

FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS AND RISKS  
FOR ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION IN AFRICAN  
AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS

By

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## INTRODUCTION

African American and Latino adolescent boys are at greater risk for displaying aggressive behaviors than their peers (United States Center for Disease Control, 2008). Vulnerability to that risk is heightened when multiple other risk factors (e.g., fathers' risky behaviors, neighborhood risk, victimization) are present (e.g., Walsh, 2006). Yet, few studies examining adolescent aggression have focused specifically on African American and Latino adolescent boys (e.g., Putallaz et al., 2007). While adolescent aggression has been researched extensively (e.g., Card, Stucky, Sawalani, & Little, 2008; Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008), most research has focused only on identifying risk factors (e.g., Herrenkohl et al., 2003). Thus, there is a need for research that not only identifies *risk factors* (i.e., negative life circumstances associated with difficulties in adjustment, not necessarily a specific event, but can be based on group membership; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000) for African American and adolescent boys' aggression, but also identifies those processes associated with resilience (Putallaz et al., 2007). Researchers have noted that resilience emerges in vulnerable adolescents such as these when key *protective processes* (i.e., ongoing forces that help address, resist, and reduce risk; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000) such as a supportive father are accessible (Windle, 2011). Based on these ideas and guided by ecological resilience perspectives, the major purpose of this study, was to examine how selected fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring, punitiveness, psychological control) may contribute, exacerbate or protect against various risks (fathers' risky behaviors, neighborhood risk, victimization) for physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys.

Scholarship regarding African American fathers typically has focused on father absenteeism increasing risk for negative outcomes for adolescents (McAddo & Younge, 2009). However, there has been a trend in research over the past decade to investigate the African American fathers' active roles in the lives of their children (e.g., Livingston & McAdoo, 2007; McAdoo & McAdoo, 2002). These studies suggest that even though African American adolescents are often from single parent homes, fathers or father figures are present and active in their lives (McAdoo & Younge, 2009). When examining African American adolescents it is important to understand that they will be raised by a variety of caregivers, which may include biological or non-biological father figures fulfilling fathering roles (Roopnarine, 2004). Whether biologically related to the adolescent or not, fathers and father figures play a significant role in the life of African American adolescent boys (McAdoo & Younge, 2009).

In a similar vein, Latino fathers are often stereotyped in scholarship as high in *machismo*, characterized by controlling, dominant, and distant behaviors (Cabrera & Coll, 2004). However, there is evidence that this stereotype does not capture the reality of fathers in Latino culture (e.g., Fitzpatrick, Caldera, Pursley, & Wampler, 1999). When examining Latino adolescents it is important to understand that within the wide variation of Latino culture both biological fathers and *compadres* (or father figures such as uncles, grandfathers, uncles, stepfathers, or other men) may fulfill fathering roles in a variety of ways in the lives of adolescent boys (e.g., Cabrera & Coll, 2004; Halguseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). Thus, it is important to define fathers as encompassing fathers or father figures based on adolescent boys' perceptions of the male figure most consistently fulfilling fathering functions in their lives rather than limiting the focus to biological fathers or other men who may be romantically linked to the boys' mothers.

Research has shown that parenting behaviors are strongly related to adolescent aggression among adolescents in racial/ethnic minority groups (e.g., Gorman-Smith et al., 2004). However, most of this research was conducted solely focused on mothers (e.g., Dadds, 1995; Phares, 1999; Phares & Compas, 1992). Over the past two decades, researchers have more closely examined the role of

fathers, showing that some fathers' parenting behaviors are strongly related to adolescent aggression (e.g., Dishion & McMahon, 1998; Spano, Vazsonyi, & Bolland, 2009). Despite the advances in research on fathering (Pleck, 2010), scholarship that examines the potentially critical fathers' parenting behavior for African American and Latino adolescents' aggression is minimal.

Research linking parenting behaviors and adolescent outcomes typically has relied on parents or outside observers to assess behaviors based on the assumption that outsiders provide more "objective" reports (Gaylord, Kitzmann, & Coleman, 2003). An alternative approach is to examine adolescents' perceptions of parental behaviors, primarily based upon assumptions that adolescents' respond to parental behaviors as they perceive them to be rather than to an "objective" reality (Bush et al., 2002). Although less common, some studies examine the similarities and differences between parents' self-reports and adolescents' perceptions of parenting behaviors (e.g., Latendresse et al., 2009). Fathers' and sons' realities are subjective, often yielding discrepancies in the way they view fathers' parenting behaviors (Latendresse et al., 2009). The current study involved examination of both fathers' and adolescent boys' perceptions of fathering behaviors in order to understand what similarities or differences might exist in the associations of fathers' parenting behaviors with adolescent boys' aggression dependent on the reporter.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Ecological resilience perspectives provide a promising theoretical approach for conceptualizing how fathers' parenting behaviors exacerbate or protect against risk for aggression in African American and Latino adolescent boys. Ecological resilience perspectives highlight the potential roles of multiple systems on both the risks and the abilities of individuals to function effectively in the face of risk (Harvey, 2007). Traditional resilience perspectives emphasize a strengths-based approach rather than a deficit-based approach (Hawley & DeHann, 1996). Resilience research has demonstrated that overcoming multiple risks (e.g., neighborhood risk, victimization) is often difficult, but not impossible (Masten, 2001; Masten, 2007). Patterson (2002) noted that resilience is a process that is both emergent and ongoing. In sum, resilience refers to more positive

outcomes (e.g., lower aggression) when an individual has experienced some risk (e.g., neighborhood risk, fathers' risky behavior, victimization) that is related to less positive outcomes (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten, 2007). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives have important implications for understanding resilience by providing a framework for understanding both risk and protective processes within an individual's milieu. Ecological resilience approaches have become more common in the last decade in resilience research in areas such as trauma (Harvey, 2007) and social work (Fraser, 2004) and hold potential for understanding resilience in African American and Latino boys.

Bronfenbrenner (1977) emphasized the interaction that occurs between an individual and multiple interrelated systems of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). These systems range from distal (remote from the individual) to proximal (contexts nearest to the individual). Latino and African American boys' development occurs based on interactions within their specific distal and proximal systems. Building upon Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives, authors (e.g., Masten, 2007; Walsh, 2006) note that resilience perspectives need to take into account the multiple system levels of individuals. People do not exist in isolation but are involved in, influenced by, and interact with their physical, social, and environmental contexts (Windle, 2011). For example, adolescent boys who are members of racial/ethnic minority groups may experience unique risks and potential protective processes relating to their particular contexts.

Building upon ecological perspectives coupled with a lack of research examining resilience across different cultural groups (Ogbu, 1981), Garcia Coll et al. (1996) proposed an integrative theoretical model specifically for studying development in youth in racial/ethnic minority groups. Though not designed as a resilience model, this model can be used in conjunction with resilience perspectives to provide a lens through which resilience in African American and Latino adolescent boys can be examined. This model relates to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives by recognizing that the different system levels from distal to proximal of adolescent boys are integral to their experiences, and takes into account the heightened risk for racial/ethnic discrimination for youth

who are members of racial/ethnic minority groups within a culture. Garcia Coll et al. (1996) posited the idea that race/ethnicity, family, and the broader environment (including neighborhoods) and can serve as both promoters and inhibitors of developmental competencies in youth. Although Masten (2007) makes a distinction between resilience (the ability to thrive despite adversity) and competence (adaptive success in developmental tasks), the Garcia Coll et al. (1996) model can be applied to both examining resilience as well as Garcia Coll et al.'s concept of adaptive competency. Similar to Masten's (2007) idea of resilience, Garcia Coll et al. (1996) proposed that adaptive competency, or the timely development of specific skills within in specific developmental periods among adolescents of racial/ethnic minority groups which involves the interface of individuals and their multiple ecological systems. Thus, when considering risk and protective processes associated with aggression among Latino and African American adolescent boys interrelated systems such as family, neighborhood, and culture are important.

Several principles serve as a foundation for ecological resilience. First, resilience on the individual level is best understood by examining the individual in the context of the family as well as the larger social contexts (Walsh, 2006). Specifically, for this study adolescent boys in racial/ethnic minority groups are examined as a part of multiple ecological levels including race/ethnicity and the father son dyad (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). A second principle is that risk has to be incurred before resilience is possible (Masten, 2007). Risk factors may carry additive risk or the accumulation of multiple risks that may increase the probability of a certain outcome (Kirby & Fraser, 1997). It is important for researchers to examine the potential of risk factors to uniquely contribute to an outcome after controlling for other risk factors (Criss, Shaw, Moilanen, Hitchings, & Ingoldsby, 2009). Another principle of resilience perspectives is to identify protective processes (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Masten, 2007). For example, fathers' parenting behaviors may be protective processes that mediate associations between perceived risks and aggression, or foster resilience on multiple levels by acting as a buffer (moderator) to those risks (Masten, 2007). It is important for researchers to examine the potential that protective processes have to mediate and moderate associations between

risk and outcome because that information can be used to correctly identify interventions and preventions of undesired outcomes for specific groups (Kraemer, Stice, Kazdin, Offord, & Kupfer, 2001). Finally, all individuals have the potential to be resilient (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Masten, 2007; Walsh, 2006) and research should focus on what resilience looks like in groups that are typically examined from a deficit based approach (Garcia Coll et al, 1996). The results of the current study have the potential to highlight key processes in the lives of African American and Latino adolescents in promoting resilience and dampening risk, specifically relating to adolescent boys' aggressive outcomes.

### **Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

*Aggression* can be conceptualized as any behavior that has intent to harm and tends to exist in various forms including physical, relational, and verbal (Fives, Kong, Fuller, & DiGiuseppe, 2011). Crick (1997) observed that the disproportionate emphasis upon boys' physical aggression overshadowed other aspects of boys' aggression such as relational aggression. Since that time, a number of studies have addressed these issues (see Card et al., 2008 for a review). However, as the research progressed other limitations warranting additional study have been identified including (a) insufficient research to date addresses aggression among racial/ethnic groups (Putallaz et al., 2007) and (b) recent findings that suggest certain types of aggression may not be as gender related as once thought, emphasizing the needs for examining multiple types of aggression within each gender (e.g., Card et al., 2008; Coyne, Archer, Eslea, & Liechty, 2008; Karriker-Jaffe, Foshee, Ennett, & Suchindran, 2008). This study will address both of these limitations by focusing upon two forms of aggression (physical aggression and relational aggression) in African American and Latino adolescent boys.

#### **Physical Aggression**

Aggressive behavior studies emphasize *physical aggression*, overt behaviors that can either harm or threaten to harm others (Crick, 1997). Physical aggression has been found to be positively related with negative adjustment (maladjustment characterized by low levels of self-restraint and high

levels of distress, Crick, 1997), peer related variables (acceptance, Smith, Rose, & Schwartz-Mette, 2010), and school related outcomes (low GPA, Loveland, Lounsbury, Welsh, & Buboltz, 2007; school dropout, Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002). Further, adolescent physical aggression has been linked to later externalizing behaviors including substance use, and continued aggressive behavior (Herrenkohl, Catalano, Hemphill, & Toumbourou, 2009).

Physical aggression is more likely to be reported by boys than girls (e.g., Card et al., 2008; Crick, 1997; Fives et al., 2011). African American (50.3%) and Latino (47.3%) boys report a higher prevalence for being in physical altercations than do their female counterparts (CDC, 2008). Further, physical aggression is more likely to be attributed to boys by their peers (Fives et al., 2011). Boys typically maintain higher levels of physical aggression throughout adolescence compared to their female peers (e.g., Karriker-Jaffe et al., 2008; Kim, Kamphaus, Orpinas, & Kelder, 2010).

### **Relational Aggression**

Early aggression research typically focused on physical types of aggressive behavior. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) identified a form of aggression, *relational aggression* or aggressive behaviors that use the relationship itself as the means of delivering harm to others through either manipulation or control. Relational aggression is a nonphysical behavior that is intended to damage peer relationships and social status (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The more covert nature of relational aggression makes it harder to identify (Fives et al., 2011). Relational aggression is very similar to the concepts of social aggression (direct or indirect aggression with the aim of damaging another's social status, self-esteem, or both; Galen & Underwood, 1997), and indirect aggression (a covert form of aggression that utilizes sophisticated strategies as one's verbal and social skills develop; Bjorkqvist, 1994). In fact, though these terms have their distinctions, the overlap of similarities is more significant than the differences. Consistent with French, Jansen, and Pidada (2002), and Heilbron and Prinstein (2008), the current study uses the term relational aggression to represent the commonalities of these different terms. Examples of the construct of relational aggression are social exclusion, giving someone the silent treatment, and defamatory gossip (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Relational aggression has been found to be associated with a number of negative outcomes (see Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008 for a review). Relational aggression has been linked to social problems (e.g., peer rejection) at varying life stages (childhood, adolescence, early adulthood) and may co-occur with those social problems in early (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Storch, Werner, & Storch, 2003) and later life stages (Cillessen & Mayeux, 2004). Craig (1998) found that relationally aggressive elementary school children also were more likely to exhibit internalized behavior like depression and anxiety. Prinstein and La Greca (2004) studied more long term effects of relational aggression and found that relational aggression in childhood was predictive of externalizing behaviors such as substance use, and multiple sex partners in adolescence. Further, relationally aggressive children tend to exhibit significantly more externalizing and internalizing problems than their non-aggressive peers do (Crick, 1997).

Early conceptualizations of relational aggression suggested that relational aggression was more prevalent among girls than boys (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) and several studies have supported this (e.g., Banny, Heilbron, Ames, & Prinstein, 2011; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Galen & Underwood, 1997; Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). Further, Goldstein and Tisak (2010) examined early adolescents' beliefs about relational aggression and found that girls perceived relational aggression to be more wrong than their male peers did. However, there are some findings that suggest that relational aggression is a notable concern for boys. In a study with 74 primarily Caucasian and Latino kindergarten children, Johnson and Foster (2005) found no significant differences in report of relational aggression across gender. In a study with 122 primarily Caucasian adolescents, Werner and Nixon (2005) found no significant differences across gender when examining adolescents' beliefs about relationally aggressive behavior, and their self-report of relationally aggressive behavior, suggesting that there may be similarities between boys and girls in how they regulate relationally aggressive behaviors. In contrast to other studies, a recent finding by Coyne et al. (2008) was that perceptions of relational aggression among boys may be that these behaviors are as common and hurtful as among girls. These authors also found that the stereotype that girls are more likely to be



relationally aggressive, and more justified in the use of those behaviors may not exist. Further, while adolescent girls are more likely to be relationally aggressive than boys, boys are more likely than girls to display relational aggression in tandem with more overt aggressive behaviors (Smith et al., 2010).

Physical and relational aggression are often not mutually exclusive but co-occur during adolescence, taking trajectories that tend to change together across time (Underwood, Beron, & Rosen, 2009). The co-occurrence of physical and relational aggression has been associated with later risk of the same aggressive behaviors, later substance use, and later psychosocial development (e.g., Herrenkohl et al., 2009).

### **Aggression and Race/Ethnicity**

African American and Latino adolescents may be at heightened risk for aggressive behavior. African American adolescents consistently report higher levels of physical aggression (e.g., Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 1982; Kim et al., 2010; Underwood et al., 2009) and are more likely to be arrested when that physical aggression turns to more violent aggression (Dodge, Coie, & Lynam, 2006). Latino adolescents also have been shown to report high levels of physical aggression (Kim et al., 2010), especially when they are exposed to alcohol in their neighborhoods, or experience feelings of depression in early adolescence (Maldonado-Molina, Reingle, Tobler, Jennings, & Komro, 2010). Also, one study found that African American adolescent boys were more likely to report higher levels of overall and overt (physical) forms of aggression than their peers, while Latino girls were more likely to report higher levels of reputational aggression, a construct similar to relational aggression (McLaughlin, Hilt, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2007). While these findings suggest that there is a relation between race/ethnicity and aggression in adolescents, research concerning racial/ethnic differences as they relate to adolescent boys' aggression is limited (e.g., Putallaz et al., 2007).

### **Risks for Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

Many studies on adolescent aggression only examine one risk factor (e.g., neighborhood or peer) without looking at the contribution other risks may make (e.g., Johnson & Foster, 2005; Khoury-Kassabri, Benbenishty, Avi Astor, & Zeira, 2004). However, there has been a recent call to

understand the importance of, and to account for, various contextual factors (individual, peer, family, neighborhood, cultural), and their influence on adolescent aggression (Maldonado-Molina et al., 2010). The present study will examine the role of multiple risks in association with adolescents' physical and relational aggression. Specifically the study focused on the importance of neighborhood risk, racial/ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, fathers' risk behavior, and fathers' parenting behaviors in association to adolescents' reports of physical and relational aggression. Further, there is potential for fathers' parenting behaviors to strengthen (additive risk) or dampen (protective process) associations between multiple risk factors and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. Also, while risk in general for adolescent boys' aggressive behavior is well researched, what is less clear is how these risks relate to aggression within specific race/ethnicity groups (African American, and Latino) and how those relations might differ among the groups. By examining African American and Latino adolescent boys within this type of ecological type model of resilience, researchers will be able to identify specific paths, patterns, and forms of aggression in response to environments and target those as central points of furthering research, enhancing education, shaping policy, and providing services. In this model the discussion starts with the most distal of risks and works toward the more proximal risks for adolescent aggression.

### **Neighborhood Risk**

Neighborhoods may be a place where adolescents experience support and connectedness as well as provide a resource for its members to depend upon (e.g., Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2003). However, neighborhoods may be a place where adolescents are exposed to risky behavior, such as crime, aggression, and violence (e.g., Cleveland, 2003; Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Tolan, 2004; Sampson et al., 1997). Further, research has shown that low-income neighborhoods composed primarily of African American or Latino adolescents show strong prevalence of crime and violence (e.g., Bray, Sample, & Kempf-Leonard, 2005).

Typically when describing and understanding neighborhoods as a risk factor, researchers focus on examining structural qualities of the communities (e.g., Leventhal, Dupéré, & Brooks-Gunn,

2009). The most frequent of those structural qualities examined are economic disadvantage and ethnic/racial heterogeneity (e.g., Hart & Marmorstein, 2009). Many studies that measure neighborhood qualities use US Census data (e.g., Bass & Lambert, 2004). However, using this data could be a limitation as it could be up to 10 years old at any given time. Because of this, many researchers have measured neighborhood qualities by the subjective perceptions of the communities' residents (e.g., Bass & Lambert, 2004; Henry, Merten, Plunkett, & Sands, 2008; Plunkett, Abarca-Mortensen, Behnke, & Sands, 2007). Those perceptions have been found to be more closely related to adolescents' behavior than the more objective measures of neighborhoods (e.g., Stiffman, Hadley-Ives, Elze, Johnson, & Doré, 1999). As boys enter into adolescence they may have more opportunity to experience the neighborhoods they live in, and thus the perceptions that they have of those neighborhoods may prove to be important to their outcomes (Plunkett et al., 2007). Several researchers have found perceptions of neighborhood risk to be directly and negatively related to different adolescent outcomes including self-esteem, self-efficacy, grade point average, academic aspirations (Plunkett et al., 2007), academic achievement (Henry et al., 2008), drug use (Scheier, Miller, Ifill-Williams, & Botvin, 2001), and mental health (Stiffman et al., 1999), as well as indirectly related to adolescent academic outcomes (Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006).

While there is some research linking neighborhood risk or disadvantage to adolescent aggression, many of these studies utilize measures of structural qualities of the neighborhood rather than examining perceptions of those neighborhoods. For example, one study that examined adolescent aggression trajectories among rural adolescents found that neighborhood disadvantage (measured as encompassing three dimensions including education, employment, and economic resources, all calculated using US census data) was positively associated with adolescent aggression (Karriker-Jaffe, Foshee, Ennett, & Suchindran, 2009). Another study measured neighborhood disadvantage as a combination of neighborhood structural qualities including proportion of single-parent households, number of households with an annual income of less than \$15,000, and neighborhood unemployment rates (Cleveland, 2003). This study found that adolescents living in

disadvantaged neighborhoods were significantly more likely to practice aggressive behavior than those adolescents living in adequate neighborhoods. However, studies examining the link between neighborhood risk as perceived by the adolescent and adolescent aggression are lacking.

### **Racial/Ethnic Discrimination**

Racial/ethnic discrimination may occur at many levels but is here thought of in the broader sense as a more distal risk for adolescent aggressive behavior, perhaps occurring within the neighborhood, community, or school setting. Research has shown that racial/ethnic discrimination can be a challenge for adolescents, especially those identifying their race/ethnicity as African American or Latino (e.g., Le & Stockdale, 2011; Thompson & Gregory, 2011). Discrimination can be conceptualized as overt or covert unfair treatment of another (Harrell, 2000). Because measures of objective discrimination accounts are difficult to obtain, researchers have used individuals' perceptions of discrimination as an appropriate measure (e.g., Thompson & Gregory, 2011). Consistent with this scholarship, the current study utilizes a measure of racial/ethnic discrimination that refers to the belief that one has been treated unfairly because of concepts related to their race/ethnicity (e.g., race, skin color, language).

For African American and Latino adolescents perceived discrimination has been found to be associated with a number of outcomes. Among African American adolescents, perceived discrimination has been associated with adjustment problems such as low self-esteem (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000), stress, and depression (Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). Latino adolescents who perceive discrimination have been shown to be at risk for similar adjustment problems including self-esteem and depression (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007), and larger suicide attempt histories (Gomez, Miranda, & Polanco, 2011). Perceived discrimination also is related to academic variables as well. African American adolescents reported lower classroom engagement when perceiving more discrimination (Thompson & Gregory, 2011), and Latino adolescents have reported less academic motivation when perceiving more discrimination (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, Bámaca, & Zeiders, 2009). Further, both African American and Latino adolescents

have been shown to be at risk for externalizing behaviors such as delinquency (Le & Stockdale, 2011), and internalizing behaviors such as anger rumination (Borders & Liang, 2011) when perceiving higher rates of discrimination.

Discrimination specifically limits the amount of resources that are available to certain groups as well as limits the access that those groups have to those resources (Garcia Coll et al., 2006). If limited resources are available, then adolescents may feel the need to be more aggressive in order to attain them. Some studies have examined the association of perceived discrimination and aggression. One study utilizing a sample of African American and Puerto Rican children ranging in age from 6 to 12 years old, found that when experiencing more racial/ethnic discrimination combined with feelings of less affirmation children reported higher levels of aggression (Brook, Rosenberg, Brook, Balka, & Meade, 2004). Another study that examined an ethnically diverse group of adolescents found that perceived ethnic discrimination is related to high levels of physical and verbal aggression when mediated by anger rumination (Borders & Liang, 2011). However, research examining the association of perceived discrimination and adolescent aggression is limited. Further, even though discrimination has been identified as a significant risk factor for adolescent aggression in a Latino sample (Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006), research examining perceived discrimination as a risk factor for aggression among both African American and Latino adolescents is lacking. The present study builds on the existing literature that examines perceived racial/ethnic discrimination as a risk factor, specifically for adolescents identifying as African American or Latino. Further, this study contributes to limited literature that specifically examines the association between perceived discrimination and aggression among these two groups.

### **Peer Victimization**

Adolescence is a time of transition and change, when adolescents tend to spend less time within the household, and perceive a greater importance to relationships outside of the family system, specifically with peers (McGoldrick & Shibusawa, 2012). It is possible that aspects of those

relationships might influence adolescents in both positive and negative ways. As adolescents begin to rely more these peer relationships, they become a more proximal risk factor for aggression.

Peer victimization studies have reported that exposure to victimization rates may be anywhere from 40%-80% among school aged youth, and that 10% to 15% of that group could be described as chronic victimization (Juvonen, & Graham, 2001). Nishina and Bellmore (2010) suggest that victimization typically happens in public, meaning that someone either witnesses the incident, or finds out about it later. Usually that person is a peer, seldom an adult, and typically little help is given to the victim.

*Victimization* is often conceptualized as being the target of some form of aggressive behavior (Sullivan, Farrell, & Kliewer, 2006). Victimization has been shown to be associated with both internalizing problems such as depression, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Hawker, & Boulton, 2000; Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernber, 2001) as well as externalizing problems such as delinquency, substance use, and aggression (Sullivan et al., 2006; Weiner et al., 2003). In addition, one study by de Bruyn, Cillessen, and Wissink (2010) found that victims were viewed as less popular, and that low self-perception of acceptance, and popularity would greatly increase one's likelihood of being victimized.

Currently, the association of gender and victimization is unclear. There is evidence that boys score higher on reports of victimization prevalence measures than do girls (Salmivalli & Peets, 2009). It is beneficial to examine victimization among boys because as with aggression, victimization may not be gender exclusive. Yet, in a study of elementary aged children (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade) females appeared to be more highly affected by victimization, than their male peers (Khatri, Kupersmidt, & Patterson, 2000). However, another study examining a similar age sample (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade) found no gender differences in the relation between peer victimization and relationally aggressive behavior. Further, regardless of gender, children who were disliked were more likely to be relationally aggressive if they were also victims (Adams, Bartlett, & Bukowski, 2010). In adolescence, victimization is an important construct when examining aggression among boys. For example, boys

who are victimized at school are less likely to seek help from an authority and more likely to resort to physical aggression themselves (Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2010). Further, different types of victimization seem to be related to aggression in different ways for males and females. Relational victimization has been shown to be positively associated with both types of aggression (relational, physical) in adolescence, with the link to physical aggression being significant for girls, and the link to relational aggression being significant for both boys and girls, but higher for boys (Sullivan et al., 2006). In the same study physical victimization was positively associated with both types of aggression in boys and girls, though more strongly related to physical aggression for boys than girls. This study builds upon this research by examining what relations might exist between peer victimization and aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys.

Some literature exists that specifically examines peer victimization in the Latino (e.g., Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2011), and African American populations (e.g., Gomes, Davis, Baker, & Servonsky, 2009). However, research examining the relation between peer victimization and aggression in adolescents from these two ethnic groups is limited. The current study examined what this relation looks like for both the Latino and African American groups, and what differences there might be between the groups.

### **Fathers' Risk Behaviors**

As we move inward toward more proximal risk factors for adolescent aggression we look at behaviors and interactions that occur within the family. Scholars also have examined the relation of fathers' risk and antisocial behavior (e.g., Thornberry, Freeman-Gallant, Lizotte, Krohn, & Smith, 2003) including aggression (Dumas, Margolin, & John, 1994), illegal activity (Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Kalb, 2001), and alcohol use (Malone, Iacono, & McGue, 2002) with adolescent risk behaviors. Several studies have found a significant association between parents' aggression and adolescents' aggression. For example, one study examining aggression in adolescents' romantic relationships concluded that adolescents were more likely to be both aggressive, and victimized by aggression in romantic relationships when they experienced parents' use of aggressive

behaviors during marital conflict (Hare, Miga, & Allen, 2009). Another study researching aggression in children 17 years old and younger found that parental verbal and physical aggression was significantly associated with higher levels of aggressive behavior in the children (Vissing, Straus, Gelles, & Harrop, 1991). Milletich, Kelley, Doane, and Pearson (2010), specifically examining fathers, found that fathers' aggression towards mothers was significantly and positively associated with their college age sons use of physical aggression in their dating relationships. This finding was supported by another study examining aggression in young adult males, that found these men to report higher rates of physical aggression with their intimate partners, when they had experienced aggression from their fathers (Palazzolo, Roberto, & Babin, 2010).

Also, exposure to fathers' alcohol use has been associated with negative outcomes in adolescents including adolescent suicidal behavior (Rossow & Moan, 2012), and more excessive drinking in their adolescents (Mares, van der Vorst, Engels, & Lichtwarck-Aschoff, 2011). Scholarship also has examined the relation that parents' alcohol use has with adolescent aggression, noting that adolescents who come from alcoholic homes, specifically with a paternal history of alcohol and substance use are more likely to score higher on measures of aggression and delinquency (Alterman et al., 1998; Giancola, Moss, Martin, Kirisci, & Tarter, 1996; Greenfield, Swartz, Landerman, & George, 1993).

Another risk behavior of fathers is their own involvement in illegal activity. Research has shown that parents who are involved in criminal behavior are likely to have children who are involved in criminal behavior (e.g., Farrington & Welsh, 2007). Farrington et al. (2001) found that adolescent boys' delinquency was predicted by relatives who had been previously arrested, and the most significant predictor among those relatives was the father. In a follow up study that examined criminal offending over three generations, Farrington, Coid, and Murray (2009) noted that offending males from generation one predicted offending males from generation two, and that offending males from generation two predicted offending males from generation three. Fathers' involvement in illegal



activity (alcohol abuse, violence in the home, and community) has been shown to relate to severe violence that leads to arrest in their adolescent offspring (Bailey, 1996).

The link among aggression, alcohol, and illegal activity has been established (Exum, 2006). That is aggression, alcohol use, and illegal activity may occur in tandem. Because of the established relation between these activities, it is expected that a combination of them will be associated with adolescent aggressive behaviors. The current study examines the relation that fathers' reports of these activities have with adolescent reports of physical and relational aggression.

### **Fathers' Parenting Behaviors**

Research has consistently shown a relation between dimensions of parenting and a range of adolescent outcomes (e.g., Peterson, 2005) including child aggressive behavior (e.g., Kuppens, Grietens, Onghena, & Michiels, 2009). This relation between parenting and aggression carries over into adolescence. In a recent study that examined change in social and physical aggression over the time from childhood to adolescence it was found that permissive parenting places adolescents at greater risk for aggressive behavior (Underwood et al., 2009).

Traditional parenting research tended to focus on maternal aspects of parenting. That trend has changed over the past two decades. Pleck (2010) contends that evidence is continuing to mount that paternal aspects of parenting play an important role in youth development, specifically stating that fathering has direct links to child outcomes, may indirectly associate with child outcomes through other family members, and may be reciprocally influenced by the child. Scholars have called for an understanding of these paternal aspects of parenting through a lens of diversity, specifically examining how such things as race/ethnicity, social class, or community help to define what is good or responsible fathering (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Recent studies have answered that call, examining fathers across different groups, in order to promote good fathering within those groups (e.g., Caldwell et al., 2010; Roy & Dyson, 2010). Pleck (2010) also described how fathering research has progressed by describing several emerging theories that are being used to link aspects of fathers' parenting to developmental outcomes in their children.

The role of parenthood for women is often viewed as clear since it is traditionally tied to their biological role in the process of pregnancy and birth, while parenthood for fathers is less clear and typically depends upon cultural definitions (Garbarino, 2000). Culture can be loosely defined as a construct of shared knowledge and practices that are passed on from generation to generation in a non-biological way (Hewlett, 2000). Fundamental differences in goals of parenting that are valued within different ethnic groups may explain, in part, variation in how fathering relates to adolescent outcomes (e.g., Dilworth-Anderson, Burton, & Turner, 1993). Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, Capps, and Zaff (2006) highlighted how fathers construct an idea of what fatherhood is to them, and the significance they place on that idea from a cultural, racial/ethnic, and economic lens. This was supported by Roy and Dyson (2010) who found that within low income African American fathers, the idea of fathering is to be viewed as carrying a great deal of responsibility and respect.

African Americans construct their ideas of fatherhood from shared values of parenting in general. African American families in the United States place importance on flexibility and support among family members when it comes to parenting. The idea of families being a part of larger extended families or kin networks also is of cultural importance (McAdoo & Younge, 2009). Further, McAdoo and Younge (2009) suggest that though fathers are somewhat missing from the literature dealing with African American parenting, there is evidence that fathers or father figures are not only often present, but also a valued part of the aforementioned kin network, and are very important piece of the parenting puzzle. Latino families place value on different aspects of parenting. For example, one highly valued aspect is *familismo*, a term that denotes the idea that the family is the primary source for support, and family loyalty and commitment supersede the needs of the individual. Another term that bears significant weight in Latino families is *respeto*, or the emphasis of both a self-respect and other-respect that maintains a harmony of interpersonal relationships. Finally, Latino families also place a high importance on *educacion*, or training in such things as fostering and maintaining relationships, morality, and responsibility (Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006).

Fathering is an important aspect of family in the Latino culture (e.g., Cruz et al., 2011). Latino fathers are involved in the care of their children to the same extent as and often more than Caucasian fathers and their behavior is important to their children's development (Cruz et al., 2011). One study conducted with Mexican-American origin ninth and tenth grade students highlighted the importance of fathering behavior, specifically academic support, is important to educational outcomes such as academic motivation (Plunkett, Henry, Houlberg, Sands, & Abarca-Mortensen, 2008). Another recent study with Latino youth found that supportive fathering behavior is significantly and positively related to adolescent self-esteem (Behnke, Plunkett, Sands, & Bámaca-Colbert, 2011). Given the continued empirical support for the importance of fathering in Latino families, adolescent perceptions of fathering behaviors may be critical in understanding the development of adolescent aggression. However, studies on the relation between fathers' parenting behavior and adolescent aggression outcomes are limited within this population and should be explored further. Though there are some recent studies focusing on the African American population that show fathers acting as protective factors specifically against overt aggression and violence (e.g., Caldwell, Rafferty, Reischl, De Loney, & Brooks, 2010; Spano, Vazsonyi, & Bolland, 2009), this line of thinking is relatively new, and needs further exploration, especially in terms of examining the relation between fathering and multiple types of adolescent aggression (physical, relational). An important goal of the current study is to build upon this line of inquiry by examining the relation between adolescent perceptions of fathers' behaviors and their own self report of physical aggression and relational aggression, specifically focusing on these two populations (African American, Latino), as well as examine fathers' reports of their own parenting behaviors and the relation to adolescent boys aggression. Because research has shown there to be discrepancies in the magnitude of associations between parenting behaviors and adolescents' behavior depending on the source of the reports (e.g., Latendresse et al., 2009) it is important to examine both reports.

Research has identified two dimensions of parenting behaviors (support, control) that play an important role in the lives of children (e.g., Peterson, 2005; Peterson & Rollins, 1987). Support

typically refers to the level that parents show warmth and acceptance towards their children (Stolz, Barber, & Olsen, 2005) while control can show itself as behavioral (monitoring, punitiveness) or psychological (Peterson, 2005). Interestingly, the dimensions of support and control were born out of the parenting research that typically focused on maternal aspects of parenting (Pleck, 2010), and were later incorporated into the early construct of paternal involvement first conceptualized by Pleck and Lamb (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, & Levine, 1985; Pleck, Lamb, & Levine, 1985). Because of the history of researchers including these dimensions in assessments of paternal involvement (rather than relying only on measures of involvement time), Pleck (2010) posited a reconceptualization of the traditional paternal involvement construct to include warmth/responsiveness (support) and control components. By examining these behaviors specific to fathers there is opportunity to advance our understanding of parenting.

### **Fathers' Support**

Fathers' support can be conceptualized as the extent to which fathers communicate feelings of warmth, affection, and a sense of being valued to the adolescent (Stolz et al., 2005). Research has shown a negative relation between parental support and adolescent aggressive behavior. Recent longitudinal research shows that high quality parenting, including parental support, may protect against adolescents' aggression behavior (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). This is supported by a study focusing specifically on African American parents in which they were found to play a role in protecting against violently aggressive behavior in their adolescents, even those exposed to violence, when they were more supportive (Spano et al., 2009). In another study conducted with 202 male and female African American adolescents in fifth, eighth, and tenth grades, paternal support was significantly negatively related with delinquency (Bean, Barber, & Crane, 2006). The authors of this study concluded that paternal support is crucial for African American adolescents, and pivotal in relation to adolescent outcomes in African American families (Bean et al., 2006). Contrary to the stigma that African American fathers are absent and uninvolved, Roopnarine (2004) emphasized the importance of supportive behaviors among African American fathers by stating that it is clear from

the literature that African American fathers do show interest in their children, and want to display attitudes of warmth and caring toward their children. In a similar vein, though Latino fathers are typically portrayed as being “macho” or ruling over their families as lord and master, research shows that these men are allowed and expected to be nurturing or supportive with their children (Cabrera & Garcia Coll, 2004). Further, because of the strong emphasis that is put on the interdependence among family members within Latino families (Halgunseth et al., 2006) recent evidence shows that Latino adolescents see their fathers as important sources of support in their lives (Henry et al., 2011).

### **Fathers’ Monitoring**

Fathers’ monitoring is a type of control that is conceptualized as the extent to which fathers supervise the activities, friendship, and money of the adolescent (Stolz et al., 2005). Consistent with Stattin and Kerr (2000), the current study describes monitoring as requiring parental knowledge of children’s behaviors, friends and activities, and that this knowledge only occurs in contexts where children feel connected enough to their parents to disclose such information. A number of studies have concluded that there is a relation between adolescents' perceptions of certain parenting behaviors, including parental monitoring, and adolescent aggressive behavior (e.g., Dishion & McMahon, 1998; Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003). Different aspects of parental behavior, like low monitoring, are associated with an increased risk for child aggression (e.g., Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2009). Conversely, monitoring characterized by communication between the adolescent and parent that keeps the parent informed about goings on in the child’s life is associated with decreased risk in child aggression over time (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). African American and Latino fathers are more likely than their Caucasian counterparts to closely monitor the activities and whereabouts of their adolescents (Toth & Xu, 1999). However, research that has examined monitoring in samples with varying racial/ethnic groups has found inconsistent findings in relation to patterns of effect (e.g., Mason et al., 2004). For example, Hofferth (2003) found that African American fathers monitored their adolescents’ activities significantly more than Caucasians, especially when controlling for

neighborhood risk, while Latino fathers monitored their adolescents' activities significantly less than Caucasians. This suggests that parental monitoring may have different meanings across race/ethnicity.

### **Fathers' Punitiveness**

Whereas monitoring is a type of control that is viewed as favorable, father punitiveness is viewed in a more negative light, and described as the extent to which fathers use verbal or coercive controlling behaviors that are characterized as being harsh, strict, or arbitrary with the adolescent (Henry, 1994). Research has shown there to be a negative relation between parental punitiveness and adolescent aggression. Different aspects of parental behavior, like high levels of punitiveness, are associated with an increased risk for child aggression over time (e.g., Smokowski et al., 2009). Further, these authors measured ineffective parenting (included aspects of punitiveness and poor monitoring) which was directly related to child self-control and aggression. Similarly, Underwood et al. (2009) found that authoritarian parenting which is characterized by low warmth and high control and is punitive in nature relates to physical aggression. Baumrind (1968) suggests that this way of controlling behavior is not effective in adolescence. It is important to note that punitiveness is a behavior not a parenting style, but that certain parenting styles may be characterized by this type of coercive behavior. The conceptualization of punitiveness as a risk or protective process is often debated, and Henry and Hubbs-Tait (2013) emphasize the importance for researchers to examine what behaviors like punitiveness might mean across cultures. For example, Mosley and Thompson (1995) building on Baumrind's work note that punitiveness has a different character across race. Specifically, that while for Caucasians, punitiveness may be seen as unfair and harsh, for African Americans, punitiveness actually protects and prepares adolescents for the harsh realities of the world (e.g., racism, economic stress) they find themselves in. Also, since ideals such as *respeto* (respect) and *obediencia* (obedience) towards the father are important aspects of Latino families, when adolescents are *mal educados* (i.e., not well behaved, mannered, or educated) fathers may respond with more punitive behaviors (Plunkett et al., 2007).

### **Fathers' Psychological Control**

Similar to punitiveness, psychological control is a harsh kind of control that can be conceptualized as an attempt by fathers to constrain the adolescent's individual autonomy through such tactics as induction of guilt, love withdrawal, shaming, or invalidation (Barber, 2002). Psychological control has been shown to relate to adolescents' increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors, decreased academic achievement, and poor development (for a review see Barber & Harmon, 2002). In relation to adolescent aggression, parental psychological control has been called a "blueprint for relational aggression" (Nelson & Crick, 2002). In their meta-analytic review of relational aggression, Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van Ijzendoorn, and Crick, (2011) supported this with the finding that more paternal psychological control was associated with higher levels of relational aggression in children under the age of 18. However, other research brings into question whether this actually holds for African American and Latino boys who may view psychological control as a sign of love and concern being shown by their parents (Mason, Walker-Barnes, Tu, Simons, & Martinez-Arrue, 2004). Specifically, while African American boys associated guilt based, coercive behavior from their parents with feeling of being manipulated and controlled, similarly to their white peers, they also associated those behaviors with more feelings of love and care relative to their white and Hispanic peers (Mason et al., 2004). Further, Crockett, Brown, Russell, and Shen (2007), found that Latino adolescents may perceive psychological control as form of caring from their parents. The current study built on previous research examining the relation between perceptions of fathers' psychological control and adolescent aggression among African American and Latino adolescents.

### **Neighborhood Risk and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors**

Much scholarship has examined the role of parenting on relations between neighborhoods and adolescent outcomes. For example, Sampson and Laub (1994) noted that in families marked by parents engaging in consistent supportive and loving behaviors, supervision, punishment, and close family ties, adolescents were at low risk for delinquency even in disadvantaged neighborhoods. This

was supported by Tolan et al. (2003) who found that selected parenting practices were partial mediators of the relation between neighborhood social processes and minority youths' involvement in gangs and use of violence. Research has also shown that living in a high risk neighborhood inclines fathers to look out for themselves first, and neglect such things as support and monitoring their children (Garbarino & Sherman, 1980). Further, parenting also has been shown to act as a buffer to neighborhood risk, specifically community violence (Gorman-Smith et al., 2004). This research all suggests that parenting behaviors may be important as protective factors for adolescents who perceive living in a risky neighborhood. The influence that fathering, specifically, has on the relation between adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk and adolescent outcomes is understudied. If adolescents' perceptions of the neighborhood they live indicate high risk areas, then identifying what paternal behaviors are most highly associated with decreases in adolescents' aggression can be helpful in both intervention and prevention.

### **Fathers' Risk Behaviors and Fathers' Parenting Behaviors**

Research has shown that fathers' aggression influences their parenting behavior (e.g., Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van Ijzendoorn, & Crick, 2011). In fact, fathers' aggression has been shown to be displayed in their parenting behavior (e.g., Nelson & Crick, 2002). Further, fathers' alcohol use is related to fathering in several ways including less consistent discipline (King & Chassin, 2004), decreased positive parenting behavior toward boys (Tildesley & Andrews, 2008), and low levels of support (Barnes, Reifman, Farrell, & Dintcheff, 2000). Fathers who are involved in illegal activity, and have been booked for a crime, or incarcerated have been shown to be less engaged with their children (Woldoff & Washington, 2008). Recent research has created composite scores of similar fathers' risk behaviors (e.g., crime involvement and drug use) and found those to be associated with adolescents' antisocial behaviors and fathers' parenting behavior (Coley, Carrano, & Lewin-Bizan, 2011), suggesting that a combination of fathers' problem behaviors may relate to parenting.



## **Fathers' Parenting Behaviors as Moderators between Victimization and Adolescent Boys'**

### **Aggression**

Selected fathers' parental behaviors hold potential to buffer the association between risk and Latino and African American boys against aggression. Several studies found that different aspects of fathering (communication, involvement, close-relationship with child, and parenting style) serve as protective factors against multiple risks (negative body image, poor psychological well-being, risky sexual behavior, delinquency, and substance use; Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, Capps, & Zaff, 2006; Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, & Carrano, 2006; Fenton, Brooks, Spencer, & Morgan, 2010; King, 2006; Videon, 2005). Lohman and Billings (2008) found that parental monitoring acts as a protective factor against such things as early sexual onset and risky sexual behavior. However, little research has specifically examined fathering behaviors such as support, and monitoring, as protective factors against adolescent risk for physical and relational aggression. Further, both punitiveness and psychological control have been associated with adolescent aggression (e.g., Nelson & Crick, 2002; Smokowski et al., 2009), and it is expected that these behaviors will attenuate the associations between victimization and adolescent boys' aggression because of their controlling nature. In this way, fathering may be an additive risk or serve as a protective factor for these boys.

### **The Current Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the potential of fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring, punitiveness, psychological control) to exacerbate or protect against multiple risks --neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors, and victimization (i.e., racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization)--for physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys. Based upon the theory and research presented above, a theoretical model was developed of multiple risks (neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors, adolescent boys' racial/ethnic discrimination, peer victimization), and fathers' parental behaviors, and physical and relational aggression in African American and Latino adolescent boys (see Figure 1). This conceptual model proposed that Latino and African American multiple risks (neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors,

racial/ethnic discrimination, and peer victimization) would be associated with both physical and relational aggression. In addition, multiple risks were conceptualized as holding potential to be indirectly associated with adolescent aggression through multiple paths: (a) fathers' support, (b) fathers' monitoring, (c) fathers' punitiveness, (d) fathers' psychological control. Further, fathers' parenting behaviors were conceptualized as having the potential to moderate the association between multiple risks and physical and relational aggression. While much of the research examining indirect associations or potential moderation among variables examines either mediation or moderation, in the present study either a mediation or moderation model was proposed as the primary focus of the research question and the alternative models were tested to strengthen support for the findings.

### **Research Questions**

Based upon the theoretical model (see Figure 1), the present study addresses two research questions. The research questions and conceptual hypotheses are summarized below. Each research question is addressed in separate manuscripts within this dissertation.

#### **Research Question 1 (Manuscript 1)**

Manuscript 1 addressed the research question of how selected risks (neighborhood risk, fathers' reports of their own risk behaviors, fathers' and adolescents' reports of selected fathers' parenting behaviors (punitiveness and psychological control) and protective processes (fathers' and adolescents' reports of fathers' support and fathers' monitoring) were associated with African American and Latino adolescent boys' reports of physical and relational aggression.

#### **Research Question 2 (Manuscript 2)**

Manuscript 2 addresses the research question regarding how selected risks (victimization in the forms of peer victimization and perceived discrimination, fathers' and adolescents' reports of fathers' behaviors of punitiveness and psychological control) and protective processes (fathers' and adolescents' reports of fathers' support and fathers' monitoring) were associated with African American and Latino adolescent boys' reports of physical and relational aggression.

## Conceptual Hypotheses

Based upon the two research questions above, conceptual models were developed for each question and conceptual hypotheses were developed.

### Hypotheses for Research Question 1

Manuscript 1 addresses Research Question 1 regarding how selected risks (adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk and fathers' perceptions of risk behaviors) and fathers' parenting behaviors are associated with African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of physical and relational aggression. The primary conceptual model used to examine Research Question 1 was the mediation model shown in Figure 2a. In this model, the following hypotheses were established regarding direct associations between risks and fathers' parenting behaviors and Latino and African American adolescent boys' aggression.

**Hypothesis 1.** Neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors are positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 2.** Fathers' support and fathers' monitoring are negatively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 3.** Fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control are positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

Further, the following hypotheses, shown in Figure 2a, were established relating to indirect associations between risks, fathers' parenting behaviors, and African American and Latino boys' aggression.

**Hypothesis 4.** Neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors are negatively associated with both fathers' support and fathers' monitoring.

**Hypothesis 5.** Neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors are positively associated with both fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control.

**Hypothesis 6.** Neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behavior are indirectly associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression through a negative association with both

fathers' support and fathers' monitoring which are, in turn, negatively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 7.** Neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behavior are indirectly associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression through a positive association with both fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control which are, in turn, positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

The alternative model, the moderation model (see Figure 2b), retained Hypotheses 1-5 and proposed that rather than mediation, the four fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring, punitiveness, and psychological control) held potential to moderate the associations between risk (neighborhood or fathers' risk behaviors) and boys' aggression (physical or relational). Due to a lack of sufficient prior empirical investigation to justify specific hypotheses, no specific hypotheses were made concerning the four fathers' parenting behaviors as potential moderators of the association between neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

### **Hypotheses for Research Question 2**

To address Research Question 2 which addresses how selected risks (adolescent boys' victimization in the forms of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization) and selected fathers' parenting behaviors (punitiveness and psychological control) and protective processes (fathers' support and fathers' monitoring) were associated with African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of physical and relational aggression, the following hypotheses were developed. These hypotheses were examined as part of Manuscript 2. The primary conceptual model for Research Question 2 shown in Figure 3a proposed that the four fathers' parenting behaviors held potential to moderate the associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. In this moderation model, the following hypotheses were established regarding direct associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 8.** Racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization are positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 9.** Fathers' support and fathers' monitoring are negatively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 10.** Fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control are positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

Due to a lack of prior empirical investigation to justify specific hypotheses, no specific hypotheses were established concerning the four parenting behaviors as potential moderators of the associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

An alternative conceptual model for Research Question 2 is the mediation model shown in Figure 3b. In this model the following hypotheses were established and proposed that rather than moderation, the four fathers' parenting behaviors held potential to mediate the associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. The following additional hypotheses, shown in Figure 3b, were established relating to indirect associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization, fathers' parenting behaviors, and African American and Latino boys' aggression.

**Hypothesis 11.** Racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization are negatively associated with both fathers' support and fathers' monitoring.

**Hypothesis 12.** Racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization are positively associated with both fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control.

**Hypothesis 13.** Racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization are indirectly associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression through a negative association with both fathers' support and fathers' monitoring which are, in turn, negatively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

**Hypothesis 14.** Racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization are indirectly associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression through a positive association with both fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control which are, in turn, positively associated with both adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

### **Conceptual Definitions**

The following definitions are included as a guide to the overall concepts. These are important theoretical concepts and variables used in the overall study, and the subsequent manuscripts.

*Aggression* is any behavior that has intent to harm and tends to exist in various forms including physical, relational, and verbal (Fives et al., 2011).

*Discrimination* is any overt or covert unfair treatment of another (Harrell, 2000).

*Distal contexts* are contexts that are more remote from the individual (e.g., culture) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

*Ecological resilience perspectives* are theoretical perspectives that emphasize risk and resilience across the multiple ecological levels that an individual is a part of (Fraser, 2004; Harvey, 2007).

*Fathers* are those men who are identified by adolescent boys to be the principal father figure in their lives. These men may be the biological father of the boy, or a non-biological father figure. Non-biological fathers are not required to be married to or romantically involved with the mother.

*Fathers' parenting behaviors* are specific dimensions of behavior that fathers utilize as they parent including support, monitoring, punitiveness, and psychological control. Types of fathers' behaviors are described below.

1. *Support* refers to the communication of feelings of warmth, affection, and a sense of being valued to the adolescent (Stolz et al., 2005).
2. *Monitoring* is the supervision of activities, friendship, and money of the adolescent (Stolz et al., 2005).

3. *Punitiveness* is controlling behaviors (verbal or coercive) that are characterized as being harsh, strict, or arbitrary with the adolescent (Henry, 1994).
4. *Psychological control* describes attempts to constrain the adolescent's individual autonomy through such tactics as induction of guilt or love withdrawal (Barber, 1996).

*Fathers' risk behaviors* are fathers' physical aggression, alcohol use, and illegal activity.

*Mediators* are variables that explain the relation between predictor and criterion variables and are presumed to intervene or transmit some of the effects of prior variables on subsequent variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

*Moderators* are any variable that affects the strength and/or direction of the relation between independent and dependent variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

*Multiple risk factors* are the presence of several risk factors associated with adjustment difficulties (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Walsh, 2006).

*Peer victimization* is being the target of some form of aggressive behavior from peers (Sullivan, Farrell, & Kliewer, 2006).

*Protective processes* are those forces that help address, reduce, and resist risk that are ongoing rather than static (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000).

*Proximal contexts* are contexts that are nearest to the individual (e.g., family) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

*Resilience* is the capacity to bounce back from some adversity with greater strength and more resourcefulness (Walsh, 2006).

*Risk* is any negative life circumstances associated with difficulties in adjustment, and does not necessarily have to be specific event but can be based on group membership (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000).

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Figure 1. Theoretical model of neighborhood risk, victimization, fathers' risk behaviors, fathers' parenting behaviors and adolescent boys' aggression

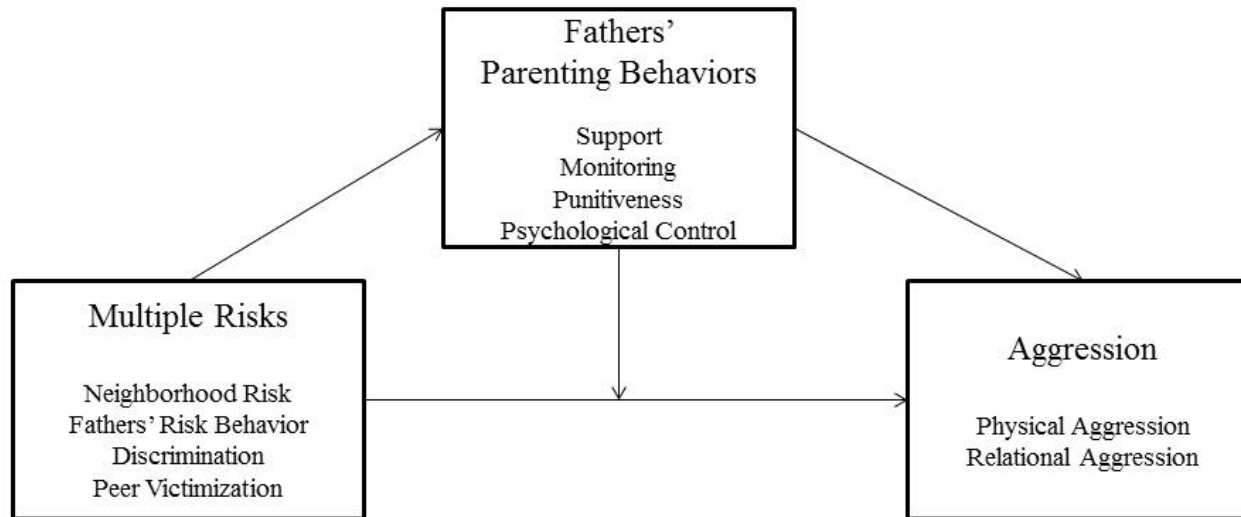




Figure 2. Conceptual models of neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors, fathers' parenting behaviors, adolescent boys' aggression

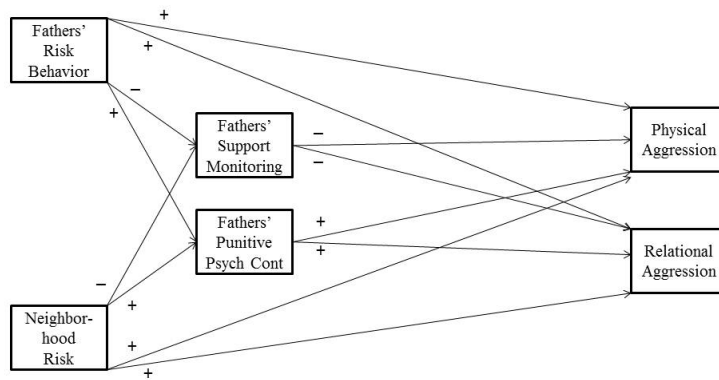


Figure 2a. Mediation model\*

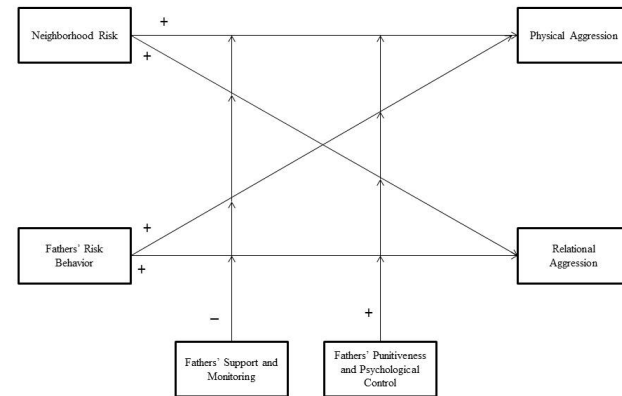


Figure 2b. Moderation model\*

\*Because of potential variation based on socioeconomic status, one indicator of SES, parents' academic achievement was tested as a control variable in the models.

Figure 3. Conceptual model of fathers' parenting behaviors as potential moderators of the relation between racial/ethnic discrimination, peer victimization and adolescent boys' aggression

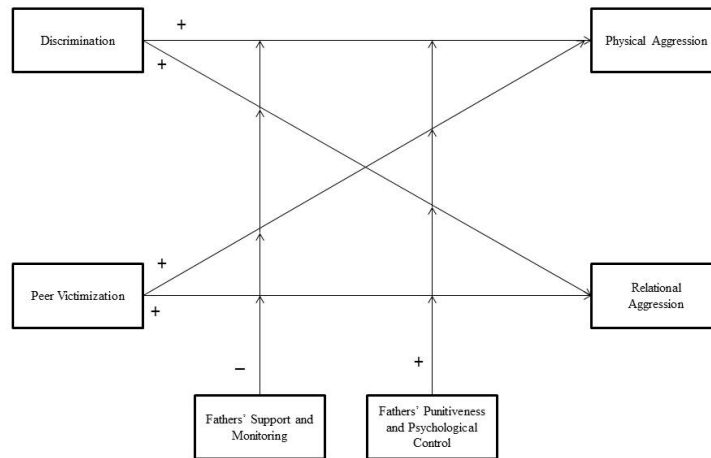


Figure 3a. Moderation model\*

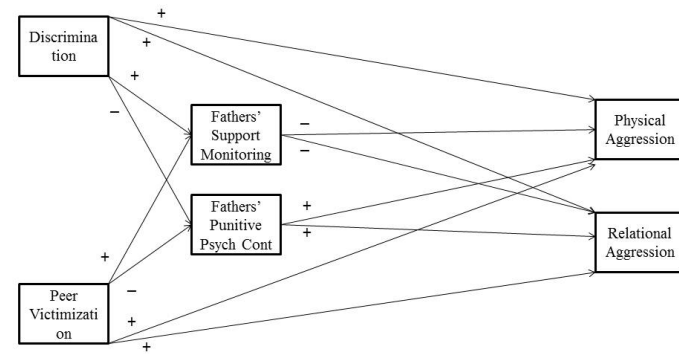


Figure 3b. Mediation model\*

\*Because of potential variation based on socioeconomic status, one indicator of SES, parents' academic achievement was tested as a control variable in the models.

## MANUSCRIPT 1

### FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS, NEIGHBORHOOD RISK, AND FATHERS' RISK BEHAVIORS IN ASSOCIATION WITH ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS

Author note: This manuscript was written by Bobby L. Kern the author as part of the doctoral dissertation **FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS AND RISKS FOR ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION IN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS** under the supervision of Carolyn S. Henry in the Oklahoma State University Department of Human Development and Family Science. This research was conducted as part of the *Fathers Count!* research project funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Andrew O. Behnke, Carolyn S. Henry, and Scott W. Plunkett, Principal Investigators, Grant # 2007-MU-FX-0003.

## Manuscript 1

Increased risk for African American and Latino adolescent boys to display aggressive behaviors as compared to their peers (CDC, 2008) coupled with the heightened vulnerability to that risk when multiple other risk factors (e.g., fathers' risky behaviors, neighborhood risk) are present (Walsh, 2006), highlights the importance of investigating aggression between and across these groups (Putallaz et al., 2007), rather than simply comparing them to a majority group (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). A promising approach to investigating these groups is to identify how fathers' parenting behaviors might protect against aggression outcomes among African American and Latino adolescent boys and examining how those findings might be generalized across the groups, or vary between the groups. Therefore, a model was developed and tested that examined how after controlling for parents' academic achievement (a) African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of neighborhood risk, their fathers' self-reports of risk behavior, and adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behavior were associated with adolescents' reports of aggressive behavior and (b) whether adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors mediated the associations between the risk factors and adolescent aggression. Further, there tends to be a discrepancy in the magnitude of associations between adolescents' perceptions and fathers' self-report of parenting behaviors (e.g., Latendresse et al., 2009). Therefore, the model was also tested using fathers' self-reports of their parenting behaviors and compared to identify how fathers' reports of their parenting behaviors differed from adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors in their association with adolescents' physical and relational aggression. Since conceptualizing socioeconomic status is not easy, and is often debated (e.g., Braveman et al., 2005) a range of indicators of socioeconomic status may be used as stand-alone proxies for socioeconomic status (Wallace et al., 2009). One of those consistently used indicators is parent academic achievement (e.g., Bachman, 2011, Davis-Kean, 2005). Consistent with this literature, parent academic achievement was served as a proxy for SES, a control variable in the study.

The current study contributes to existing literature in the following ways. First, this study builds upon the call of Garcia Coll et al. (1996) to examine development specifically in adolescent boys who are members of racial/ethnic minority groups, rather than relying on samples that are overrepresented by majority populations, or limited to only one racial/ethnic group. Because adolescence is a time of transition for the adolescent often marked by a change in parenting strategies and style as adolescents seek greater autonomy (McGoldrick & Shibusawa, 2012), the current study focuses on ninth and tenth grade boys where developmentally appropriate intervention or prevention relating to physical and relational aggression may be of value. Further, Pleck (2010) contends that evidence is continuing to mount that paternal aspects of parenting play an important role in youth development. Specifically, there is a trend developing that examines African American (e.g., McAdoo & Younge, 2009) and Latino (e.g., Halguseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006) fathers/father figures as playing a significant role in the lives their adolescents. The term father figure is used because it is not always the biological father who adolescent boys identify as the man fulfilling the fathering role in their lives. This study builds upon that trend, as opposed to more traditional research that has examined fathers in these groups from a more negative stereotypical lens (Cabrera & Garcia Coll, 2004; McAdoo & Younge, 2009). Moreover, the study examines the similarities and differences between fathers' self-reports and adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors (Latendresse et al., 2009). Consistent with Luthar and Cicchetti's (2000) emphasis on risk and protective factors in the development of adolescence, the current study examines the role that fathers' parenting behaviors may play as protective factors against adolescent physical and relational aggression in the face of certain risk factors (fathers' risk behaviors, neighborhood risk). The results of the current study have the potential to highlight key processes in the lives of African American and Latino adolescents in promoting resilience and dampening risk, specifically relating to adolescent boys' aggressive outcomes.

## Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior

*Aggression* refers to any behavior that has intent to harm manifested through various forms including *physical aggression* (overt behaviors that can either harm or threaten to harm others; Crick, 1997) and *relational aggression* (nonphysical behavior that is intended to damage peer relationships and social status Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Fives, Kong, Fuller, & DiGiuseppe, 2011). Physical aggression has been shown to be associated with low levels of self-restraint (Crick, 1997), low peer acceptance, (Smith, Rose, & Schwartz-Mette, 2010), low GPA, (Loveland, Lounsbury, Welsh, & Buboltz, 2007) more school dropout, (Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002), and substance use, (Herrenkohl, Catalano, Hemphill, & Toumbourou, 2009). Relational aggression also has been found to be associated with a number of negative outcomes (see Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008 for a review).

Crick (1997) observed a disproportionate emphasis upon boys' physical aggression that overshadowed other aspects of boys' aggression including relational aggression. Since that time, a number of studies have addressed these issues (see Card et al., 2008 for a review). However, as the research progressed other limitations warranting additional study have been identified including (a) insufficient research to date addressing aggression among adolescents in racial/ethnic minority groups (Putallaz et al., 2007) and (b) recent findings that suggest certain types of aggression may not be as gender related as once thought, emphasizing the needs for examining both physical and relational aggression among adolescent boys (e.g., Card et al., 2008; Coyne, Archer, Eslea, & Liechty, 2008; Karriker-Jaffe, Foshee, Ennett, & Suchindran, 2008).

African American (50.3%) and Latino (47.3%) boys report a higher prevalence of physical altercations than do their female counterparts (CDC, 2008). African American adolescent boys consistently report higher levels of physical aggression (e.g., Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 1982; Kim et al., 2010; Underwood et al., 2009). Latino adolescents also have been shown to report high levels of physical aggression (e.g., Kim et al., 2010), especially when they experience feelings of depression in early adolescence (Maldonado-Molina, Reingle, Tobler,

Jennings, & Komro, 2010). Further, Coyne et al. (2008) found that perceptions of relational aggression among boys may be as common and hurtful as among girls, and that gender stereotypes about aggression may not exist. Additionally, boys are more likely than girls to display relational aggression in tandem with more overt aggressive behaviors (Smith et al., 2010).

### **Ecological Resilience Perspectives on Adolescent Boys' Physical and Relational Aggression**

Ecological resilience perspectives build upon traditional resilience perspectives that emphasize a strengths-based approach (Hawley & DeHann, 1996) to understanding development, as well as taking into account the multiple system levels that people are involved in, influenced by, and interacting with (e.g., Windle, 2011). Resilience perspectives build upon Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives, focusing on resilience as an emerging and ongoing process across multiple system levels (Patterson 2002). Resilience research has demonstrated that overcoming multiple risks (e.g., neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors) is difficult but not impossible (e.g., Masten, 2001; Masten, 2007).

Garcia Coll et al. (1996) proposed an integrative theoretical model specifically for studying development in youth of racial/ethnic minority groups that can be used in conjunction with resilience perspectives. This model provides a lens through which resilience in African American and Latino adolescent boys can be examined, and also relates to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives, recognizing the influence that system levels from distal (larger macrosystems) to proximal (smaller systems) have on the experiences of the boys. Using this model, neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behavior can be viewed as distal and proximal risk factors for aggression. Further, protective processes, such as fathers' parenting behaviors may mediate associations between stressors and outcomes, or foster resilience on multiple levels by acting as a buffer (moderator) to certain stressors (Masten, 2007). It is important for researchers to examine the potential that protective processes have to mediate and moderate associations between risk and aggression because that information can be used to correctly identify

interventions and preventions of undesired behaviors for specific groups (Kraemer, Stice, Kazdin, Offord, & Kupfer, 2001).

### **Risks for Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

There has been a recent call to understand the importance of, and to account for, various factors (e.g., neighborhood, family), and their influence on adolescent aggression (Maldonado-Molina et al., 2010). While risk in general for adolescent boys' aggressive behavior is well researched, what is less clear is how these risks relate to aggression within specific race/ethnicity groups (African American, and Latino) and how those relations might differ among the groups. By examining risks that African American and Latino adolescent boys may be faced with, researchers will be able to identify specific paths, patterns, and forms of aggression in response to environments and target those as central points of furthering research, enhancing education, shaping policy, and providing services.

**Neighborhood risk.** Consistent with ecological resilience perspectives, the more distal system of neighborhoods may be a place where adolescents are exposed to risky behavior, such as crime, aggression, and violence (e.g., Cleveland, 2003; Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Tolan, 2004; Sampson et al., 1997). Further, research has shown that low-income neighborhoods composed primarily of African American or Latino adolescents show strong prevalence of crime and violence (Bray, Sample, & Kempf-Leonard, 2005).

Typically when describing and understanding neighborhoods as a risk factor, researchers focus on examining structural qualities of the communities (e.g., Leventhal, Dupéré, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009) such as economic disadvantage and ethnic/racial heterogeneity (Hart & Marmorstein, 2009), often using U.S. Census data (Bass & Lambert, 2004). However, using this data could be a limitation as it could be up to 10 years old at any given time. Because of this, many researchers have measured neighborhood qualities by the subjective perceptions of the communities' residents (e.g., Bass & Lambert, 2004; Henry, Merten, Plunkett, & Sands, 2008; Plunkett, Abarca-Mortensen, Behnke, & Sands, 2007). Perceptions of neighborhood qualities



have been found to be more closely related to adolescents' behavior than more objective measures (e.g., Stiffman, Hadley-Ives, Elze, Johnson, & Doré, 1999) justifying their use.

While there is some research linking neighborhood risk to adolescent aggression, many of these studies utilize measures of structural qualities of the neighborhood rather than examining perceptions of those neighborhoods. For example, one study that examined adolescent aggression trajectories among rural adolescents found that neighborhood disadvantage (measured as encompassing three dimensions including education, employment, and economic resources, all calculated using US census data) was positively associated with adolescent aggression (Karriker-Jaffe, Foshee, Ennett, & Suchindran, 2009). Another study measured neighborhood disadvantage as a combination of neighborhood structural qualities including proportion of single-parent households, number of households with an annual income of less than \$15,000, and neighborhood unemployment rates (Cleveland, 2003). This study found that adolescents living in disadvantaged neighborhoods were significantly more likely to practice aggressive behavior than those adolescents living in adequate neighborhoods. However, studies examining the link between neighborhood risk as perceived by the adolescent and adolescent aggression are lacking.

**Fathers' risk behaviors.** A more proximal risk factor occurs within the family system. Scholars have examined the relation of fathers' risk behavior (e.g., Thornberry, Freeman-Gallant, Lizotte, Krohn, & Smith, 2003) including aggression (Doumas, Margolin, & John, 1994), illegal activity (Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Kalb, 2001), and alcohol use (Malone, Iacono, & McGue, 2002) with adolescent risk behaviors. Several studies have found a significant association between fathers' aggression and adolescents' aggression. For example, one study researching aggression in children 17 years old and younger found that parental verbal and physical aggression was significantly associated with higher levels of aggressive behavior in the children (Vissing, Straus, Gelles, & Harrop, 1991). Milletich, Kelley, Doane, and Pearson (2010), found that fathers' aggression towards mothers was significantly and positively associated with their college age sons use of physical aggression in their dating relationships. Similarly, exposure

to fathers' alcohol use also has been associated with adolescent aggression, specifically noting that adolescents who come from alcoholic homes are more likely to score higher on measures of aggression (e.g., Alterman et al., 1998; Giancola, Moss, Martin, Kirisci, & Tarter, 1996; Greenfield, Swartz, Landerman, & George, 1993). Giancola et al. (1996) found that a paternal history of alcohol and substance use was significantly related to aggression in adolescents. A fathers' involvement in illegal activity has been shown to relate to severe violent aggression that leads to arrest in their adolescent offspring (Bailey, 1996). The link among the behaviors, physical aggression, alcohol, and illegal activity has been established (Exum, 2006), and it is expected that a combination of these behaviors will be associated with adolescent aggressive behaviors.

### **Fathers' Parenting Behaviors and Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

Based upon calls from scholars (e.g., Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000; Pleck, 2010) for an understanding of fathers' parenting that specifically examines how such things as race/ethnicity, social class, or community help to define what is good or responsible fathering, the present study examines fathers' parenting behaviors as potential protective processes against adolescents' physical and relational aggression in the face of risk factors.

Research has identified support and control as central dimensions of parenting behaviors (Peterson, 2005) consistently related to a range of adolescent outcomes (Peterson, 2005) including aggressive behavior (Kuppens, Grietens, Onghena, & Michiels, 2009). Research has shown a negative relation between parental *support*, or warmth and acceptance towards their children (e.g., Stolz, Barber, & Olsen, 2005) and adolescent aggression (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). Spano et al. (2009) found that African American parents' support played a role in protecting against violently aggressive behavior in their adolescents. Based on a study of 202 male and female African American adolescents in fifth, eighth, and tenth grades the authors concluded that father support is crucial and pivotal in relation to outcomes for African American adolescents (Bean, Barber, & Crane, 2006). Contrary to the stigma that African American fathers

are absent and uninvolved, Roopnarine (2004) emphasized the importance of African American fathers' support. Similarly, although Latino fathers are typically portrayed as "macho" or ruling over their families as lord and master, research shows that these men are allowed and expected to be supportive toward their children (Cabrera & Coll, 2004). Further, because of the strong emphasis that is put on the interdependence among family members within Latino families (Halgunseth et al., 2006), it is possible that Latino adolescents see their fathers as important sources of support in their lives (Henry et al., 2008).

*Control* refers to techniques fathers employ to discipline, encourage, or exact child compliance with expectations (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). *Fathers' monitoring* is a type of control described as requiring knowledge of children's behaviors, friends and activities, and this knowledge only occurs in contexts where children feel connected enough to their parents to disclose such information (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Low monitoring is associated with increased risk for child aggression (Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2009), while, more monitoring is associated with decreased risk in child aggression (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). African American and Latino fathers are more likely than Caucasians to monitor closely the activities and whereabouts of their adolescents (Toth & Xu, 1999). However, research examining monitoring in multiple race/ethnicity samples has found inconsistent findings in relation to patterns of effect (Mason et al., 2004). For example, Hofferth (2003) found that African American fathers monitored their adolescents' activities significantly more than Caucasians, especially when controlling for neighborhood risk, while Latino fathers monitored their adolescents' activities significantly less than Caucasians, suggesting that paternal monitoring may have different meanings across race/ethnicity.

Control that is harsh or coercive in nature includes punitiveness and psychological control and may increase the risk for behavior problems (Baumrind, Larzelere, & Owens, 2010). Fathers' *punitiveness* is described as the extent to which fathers use controlling behaviors (verbal or coercive) characterized as being harsh, strict, or arbitrary with the adolescent (Henry, 1994).

Research has shown a negative relation between parental punitiveness and adolescent aggression (e.g., Smokowski et al., 2009). However, the conceptualization of punitiveness as a risk or protective process is often debated, and Henry and Hubbs-Tait (2013) emphasize the importance for researchers to examine what behaviors like punitiveness might mean across culture. For example, Mosley and Thompson (1995) building on Baumrind's work note that punitiveness has a different character across race. Specifically, that while for Caucasians, punitiveness may be seen as unfair and harsh, for African Americans, punitiveness protects and prepares adolescents for the harsh realities of the world (e.g., racism, economic stress). Also, since ideals such as *respeto* (respect) and *obediencia* (obedience) towards fathers are important aspects of Latino families, when adolescents are *mal educados* (i.e., not well behaved, mannered, or educated) fathers may respond with more punitive behaviors (Plunkett et al., 2007).

Another form of control that may increase the risk for adolescent boys' aggression is *psychological control*, attempts by fathers to constrain their adolescent's individual autonomy through such tactics as guilt induction, love withdrawal, shaming, or invalidation (Barber, 2002). Parental psychological control has been called a "blueprint for relational aggression" (Nelson & Crick, 2002). In their meta-analytic review of relational aggression, Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van Ijzendoorn, & Crick, (2011) supported this with the finding that more paternal psychological control was associated with higher levels of relational aggression in children under the age of 18 in a primarily Caucasian sample. Other research brings into question whether this is true for African American and Latino boys who may view psychological control as a sign of love and concern shown by their fathers (e.g., Crockett, Brown, Russell, & Shen, 2007; Mason, Walker-Barnes, Tu, Simons, & Martinez-Arrue, 2004).

Fundamental differences in goals of parenting that are valued within different ethnic groups may explain, in part, variation in how fathering relates to adolescent outcomes (Dilworth-Anderson, Burton, & Turner, 1993). African American families in the United States place importance on flexibility and support among family members when it comes to parenting, and

value being a part of larger extended families or kin networks (McAdoo & Younge, 2009). Further, McAdoo and Younge (2009) suggest that though fathers are somewhat missing from the literature dealing with African American parenting, evidence exists that fathers/father figures are not only often present, but a valued part of the kin network, and a very important piece of the parenting puzzle. Latino families in the United State tend to place value on different aspects of parenting, including *familismo*, the idea that the family is the primary source for support, and family loyalty and commitment supersede the needs of the individual; *respeto*, the emphasis of both a self-respect and other-respect that maintains a harmony of interpersonal relationships; *educacion*, training in such things as fostering and maintaining relationships, morality, and responsibility (Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). Fathering is an important aspect of family in the Latino culture (Cruz et al., 2011).

### **Neighborhood Risk, Fathers' Risk Behaviors, Fathers' Parenting Behaviors and Adolescents' Aggression**

Much scholarship has examined the role of parenting on the association between neighborhoods and adolescent outcomes. For example, Sampson and Laub (1994) noted that in families with consistent supportive and loving behaviors, supervision, punishment, and close family ties, adolescents were at low risk for delinquency even in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Tolan et al. (2003) found that certain parenting practices were partial mediators of the relation between neighborhood social processes and minority youths' involvement in gangs and use of violence. Further, parenting has been shown to act as a buffer to neighborhood risk, specifically community violence (Gorman-Smith et al., 2004). This research all suggests that parenting behaviors may be important as protective factors for adolescents who perceive living in a risky neighborhood.

Research has shown that fathers' aggression is associated with their parenting behavior (e.g., Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van Ijzendoorn, & Crick, 2011). In fact, fathers' aggression has been shown to be displayed in their parenting behavior, in that physical aggression may be a tool

that fathers use to exact control (Nelson & Crick, 2002). Further, fathers' alcohol use is related to fathers' parenting behavior in several ways including less consistent discipline (King & Chassin, 2004), decreased positive parenting behavior toward boys (Tildesley & Andrews, 2008), and low levels of support (Barnes, Reifman, Farrell, & Dintcheff, 2000). Fathers who are involved in illegal activity, and have been booked for a crime, or incarcerated have been shown to be less engaged with their children (Woldoff & Washington, 2008). Recent research has created composite scores of similar fathers' risk behaviors (e.g., crime involvement and drug use) and found those to be associated with adolescents' antisocial behaviors including aggression, and fathers' parenting behavior (Coley, Carrano, & Lewin-Bizan, 2011).

### **Current Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine how neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors relate with physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys, and how fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring, punitiveness, psychological control) may exacerbate or protect against those risks. It was hypothesized that, neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors are positively associated with adolescent boys' aggression. Further, selected forms of fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring), were hypothesized to be negatively associated with adolescent boys' aggression, and other forms of fathers' parenting behaviors (punitiveness, and psychological control) were hypothesized to be positively related with adolescent boys' aggression. Also, neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors were hypothesized to be indirectly associated with adolescent aggression through multiple paths: (a) fathers' support, (b) fathers' monitoring, (c) fathers' punitiveness, (d) fathers' psychological control (see Figure 2a, p. 57). This mediation model was tested as the primary model. As an alternative a moderation model (see Figure 2b, p. 57) also was tested. Although specific hypotheses were not made regarding fathers' parenting behaviors as potential moderators of the associations between neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression, all such possible interactions were tested. Because African

American and Latino adolescent boys may live in different racial/ethnic contexts (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996) the fit of the model was examined for each of the two groups. Although no specific hypotheses were made regarding a comparison between models utilizing adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors and fathers' self-reports of parenting behaviors, separate models utilizing each of the reports were examined and reported.

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

This study is part of the Fathers Count project, a larger study of family, neighborhood, school, and peer factors associated with adolescent risk, targeting schools and community organizations with large African American and Latino populations. Prior to data collection Institutional Review Boards approval was granted through the three participating universities. Research team members made contact with administrators or leaders in identified high schools and community organizations, obtained agreements to participate, and made arrangements for data collection by distributing packets and collecting data from boys either onsite at the schools/organizations, or by sending questionnaires home with boys. Boys were directed to ask their fathers or father figures to participate in the study.

In North Carolina, ninth and tenth grade students in three schools were invited to participate in the study by research team members who met with students either during home room or another designated class time. Adolescents received self-report surveys from teachers, completed the surveys at home after receiving parental permission (signed consent forms), and returned the completed surveys in sealed envelopes to their teachers. Teachers were provided with an instruction packet, and distributed gift cards when the students returned the consent forms and completed surveys.

In California, data collection took place in two schools, with initial contacts in one school through the home rooms followed by data collection (from students returning signed consent and assent forms) during regular class sessions. In the second school, data collection was coordinated

through one teacher who distributed consent and assent forms one week in classes, followed by data collection by members of the research team the following week. Consent/assent forms were distributed through that teacher's class one week. The next week, forms were returned and a team of researchers administered the survey.

In Oklahoma, data collection took place in three schools. In all three schools researchers met with school principals to explain the survey. After that initial meeting, the procedure looked different in each school. In two schools researchers met with 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to explain the survey. Next researchers distributed packets containing parent consent and adolescent assent forms to the teachers who in turn distributed them to their students. Students were then given a week to return the packets. On the data collection day, students who had returned their signed forms were excused to a separate room set up for data collection in order to complete the survey. Data were collected at a third school by going through a community organization, who invited researchers to two separate enrollment nights. Parents completed consent forms and adolescents completed assent forms and surveys at that time.

In all three states, African American and Latino fathers were asked by their sons to complete a separate father survey. Adolescents were given the father packets to deliver to fathers who were instructed to mail the completed assent forms and surveys back to the associated university. In Oklahoma at data collection sites where fathers were present, the opportunity was given to complete the survey at that time. Researchers distributed via mail gift cards to participating fathers.

### **Participants**

Participants in this study were 234 African American (34.2%,  $n = 80$ ) and Latino (65.8%,  $n = 154$ ) adolescent boys, and fathers /father figures of those adolescents. Fathers /father figures were identified by the adolescents as being the primary father figure in their lives. Participant demographics follow: mean age was 15.17 (range 13-18), 61.5% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 38.5% in 10<sup>th</sup> grade; state of residence was 72.6% North Carolina, 23.9% California, and 3.5% Oklahoma. The



relationship of the reporting fathers/father figures follow: biological fathers 69.2%, adoptive fathers 2.1%, stepfathers 15.4%, grandfathers 1.3%, uncles 3%, and others 9%.

## Measures

**Parent academic achievement.** The current project uses selected items and scales completed by Latino and African American adolescent boys and their fathers who participated in the larger study. Demographic variables were measured with single-item questions with the exception of the control variable, parent academic achievement, which was measured using a composite of two items: “What’s the highest level of education your mother figure completed?” and “What’s the highest level of education your father figure completed?” Response choices for adolescents’ reports of mothers’ and fathers’ academic achievement follow: 1 = *no schooling completed*, 2 = *some elementary school (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades)*, 3 = *some middle school (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades)*, 4 = *some high school (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades)*, 5 = *high school graduate or equivalency (GED)*, 6 = *some college but no degree*, 7 = *associate (technical school) degree*, 8 = *bachelor’s degree*, 9 = *master’s degree*, 10 = *professional school (medical, law) degree*, 11 = *doctorate degree (Ph.D., Ed.D.)*. Mean scores were computed to formulate a parent academic achievement score, with higher scores indicating a higher education achievement level. Using these data, a Cronbach’s alpha of .85 was calculated.

**Adolescents’ physical aggression.** Burton, Hafetz, and Henninger’s (2007) 9-item Likert-type modification of Physical Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) was used to measure adolescents’ report of physical aggression. Sample items were: “If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.” and “I have threatened people I know.” Burton et al., modified the response choices of the original scale (1 = *extremely uncharacteristic of me* to 5 = *extremely characteristic of me*) to the following response choices: were: 0 = *never*, 1 = *sometimes*, 2 = *frequently*, 3 = *very frequently*, 4 = *always*. Mean scores of the items were computed with higher scores representing higher levels of physical aggression. A Cronbach’s alpha of .87 was calculated with the current data.

**Adolescents' relational aggression.** Adolescents' relational aggression was assessed using a 5-item relational aggression Likert-type scale adapted from a 7-item Likert-type scale used in previous research (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007). Sample items were: "When I get mad at someone, I get even by keeping that person from being in my group of friends." and "I tell friends I will stop liking them unless they do what I say." Response choices were: 0 = *never*, 1 = *sometimes*, 2 = *frequently*, 3 = *very frequently*, 4 = *always*. Mean scores were computed with higher scores representing higher levels of relational aggression. Using the current data, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .83 was established.

**Neighborhood risk.** Adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk were assessed with a modified version (Behnke et al., 2011) of a previously used neighborhood risk scale (Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006). Examples of those risks include low education, unemployment, poverty, substance use, illegal acts, and violence, a severe form of aggression. For the project, the wording of one item, "I have seen many illegal acts" was improved to "I have seen people do illegal things." Two items, "Education is not valued," and "I feel unsafe," had their coding changed so that they indicated higher risk. A sample item follows: "I feel unsafe." Participants responded using the following choices: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Mean scores were computed with higher scores indicating greater perceived neighborhood risk. Using the current data a Cronbach's alpha of .92 was established.

**Fathers' risk behaviors.** Fathers' perceptions of their own risk behavior was measured as a 17-item scale that combined items about fathers' reports of their own physical aggression (9 items), alcohol use (4 items), and illegal activity (4 items). The scale was created specifically for this study and combined Burton, Hafetz, and Henninger's (2007) 9-item Likert-type modification of Physical Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) to measure fathers' report of physical aggression; the CAGE Questionnaire (Ewing, 1984) to measure fathers' alcohol use and; fathers' reports of their own participation in illegal activity was measured with a 4 item Likert-type scale.

Mean scores were computed with higher scores indicating more risk behavior. Using the current data, a Cronbach's alpha of .84 was established.

**Fathers' parenting behaviors.** Adolescent boys' perceptions and fathers' self-reports of fathers' parental behaviors were measured using subscales from the Parent Behavior Measure (PBM; Bush, Peterson, Cobas, & Supple, 2002; Peterson, 1982). Specific fathers' behaviors that were used in the present study include support (four items), monitoring (six items), punitiveness (seven items), and psychological control (seven items).

Wording of items was changed slightly depending on the respondent. An example of an item from the adolescents' survey follows: "Tells me how much he loves me." An example of the same item on the fathers' survey follows: "I tell him how much I love him." The participants responded to the items using the following choices: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Mean scores for adolescents' and fathers' responses were computed separately yielding scores for each variable. The following Cronbach's alphas were established with the current data: support, .83 for adolescents' perception and .82 for fathers' self-report; monitoring, .85 for adolescents' perception and .90 for fathers' self-report; punitiveness, .79 for adolescents' perception and .78 for fathers' self-report; psychological control, .83 for adolescents' perception and .86 for fathers' self-report.

### **Analytic Strategy**

Preliminary analysis involved computing means, and standard deviations, and examining bivariate correlations. Independent *t*-tests were conducted for each of the predictor and criterion variables in order to examine what mean differences might exist across the race/ethnicity groups. Further, because of potential differences between the regions of the country in which respondents lived a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine mean differences by state for each of the predictor and criterion variables. Next, all of the predictor and moderator variables, with the exception of the dummy coded ethnicity variable, were centered by subtracting the mean score from each participant's score on each of the variables (Kline, 2005).

Prior to analysis, interaction terms also were created for all possible two-way interactions in the moderation model.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized to conduct a variety of analyses using *MPlus* (Muthen & Muthen, 2010). Model fit was assessed with the model chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), the comparative fit index (*CFI*), root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*), the standardized root mean square residual (*SRMR*). Path analyses were used in SEM to examine separate models measuring fathers' parenting behaviors as potential mediators and as potential moderators. Path analysis is an excellent technique for measuring multiple sets of indicators and criterion in one measure, and allows for variables to be both a predictor and a criterion (Kline, 2005). Further, path analysis allows the researcher to test a theoretical model and involves estimating causal correlations among observed variables, as well as examining effect patterns of variables (Kline, 2005). Using the current sample, missing data ranged from 0 to 3% for all independent variables. *MPlus* utilizes the optimal full information maximum likelihood for handling missing data. FIML is an approach to missing data that utilizes partially complete and complete cases in a casewise likelihood estimation of observed data accumulated across entire samples and maximized (Enders & Bandalos, 2001).

An initial risk model was examined that included only pathways from the risk factors (neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors) to the outcome variables (adolescents' physical and relational aggression). Fathers' parenting behaviors were added to the model and their potential as mediators of the risk/outcome associations was examined. Bootstrap methodology was employed to test for indirect effects using *MPlus* (Muthen & Muthen). Bootstrapping is a method of statistical resampling that simulates the drawing of many samples (e.g., 2000) from the researcher's population (Kline, 2005). This method was used to overcome the Sobel Test of mediation's conservative nature (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Hoffman, 2002). Bootstrapping estimates the indirect effects through the statistical resampling by calculating confidence intervals, which represent the precision or accuracy of the estimate (MacKinnon, Lockwood, &

Williams, 2004). If zero is not within the 95% confidence interval, then the null hypothesis of no indirect effects will be rejected at  $p < .05$  (MacKinnon et al., 2004). A third alternative unhypothesized model was examined to test the potential of fathers' parenting behaviors as moderators of the association between fathers' risk behaviors and neighborhood risk, with adolescents' physical and relational aggression. Post hoc analysis was conducted on any significant 2-way interactions using the approach from Aiken and West (1991) and simple slopes were calculated and graphed using Dawson's (2010) template. Finally the mediation and moderation models were also examined using fathers' self-reports in place of adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors. The models were compared to identify variance in adolescents' physical and relational aggression depending on the source of information about fathers' parenting behavior.

## **Results**

### **Descriptives and Bivariate Correlations**

As hypothesized there was a significant positive bivariate correlation between both risk factors (neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors) and adolescents' physical and relational aggression (see Table 1). The predicted associations between the two risk factors (neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors) and the fathers' parenting behaviors were significant in ten of the sixteen cases. Specifically, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support and monitoring were negatively associated with neighborhood risk, while perceptions of fathers' psychological control were positively associated with neighborhood risk. Contrary to the hypothesis, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring were not significantly associated with neighborhood risk. Further, as predicted, fathers' reports of their own psychological control were positively related to neighborhood risk. However fathers' reports of their own support, monitoring, and punitiveness were not significant in their association with neighborhood risk. Also, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support and monitoring were significant in association with fathers' risk behavior in the predicted negative direction, while neither punitiveness or psychological control were significant

in their associations with fathers' risk behaviors. Further, all four of the fathers' reports of their own parenting behaviors were significant in their associations with fathers' risk behaviors. As predicted fathers' reports of support and monitoring were negatively related and fathers' reports of punitiveness and psychological control were positively related to fathers' risk behaviors. Fathers' parenting behaviors were associated with the aggression measures in only six of sixteen correlations. Specifically, both adolescents' perceptions and fathers' reports of fathers' support and monitoring were negatively associated with adolescents' physical and relational aggression. However, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' punitiveness and psychological control were not significantly associated with either physical or relational aggression. None of the fathers' reports of their own parenting behaviors were associated with adolescents' physical aggression. Further, fathers' reports of support (negative) and psychological control (positive) were associated with adolescents' relational aggression in the predicted directions, while fathers' reports of monitoring and punitiveness were not related with adolescents' relational aggression. Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics. All tolerance values were greater than .51 and the highest VIF value was 1.9 which falls within recommended acceptable guidelines for both (Pedhazur, 1997).

The results of the *t*-tests (see Table 3) showed that African American boys reported significantly higher levels of physical aggression than did Latino boys. Further, African American boys also reported significantly more educational achievement by their parents than their Latino counterparts. Latino boys reported significantly higher levels of neighborhood risk than did African American boys. Also, fathers of Latino boys reported using more psychologically controlling behavior than did fathers of African American boys.

A series of one-way ANOVAs was conducted to examine possible mean differences that might exist between the three regions that data were collected in for all predictor and criterion variables. The ANOVA results showed that only neighborhood risk significantly varied across region ( $F = 3.41, p < .05$ ). Post-hoc analyses of the significant ANOVA showed that the

difference in adolescent reports of neighborhood risk is significant between those living in California and those living in North Carolina. Specifically, those living in California reported significantly higher levels of neighborhood risk than those in North Carolina ( $p < .05$ ).

### **Mediation Model Using Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathers' Parenting Behavior**

First, a just identified model was examined that included only paths from the risk factors (neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behaviors) and the control variable of parents' academic achievement to adolescents' reports of physical and relational aggression. An examination of standardized beta coefficients showed that adolescents' perception of neighborhood risk was significantly positively related to adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = .15, p = .02$ ), but not physical aggression. Further, fathers' reports of risk behavior showed significant positive associations with both adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .16, p = .01$ ) and relational aggression ( $\beta = .13, p = .04$ ). The control variable of parents' academic achievement was not significantly associated with either adolescent aggression variable.

Next the full model was tested that added the adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behavior. As is expected of a model with a few degrees of freedom (Kline, 2005), the fit of the model was good,  $\chi^2(4) = .73, p = .95$ , CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, SRMR = .01. With the adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors added to the model, the direct paths from the neighborhood risk to adolescents' relational aggression and fathers' risk behavior to adolescents' physical and relational aggression were no longer significant, although fathers' risk behavior was marginally related to adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .17, p = .06$ ).

Neighborhood risk was significantly negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support ( $\beta = -.21, p < .001$ ) and monitoring ( $\beta = -.15, p = .02$ ), and was positively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .20, p < .01$ ), but not fathers' punitiveness. Fathers' risk behaviors were negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support ( $\beta = -.44, p < .001$ ), but not with the other three mediators.

Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support was negatively associated with relational aggression

( $\beta = -.17, p < .01$ ). None of the other adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors were significantly associated with relational aggression. While adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring ( $\beta = -.09, p = .08$ ) and punitiveness ( $\beta = -.11, p = .08$ ) were marginally significant in their negative associations with physical aggression, none of the adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors actually reached significance in their associations with physical aggression.

**Final model.** Model trimming was applied to find a more parsimonious model consistent with theory and data (Kline, 2005). Non-significant pathways were examined and those not predicting adolescents' physical or relational aggression were fixed to zero. Non-significant parameters predicting adolescents' physical or relational aggression were kept free in the model, as one of the goals of this study is to examine those pathways across ethnicity. Model fit indices were examined and the trimmed model was shown to have goodness of fit,  $\chi^2(14) = 11.68, p = .63, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, SRMR = .04$ . Modification indices were examined, however none were suggested that would significantly improve the model fit.

A non-significant chi-square difference test,  $\chi^2(10), 10.95, p = .36$ , supported the null hypothesis of retaining the more constrained model. Thus, the trimmed final model showed goodness of fit and was retained. Consistent with the full model, the final model showed that fathers' risk behavior and neighborhood risk were indirectly related to adolescents' relational aggression through adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support (see Figure 4). Further, fathers' risk behavior was negatively related to adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring ( $\beta = -.26, p < .001$ ), and positively related to adolescents' perceptions of fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .12, p = .01$ ). No pathways including the control variable of parents' academic achievement were significant. With the final trimmed model, the direct pathway from fathers' risk behavior to adolescents' physical aggression became significant ( $\beta = .13, p = .05$ ). Confidence intervals were calculated for the possible indirect effects between fathers' risk behavior and adolescent relational aggression through fathers' support, and neighborhood risk and adolescent relational aggression



through fathers' support (see Table 2). Neither included zero, indicating that the indirect relations between fathers' risk behaviors and adolescents' relational aggression, and neighborhood risk and adolescents' relational aggression are statistically significant. Specifically, fathers' risk behavior and neighborhood risk were both negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support, and in turn support was negatively associated with relational aggression. Because the direct associations between fathers' risk behavior and adolescents' relational aggression, and neighborhood risk and adolescents' relational aggression are reduced to nonsignificance when the adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors were added to the model, the significant indirect relation indicates full mediation. The final model explained approximately 10 % of the variance in physical aggression ( $R^2 = .096$ ,  $p = .01$ ) and relational aggression ( $R^2 = .95$ ,  $p = .01$ ).

**Multiple group analysis.** Next, the final model was examined as part of a multiple group path analysis to determine if pathways varied across ethnicity (African American, Latino). First, a model was examined with equality constraints on the variances, residual variances, and covariances of variables in the model. This model fit the data marginally well,  $\chi^2(39) = 41.71$ ,  $p = .35$ , CFI = .99, RMSEA = .02, SRMR = .06. Next path coefficients were constrained to be equal across the two groups. The model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(56) = 73.05$ ,  $p = .06$ , CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .08. However, a chi-square difference test between the two models was significant,  $\chi^2(17) = 31.34$ ,  $p = .02$ , indicating that the value of the path coefficients differed for African American and Latino adolescents. Among African American adolescent boys (see Figure 5), neighborhood risk was positively associated with adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .32$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Further, fathers' punitiveness was negatively related with adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = -.31$ ,  $p = .01$ ), while fathers' support was negatively related to relational aggression ( $\beta = -.31$ ,  $p = .01$ ). Also, neighborhood risk was negatively related with fathers' support ( $\beta = -.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and positively related with fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Among Latino adolescent boys (see Figure 6) fathers' risk behavior was negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support ( $\beta = -$

.34,  $p < .001$ ), and monitoring ( $\beta = -.25, p = .001$ ). Neighborhood risk was negatively related with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support ( $\beta = -.15, p = .04$ ) and monitoring ( $\beta = -.18, p = .01$ ). Further, monitoring was negatively associated with physical aggression ( $\beta = -.25, p = .02$ ). The confidence intervals produced by the bootstrapping only included zero in one of the possible three indirect effects in the multiple group analysis, indicating two statistically significant indirect effects (see Table 2). For the African American group, neighborhood risk showed significant indirect relation with adolescents' relational aggression. Specifically, neighborhood risk was negatively associated with adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support, and in turn support was negatively associated with relational aggression. For the Latino group, fathers' risk behavior was significantly indirectly related to adolescents' physical aggression. Specifically, fathers' risk behavior was negatively associated with monitoring, which in turn was negatively associated with physical aggression. There was no significant indirect effect between neighborhood risk and adolescents' physical aggression among Latino adolescent boys, even though both paths through monitoring were significant. The model significantly explained approximately 24% of the variance in physical aggression ( $R^2 = 23.8, p < .01$ ) and 25% of the variance in relational aggression ( $R^2 = 25.3, p < .01$ ) for the African American group, and approximately 14% of the variance in physical aggression ( $R^2 = 13.8, p < .01$ ), and 9 % of the variance in relational aggression ( $R^2 = 8.9, p < .05$ ) for the Latino group.

### **Mediation Model Using Fathers' Report of Fathers' Parenting Behaviors**

Next, the same process was used to test a model using fathers' self-reports of their own parenting behavior, rather than adolescents' perceptions of those same behaviors. The model had few degrees of freedom and fit the data well,  $\chi^2(4) = 3.28, p = .51, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, SRMR = .01$ . Fathers' risk behavior remained significantly positively associated with adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .19, p < .01$ ), however was not significantly associated with adolescents' relational aggression. Neighborhood risk was positively associated with adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = .13, p = .05$ ), but not significantly associated with adolescents' physical

aggression. Fathers' reports of their own support behavior was negatively associated with adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = -.15, p = .05$ ), however, fathers' reports of monitoring, punitiveness, and psychological control were not significantly associated with adolescents' relational aggression. Further, none of the four fathers' parenting behaviors were significantly related to adolescents' physical aggression. Fathers' risk behavior was negatively related with fathers' support ( $\beta = -.21, p = .001$ ) and fathers' monitoring ( $\beta = -.31, p < .001$ ), and positively related with fathers' punitiveness ( $\beta = .25, p < .001$ ) and fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ). Neighborhood risk was positively related to fathers' reports of psychological control ( $\beta = .13, p = .04$ ) but not significantly related to fathers' reports of support, monitoring, or punitiveness.

**Trimmed final model.** Next, model trimming was applied where again non-significant pathways were examined and those not predicting adolescents' physical or relational aggression were fixed to zero. The trimmed model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(14) = 13.33, p = .50, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, SRMR = .04$ . A chi-square difference test indicated no statistically significant difference,  $\chi^2_d(10) = 10.05, p = .43$  between the full and final models thus the trimmed model was retained (Figure 7). Consistent with the full model, the final model showed a significant positive association between fathers' risk behavior and adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .32, p < .01$ ) and a non-significant association between fathers' risk behavior and adolescents' relational aggression. Neighborhood risk was positively associated with adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = .13, p = .05$ ) and not associated with adolescents' physical aggression. Fathers' support was negatively associated with adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = -.15, p = .05$ ), however, fathers' monitoring, punitiveness and psychological control were not associated with adolescents' relational aggression. None of the fathers' parenting behaviors were significantly associated with adolescents' physical aggression. Fathers' risk behavior was negatively related with fathers' support ( $\beta = -.21, p = .001$ ) and fathers' monitoring ( $\beta = -.32, p < .001$ ), and positively associated with fathers' punitiveness ( $\beta = .26, p < .001$ ) and fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .28, p <$

.001). Neighborhood risk was no longer significantly associated with psychological control in the final model. Confidence intervals created by the bootstrapping contained zero indicating that the only possible indirect effect between fathers' risk behavior and adolescents' relational aggression through fathers' reports of their own support was not significant. Effect sizes for this model were small. Specifically, the model significantly explained approximately 7% of the variance in relational aggression ( $R^2 = .066$ ,  $p = .30$ ), while the variance in physical aggression was non-significant ( $R^2 = .043$ ,  $p = .10$ ).

**Multiple group analysis.** The final model using fathers' reports of their own fathering behaviors also was examined as part of a multiple group path analysis to determine if paths varied across ethnicity (African American, Latino). First a model was tested that constrained the variances, residual variances, and covariances to be equal across groups. This model showed adequate fit,  $\chi^2(38) = 51.58$ ,  $p = .07$ , CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .07. Next, path coefficients were constrained to be equal across the two groups. This model had adequate fit,  $\chi^2(55) = 71.31$ ,  $p = .07$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .08. Modification indices were examined but did not significantly improve the model. A chi-square difference test between the path constrained model and the previous model was non-significant,  $\chi^2(17) = 19.73$ ,  $p = .29$ , indicating that paths did not significantly vary across ethnicity in the model.

### **Moderation Models**

Because of the small sample size of the groups to be examined in the multiple group analyses coupled with the large amount of interactions to be tested, statistical power was too small to conduct a full moderation model including every interaction (McClelland & Judd, 1993). Thus, a moderation model was examined in several steps. First, smaller models that included one risk and one aggression outcome (e.g., one model for interactive effects of neighborhood risk on physical aggression) were examined. A liberal criterion of  $p > .20$  (R. E. Larzelere, personal communication, June 5, 2012) was used to drop interactions that were nowhere near significant in either ethnic group, or the full sample in these models. The more promising interaction terms

were kept to be examined in the final composite model. As an additional step, any main effects that had all of their interaction terms dropped and themselves were not approaching significance for either aggression outcome were also dropped from the final model.

**Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors.** Using the above procedure, a composite model was constructed that included all promising interaction terms ( $p < .20$ ) from the smaller models. This model fit the data well ( $\chi^2(6) = 9.57, p = .14, RMSEA = .05, CFI = .96, SRMR = .02$ ). Next, those paths that were non-significant were trimmed from the model. The trimmed model also fit the data well ( $\chi^2(12) = 12.68, p = .39, RMSEA = .02, CFI = .99, SRMR = .03$ ). A chi-square difference test ( $\chi^2_d(6) = 3.11, p = .79$ ) showed that the trimmed model fit the data significantly better than the previous model, and was retained (Figure 8). Adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk were positively associated with relational aggression ( $\beta = .15, p = .02$ ). Both adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk ( $\beta = .11, p = .098$ ) and fathers' reports of risk behavior ( $\beta = .10, p = .09$ ) approached significance in their associations with physical aggression. Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring were significantly negatively related with both physical aggression ( $\beta = -.19, p = .005$ ), and relational aggression ( $\beta = -.17, p = .009$ ). Further, the interaction between fathers' risk behavior and fathers' monitoring was significantly positively associated with physical aggression ( $\beta = .18, p = .003$ ), while the interaction between adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk and fathers' monitoring was significant in predicting relational aggression ( $\beta = .13, p = .02$ ).

Post-hoc analyses of the significant 2-way interactions in the path model showed adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' monitoring moderated the relationship between neighborhood risk and relational aggression (Figure 9). Specifically, when boys reported low neighborhood risk there was a significant slope showing a negative association between fathers' monitoring and boys' relational aggression. Yet, when boys reported high neighborhood risk, fathers' monitoring did not show a significant slope in association with relational aggression. Further, fathers' monitoring also moderated the relationship between fathers' risk behavior and

physical aggression (Figure 10). Specifically, when fathers reported low risk behavior there was a significant slope showing a negative association between fathers' monitoring and adolescent boys' physical aggression. Fathers' monitoring did not show a significant slope in association with adolescent boys' physical aggression when fathers reported high risk behavior. This model explained approximately 10% of the variance in physical aggression ( $R^2 = .101, p < .01$ ) and 75 of the variance in relational aggression ( $R^2 = .07, p < .05$ ).

The final model was next examined as part of a multiple group path analysis. First a model was examined that constrained the variances, residual variances, and covariances to be equal across group. Initially the constrained model showed poor fit ( $\chi^2 (63) = 110.32, p < .000$ , RMSEA = .08, CFI = .56, SRMR = .10). Modification indices suggested freeing seven of the constrained covariances to strengthen model fit. This model showed adequate fit, though the CFI was still low ( $\chi^2 (56) = 70.63, p = .09$ , RMSEA = .04, CFI = .86, SRMR = .08), and a chi-square difference test ( $\chi_d^2 (7) = 39.69, p < .001$ ) showed that the modified model fit the data significantly better. Next, paths were constrained to be equal across groups. The initial constrained path model did not fit the data well ( $\chi^2 (67) = 92.26, p = .02$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .76, SRMR = .09). Modification indices suggested freeing the path constraint from the fathers' risk behavior by fathers' monitoring interaction to physical aggression. With this path freed, the model showed better but still inadequate fit ( $\chi^2 (66) = 87.07, p = .04$ , RMSEA = .05, CFI = .80, SRMR = .09). A chi-square difference test conducted between the path constrained model and the path unconstrained model was non-significant ( $\chi_d^2 (10) = 16.44, p = .09$ ) indicating that there were no significant path differences across the two groups.

**Fathers' self-reports of parenting behavior.** The same procedure again was utilized to analyze a moderation model with fathers' self-reports of their parenting behavior rather than adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors. In the smaller models, no interaction terms including fathers' risk behavior or neighborhood risk and any of the fathers' self-reports of their parenting behaviors approached significance, even utilizing the liberal criterion ( $p < .20$ ).

Further, none of the direct associations between the fathers' reports of parenting behaviors and adolescents' physical or relational aggression were significant.

### **Discussion**

The present results provide support for taking into account race/ethnicity and multiple reports of fathers' parenting behaviors when examining the association of neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behavior with physical and relational aggression among 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade African American and Latino boys. The findings indicate the critical nature of African American and Latino boys' perceptions of certain paternal parenting behaviors in explaining variation in boys' physical and relational aggression, in which boys' perceptions of their neighborhood and fathers' reports of risk behavior are associated with the boys' aggressive behavior. Consistent with earlier research on fathers' parenting behaviors (Aceves & Cookston, 2007), adolescent boys' perceptions of paternal support emerged as a protective process against relationally aggressive behavior for African American boys, while perceptions of paternal monitoring emerged as a protective process against physical aggression for Latinos only. Further, boys' perceptions of neighborhood risk (for African American boys only), and fathers' reports of risk behavior (for African American boys only) directly explain variation in physical and relational aggression.

The hypothesized negative relation between adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood risk and fathers' support and monitoring was supported. The results showed for the full sample that boys who reported higher levels of neighborhood risk reported less fathers' support and less fathers' monitoring. This could be because living in a stressful high risk neighborhood inclines fathers to look out for themselves first in order to gain some form of advantage (Garbarino & Sherman, 1980). This does not suggest that fathers in high risk neighborhoods do not want to support or monitor their sons, but that they may feel more pressure in life coupled with fewer resources to support their sons. Future research should examine why these patterns exist. The findings suggest that adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors such as support in high risk neighborhoods may encourage boys likely to be more relationally aggressive.

The significant indirect association between fathers' reports of their own risk behavior and relational aggression (for the full sample) and physical aggression (for Latinos only) is noteworthy. In the full sample, when fathers reported higher levels of risk behavior, adolescent boys perceived less support and in turn reported being more relationally aggressive. For Latino boys only, when fathers reported higher levels of risk behavior, adolescent boys perceived less paternal monitoring and in turn reported higher levels of physical aggression. This supports research that suggests fathers' risk behavior can potentially decrease their engagement with (Woldoff & Washington, 2008) and support of (Barnes et al., 2000) their children. Further, these findings are consistent with research that posits that poor paternal parenting behaviors such as low support or poor monitoring increase risk for adolescent aggressive behavior (Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2009).

The unique findings across race/ethnicity suggest that for African American adolescent boys' the neighborhood they live in plays a critical role in their use of aggressive behavior, whereas, for Latino adolescent boys, fathers' risk behavior seems to play a critical role in their own use of aggressive behavior. This is consistent with the emphasis that African Americans tend to put on sharing parenting responsibilities within larger contexts of community (extended family, kin networks, neighborhood) (McAdoo & Younge, 2009). On the other hand, for Latino adolescent boys, when important cultural ideals such as *familisimo* and *respeto* are not being modeled by their fathers (Halgunseth et al., 2006), they may be more likely to act out in ways similar to their fathers, such as being more physically aggressive.

While adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support mediated certain relations, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring moderated certain associations. Specifically, fathers' monitoring emerged as a protective factor against relational aggression in low risk neighborhoods but not in high risk neighborhoods. Adolescent boys living in higher risk neighborhoods may perceive paternal monitoring in a negative light. This is contrary to research that suggests more monitoring protects against negative outcomes like aggression for adolescents



living in at risk neighborhoods (Gorman-Smith et al., 2004) and should be reserached further. This is also in contrast to models put forth by Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) which suggest that these protective factors emerge under conditions of high risk rather than low. It could be that boys living in high risk neighborhoods are less likely to disclose information about their whereabouts, and peer groups to their fathers, thus limiting the ability of the father to monitor. A more diverse range of neighborhood risk should be examined future research to test whether these patterns hold.

The same pattern emerges in the association between fathers' monitoring and physical aggression depending on low or high levels of fathers' risk behavior. Specifically, at low levels of fathers' risk behavior, fathers' monitoring emerges as a protective factor against physical aggression, but not at high levels of fathers' risk behavior. It could be that adolescent boys whose fathers' report more risk behavior, and are perceived by their sons to be over-controlling in areas of supervision, are more likely to be physically aggressive themselves. This supports previous research that suggests poor monitoring (too little or too much) may increase the risk for adolescent aggression (Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2009), and also encourages future research to examine how engaging in risky behavior effects how fathers are perceived in their parenting behaviors. However, it might not be that monitoring is being perceived as over controlling at all. The apparent lack of difference that monitoring makes for boys with fathers involved in more risk behavior may be due to fathers socializing their sons into their deviant life-style. It may be that these fathers' who highly monitor their sons could either increase or decrease the boys' risk for aggression depending upon if they are trying to include them in their deviant activity or discourage them from travelling down the same path. More research is needed to examine the role of monitoring in the association between fathers' risk behavior and adolescent boys' aggression.

Consistent with recent research (Coyne et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2010) relational aggression emerged as a viable outcome for African American and Latino adolescent boys. This is important for future longitudinal research as researchers may wish to examine what factors

both contribute to and result from relational aggression in these boys. Those working with these boys may need to educate on appropriate ways to respond relationally to their peers, rather than focusing solely on more physical responses like violence.

There are several methodological and theoretical strengths of this study. One strength is the sampling of a specific population of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade boys typically experiencing a time of major transition in their development as they move away from child-like roles into more adult-like responsibilities and begin spending more time away from home and less with family (McGoldrick & Shibusawa, 2012). This allowed the researcher to understand how fathers' parenting behaviors interact with certain risk factors at this particular point in adolescent boys' development. This study also addresses the need for further research to examine risk and resilience in the development of adolescents of racial/ethnic minorities (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996) and the association of different risk factors with certain fathers' parenting behaviors (Pleck, 2010). This study advances research on multiple level risk factors associated with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression in a sample of early adolescent boys from African American and Latino ethnic groups (Putallaz et al., 2007).

Despite the strengths, as with all research, this study has several limitations that warrant consideration. One methodological limitation of this study is that it is cross-sectional, and therefore true causal statements cannot be made. Also, because some of the variables examined in the study to be associated with adolescent boys' aggression were reported by the adolescents themselves, there is some possibility that the results could be inflated due to having the same respondent on each.

Another methodological limitation is that the data for this study was based on a self-report questionnaire. While anonymous it is possible that some participants responded with social desirability bias, especially when considering the nature of some of the issues addressed. Further, because this study collects data from multiple respondents (adolescents and fathers), the risk of shared method variance, as well as the limitations of self-report is decreased (Kenny et al., 2006).

Also, since one of the key processes in family resilience is making meaning out of risk (Walsh, 2006) it is important to examine the perceptions of the adolescent boys regarding the multiple risk factors in the study. Further, the small variations in the procedure for administering the surveys at the different sites is also a limitation. Also, the significant positive direct associations between parenting behaviors and aggression changed in direction of significance when part of interactions indicating a possible curvilinear effect. Future research should utilize longitudinal data examining parenting behaviors as potential protective processes. While these limitations exist, the results of this study will benefit the field by providing information on associations that exist between variables serving as a guide for theory development of future longitudinal studies that will investigate causal associations. A related conceptual limitation is that resilience is a process rather than an isolated event (Walsh, 2006) and therefore should be examined over time. However, Windle (2011) encourages the study of factors that are associated with resilience, especially across a variety of levels.

The lack of significant findings from the models utilizing fathers' reports of their own parenting behaviors is interesting to note. This is consistent with research that has consistently found discrepancies in parents' reports versus adolescents' reports of parenting behaviors (Cottrell et al., 2003; West et al., 2011). However, one interesting finding from the fathers' reports is that their own reports of risk behavior was significantly negatively associated with their own reports of support and monitoring, and positively associated with their own reports of punitiveness and psychological control. Future research may want to examine further how fathers' risk behavior relates to their parenting behaviors and each in turn relates to adolescent outcomes.

Another important finding in this study is the number of significant paths leading to relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys. These findings contribute to the growing literature that suggest relational aggression should not be limited to

studies involving females only, but that this unique type of aggression may be important when examining adolescent boys as well (Coyne et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2010).

The results of this study provide important insights into prevention and intervention practice for those working with African American and Latino adolescent boys. Results suggest that programs geared toward intervention or prevention of physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys may benefit from focusing on how parenting behavior is framed. For example, supportive behaviors may need to be taught and emphasized for fathers living in high risk neighborhoods as these behaviors appear to make more of a difference in protecting against aggression than other behaviors such as monitoring. However, adolescents' may benefit from programs that encourage them to show more trust in their fathers by disclosing more information to them, so that in turn, fathers may be able to successfully monitor their sons, especially in high risk neighborhoods. Further, given the discrepancies in fathers' and sons' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors, programs may benefit by including both fathers and sons. In this way, quality father-son interaction, and communication may be fostered and each may begin to understand more clearly how the other understands the parenting behaviors that are displayed. Further, programs geared specifically toward fathers may need to emphasize how risk behavior affects their parenting, and create avenues for fathers to pursue that exclude risky behavior.

Finally, the findings suggest that African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors are important in understanding the variations in their own physical and relational aggression. Working with these adolescents to identify those parenting behaviors that fathers display that communicate feelings of support and knowledge of the adolescent may promote resilience in these boys. Because more differences may be acknowledged between the two groups than were supported in this study, future research should examine the protective processes that fathers' parenting behaviors may play in associations with risks at different levels specific to these two racial/ethnic groups.

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Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1. Physical aggression	-												
2. Relational aggression	.58***	-											
3. Parent academic achievement	.00	.10	-										
4. Neighborhood risk	.14*	.19**	.03	-									
5. Fathers' risk behavior	.15*	.15*	-.07	.11	-								
6. Fathers' support (Ad)	-.23***	-.24***	.02	-.25***	-.27***	-							
7. Fathers' monitoring (Ad)	-.22***	-.13*	-.02	-.16*	-.14*	.61***	-						
8. Fathers punitiveness (Ad)	-.09	.03	.04	.11	-.05	.17*	.25***	-					
9. Fathers' psychological control (Ad)	.05	.11	.02	.19**	.02	.04	.10	.66***	-				
10. Fathers' support (Dad)	-.06	-.13*	.04	-.09	-.19**	.43***	.23***	.04	-.04	-			
11. Fathers' monitoring (Dad)	-.03	-.06	-.05	-.12	-.28***	.35***	.38***	.04	-.03	.53***	-		
12. Fathers' punitiveness (Dad)	-.01	.11	-.04	.09	.30***	.04	.06	.29***	.28***	.15*	.12	-	
13. Fathers' psychological Control (Dad)	.05	.16*	-.08	.15*	.35***	-.10	-.05	.25***	.41***	.01	-.06	.64***	-
Mean <sup>a</sup>													
African American	1.24	.65	6.75	1.83	.29	3.35	3.04	2.41	2.15	3.55	3.38	2.26	1.78
Latino	.91	.50	4.92	2.10	.32	3.27	3.08	2.38	2.27	3.45	3.22	2.35	2.08
Overall Sample	1.02	.55	5.51	2.00	.31	3.30	3.07	2.39	2.23	3.49	3.27	2.32	1.98
SD <sup>a</sup>													
African American	.91	.92	1.77	.61	.36	.68	.76	.68	.68	.60	.59	.62	.58
Latino	.79	.61	2.28	.71	.41	.60	.66	.67	.72	.56	.74	.62	.77
Overall Sample	.84	.73	2.29	.69	.39	.63	.70	.67	.71	.57	.69	.62	.72

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

<sup>a</sup>Before centering

Table 2. *Bootstrap Analyses of the Magnitude and Significance of Indirect Effects (N=234)*

	Independent Variable	Mediator Variables	Dependent Variable	$\beta$ Indirect Effect	95% <i>CI</i> (Lower, Upper)	<i>T</i> Value of Indirect Paths
Full Sample	Fathers' risk behavior → -	Fathers' support → -	Relational aggression	.04	.006, .072	1.93*
	Neighborhood risk → -	Fathers' support → -	Relational aggression	.06	.011, .114	2.23*
African Amer.	Neighborhood risk → -	Fathers' support → -	Relational aggression	.13	.009, .258	1.77*
Latino	Fathers' risk behavior → -	Fathers' monitoring → -	Physical aggression	.06	.013, .098	2.06*

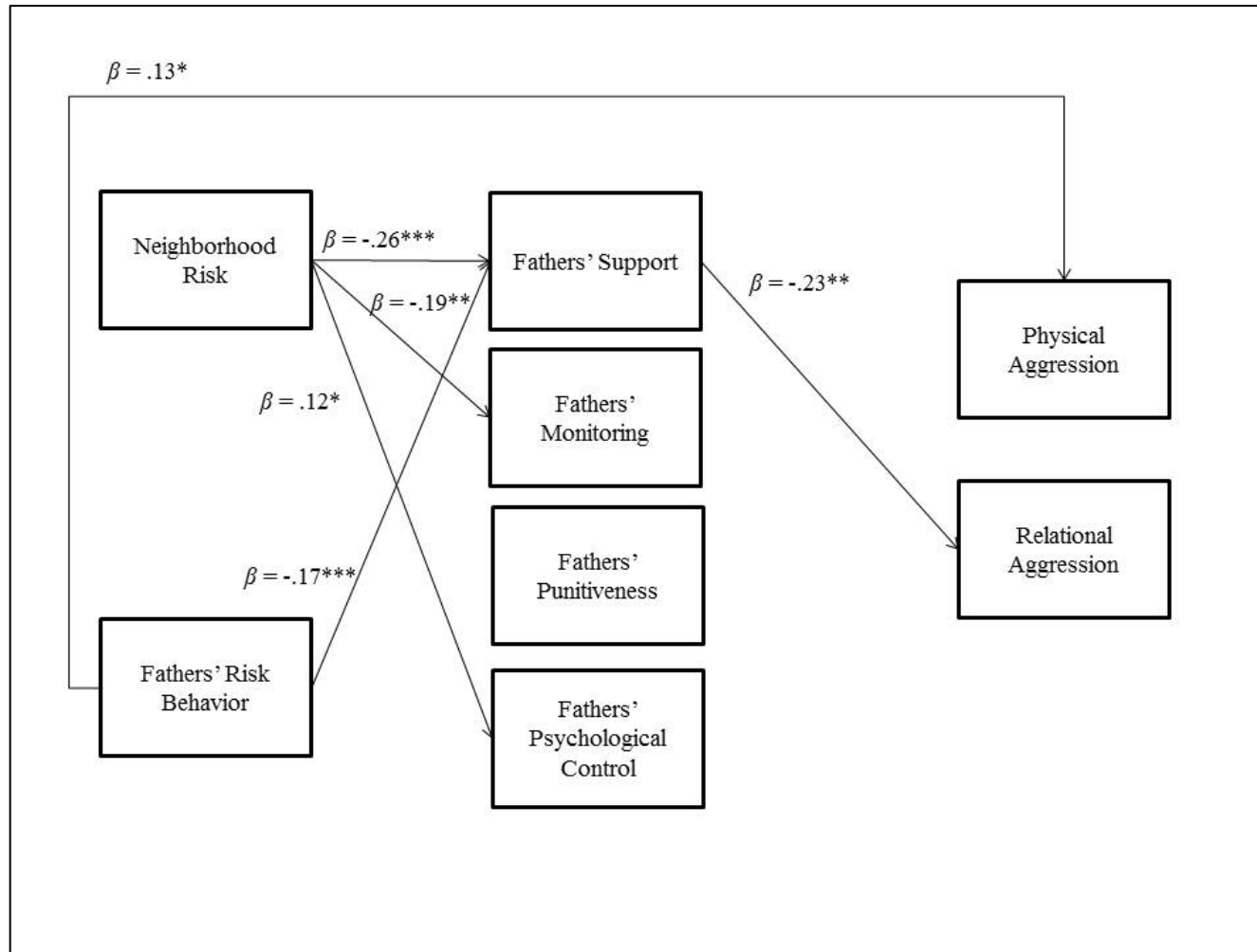
\* $p < .05$

Table 3. *T Values for Mean Difference Analyses.*

<i>Variable</i>	Mean African American (Latino)	SD African American (Latino)	<i>t</i> -value
Adolescents' physical aggression	1.24 (.91)	.91 (.79)	2.72**
Adolescents' relational aggression	.65 (.50)	.92 (.61)	1.27
Parents' academic achievement	6.75 (4.92)	1.77 (2.28)	6.49***
Neighborhood risk	1.83 (2.10)	.61 (.71)	-2.90**
Fathers' risk behavior	.29 (.32)	.36 (.41)	-.60
Adolescent perception of fathers' parenting behaviors			
Fathers' support	3.35 (3.27)	.68 (.60)	.87
Fathers' monitoring	3.04 (3.08)	.76 (.66)	-.42
Fathers' punitiveness	2.41 (2.38)	.68 (.67)	.30
Fathers' psychological control	2.15 (2.27)	.68 (.72)	-1.21
Fathers' self-report of parenting behaviors			
Fathers' support	3.55 (3.45)	.60 (.56)	1.18
Fathers' monitoring	3.38 (3.22)	.59 (.74)	1.77
Fathers' punitiveness	2.26 (2.35)	.62 (.62)	-1.08
Fathers' psychological control	1.78 (2.08)	.58 (.77)	-3.04**

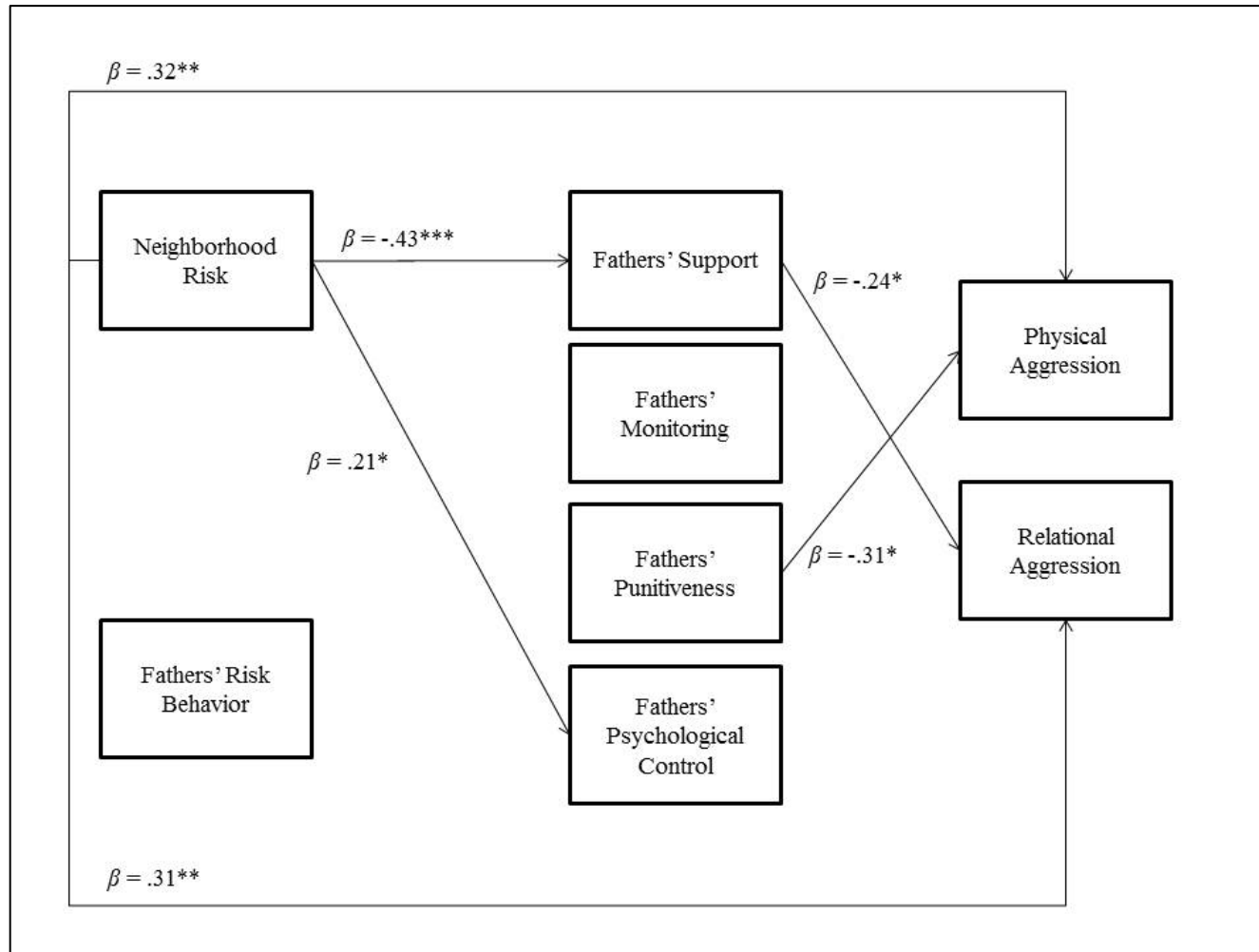
\*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Figure 4. Mediation model full sample (adolescents' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors)



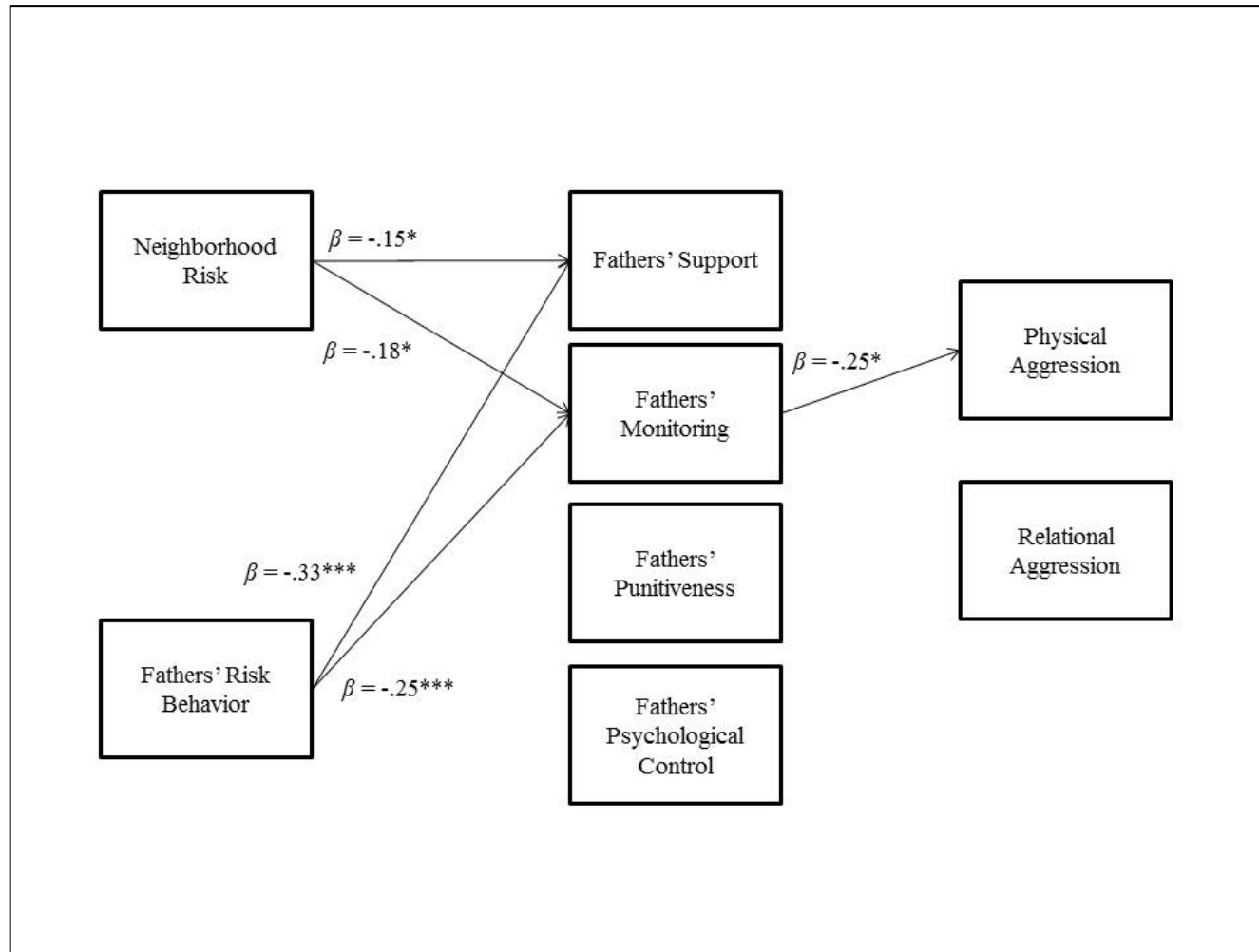
\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; non-significant paths predicting physical and relational aggression are not shown in the figure

Figure 5. Mediation model African American sample (adolescents' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors)



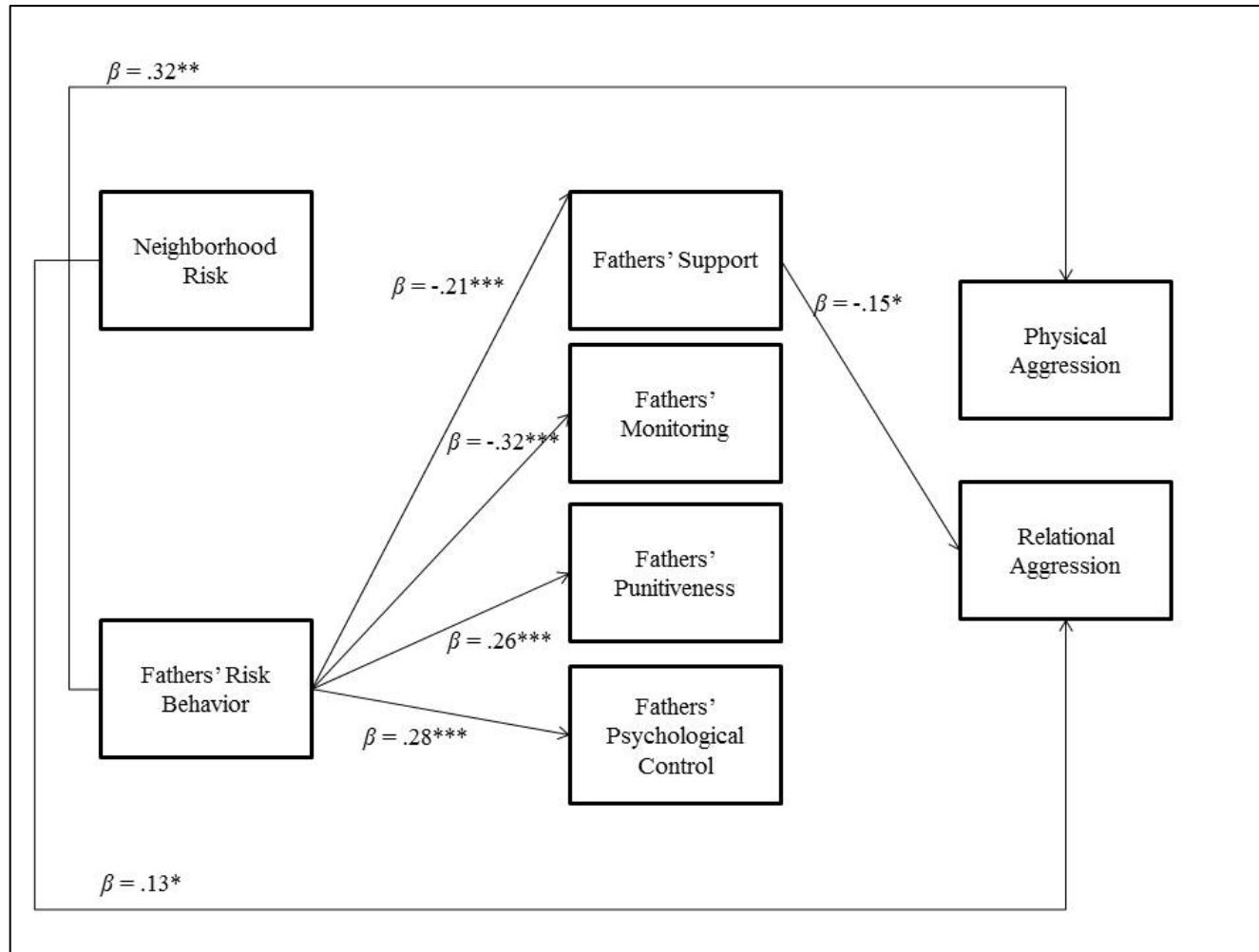
\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; non-significant paths predicting physical and relational aggression are not shown in the figure

Figure 6. Mediation model Latino sample (adolescents' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors)



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; non-significant paths predicting physical and relational aggression are not shown in the figure

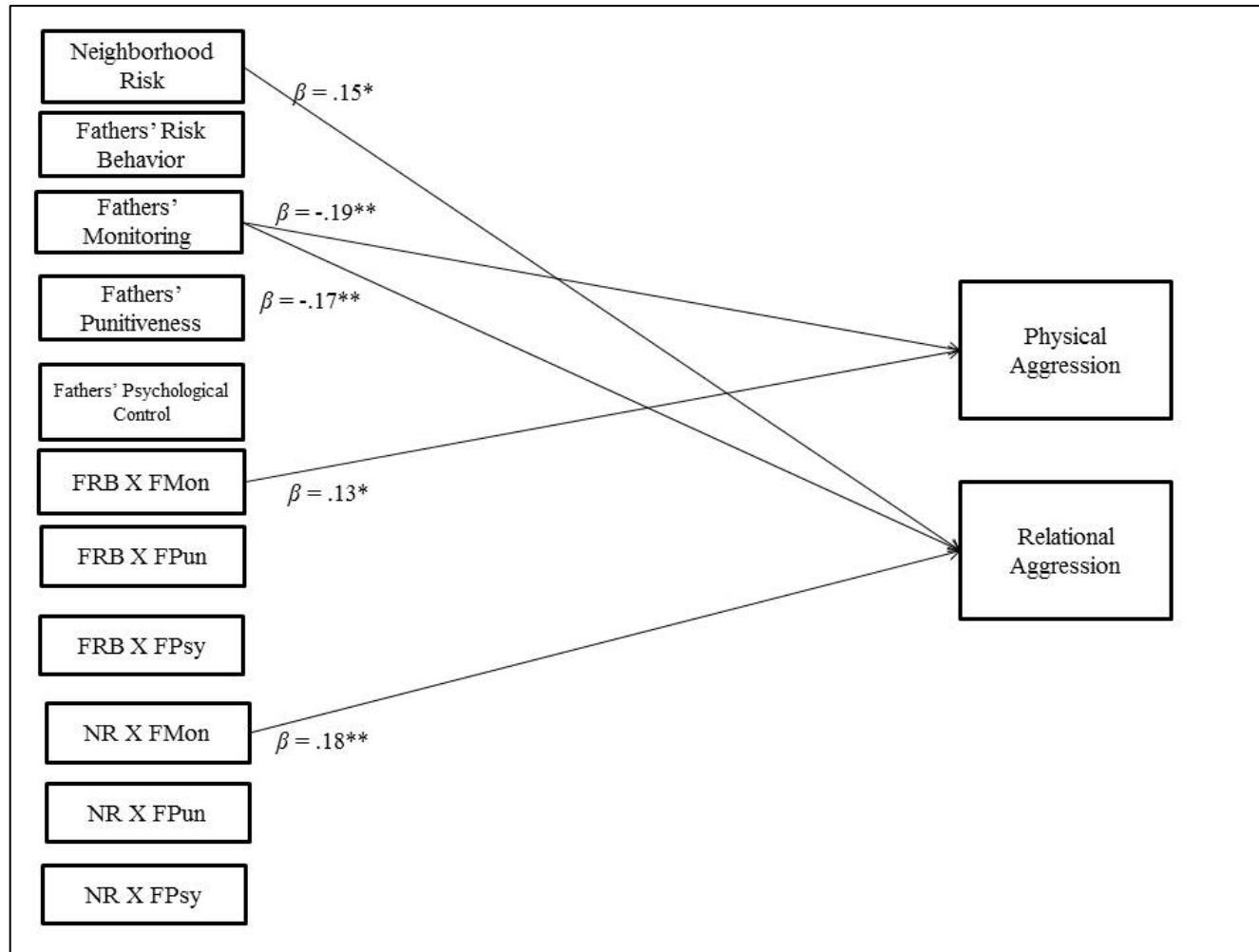
Figure 7. Mediation model full sample (fathers' self-reports of parenting behaviors)



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; non-significant paths predicting physical and relational aggression are not shown in the figure



Figure 8. Moderation model full sample (adolescents' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors)



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; non-significant paths predicting physical and relational aggression are not shown in the figure

Figure 9. Neighborhood risk x father's monitoring for adolescents' relational aggression

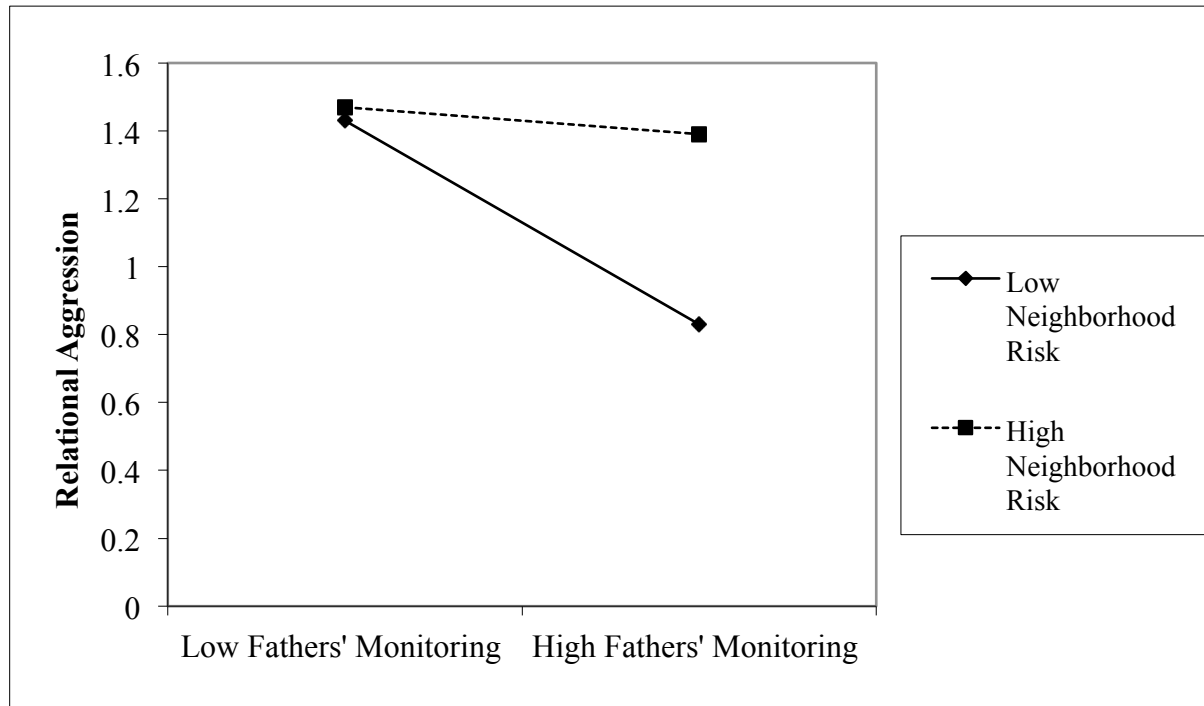
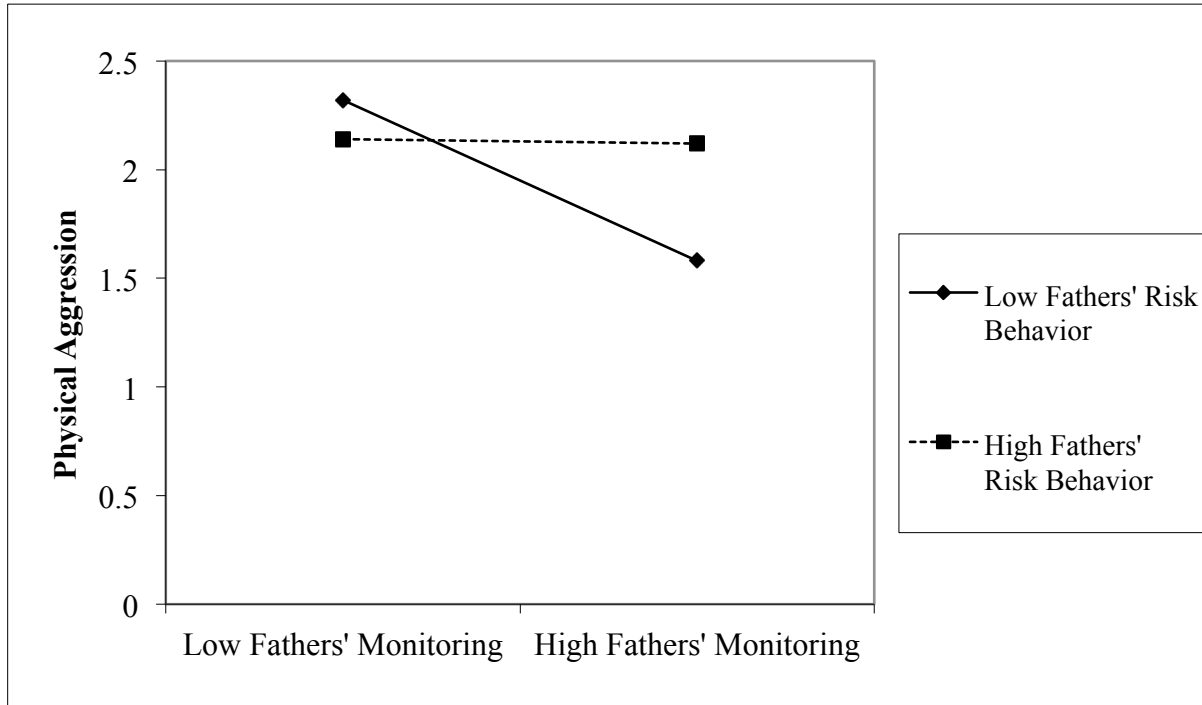


Figure 10. Fathers' risk behavior x fathers' monitoring for adolescents' physical aggression.



## MANUSCRIPT 2

### FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS, RACIAL/ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION, AND PEER VICTIMIZATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS

Author note: This manuscript was written by Bobby L. Kern the author as part of the doctoral dissertation FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS AND RISKS FOR ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION IN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS under the supervision of Carolyn S. Henry in the Oklahoma State University Department of Human Development and Family Science. This research was conducted as part of the *Fathers Count!* research project funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Andrew O. Behnke, Carolyn S. Henry, and Scott W. Plunkett, Principal Investigators, Grant # 2007-MU-FX-0003.

## Manuscript 2

Being involved in aggressive behavior is not an uncommon experience for adolescent boys (Card, Stucky, Sawalani, & Little, 2008). It is more common among African American and Latino adolescent boys, who tend to display more aggressive behaviors than their peers (CDC, 2008). Vulnerability to displaying aggression is heightened when other risk factors are present (Walsh, 2006). Specifically, when these youth are victimized in some way, the risk for aggression behavior is increased (Nishina & Bellmore, 2010), making it important to investigate aggression between and across these groups (Putallaz et al., 2007), rather than to simply compare them to a majority group (Garcia Coll et al., 1996).

The current study contributes to existing literature by building upon the call of Garcia Coll et al., (1996) to examine development in adolescent boys who identify with racial/ethnic minority groups, as opposed to relying on overrepresented majority samples or samples that are limited to only one racial/ethnic group. Further, the study adds to the Garcia Coll et al., (1996) model by not only examining discrimination but also peer victimization as a risk factor for aggression, adding a dimension of peer relationship to the model which is lacking. The current study focuses on ninth and tenth grade boys where developmentally appropriate intervention or prevention relating to physical and relational aggression, specifically in relation to discrimination and peer victimization, may be of value.

Evidence continues to mount that fathers play an important role in youth development (Pleck, 2010), and may specifically play a role in protecting against risk behavior such as aggression (Caldwell, Rafferty, Hill de Loney, & Brooks, 2010). Further, recent research examines African American (McAdoo & Younge, 2009) and Latino (Halguseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006) fathers as being particularly important in their adolescents' development. It is important to investigate African American and Latino adolescent boys by identifying how fathers' parenting behaviors might protect against physical and relational aggression in these groups (Cabrera & Garcia Coll, 2004; McAdoo & Younge, 2009). Research has shown there to be a discrepancy in

the magnitude of associations between parenting behaviors and adolescents' behavior depending on the source of the reports (Latendresse et al., 2009). Thus, a model was developed and tested that examined how (a) African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of discrimination, peer victimization, and fathers' parenting behavior were associated with adolescents' reports of physical and relational aggression and (b) consistent with research on risk and protective factors (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000) whether adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors moderated the associations between the risk factors and adolescent aggression. The model was also tested examining fathers' self-reports of their parenting behaviors. The model also examined parents' academic achievement as a control variable. Consistent with literature (Bachman, 2011; Davis-Kean, 2005) parents' academic achievement serves as a proxy for socioeconomic status.

### **Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

*Aggression* is conceptualized as any behavior that intends to harm. Aggression may exist in various forms including *physical aggression* (overt behaviors that intend to harm or threaten to harm others; Crick, 1997), and *relational aggression* (nonphysical behavior intended to harm peer relationships and damage social status Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Aggression has been linked to a number of undesirable outcomes (Crick, 1997; Herrenkohl, Catalano, Hemphill, & Toumbourou, 2009; Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008).

Traditionally, research has overemphasized physical aggression among boys' to the neglect of other aspects of aggression among boys' such as relational aggression (Crick, 1997). While several studies have addressed these issues (see Card et al., 2008, for a review) as the research progressed other issues have been identified including (a) a lack of studies examining aggression across ethnic groups (Putallaz et al., 2007) and (b) a lack of research that examines both physical and relational aggression among adolescent boys (Card et al., 2008; Coyne, Archer, Eslea, & Liechty, 2008; Karriker-Jaffe, Foshee, Ennett, & Suchindran, 2008).

## **Ecological Resilience Perspectives on Adolescent Boys' Physical and Relational Aggression**

Contrary to more deficit based approaches, resilience perspectives emphasize a strengths-based approach (Hawley & DeHann, 1996) to understanding development. Resilience is an emergent and ongoing process (Patterson, 2002). Ecological resilience perspectives take this understanding of resilience into account and build upon it by recognizing the influence of the different systems and individual belongs too on their potential to be resilient (Harvey, 2007). Because resilience is potentially different for those adolescents of racial ethnic minority groups who may face unique risks, Garcia Coll et al. (1996) proposed an integrative theoretical model designed for specifically studying youth development among these groups. This model is not necessarily a resilience model, but is consistent with resilience perspectives providing an ecological lens through which resilience can be examined in racial/ethnic minority adolescents. This model builds upon Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives recognizing the influence of multiple system levels on individual development. This model puts forth the idea that either more distal or proximal system levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can serve as both promoters and inhibitors of youth development. Because protective processes, such as fathers' parenting behaviors have the potential to mediate associations between stressors and outcomes, or foster resilience by acting as a buffer (moderator) to certain stressors (Masten, 2007), it is important to examine the potential that protective processes have to mediate and moderate associations between risk and outcome. That information can be used to correctly intervene or prevent undesired outcomes for specific groups (Kraemer, Stice, Kazdin, Offord, & Kupfer, 2001).

## **Victimization as a Risk for Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

Despite the wealth of research on adolescent aggression, there has recently been a call for more research that examines various factors that increase the risk of adolescent aggression (Maldonado-Molina et al., 2010). The examination of these risks for African American and Latino adolescent boys will contribute to the knowledge base upon which research, education,

policy, and services relating to preventing or intervening against forms aggression can be strengthened.

One such risk is *victimization*, or being the target of some form of aggressive behavior (Sullivan, Farrell, & Kliewer, 2006). Victimization has been shown to be associated with both internalizing problems such as depression, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Hawker, & Boulton, 2000; Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernber, 2001) as well as externalizing problems such as delinquency, substance use, and aggression (Sullivan et al., 2006; Weiner et al., 2003). Victimization may manifest in different forms including discrimination and peer victimization (Romano, Bell, & Billette, 2011) and increase the risk for aggression in either.

**Discrimination.** When examining risks for aggression in an ecological resilience frame the more distal type of victimization is discrimination. African American and Latino adolescents are at risk for discrimination based upon race/ethnicity (Le & Stockdale, 2011; Thompson & Gregory, 2011). Discrimination, conceptualized as overt or covert unfair treatment of another (Harrell, 2000), is a social reality for adolescents of racial/ethnic minority groups, and perceptions of discrimination have been linked to risky behavior (Thompson & Gregory, 2011).

For African American and Latino adolescents perceived discrimination has been found to be associated with a number of negative outcomes including low self-esteem ), stress, depression, and suicide attempts (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Gomez, Miranda, & Polanco, 2011; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Discrimination has been identified as a significant risk factor for adolescent aggression in a Latino sample (Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006), which according to the authors is most likely due to the stress of acculturation for Latino families. However, little research exists examining perceived discrimination as a risk factor for aggression Latino adolescents and less for African American adolescents.



Discrimination limits the amount of resources available to certain groups and limits the access that those groups have to those resources (Garcia Coll et al., 2006). Thus, adolescents who perceive discrimination may feel the need to be more aggressive in order to attain those resources.

**Peer victimization.** Thinking about resilience in an ecological frame, a more proximal form of victimization is peer victimization. Studies have reported that exposure to victimization rates may be anywhere from 40%-80% among school aged youth, and that 10% to 15% of that group could be described as chronic victimization (Juvonen, & Graham, 2001). Peer victimization has been shown to be associated with internalizing problems such as depression, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Hawker, & Boulton, 2000; Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernber, 2001) as well as externalizing problems including and aggressive behavior (Sullivan et al., 2006; Weiner et al., 2003).

Since boys score higher on reports of victimization prevalence measures than girls (Salmivalli & Peets, 2009) and boys who are victimized at school are less likely to seek help from an authority and more likely to resort to physical aggression themselves in response to that victimization (Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2010). Despite the emergence of some recent studies of peer victimization among Latino (Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2011) and African American populations (Gomes, Davis, Baker, & Servonsky, 2009), limited research is available within these groups on the association between peer victimization and aggression in adolescents.

### **Fathers' Parenting Behaviors and Adolescent Boys' Aggressive Behavior**

Research has identified two dimensions of parenting behaviors (support and control) that play an important role in the lives of children (Peterson, 2005; Peterson & Rollins, 1987). *Support* refers to parental warmth and acceptance of their children (Stolz, Barber, & Olsen, 2005). Research has shown that parental support may protect against adolescents' aggression (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). Among African American parents support plays a role in protecting against violently aggressive behavior in adolescents, even when exposed to violence (Spano et al., 2009).

In one study conducted with 202 male and female African American adolescents in fifth, eighth, and tenth grades, fathers' support was found to be significantly negatively associated with delinquency and depression (Bean, Barber, & Crane, 2006), and was concluded to be crucial for African American adolescents, and pivotal in relation to adolescent outcomes (Bean et al., 2006). Roopnarine (2004) emphasized the importance of supportive behaviors among African American fathers, contrary to stereotypes that label them as being uninvolved. Similarly, although Latino fathers are typically portrayed as "macho" or lording over their families as master, research shows that these men are allowed and expected to be supportive of their children (Cabrera & Coll, 2004). Because of the strong emphasis that is put on the interdependence among family members within Latino families (Halgunseth et al., 2006), it is possible that Latino adolescents see their fathers as important sources of support (Henry et al., 2008).

*Control* describes fathers' techniques used to discipline, encourage, or exact child compliance with their expectations (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). *Fathers' monitoring* is a type of control referring to the extent to which fathers supervise the activities, friendship, and money of the adolescent (Stolz et al., 2005). Stattin and Kerr (2000) describe monitoring as requiring parental knowledge of children's behaviors, friends and activities. They posit that this knowledge can only occur in contexts where children feel connected enough to their parents to disclose such information. Low monitoring is associated with an increased risk for child aggression (Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2009), while higher monitoring is associated with decreased risk in aggression over time (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). African American and Latino fathers are more likely than Caucasian fathers to closely monitor the activities and whereabouts of their adolescents (Toth & Xu, 1999). However, research that has examined monitoring in multiple race/ethnicity samples has found inconsistent findings in relation to patterns of effect (Mason et al., 2004), suggesting that parental monitoring may have different meanings across race/ethnicity.

Harsh control includes punitiveness and psychological control. This type of control is coercive in nature and may increase the risk for behavior problems (Baumrind, Larzelere, &

Owens, 2010). *Fathers' punitiveness* is the extent to which fathers use controlling behaviors (verbal or coercive) characterized as harsh, strict, or arbitrary with the adolescent (Henry, 1994). Research has shown a negative relation between parental punitiveness and adolescent aggression (Smokowski et al., 2009). However, the conceptualization of punitiveness as a risk or protective process is often debated. Henry and Hubbs-Tait (in press) emphasize the importance for researchers to examine what behaviors like punitiveness might mean across culture. For example, Mosley and Thompson (1995) building on Baumrind's work note that punitiveness has a different character across race. Specifically, punitiveness may be seen as unfair and harsh among Caucasians, however, for African Americans, punitiveness protects and prepares adolescents for the harsh realities of the world (e.g., racism, economic stress). Further, since ideals such as *respeto* (respect) and *obediencia* (obedience) towards fathers are important aspects within Latino families, adolescents who are *mal educados* (i.e., not well behaved, mannered, or educated) may have fathers who respond with more punitive behaviors (Plunkett et al., 2007).

*Psychological control*, attempts by fathers to constrain their adolescent's individual autonomy through such tactics as induction of guilt, love withdrawal, shaming, or invalidation (Barber, 2002), may also increase the risk for adolescent aggression. Psychological control has been called a "blueprint for relational aggression" (Nelson & Crick, 2002). This is supported by Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van Ijzendoorn, & Crick, (2011) who found that more paternal psychological control was associated with higher levels of relational aggression in children under the age of 18. However, the previous studies examined primarily Caucasian samples. Other research brings into question whether this is true for African American and Latino boys who may view psychological control as a sign of love and concern from their parents (Mason, Walker-Barnes, Tu, Simons, & Martinez-Arrue, 2004). Specifically, while African American boys associated guilt based, coercive behavior with more feelings of love and care relative to their white and Hispanic peers (Mason et al., 2004). Further, Crockett, Brown, Russell, and Shen (2007), found that Latino adolescents also may perceive psychological control as form of caring.

Pleck (2010) suggested that our understanding of parenting could be enhanced by examining these behaviors specific to fathers. Our understanding of parenting can be further enhanced by examining these behaviors within different ethnic groups (Dilworth-Anderson, Burton, & Turner, 1993). African American families in the United States place importance of support among family members when it comes to parenting, placing high value extended families and kin networks to assist in raising their children (McAdoo & Younge, 2009). Further, McAdoo and Younge (2009) suggest that though fathers are somewhat missing from the literature dealing with African American parenting, evidence exists that fathers/father figures are not only often present, but a valued part of the kin networks that are so valued, and a very important piece of the parenting puzzle. Latino families in the United State tend to place value on different aspects of parenting, including *familismo*, a term that denotes the idea that the family is the primary source for support, and family loyalty and commitment supersede the needs of the individual; *respeto*, or the emphasis of both a self-respect and other-respect that maintains a harmony of interpersonal relationships; *educacion*, or training in such things as fostering and maintaining relationships, morality, and responsibility (Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). Fathering itself is an important aspect of family in the Latino culture (Cruz et al., 2011). Given the continued empirical support for the importance of fathering in Latino families, adolescent perceptions and fathers' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors may be critical in understanding the development of adolescent aggression.

Studies on the relation between fathers' parenting behavior and adolescent aggression outcomes are limited within this population and should be explored further. Though there are some recent studies focusing on the African American population that show fathers serving as protectors specifically against overt aggression and violence (Caldwell, Rafferty, Reischl, De Loney, & Brooks, 2010; Spano, Vazsonyi, & Bolland, 2009), this line of thinking is relatively new, and needs further exploration, especially in terms of examining the relation between fathers' parenting behavior and adolescent physical and relational aggression.

## **Fathers' Parenting Behaviors as Moderators between Risks and Adolescent Boys'**

### **Aggression**

Not only may fathers' parental behaviors hold potential to protect Latino and African American boys against aggression, they hold potential to moderate the association between contextual risks and adolescent boys' aggression. Specifically, some behaviors may attenuate the association between victimization and aggression, while other behaviors may buffer the association. In this way, fathering behavior may be an additive risk (Kirby & Fraser, 1997) or serve as a protective factor (Criss et al., 2009) for these boys. Several studies have found that different aspects of fathering (communication, involvement, close-relationship with child, and parenting style) protect against risks (delinquency and substance use; Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, Capps, & Zaff, 2006; Bronte-Tinkew, Moore, & Carrano, 2006; Fenton, Brooks, Spencer, & Morgan, 2010; Videon, 2005). Some research has found evidence that parental behaviors like support and monitoring serve as protective factors against risk, moderating associations between risk factors and outcomes such as risky sexual behavior and alcohol use (Lohman & Billings, 2008; Reimuller, Shadur, & Hussong, 2011). However, little research has specifically examined fathering behaviors such as support, and monitoring, as protective factors specifically, as potential moderators of the association between discrimination, or peer victimization and adolescent boys' aggression. Further, punitiveness and psychological control have been associated with adolescent aggression (Nelson & Crick, 2002; Smokowski et al., 2009), and are expected to exacerbate the associations between victimization and adolescent boys' aggression because of their controlling nature. This study will examine the potential of fathers support, monitoring, punitiveness, and psychological control to moderate associations between discrimination, peer victimization and adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression.

### **Current Study**

Based on the ideas presented above, the present study was designed to examine how perceptions (both fathers and sons) of fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring,

punitiveness, psychological control) may exacerbate or protect against victimization (discrimination, peer victimization) for physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys. Adolescent boys' perceptions of victimization (discrimination and peer victimization) and selected forms of fathers' parenting behaviors (punitiveness, psychological control) were hypothesized to be positively associated with adolescent boys' aggression. Other forms of fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring) were hypothesized to be negatively associated with adolescent boys' aggression. The primary moderation model (see Figure 3a, p. 58) was tested using each of the forms of victimization (racial/ethnic discrimination, peer victimization) to understand how each specifically interacted with the four fathers' parenting behaviors. Although specific hypotheses were not established it was anticipated that each of the fathers' parenting behaviors might moderate the associations between racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. An alternative mediation model (see Figure 3b, p. 58) was tested that hypothesized racial/ethnic discrimination and peer victimization would be indirectly associated with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression through fathers' parenting behaviors (support, monitoring, punitiveness, psychological control). Although no specific hypotheses were made regarding a comparison between models utilizing adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors and fathers' self-reports of parenting behaviors, the models were run and results compared to highlight potential differences in associations of the variables based on the reporter. Because African American and Latino adolescent boys may live in different racial/ethnic contexts (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996) the model was tested for differences between each of the two groups.

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

The current study is part of the Fathers Count project. Fathers Count is a larger study of risk and resilience factors related to adolescent delinquency. The study involves data collection in

three states utilizing self-report questionnaires. Schools and community organizations in areas with large African American and Latino populations were targeted for the project. Selected items and scales completed by Latino and African American adolescent boys and their fathers who participated in the larger project are used for the current study. Approval was granted by the Institutional Review Boards of the three participating universities before data was collected. After approval, research team members identified and made contact with high schools and community organizations. Next agreements to participate were obtained from the associated officials, and arrangements for distributing packets and collecting data were made. Fathers of African American and Latino boys also were given the opportunity to participate in the study by completing a separate self-report survey.

In North Carolina, students in ninth and tenth grade from three schools were invited to participate in the study. Research team members met with students either during home room or another designated class time to discuss the project. After returning signed consent forms, adolescents received self-report surveys from teachers, completed the surveys at home, and returned completed surveys in sealed envelopes to their teachers, who were provided with instruction packets. Teachers distributed gift cards when consent forms and completed surveys were returned.

In California, data collection took place in two schools. Initial contacts in one school were made through the home rooms followed by data collection (from students who returned signed consent and assent forms) during regular class sessions. In the second school, data collection was coordinated through one teacher. This teacher distributed consent and assent forms one week and when they were returned the following week data collection was conducted by members of the research team.

In Oklahoma, data collection took place in three schools. Researchers first met with school principals to explain the survey. Next, in two of the schools researchers met with ninth and tenth grade teachers, explained the survey, and then distributed through the teachers packets

containing parent consent and adolescent assent forms to the students. Packets were returned a week later on a specified data collection day. Those students who had returned signed forms were excused to a separate room set up for data collection and completed the survey. At the third school data was collected by going through a community organization, who invited researchers to two separate enrollment nights, where parents completed consent form, and adolescents completed assent forms and surveys on site.

African American and Latino fathers were given the opportunity to complete a separate father survey in each of the three states. Adolescents identifying as African American or Latino were given father packets to deliver to their fathers. The fathers were instructed to mail completed assent forms and surveys to the associated university in return envelopes that were included in the packets. At data collection sites in Oklahoma where fathers were present the opportunity was given to complete the survey on site. Participating fathers received gift cards via mail from researchers.

### **Participants**

234 African American (34.2%,  $n = 80$ ) and Latino (65.8%,  $n = 154$ ) adolescent boys, and their fathers /father figures participated in the study. Participant demographics follow: mean age was 15.17 (range 13-18), 61.5% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 38.5% in 10<sup>th</sup> grade; state of residence was 72.6% North Carolina, 23.9% California, and 3.5% Oklahoma. The relationship of the reporting fathers/father figures follow: biological fathers were 69.2%, adoptive fathers were 2.1%, step-fathers were 15.4%, grandfathers were 1.3%, uncles were 3%, and other were 9%.

### **Measures**

**Demographic variables.** Demographic variables were measured with single-item questions with the exception of the control variable parent academic achievement which was measured using a composite of 2 items: “What’s the highest level of education your mother figure completed?” and “What’s the highest level of education your father figure completed?” Response choices for the two items follow: 1 = *no schooling completed*, 2 = *some elementary school* (1<sup>st</sup> –



5<sup>th</sup> grades), 3 = some middle school (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades), 4 = some high school (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades), 5 = high school graduate or equivalency (GED), 6 = some college but no degree, 7 = associate (technical school) degree, 8 = bachelor's degree, 9 = master's degree, 10 = professional school (medical, law) degree, 11 = doctorate degree (Ph.D., Ed.D.). Mean scores were computed and a parent academic achievement score was formulated. Higher scores indicated a higher academic achievement level. With the current data, a Cronbach's alpha of .85 was calculated.

**Adolescents' physical aggression.** Adolescents' reports of physical aggression were measured with Burton, Hafetz, and Henninger's (2007) 9-item Likert-type modification of Physical Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) Sample items include: "If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will." and "I have threatened people I know." Burton et al., modified the response choices of the original scale (1= *extremely uncharacteristic of me* to 5 = *extremely characteristic of me*) to the following response choices: were: 0 = *never*, 1 = *sometimes*, 2 = *frequently*, 3 = *very frequently*, 4 = *always*. Mean scores were computed with higher scores representing higher levels of physical aggression. Using the current data, a Cronbach's alpha of .87 was calculated.

**Adolescents' relational aggression.** A 5-item relational aggression Likert-type scale adapted from a 7-item Likert-type scale used in previous research (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007) was used to assess adolescents' relational aggression. Sample items include: "When I get mad at someone, I get even by keeping that person from being in my group of friends." and "I tell friends I will stop liking them unless they do what I say." Response choices were: 0 = *never*, 1 = *sometimes*, 2 = *frequently*, 3 = *very frequently*, 4 = *always*. Mean scores were computed. Higher scores represented higher levels of relational aggression. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .83 was established with the current data.

**Discrimination.** Adolescents' perceptions of discrimination measured more chronic, routine, and relatively minor experiences of unfair treatment (Essed, 1991), using a stem that said "Because of race, culture, language, and/or skin color, how often has any of the following

happened to you...” Example items were “You are treated with less respect than other people,” “You are called names or insulted.” Response choices on the 9 items follow: 1 = *never*, 2 = *less than once a year*, 3 = *a few times a year*, 4 = *a few times a month*, 5 = *at least once a week*, 6 = *almost every day*. Mean scores were computed with higher scores indicating more frequent perceived discrimination. Using the current data a Cronbach’s alpha of .93 was established.

**Peer victimization.** A 9 item Likert-type scale that is a modification (an item about being gossiped about was added) of the Bullying Scale (Champion & Clay, 2007) was used to assess adolescents’ perceptions of peer victimization. A stem was used that said, “In the past 6 months how often has another kid...” Response choices on the 9 items follow: 0 = *never*, 1 = *once or twice*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *once a week*, 4 = *more than once per week*. Mean scores were computed. Higher scores indicated more frequent victimization. Using the current data Cronbach’s alpha of .94 was established.

**Fathers’ parenting behaviors.** Fathers’ parental behaviors were measured using subscales from the Parent Behavior Measure (PBM; Bush, Peterson, Cobas, & Supple, 2002; Peterson, 1982) for both adolescent boys’ perceptions and fathers’ self-reports. Fathers’ parenting behaviors that were used in the current study include support (4 items), monitoring (6 items), punitiveness (7 items), and psychological control (7 items).

Item wording was slightly changed depending on the reporter. An example of an item from the adolescents’ survey follows: “Tells me how much he loves me.” An example of the same item on the fathers’ survey follows: “I tell him how much I love him.” Both adolescents and fathers responded to the items using the following choices: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Mean scores were computed separately for adolescents and fathers yielding scores for each variable from each reporter. Using the current data the following Cronbach’s alphas were established: support, .83 for adolescents’ perception and .82 for fathers’ self-report; monitoring, .85 for adolescents’ perception and .90 for fathers’ self-report;

punitiveness, .79 for adolescents' perception and .78 for fathers' self-report; psychological control, .83 for adolescents' perception and .86 for fathers' self-report.

### **Analytic Strategy**

Preliminary analysis involved computing means, and standard deviations, conducting bivariate correlations, conducting *t*-tests in order to examine the mean differences of the race/ethnicity groups for each of the predictor and criterion variables, and because differences may exist among the different regions in which data was collected, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted in order to examine mean differences of the regions for each of the predictor and criterion variables. All of the predictor and moderator variables, with the exception of the dummy coded ethnicity variable, were centered by subtracting the mean score from each participant's score on each of the variables (Kline, 2005). Parent academic achievement was included as a control variable. Interaction terms including discrimination and peer victimization with each of the fathers' parenting behaviors were created for all possible two-way interactions in the moderation model, prior to analysis.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized to conduct a variety of analyses using *MPlus* (Muthen & Muthen, 2010). Model fit was assessed with the model chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), the comparative fit index (*CFI*), root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*), the standardized root mean square residual (*SRMR*). Path analysis in SEM allows for variables to be examined as both a predictor and criterion, and is excellent for examining multiple predictors and criterion variables in one analysis (Kline, 2005). *MPlus* utilizes full information maximum likelihood, an approach utilizing complete and partially complete cases in casewise likelihood estimation of observed data accumulated and maximized across entire samples (Enders & Bandalos, 2001), to handle missing data. Missing data ranged from 0-3% on independent variables in the current study..

First, a contextual risk model was examined that included only pathways from the risk factors (discrimination and peer victimization) to the outcome variables (adolescents' physical

and relational aggression). Next, fathers' parenting behaviors were added to the model and examined. Finally, interaction terms including each of the parenting behaviors and risk factors were added to the model and their potential as moderators of the risk/outcome associations were examined. Because of the small sample size of the groups to be examined in the multiple group analyses coupled with the large amount of interactions to be tested, statistical power was too small to conduct a full moderation model including every interaction (McClelland & Judd, 1993). Thus, a composite moderation model was developed in several steps. First, smaller models that included one risk and one aggression behavior (e.g., one model included peer victimization and physical aggression) were examined. A liberal criterion of  $p > .20$  (R.E. Larzelere, personal communication, June 5, 2012) was used to drop interactions that were nowhere near significant for the full sample in these models. The more promising interaction terms were kept to be examined in the final composite model. As an additional step, any main effects that had all of their interaction terms dropped and themselves were nowhere approaching significance for either aggression outcome were also dropped from the final model. Post hoc analysis of all significant 2-way interactions was conducted using Aiken and West's (1991) approach, using tools developed by Dawson and Richter (2006). A third alternative model was examined to test the potential of fathers' parenting behaviors as mediators of the association between fathers' risk behaviors and neighborhood risk, with adolescents' physical and relational aggression. Finally, all moderation and mediation models were also examined using fathers' self-reports in place of adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors.

## **Results**

### **Descriptives and Bivariate Correlations**

Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations are presented in Table 1. There were positive bivariate correlations between peer victimization and adolescent boys' reports of both physical and relational aggression (Table 1). However, though positive in direction, racial/ethnic discrimination was not significantly correlated with adolescent boys' reports of

either physical or relational aggression. In addition, bivariate correlations indicated negative associations between adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support and fathers' monitoring with forms of aggression, and non-significant associations between fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control with either physical or relational aggression. Adolescent reports of fathers' support and monitoring were negatively associated with both peer victimization and racial/ethnic discrimination, while fathers' psychological control was positively associated with peer victimization. Fathers' punitiveness was not significantly associated with either peer victimization or racial/ethnic discrimination, and fathers' psychological control was not associated with racial/ethnic discrimination.

Contrary to hypotheses none of the four parenting behaviors as reported by the fathers were significantly associated with boys' physical aggression. Fathers' reports of their own supportive behavior were negatively correlated with relational aggression, while reports of their psychological controlling behavior were positively correlated with relational aggression, and neither reports of punitiveness nor monitoring were significantly associated with relational aggression. Further, fathers' reports of their own psychological control were positively associated with both adolescents' reports of peer victimization and discrimination, while fathers' reports of their own punitiveness were positively associated with adolescents' reports of discrimination. Fathers' support and monitoring were not significantly associated with either peer victimization or racial/ethnic discrimination. Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics. All tolerance values were greater than .51 and the highest VIF value was 1.9 which fall within recommended acceptable guidelines for both (Pedhazur, 1997).

Independent *t*-tests were conducted to examine mean differences between the two race/ethnic groups on all of the predictor and criterion variables. The results of the *t*-tests (Table 2) showed that African American boys reported significantly higher levels of physical aggression than did Latino boys. Further, African American boys reported significantly higher parental

educational achievement than their Latino counterparts. Also, fathers of Latino boys reported using more psychologically controlling behavior than did fathers of African American boys.

A series of one-way ANOVAs was conducted to examine possible mean differences that might exist between the three regions that data was collected in for all predictor and criterion variables. The ANOVA results were all non-significant, indicating that none of the variables significantly varied across region.

### **Moderation Model Using Adolescents' Perceptions of Fathers' Parenting Behaviors**

First, a just-identified model was examined that included only paths from the risk factors (peer victimization, discrimination) and the control variable of parents' academic achievement to adolescents' reports of physical and relational aggression. An examination of the standardized beta coefficients in this model showed adolescents' reports of peer victimization were significantly positively related to adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .27, p < .001$ ), and significantly positively related to adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = .41, p < .001$ ). Adolescents' reports of race/ethnic discrimination were not significantly related to either physical or relational aggression. The control variable of parents' academic achievement was not significantly associated with either adolescent aggression outcome.

Next, a just-identified model was tested that added adolescents' perceptions of the four fathers' parenting behaviors. With the inclusion of the fathers' parenting behaviors, peer victimization remained significantly positively related to both adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ) and relational aggression ( $\beta = .37, p < .001$ ). Adolescents' reports of racial/ethnic discrimination remained non-significant in association with both physical and relational aggression, as did the control variable of adolescents' reports of their parents' academic achievement. In this model, none of the adolescents' reports of fathering behaviors were significantly related with physical aggression, and only fathers' support was significantly negatively related to adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = -.23, p = .01$ ).

Using the liberal criterion of  $p > .20$  (R.E. Larzelere, personal communication, June 5, 2012) only one interaction term (peer victimization by fathers' monitoring) was significant. None of the other interaction terms that included peer victimization approached significance in their associations with adolescents' physical or relational aggression. Also, the direct association of fathers' psychological control was not significantly related with either adolescents' physical or relational aggression. Further, neither racial/ethnic discrimination nor any of the interactions including discrimination approached significance in the smaller models. Thus, the composite model included only paths from peer victimization, fathers' support, fathers' monitoring, fathers' punitiveness, and the interaction term of peer victimization by fathers' monitoring. Peer victimization was significantly positively related with both physical aggression ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ) and relational aggression ( $\beta = .41, p < .01$ ). Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support was negatively associated with adolescents' relational aggression ( $\beta = -.24, p = .001$ ). Neither fathers' monitoring nor fathers' punitiveness were significant in association with either physical or relational aggression. The interaction of peer victimization by fathers' monitoring was significantly positively related with both adolescents' physical aggression ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ) and relational aggression ( $\beta = .25, p < .001$ ). The just identified model was trimmed by setting non-significant paths to zero. As is expected of a model with few degrees of freedom (Kline, 2005), the model fit the data well ( $\chi^2(4) = 1.41, p = .84, RMSEA < .001, CFI = 1, SRMR = .01$ ). In this trimmed final model (Figure 11), peer victimization was still positively associated with both physical ( $\beta = .27, p < .001$ ) and relational ( $\beta = .40, p < .001$ ) aggression. Adolescents' reports of fathers' support were significantly related to relational aggression ( $\beta = -.25, p < .001$ ). The interaction of peer victimization x fathers' monitoring was significantly positively related to both physical ( $\beta = .14, p = .04$ ) and relational ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ) aggression.

Post-hoc analyses of the significant 2-way interaction in the model (Table 6) showed that adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' monitoring moderated the relationship between peer victimization and physical aggression (Figure 12). Specifically, when boys reported low peer

victimization there was a significant slope showing a negative association between fathers' monitoring and boys' physical aggression. However, at high levels of peer victimization there was a non-significant slope in the association between fathers' monitoring and physical aggression. Further, analyses showed that boys' perceptions of fathers' monitoring also moderated the association between peer victimization and relational aggression (Figure 12). Specifically, at low levels of peer victimization, fathers' monitoring showed a negative slope in association with relational aggression, while at high levels of peer victimization, fathers' monitoring showed a positive slope in association with relational aggression. The final model significantly explained 14% of the variance in physical aggression ( $R^2 = .14$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and 24% of the variance in relational aggression. ( $R^2 = .243$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

**Multiple group analysis.** To examine differences that may exist across racial/ethnic groups the final model was then examined as part of a multiple group path analysis. First, background parameters including variances, residual variances, and covariances were constrained to be equal across the groups. The initial constrained model fit poorly ( $\chi^2 (26) = 94.96$ ,  $p < .001$ , RMSEA = .15, CFI = .50, SRMR = .20). Modification indices suggested freeing three variances and three covariances to achieve better fit. When these constraints were lifted the model fit the data adequately ( $\chi^2 (20) = 30.29$ ,  $p = .07$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .93, SRMR = .06). Next, the paths were constrained to be equal across the two groups and the chi-square difference was examined to test for differences between the groups. The test yielded a non-significant chi-square difference ( $\chi_d^2 (8) = 8.96$ ,  $p = .34$ ) indicating that the paths did not differ across groups. Thus, the final model for the full sample is reported.

### **Moderation Model Using Fathers' Reports of Parenting Behaviors**

First, an additive model was examined where the fathers' reports of their own parenting behavior were added to the initial risk model. In this just identified model peer victimization remained significantly positively related to both physical ( $\beta = .46$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and relational ( $\beta = .65$ ,  $p < .001$ ) aggression. Discrimination and parents' academic achievement remained non-



significant in their association with both physical and relational aggression. Also, none of the fathers' parenting behaviors were significantly associated with either adolescents' physical or relational aggression. Next smaller models including one risk and one aggression behavior were examined to identify those interactions that might be promising for a composite model. In these models neither discrimination nor any interactions between discrimination and fathers' reports of their parenting behaviors were near significant and were therefore not retained for the final model. Also, interactions involving peer victimization and fathers' reports of their parenting behaviors were not significant when predicting adolescents' physical aggression. Thus, the composite model utilizing fathers' self-report of their own parenting behaviors included only significant or near significant paths between peer victimization, interactions involving peer victimization and fathers' parenting behaviors, and relational aggression. In the just identified model peer victimization was positively related with relational aggression ( $\beta = .38, p < .001$ ). Also, fathers' support becomes negatively associated with adolescent boys' relational aggression ( $\beta = -.18, p < .01$ ). Further, the interaction of peer victimization with fathers' support is positively related with relational aggression ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ). The interactions of peer victimization by fathers' punitiveness ( $\beta = -.20, p = .06$ ) and peer victimization by fathers' psychological control ( $\beta = .19, p = .06$ ) were approaching significance and retained in the trimmed model. Next, all other non-significant paths were set to zero and the model was reexamined. This model fit the data well ( $\chi^2(3) = 2.15, RMSEA < .001, CFI = 1, SRMR = .01$ ). In this final model (Figure 13) peer victimization was positively related with relational aggression ( $\beta = .39, p < .001$ ). Fathers' support ( $\beta = -.18, p < .01$ ) as well as the interaction of peer victimization by fathers' support ( $\beta = .24, p < .01$ ) were significantly associated with adolescent boys' relational aggression. Both the interactions of peer victimization by fathers' punitiveness and fathers' psychological control remained non-significant in association with physical and relational aggression in the final model.

Post-hoc analyses of the significant 2-way interaction in the model (Table 6) showed that fathers' reports of their own supportive behavior moderated the association between peer

victimization and relational aggression (Figure 14). Specifically, when boys reported low peer victimization, fathers' support showed a significant negative slope in association with relational aggression, however, at high levels of peer victimization, fathers' support showed a non-significant slope in association with relational aggression. This model explained approximately 23% of the variance in relational aggression ( $R^2 = .228$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Next, the final model was examined as part of a multiple group path analysis. First, the background parameters were constrained to be equal across the groups. The initial constrained model did not fit the data well ( $\chi^2(48) = 192.88$ , RMSEA = .16, CFI = .30, SRMR = .22). Modification indices suggested freeing the variances of the interaction terms and seven of the constrained covariances. With those parameters freed the model fit the data reasonably well ( $\chi^2(38) = 43.14$ , RMSEA = .03, CFI = .97, SRMR = .08). Next the path coefficients were constrained to be equal across groups. This model fit the data reasonably well ( $\chi^2(43) = 53.93$ , RMSEA = .05, CFI = .95, SRMR = .08), however, a non-significant chi-square test between the path constrained model and the previous model indicated that no significant differences existed across the two groups.

### **Alternative Mediation Models**

**Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors.** In the first step adolescents' perceptions of fathering behaviors were added to the original risk model. As is expected of a model with a few degrees of freedom, the model fit the data well ( $\chi^2(6) = 8.52$ , RMSEA = .04, CFI = .99, SRMR = .02). In this model, peer victimization remained significantly and positively associated with both physical ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and relational aggression ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Discrimination was not significantly associated with either physical or relational aggression. Adolescents' perceptions of punitiveness was significantly negatively related with physical aggression ( $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p = .04$ ), and adolescents' perceptions of fathers' support was significantly negatively associated with relational aggression ( $\beta = -.22$ ,  $p < .01$ ). There were no other significant direct associations between the other fathers' parenting behaviors and either physical

or relational aggression. The control variable of parents' academic achievement was not significantly associated with either physical or relational aggression. Also, there were no significant associations between either peer victimization or discrimination with any of the fathers' parenting behaviors, indicating no indirect associations between the risk factors and physical or relational aggression through fathers' parenting behaviors.

**Fathers' self-reports of parenting behaviors.** When the parenting behaviors were added to the risk model, the model fit well ( $\chi^2(6) = 11.33$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .98, SRMR = .03). Peer victimization remained significant in its association with both physical ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and relational ( $\beta = .39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) aggression. However, neither discrimination nor the control variable, parents' academic achievement, were significantly associated with either physical or relational aggression. Further, none of the fathers' parenting behaviors were significantly associated with either physical or relational aggression in this model. Finally, neither peer victimization nor discrimination were significantly related with any of the four fathers' parenting behaviors, indicating no significant indirect associations between the risk factors and physical or relational aggression through fathers' parenting behaviors.

### **Discussion**

Despite the risk of peer victimization (Adams et al., 2010) the present results demonstrate the potential of certain fathers' parenting behaviors to either protect adolescent boys against physical and relational aggression, or to exacerbate existing associations between peer victimization and physical and relational aggression. Consistent with earlier research examining fathers' parenting behaviors (Aceves & Cookston, 2007), African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' support emerged as a protective factor against relational aggression. However, contrary to that research, support became less important for boys who faced higher rates of peer victimization, and only served as an added protection for those boys who experienced less than average peer victimization. Further boys' perceptions of their own peer victimization directly explain variation in physical and relational aggression. Specifically, boys in

this sample who reported higher rates of being victimized by their peers also reported utilizing more physical and relational aggressive behaviors themselves. This is consistent with literature that suggests boys who are victimized will resort to aggressive tactics (Aceves et al., 2010).

Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring was shown to moderate the association between peer victimization and adolescents' reports of their own physical and relational aggression. Adolescent boys who reported low levels of peer victimization were more likely to report lower levels of both physical and relational aggression when also perceiving themselves to be more highly monitored by their fathers. Interestingly, the present results show that monitoring no longer holds as a protective factor against physical aggression for boys who report higher levels of peer victimization. This is in contrast to much research that posits monitoring as a protective factor against adolescent risk behavior such as aggression (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006), as well as to research that suggests these behaviors only serve as protective factors at high levels of risk (Luthar et al., 2000). Peer victimization seems to undermine fathers' monitoring as a protective factor, and may be due peers using threats and shaming to prevent these boys from disclosing information about the victimization to their fathers. Thus, fathers may not be aware of the victimization and are therefore see no need for greater monitoring. It may also be that adolescent boys who perceive themselves as being highly victimized by their peers are more sensitive to controlling behaviors such as high monitoring by their fathers and perceive those behaviors as another form of victimization.

It is interesting to note that boys who reported high levels of peer victimization and increased fathers' monitoring also reported higher rates of relational aggression. This suggests that fathers' monitoring may be perceived as protective against aggressive behavior to a point, but may exacerbate the association when there is higher than average peer victimization occurring. In sum these findings suggest that poor monitoring may not be limited to a lack of supervision, but may be seen as over-controlling and increase the risk for adolescent aggression (Smokowski,

Rose, & Bacallao, 2009), and that when adolescents perceive fathers' monitoring as being positive it can serve as a protective factor against aggression (Gorman-Smith et al., 2004).

When utilizing fathers' reports of their own parenting behaviors in the models, fathers' support emerged as the parenting behavior of note. First, fathers' reports of their own support serve as a protective factor against adolescent aggression. Specifically, adolescents whose fathers reported higher levels of support, themselves reported lower levels of relational aggression. This supports previous research that fathers' support protects against aggression in adolescents (Aceves & Cookston, 2007). It was found that the association of peer victimization and relational aggression was strongest fathers' support was high but only under low levels of peer victimization. Under high levels of peer victimization monitoring no longer served as a protective factor. This could be due to boys' feelings of shame from being victimized which in turn causes them to keep the victimization a secret from their father. In this case fathers may assume that they are providing high support, but the boys do not view it that way. Adolescents whose fathers reported high levels of supportive behavior, and themselves reported high levels of peer victimization, were more likely to report high levels of relational aggression. This is in contrast to research that has shown more controlling types of parenting behavior like psychological control to exacerbate risk for relational aggression among adolescents, and supportive behavior to attenuate that risk (Nelson & Crick, 2002). It may be that fathers are misinterpreting their own behavior that is meant to be supportive, especially when aware that their sons are being victimized by peers. This would be consistent with the literature that suggests fathers tend to overestimate their supportive behavior when compared to adolescents' reports of the same (Cottrell et al., 2003). The discrepancies between the fathers' reports and adolescents' perceptions are not surprising, and according to previous research should be expected (West et al., 2011).

Several methodological and theoretical strengths are present in this study. One strength is the specific sampling of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade boys who may be experiencing a time of major transition in development, moving away from child-like roles toward more adult-like

responsibilities, spending more time away from home with peers and less with family (McGoldrick & Shibusawa, 2012). This allowed the researcher to understand how certain fathers' parenting behaviors interact with the risk of victimization at this particular point in adolescent boys' development. This study addresses the call for research to examine risk and resilience in the development of racial/ethnic minority adolescents (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996) and the association between different risk factors and certain fathers' parenting behaviors (Pleck, 2010). This study also advances research examining different types of victimization associated with adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression in a sample of African American and Latino early adolescent boys (Putallaz et al., 2007).

As with all research studies, the current study has limitations that merit consideration. This study is cross-sectional. Therefore true causal statements cannot be made. Further, some of the variables examined in the study to be associated with adolescent boys' aggression were reported by the adolescents themselves, and therefore the possibility exists that the results could be inflated due to having the same respondent on each. Further, another methodological limitation is that the data for this study was based on self-report questionnaires. These questionnaires were anonymous but it is possible, especially considering the nature of some of the issues of interest that some of the participants responded with social desirability bias. However, this study collects data from multiple respondents (adolescents and fathers), so the risk of shared method variance, as well as the limitations of self-report is decreased (Kenny et al., 2006). Another methodological limitation is the small number of cases in the two racial/ethnic groups, given the large number of interactions that were examined in the study. Future research should utilize larger sample sizes. Another limitation is that the significant positive direct associations between parenting behaviors and aggression coupled with the change in direction of significant interactions involving those behaviors may indicate a curvilinear effect. Future research should utilize longitudinal data and examine these parenting behaviors as potential protective processes. One of the key processes in family resilience is making meaning out of risk (Walsh, 2006). Therefore, it is important to look

at the perceptions of the adolescent boys regarding the risk factors in the study. The small variations in procedures for survey administration at the different sites is also a limitation. While limitations do exist, the results of this study will benefit the field by providing information on associations that exist between variables. This information may serve as a guide for the development of theory for future longitudinal studies investigating causal associations. A related conceptual limitation is that resilience is a process rather than an isolated event (Walsh, 2006) and therefore should be examined over time. However, Windle (2011) encourages the study of factors that are associated with resilience, especially across a variety of levels.

The lack of any significant findings involving either direct associations of racial/ethnic discrimination or interactions that involve discrimination is noteworthy, given the research that suggests that racial/ethnic discrimination is a substantial challenge for African American and Latino adolescents (Le & Stockdale, 2011) and increases the risk for aggression in these two groups (Borders & Liang, 2011; Brook et al., 2004). However, this may be due to a lack of diversity in the schools that these boys attend. Future research should examine these associations in diverse samples.

Further, an important finding in this study is the number of significant paths leading to relational aggression among boys in the sample. These findings contribute to the existing scholarship suggesting that relational aggression may be important when examining adolescent boys (Coyne et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2010). Programs may wish to capitalize on this research by educating boys on appropriate ways to relationally respond to their peers, rather than using their relationships as tools to hurt.

The results of the current study have important implications for intervention and prevention practice. First, those working with African American and Latino adolescent boys need to recognize that victimization has the potential to increase the boys' risk for aggression behavior. Further, while programs may put an emphasis on preventing physical type of aggression from boys who are victimized, they should also recognize that boys who are victimized are likely to be

relationally aggressive as well (Coyne et al., 2006). Further, results suggest that programs geared toward intervention or prevention of physical and relational aggression among African American and Latino adolescent boys may benefit from also involving fathers. For example, adolescents and fathers may benefit from programs that encourage them to interact and communicate in quality ways, so as to foster a clear understanding of how the other views the parenting behaviors displayed. Also, sons should be encouraged to disclose information about being bullied to their fathers and fathers encouraged to appropriately respond to that disclosure, recognizing that there may be feelings of shame involved for the boy. Further, programs geared specifically toward fathers may need to educate them on culturally appropriate ways to show support to their sons, so as not to exacerbate risk associations.

Finally, results indicate that African American and Latino adolescent boys' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors are important in understanding variation in their own aggressive behavior. These adolescents should be encouraged to identify those parenting behaviors that their fathers display that effectively communicate feelings of support and knowledge so as to promote resilience in these boys. It is possible that more differences between the two groups may exist than were supported in this study. Thus, future research should examine the protective processes that fathers' parenting behaviors may play in associations with different kinds of victimization specific to these two racial/ethnic groups.



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Table 4. Means, Standard Deviation, and Bivariate Correlations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1. Physical aggression	-												
2. Relational aggression	.58***	-											
3. Parent academic achievement	.00	.10	-										
4. Discrimination	.12	.08	-.06										
5. Peer victimization	.31***	.45***	.13	.38***									
6. Fathers' support (Ad)	-.23***	-.24***	.02	-.20**	-.14*	-							
7. Fathers' monitoring (Ad)	-.22***	-.13*	-.02	-.20**	-.16*	.61***	-						
8. Fathers punitiveness (Ad)	-.09	.03	.04	.09	.09	.17*	.25***	-					
9. Fathers' psychological control (Ad)	.05	.11	.02	.12	.14*	.04	.10	.66***	-				
10. Fathers' support (Dad)	-.06	-.13*	.04	-.09	-.07	.43***	.23***	.04	-.04	-			
11. Fathers' monitoring (Dad)	-.03	-.06	-.05	-.07	-.05	.35***	.38***	.04	-.03	.53***	-		
12. Fathers' punitiveness (Dad)	-.01	.11	-.04	.12	.17*	.04	.06	.29***	.28***	.15*	.12	-	
13. Fathers' psychological Control (Dad)	.05	.16*	-.08	.16*	.23***	-.10	-.05	.25***	.41***	.01	-.06	.64***	-
Mean <sup>a</sup>													
African American	1.24	.65	6.75	1.46	1.87	3.35	3.04	2.41	2.15	3.55	3.38	2.26	1.78
Latino	.91	.50	4.92	1.52	1.96	3.27	3.08	2.38	2.27	3.45	3.22	2.35	2.08
Overall sample	1.02	.55	5.51	1.50	1.93	3.30	3.07	2.39	2.23	3.49	3.27	2.32	1.98
SD <sup>a</sup>													
African American	.91	.92	1.77	.67	1.01	.68	.76	.68	.68	.60	.59	.62	.58
Latino	.79	.61	2.28	.86	1.19	.60	.66	.67	.72	.56	.74	.62	.77
Overall sample	.84	.73	2.29	.80	1.13	.63	.70	.67	.71	.57	.69	.62	.72

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

<sup>a</sup>Before centering

Table 5. *Independent t-Test Values for Mean Difference Analyses.*

Variables	Mean African American (Latino)	SD African American (Latino)	<i>t</i> -value
Adolescents' physical aggression	1.24 (.91)	.91 (.79)	2.72**
Adolescents' relational aggression	.65 (.50)	.92 (.61)	1.27
Parents' Academic Achievement	6.75 (4.92)	1.77 (2.28)	6.49***
Race/ethnicity discrimination	1.87 (1.96)	1.01 (1.19)	-.61
Peer victimization	1.46 (1.52)	.67 (.86)	-.56
Adolescents' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviors			
Fathers' support	3.35 (3.27)	.68 (.60)	.87
Fathers' monitoring	3.04 (3.08)	.76 (.66)	-.42
Fathers' punitiveness	2.41 (2.38)	.68 (.67)	.30
Fathers' psychological control	2.15 (2.27)	.68 (.72)	-1.21
Fathers' self-report of parenting behaviors			
Fathers' support	3.55 (3.45)	.60 (.56)	1.18
Fathers' monitoring	3.38 (3.22)	.59 (.74)	1.77
Fathers' punitiveness	2.26 (2.35)	.62 (.62)	-1.08
Fathers' psychological control	1.78 (2.08)	.58 (.77)	-3.04**

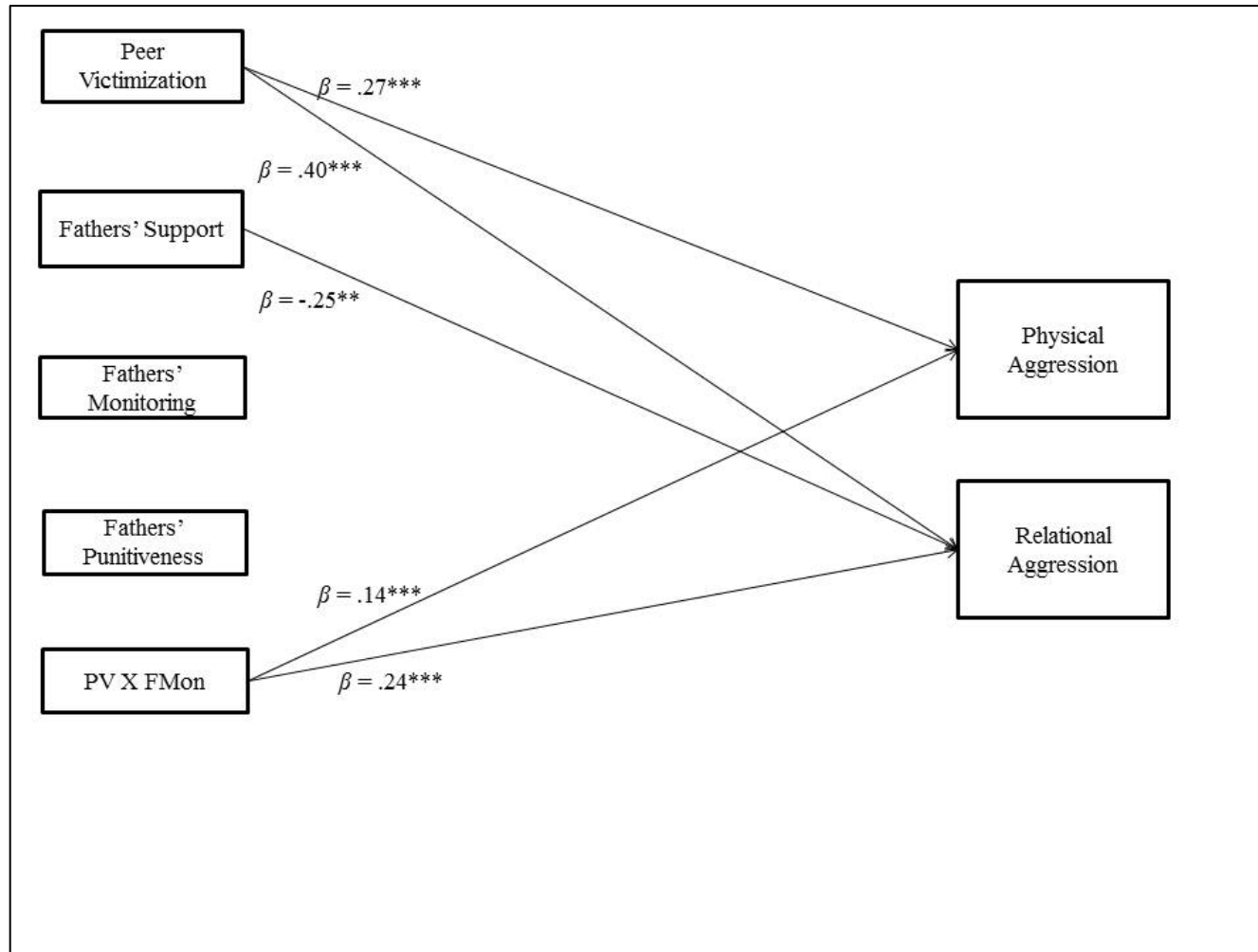
\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 6. Slopes Depicting the Association Between Peer Victimization and Adolescent Boys' Physical and Relational Aggression at Different Levels of Fathers' Monitoring (Adolescents' Perceptions) and Fathers' Support (Fathers' Self-report)

Predictor	Physical Aggression		Relational Aggression	
	Low	High	Low	High
Levels of Moderator: Fathers' Monitoring (Adolescents' Report)				
Peer victimization	.26*	.62***	.35**	.99***
Levels of Moderator: Fathers' Support (Fathers' Report)				
Peer victimization	-	-	.36**	.94***

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

Figure 11. Moderation model (adolescents' reports of fathers' parenting behaviors).



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

Figure 12. Peer victimization x fathers' monitoring for adolescent boys' physical aggression and relational aggression.

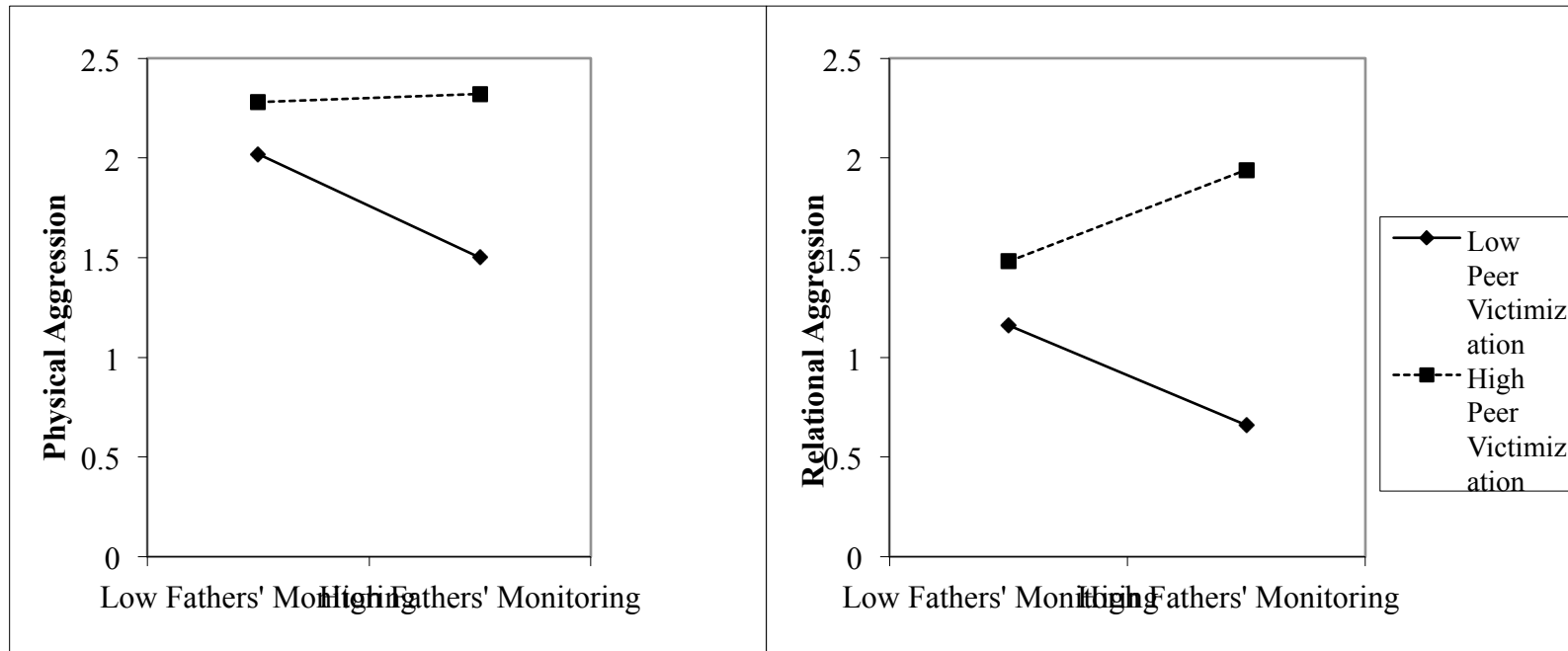
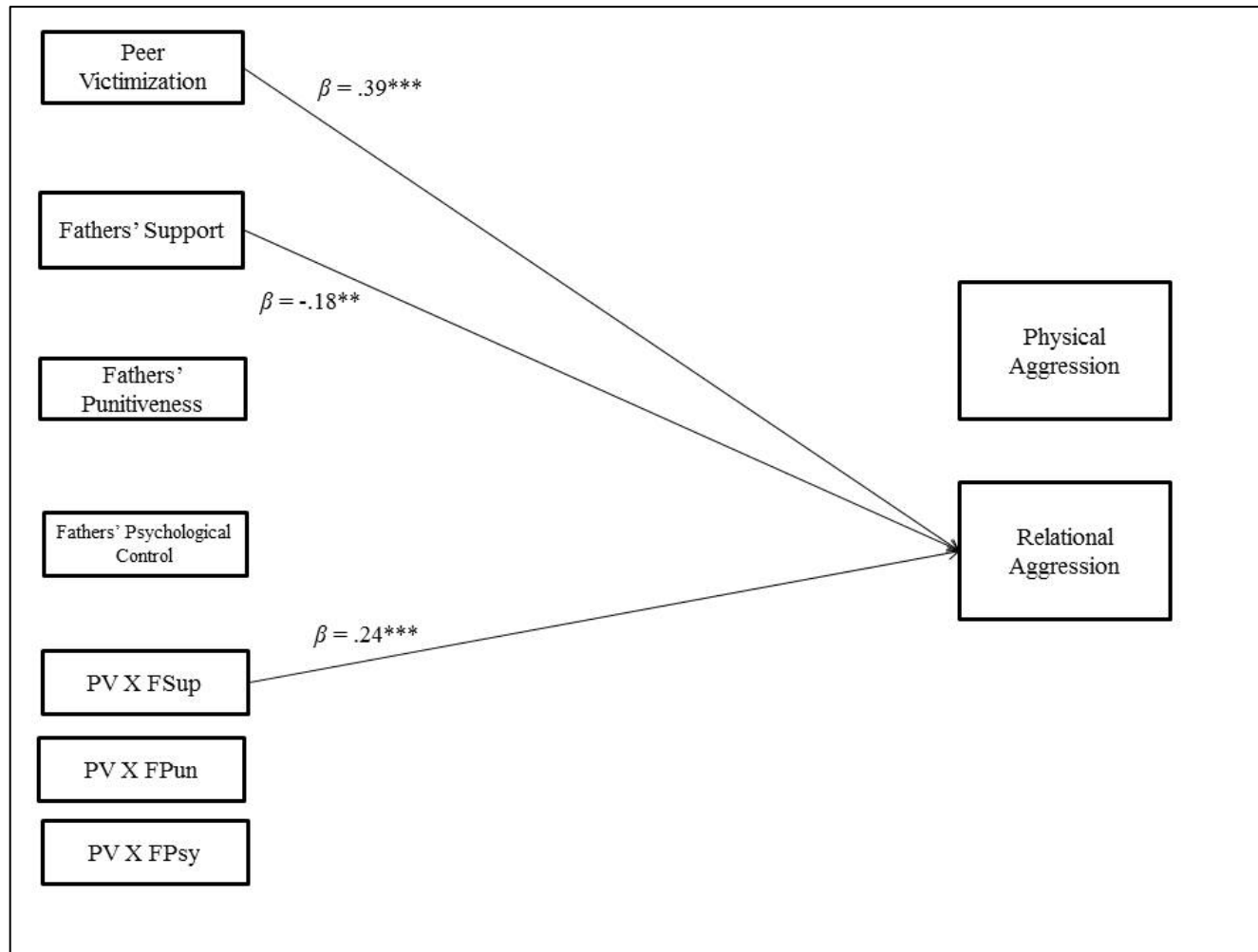


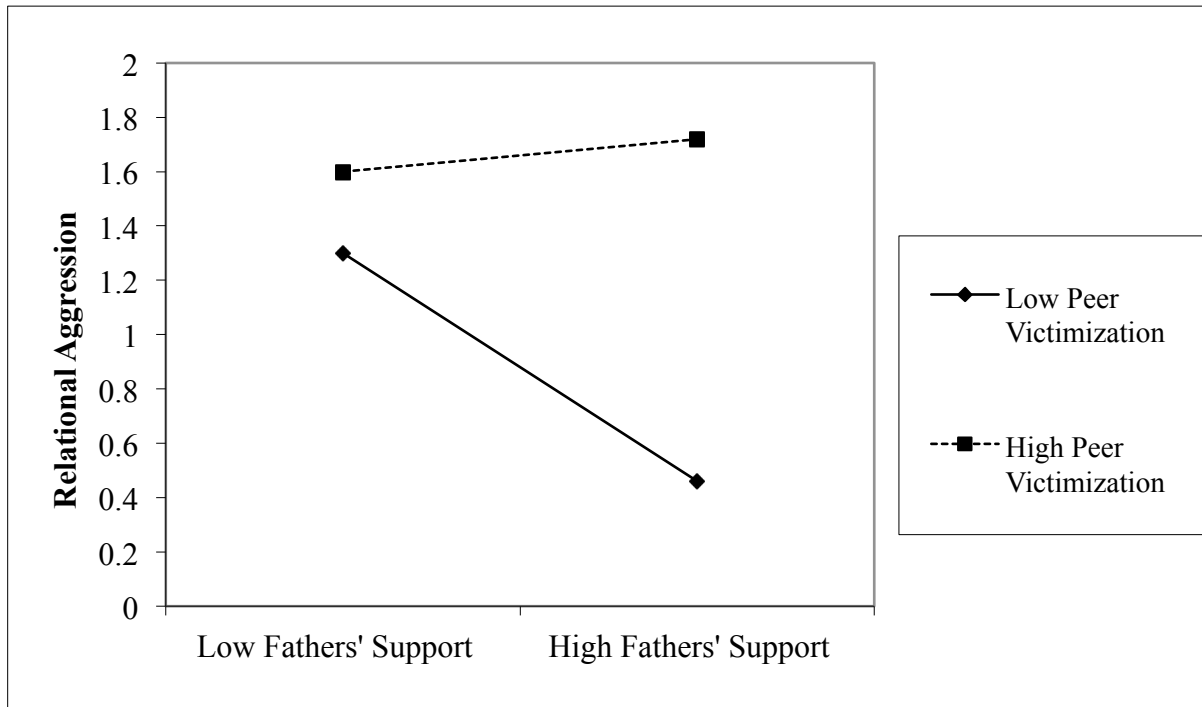


Figure 13. Moderation model (fathers' self-reports of parenting behaviors).



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

Figure 14. Peer victimization x fathers' support for adolescent boys' relational aggression.



## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRES

Selected demographics and scales:

What is your age?

What is your grade?

What is your gender?

In terms of an ethnicity/race, I am:

1. African American/Black, 2. Asian, 3. Caucasian/White, 4. Hispanic/Latino,

5. Native American, 6. Other/mixed

Who, if anyone, functions as your father figure most often?

1=birth father, 2=stepfather, 3=grandfather, 4=mother's live in boyfriend, 5=adopted father, 6=foster father, 7=uncle, 8=no father figure, 9=brother, 10=cousin

Adolescent Questionnaires:

PARENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	
<b>Please use the scale to the right to answer the following.</b>	
What's the highest level of education your mother figure completed?	1 = No schooling completed
What's the highest level of education your father figure completed?	2 = Some elementary school (1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> grades)
	3 = Some middle school (6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grades)
	4 = Some high school (9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grades)
	5 = High school graduate or equivalency (GED)
	6 = Some college but no degree
	7 = Associate (technical school) degree
	8 = Bachelor's degree
	9 = Master's degree
	10 = Professional school (medical, law) degree
	11 = Doctorate degree (Ph.D., Ed.D.)

**AGGRESSION: PHYSICAL AGGRESSION RELATIONAL AGGRESSION**

<b>How frequently do you feel or do the following?</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Very Frequently</b>	<b>Always</b>
Once in a while I can't control the urge to strike another person.	0	1	2	3	4
If pushed too far, I may hit another person.	0	1	2	3	4
If somebody hits me, I hit back.	0	1	2	3	4
I get into more fights than the average person.	0	1	2	3	4
If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.	0	1	2	3	4
There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.	0	1	2	3	4
I can think of good reasons for hitting a person.	0	1	2	3	4
I have threatened people I know.	0	1	2	3	4
I have become so mad that I have broken things.	0	1	2	3	4
When I get mad at someone, I get even by keeping that person from being in my group of friends.	0	1	2	3	4
I tell friends I will stop liking them unless they do what I say.	0	1	2	3	4
When I get mad at a person, I ignore them or stop talking to them.	0	1	2	3	4
I try to keep certain people from being in my group during activity time or play time.	0	1	2	3	4
I try to make other kids not like a certain person by spreading rumors about them.	0	1	2	3	4

Modification of Physical Aggression Questionnaire (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007);  
 Relational Aggression Questionnaire (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007).

**PARENTAL BEHAVIORS (SUPPORT, PUNITIVENESS, PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL, MONITORING)**

				Please answer how much you agree with each statement about your mother figure AND father figure.	Father Figure			
					Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
				<b>This parent...</b>				
				Has made me feel that he/she would be there if I needed him/her.	1	2	3	4
				Seems to approve of me and the things I do.	1	2	3	4
				Tells me how much he/she loves me.	1	2	3	4
				Says nice things about me.	1	2	3	4
				Knows where I am after school.	1	2	3	4
				Knows who I am going to be with when I go out.	1	2	3	4
				Knows where I am when I go out.	1	2	3	4
				Knows the parents of my friends.	1	2	3	4
				Knows who my friends are.	1	2	3	4
				Knows how I spend my money.	1	2	3	4
				Punishes me when she thinks I am doing something wrong.	1	2	3	4
				Punishes me by not letting me do things that I really enjoy.	1	2	3	4
				Does not give me any peace until I do what he/she says.	1	2	3	4
				Yells at me a lot without good reason.	1	2	3	4
				Punishes me by not letting me do things with other teenagers.	1	2	3	4
				Punishes me by sending me out of the room.	1	2	3	4
				Punishes me by spanking or hitting me.	1	2	3	4
				Is always finding fault with me.	1	2	3	4
				Tells me that I will be sorry that I wasn't better behaved.	1	2	3	4
				Tells me about all the things that he/she has done for me.	1	2	3	4
				Tells me that someday I will be punished for my behavior.	1	2	3	4
				Tells me that if I loved him/her, I would do what he/she wants me to do.	1	2	3	4
				Will not talk to me when I displease him/her.	1	2	3	4
				Avoids looking at me when I have disappointed him/her.	1	2	3	4

Adolescent boys responded to subscales of the Parent Behavior Measure (Bush et al., 2002)

**NEIGHBORHOOD RISKS &**

<b>Please answer about your NEIGHBORHOOD...</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Many people cannot speak English very well.	1	2	3	4
Education is not valued.	1	2	3	4
Many families are poor.	1	2	3	4
Many adults are unemployed.	1	2	3	4
I have seen people do illegal things.	1	2	3	4
There is a lot of crime.	1	2	3	4
There is a lot of violence.	1	2	3	4
Many people use drugs or drink alcohol.	1	2	3	4
Illegal drugs are readily available.	1	2	3	4
There is a lot of racism/prejudice.	1	2	3	4
There is a lot of graffiti.	1	2	3	4
I feel unsafe.	1	2	3	4

Adolescent boys responded to a modified neighborhood scale (Behnke et al., 2011)

**PEER VICTIMIZATION**

<b>During the last 6 months another kid...</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once or twice</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Once a week</b>	<b>More than once per week</b>
Called me mean names to hurt my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
Said he/she was going to beat me up.	1	2	3	4	5
Tried to get back at me by not letting me be in his or her group.	1	2	3	4	5
Hit or kicked to hurt me.	1	2	3	4	5
Told lies about me so other kids would not like me.	1	2	3	4	5
Tried to keep others from liking me by saying mean things	1	2	3	4	5
Threatened me.	1	2	3	4	5
Pushed or shoved me.	1	2	3	4	5
Gossiped about me.	1	2	3	4	5

Adolescent boys responded to a modification of the Bullying Scale (Champion & Clay, 2007)

**DISCRIMINATION**

<b>How often have any of the following happened to you because of your RACE, CULTURE, LANGUAGE, and/or SKIN COLOR</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Less than once a year</b>	<b>A few times a year</b>	<b>A few times a month</b>	<b>At least once a week</b>	<b>Almost every day</b>
You are treated with less courtesy than others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
You are treated with less respect than other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
You receive poorer service than others in restaurants or stores.	1	2	3	4	5	6
People act as if they think you are not smart.	1	2	3	4	5	6
People think they are better than you.	1	2	3	4	5	6
People are afraid of you.	1	2	3	4	5	6
People think you are dishonest.	1	2	3	4	5	6
You are called names or insulted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
You are threatened or harassed.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Adolescent boys responded to a previously used everyday discrimination scale (Essed, 1991)

Fathers' Questionnaires:

**PARENTAL BEHAVIORS (SUPPORT, PUNITIVENESS, PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL, MONITORING)**

<b>Please answer how much you agree with each statement about your relationship with the adolescent.</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I have made him feel that I would be there if he needed me.	1	2	3	4
I approve of him and the things he does.	1	2	3	4
I tell him how much I love him.	1	2	3	4
I say nice things about him.	1	2	3	4
I do not give him any peace until he does what I say.	1	2	3	4
I punish him when I think his doing something wrong.	1	2	3	4
I punish him by not letting him do things that he really enjoys.	1	2	3	4
I yell at him a lot without good reason.	1	2	3	4
I punish him by not letting him do things with other teenagers.	1	2	3	4
I punish him by sending him out of the room.	1	2	3	4
I punish him by spanking or hitting.	1	2	3	4
I always find faults with him.	1	2	3	4
I tell him that he will be sorry that he wasn't better behaved.	1	2	3	4
I tell him about all the things that I have done for him.	1	2	3	4
I tell him that someday he will be punished for his behavior.	1	2	3	4
I tell him that if he loved me, he would do what I want him to do.	1	2	3	4
I will not talk to him when he displeases me.	1	2	3	4
I avoid looking at him when he has disappointed me.	1	2	3	4
I know where he is after school.	1	2	3	4
I know who he is going to be with when he goes out.	1	2	3	4
I know where he is when he goes out.	1	2	3	4
I know the parents of his friends.	1	2	3	4
I know who his friends are.	1	2	3	4
I know how he spends his money.	1	2	3	4

Fathers responded to subscales of the Parent Behavior Measure (Bush et al., 2002)



**FATHERS' RISK BEHAVIORS**

<b>How frequently do you feel or do the following?</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Very Frequently</b>	<b>Always</b>
Once in a while I can't control the urge to strike another person.	0	1	2	3	4
If pushed too far, I may hit another person.	0	1	2	3	4
If somebody hits me, I hit back.	0	1	2	3	4
I get into more fights than the average person.	0	1	2	3	4
If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.	0	1	2	3	4
There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.	0	1	2	3	4
I can think of good reasons for hitting a person.	0	1	2	3	4
I have threatened people I know.	0	1	2	3	4
I have become so mad that I have broken things.	0	1	2	3	4

Fathers responded to a modification of the Physical Aggression Questionnaire (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007)

	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?	0	1
Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?	0	1
Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?	0	1
Have you ever had a drink in the morning to get rid of a hangover?	0	1

Fathers responded to the CAGE Questionnaire for alcohol dependence (Ewing, 1984)

<b>During the last SIX MONTHS, how often have you:</b>	<b>Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)</b>	<b>Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)</b>	<b>Occasionally (3-4 days)</b>	<b>Mostly or almost all the time (5-7 days)</b>
<b>ILD1</b> Been placed in a police car, picked up, or taken home by the police?	0	1	2	3
<b>ILD2</b> Ticketed or cited by the police for any reason, other than a parking ticket?	0	1	2	3
<b>ILD3</b> Arrested for any reason?	0	1	2	3
<b>ILD4</b> Found guilty or convicted of any crime?	0	1	2	3

Fathers responded to a scale created for the PAYS study (Dr. Scott Coltrane, principal investigator)

APPENDIX B

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

**Note:** The Fathers Count! Project was approved in September 2008 and was renewed in October 2009 and October 2010.

## Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Monday, November 24, 2008  
IRB Application No HE0854  
Proposal Title: Fathers Count!

Reviewed and Processed as: Full Board

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 9/22/2009

Principal Investigator(s):  
Carolyn Henry  
233 HES  
Stillwater, OK 74078

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The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

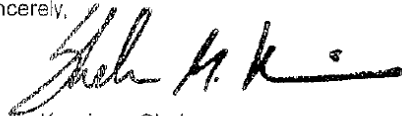
The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, [beth.mcternan@okstate.edu](mailto:beth.mcternan@okstate.edu)).

Sincerely,



Shelia Kennison, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

### Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date Thursday, October 15, 2009 Protocol Expires: 10/14/2010

IRB Application No: HE0854

Proposal Title: Fathers Count!

Reviewed and Processed as: Full Board  
**Continuation**

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): **Approved**

Principal Investigator(s) :

Carolyn Henry  
233 HES  
Stillwater, OK 74078

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Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office **MUST** be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

- The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

Signature



Shelia Kennison, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Thursday, October 15, 2009  
Date

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date Friday, October 29, 2010 Protocol Expires: 10/28/2011

IRB Application No: HE0854

Proposal Title: Fathers Count!

Reviewed and Full Board  
Processed as: Continuation

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Principal Investigator(s) :

Carolyn Henry  
233 HES  
Stillwater, OK 74078

---

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

- The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

Signature :



Shelia Kennison, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Friday, October 29, 2010

Date

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION TO USE DATA FROM FATHERS COUNT RESEARCH STUDY

**Permission for Use of Fathers Count Data**

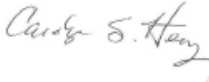
By signing below we verify that Bobby Kern has permission to use data collected in North Carolina, California, and Oklahoma for the Fathers Count Research Study for his doctoral dissertation in Human Sciences with an emphasis in Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University. Mr. Kern's dissertation examines the potential that fathers' parenting behaviors have to exacerbate or protect against certain risk factors for African American and Latino adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. The study will use data collected from both adolescents and fathers and involves the following variables: adolescents' physical aggression, adolescents' relational aggression, neighborhood risk, fathers' risk behavior, discrimination, peer victimization, and demographic variables. The three co-principal investigators will be co-authors on all manuscripts generated from the dissertation.



Andrew O. Behnke, Ph.D., Associate Professor, North Carolina State University



Scott W. Plunkett, Ph.D., Professor, California State University-Northridge



Digitally signed by Carolyn Henry  
DN: cn=Carolyn Henry, o, ou,  
email=carolyn.henry@okstate.edu,  
c=US  
Date: 2012.07.10 20:03:32 -05'00'

Carolyn S. Henry, Ph.D., Professor, Oklahoma State University

VITA

Bobby L. Kern

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS AND RISKS FOR ADOLESCENT  
AGGRESSION IN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO BOYS

Major Field: Human Science

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Human Sciences at  
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2012.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts in Youth Ministry at  
Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City, OK in 2003.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Religious Education  
at Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City, OK in 2000.

Experience: Project Coordinator for Fathers Count Research Project in  
Oklahoma from 2009-2010, Graduate Teaching Assistant at Oklahoma  
State University from 2008-2012, Instructor of Record at Oklahoma  
State University from 2010-2012

Professional Memberships: National Council on Family Relations, Oklahoma  
Council on Family Relations

Name: Bobby L. Kern

Date of Degree: December, 2012

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: FATHERS' PARENTING BEHAVIORS AND RISKS FOR  
ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION IN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND  
LATINO BOYS

Pages in Study: 174

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Human Sciences

Scope and Method of Study: Guided by ecological resilience perspectives this study examined the association between various risk factors (neighborhood risk, discrimination, peer victimization, fathers' risk behaviors) and African American and Latino adolescent boys' physical and relational aggression. Fathers' parenting behaviors were examined primarily as mediators and moderators of those associations to determine how they might exacerbate or protect against those risks. Both adolescents and their fathers reported on fathers' parenting behaviors. Data were collected from 234 adolescents (mean age of 15.17, 34.2% African American, 65.8% Latino) and their fathers. Structural equation modeling was used to test two aspects of a theoretical model that from which two research questions evolved. The first model posited that (a) risks would be positively associated with boys' aggression, and (b) fathers' parenting behaviors would mediate the associations between risk factors and aggression. The second model posited that (a) victimization would be positively associated with boys' aggression and (b) fathers' parenting behaviors would mediate the associations between risk factors and aggression.

Findings and Conclusions: In the model examining the relation of neighborhood risk and fathers' risk behaviors with adolescent boys' aggression, adolescents' reports of fathers' support mediated the relation between neighborhood risk and relational aggression for African American boys, but fathers' monitoring mediated the relation between fathers' risk behavior and physical aggression for Latino boys. In the model examining discrimination and peer victimization, adolescents' perceptions of fathers' monitoring emerged as a protective factor of physical and relational aggression at low levels of peer victimization but not high while fathers' self-reports of support emerged as a protective factor against relational aggression at low levels of peer victimization but not high. Future research can focus on these two racial/ethnic groups to better understand the role that fathers' parenting behaviors play as either risk or protector. Intervention programs should emphasize and encourage fathers' support as opposed to monitoring in the presence of higher risk factors. Programs should involve fathers and sons together and emphasize open communication between the pair.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Carolyn S. Henry

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