Beyond parenting: Coparenting and children's classroom adjustment. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 27(1), 31–40.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01650250143000580>

Teubert, D., & Pinquart, M. (2010). The association between Coparenting and child adjustment: A meta-analysis. *Parenting*, 10(4), 286–307.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15295192.2010.492040>

Van Lissa, C. J., & Keizer, R. (2020). Mothers' and fathers' quantitative and qualitative parenting in relation to children's emotional adjustment: A between- and within-family investigation. *Developmental Psychology*, 56(9), 1709–1722.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001042>

Vetter, S., Rossegger, A., Rossler, W., Bisson, J. I., & Endrass, J. (2008). Exposure to the tsunami disaster, PTSD symptoms and increased substance use – An internet-based survey of male and female residents of Switzerland. *BMC Public Health*, 8(1).

<https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-8-92>

Weissman, S. H., & Cohen, R. S. (1985). The parenting alliance and adolescence. *Adolescent Psychiatry*, 12, 24–45.

White, R. M., Liu, Y., Nair, R. L., & Tein, J.-Y. (2015). Longitudinal and integrative tests of family stress model effects on Mexican origin adolescents. *Developmental Psychology*, *51*(5), 649–662. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038993>

ACADEMIC VITA

Education

2018–Present B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies, Anticipated
Minor in Psychology, Anticipated
Drexel University Nursing Program (Expected 2022-2023)

Graduation: May 2022
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

Research Interests

My ultimate goal is to expand my knowledge through the means of experience, where I can grasp a better understanding of my interest in child development and the skills that come along with it.

Honors and Awards

2022 Graduation Student Marshal, Human Development and Family Studies
2020 PSU CrossFit Club “Dedicated Member of the Year”
2020-Present Schreyer Honors College

Experience

2021-Present Nursing Assistant at Cape Regional Medical Center-Affiliate of Penn Medicine
2021-Present Research Assistant- Data 4 Action
2020-Present Human Development and Family Studies USO - Vice President
2020-Present PSU CrossFit Club - Mentor; Head THON Chair; Administrative THON Chair (2020-2021); 2020 (Spring Semester) Event Coordinator
2019-2021 Dancer Relations Committee Member - Encourage and motivate dancers to stand for 46 hours, ensure all dancers are properly stretching, and maintaining emotional stability among dancers. Taking on the responsibility of “Administrator” where I organize and manage committee members and their involvement.
2019-2020 Life Link with The Pennsylvania State University - Volunteered with students with special needs during their lunch break. Worked on communication skills with them.

Important Courses Taken

HDFS 129: Intro to HDFS, HDFS 229: Infancy Childhood, HDFS 239: Adolescent Development, HDFS 301: Values/Ethics Human Development, HDFS 497: Special Topics, BIOL 161: A&P I Lecture, BIOL 162: A&P I Lab, BIOL 163:A&P II Lecture, BIOL 164: A&P I Lab, PSYCH 100: Intro Psychology, Statistics 200:Elementary Statistics, CAS 100: Public Speaking, HDFS 310M: Seminar in Honors, HDFS 497: Professional Development, HDFS 312W: Empirical Inquiry in Human Development, HDFS 311: Resolving Individual and Family Problems, CHEM 130: Introductory to General, Organic and Biochemistry, Micro 106: Elementary Microbiology, Micro 107: Introductory Microbiology Lab, HDFS 300H: Honors Seminar, HDFS 496: Independent Research Study, HDFS 428: Infant Development, PSYCH 484: Work Attitude and Motivation, NUTR 251: Introduction to Nutrition, CHEM 111: Introduction to Chemistry Lab, HDFS 494H: Research Project, HDFS 315: Family Development, HDFS

497: TA for HDFS 311, HDFS 445: Adulthood, HDFS 494H: Senior Honors Thesis, PSYCH 243: Intro Wellbeing Positive Psychology, HDFS 497: TA for HDFS 453 and HDFS 418: Family Relationships.