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Janett M. Naylor
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“THAT’S NOT WHAT FRIENDS DO!”: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN’S REACTIONS TO INTERPERSONAL VIOLATIONS

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

BY

Bridget Murphy

Ryan Brown

Lara Mayeux

Jody Newman

Robert Terry

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ABSTRACT

Little is known about how children respond to interpersonal violations by best friends; therefore the goal of the present study was to examine children's reactions to violations in detail. When confronted with problematic interactions, children must immediately assess the situation and determine the short-term impact, as well as the long term impact on the relationship. Specifically, children must justify their friends' actions, determine their willingness to overcome, and assess the long-term negative impact on the friendship. Elementary school children (N=105) responded to six hypothetical vignettes depicting interpersonal violations (e.g., lie, blame, and secret) and completed measures of social cognitive skills. Results indicate that children's short-term assessment (occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, and reasonings about overcoming) does impact their expectations of long-term negative impact. In addition, friendship understanding and emotional display rules were significantly related to several aspects of children's reactions. Overall, children select behaviors and reason to reduce the negative aspects following interpersonal violations. Moreover, children view the use of forgiveness as positive and the use of revenge as negative. Findings indicate that children's reactions to interpersonal violations is a worthy and vital area of research that needs more examination.

INTRODUCTION

Friendships are unique in that they are one of the first opportunities for children to participate in relationships that are not obligatory and most importantly that are based on equality and concern for others (Laursen & Bukowski, 1997; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1998). In general, friendship interactions are focused on sharing power and providing emotional support, which help children understand the fundamentals of sharing and self-disclosure (Hartup, 1992; Hartup & Stevens, 1997). Friendships and all social interactions involve communication of feelings, as well as motivations and behaviors (Halberstadt, Denham, & Dunsmore, 2001). As children learn subtle nuances of social exchanges, their expectations and desires are inevitably violated. Often, these violations of interpersonal expectations involve a shift in the balance of power or a breech of established friendship norms that must be overcome. From these experiences, children learn how to handle problematic interactions, how to express emotions, and how to alter their understanding of social relations. The foundation for social communication is laid in middle childhood and continues across the life-span (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Halberstadt, Denham, & Dunsmore, 2001; Shantz, 1983). Despite the developmental importance of violations among friends, relatively little is known about how children think about these events. Thus, children's reactions to violations among friends and the factors that influence their reactions were the primary focus of the present study.

Reactions to Interpersonal Violations

When one friend lies to another, tells another friend's secret, or blames the friend for an event, the offender has breeched expectations and has taken the power within the friendship, leaving the victim feeling vulnerable. In addition, the victims of

unanticipated interpersonal violations may feel emotional distress and cognitive turmoil directed at the source of the violation. The offender's power advantage can create a debt between friends, as has been shown in adult research (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002). To restore the friendship to its previous status and to continue being friends, the balance of power must be regained and the emotional distress must be overcome (Laursen & Collins, 1994). Therefore, children must deal with negative affect, thoughts, and behaviors by justifying the behaviors of their friend, by considering their willingness to overcome the violation, and by assessing the violation's impact on the friendship.

Justifications of Behaviors

Justifications of the violations are crucial for children to understand because children must first recognize the behaviors of their friends as wrong and as an actual violation of the friendship. By middle childhood, children do expect secrecy and fairness within friendships and can recognize the violation of these interpersonal qualities (Rotenberg, 1991; Watson & Valtin, 1997a; Watson & Valtin, 1997b).

Although research suggests that children can recognize interpersonal violations within friendships, little is known about their reactions to, assessment of, and reasoning about such situations. However, research pertaining to the ways in which children judge and reason about moral violations in general provides insight regarding children's reasoning about violations among friends. Typical transgressions entail stealing, lying, or cheating and are similar to violations among friends, but specifically involve a breech of social or moral codes. In general, research concerning children's reasonings about moral transgression indicates that children reason about moral situations from a self vs. other

approach (Kohlberg, 1984). Specifically, children evaluate the situation based on the amount of harm or violation to the self (e.g., the action hurt me in some way) or the amount of harm or violation to others or the relationship (e.g., the action hurt the friendship or hurt my friend). This basic self vs. other distinction is found consistently across different violation scenarios and methodologies (for review see, Sapp, 1986). Thus, when faced with interpersonal violations, children need to judge the situations for the immediate impact, whether the violations were breaking personal expectations (e.g., friend was mean to child) or relationship expectations (e.g., that is not what friends do for each other).

In addition, across middle childhood, children reason differently about transgressions involving interpersonal obligations and those involving moral obligations. Concerns for moral justice can coexist with interpersonal obligations, but their relative importance varies across situations. Specifically, when faced with conflicts between being fair (moral justice) and being a good friend (interpersonal obligation), children are more likely to choose being a good friend over doing what is fair (Smetana, Killen, & Turiel, 1991). This would suggest that relational influences, like interpersonal obligations, the need for balance, and concern for future interactions, can impact children's reasoning about the occurrence of a friend's violation.

Willingness to Overcome

To be able to overcome interpersonal debt and to help restore the balance within the friendship, children may need to forgive or to seek revenge. Because the area of forgiveness and revenge has rarely been studied from a developmental perspective, social psychological work may provide a foundation from which to begin. However, no general

definition of forgiveness or revenge can be agreed upon by social psychology researchers (Brown, 2003), but most researchers can at least concede that forgiveness does not require the victim and the offender to fully reconcile their actions to one another. Typically, forgiveness can be defined as getting over the violation. Typically thought of as opposite to forgiveness, revenge has been found to be mutually exclusive from forgiveness (Brown, 2003). Generally, revenge can be thought of as getting back at the offender.

Although forgiveness and revenge have not been specifically studied from a developmental perspective, other areas of developmental research can help shed light on the possible occurrence of forgiveness and revenge in peer relations. General research pertaining to peer conflict indicates that when children are in problematic situations, they will try to retaliate or get over the conflict (for review see, Shantz, 1987). Specifically, in response to opposition during conflict, children tend to use strategies that are equivalent to or more intense than the initial provocation. For example, if children are hit, they are likely to hit back; if children's wishes are opposed, they are likely to oppose the wishes of another. However, children will also seek an explanation for their peers' actions, especially when conflict has occurred between friends, indicating that friends want to understand and work through the event. This area alludes to the possible processes involved in problematic interactions that children are likely to engage in post-conflict indicating that children understand that they must forgive and/or seek revenge post-conflict.

Research pertaining to conflict and social interactions between friends (Hymel, 1986; Whitesell & Harter, 1989) also suggests that children give their friends the benefit

of the doubt and tend to dismiss negative behaviors relatively quickly. Thus, friends may overlook the actions of their friends that have hurt them. Specifically, after interpersonal violations, friends may be inclined to believe that their friends had not meant to hurt them. This area may be the closest area of research to demonstrate that children have a pressing need to forgive their friends and get past the event.

In addition, limited research pertaining to children's reactions to apologies suggests that children do recognize that interpersonal debt can sometimes be overcome. Specifically, Darby and Schlenker (1982) found that children who offered apologies reduced the negative consequences for the offenders' actions—such as the offender was blamed less, received less punishment, was forgiven more, was liked more, and was rated more positively by the victim. The offering of an apology may infer the offender's motivations, intentions, and goals during the violation. Children may view apologies as offenders' attempts to accept blame, express regret, and acknowledge the interpersonal debt created by their actions. For that reason, when reasoning about an apology, children could be making an attempt to overcome interpersonal debt or could be recognizing inequality within the friendships. Children may see an apology and by extension, forgiveness, as an essential part of dealing with problematic interactions and their impact on the friendship.

Both forgiveness and revenge may occur for a variety of reason; specifically, both can be used to promote selfish motivations and reasonings or to promote relational motivations and reasonings. By forgiving their friend, children may be indicating a wllingness to both recognize and put aside the event but this can be done for selfish or relationship reasons. For example, children may forgive their friend to make their friend

like them again (self based) or to show the other child that they are still friends and will remain friends (relationship based). Revenge also can occur for selfish or relationship reasons. Children may seek revenge to get even with their friends for hurting them (self based) or to show the violators that the behavior was not appropriate in the friendship (relationship based). Laursen and Collins (1994) suggest that revenge may be used to restore the balance in a friendship and continue in the friendship. By seeking revenge, children may be suggesting that their friend has created a debt so large that to remain friends the victim must retaliate with an equal or greater violation.

Indeed, research pertaining to goals (i.e., children's intentions and desired outcome) indicates that children can have numerous reasons for their responses to violations (Chung & Asher, 1996; Murphy & Eisenberg, 1996; Renshaw & Asher, 1983). For example, children can have a desire to maintain or dissolve the friendship, to understand another's argument, or to persuade another to concede to their argument (Stein & Albro, 2001). In general, children's goals can be categorized into two groups, relationship oriented and self biased desires. Relationship goals focus on maintaining the friendship and minimizing conflict, whereas self-biased goals focus on getting one's own way (Rose & Asher, 1999). Thus, reactions such as forgiveness and revenge may occur for reasons focused on the impact of the violation on the self or the impact on the friendship (Rabiner & Gordon, 1992). If the victim is self-focused, he/she may try to "save face" by demonstrating that the offender's actions embarrassed or humiliated him/her. However, if the focus is on the friendship, the victim may want to show the offender that friendships are about equality. Therefore, the reasons for children's

willingness to forgive or seek revenge may help describe the process of overcoming interpersonal debt.

Negative Impact

Interpersonal violations can have a large impact on the friendship (Laursen, Hartup, & Koplas, 1996). If equity can be restored, children may anticipate minimal change in the friendship and may continue with the friendship as before. However, if unable to restore the balance, children may decrease their investment in the friendship causing it to dissolve. Children must assess the long-term impact of the violations on the friendship, such as if the friendship would be negatively affected and if the interpersonal qualities of secrecy and trust are expected to be regained and maintained in the future. If children think that their friendship will be indefinitely harmed by the violations, they may not want to continue in the friendship. Also, if children believe that their friends will violate the friendship in the future, trust and expectations may be permanently damaged. Thus, the ability to overcome violations may not only hinge on the initial assessment (e.g., justifications and willingness to overcome) but also may depend on children's evaluation of long-term impact, specifically expectations of future violations, of negative change in friendship, and of the desire to continue with the friendship.

Children do expect consistency in others' behaviors and make predictions about future behaviors based on past experience with that person or situation (Droege & Stipek, 1993; Ruble & Dweck, 1995). Children view their friends in a positive light and therefore may be motivated to expect their friends to not violate their friendships. However, once a violation has occurred, friends may again be motivated to see their friends as less likely to commit the violations in the future and not expect more

violations. Thus, friendship violations may be seen as atypical and not consistent with previous experiences.

Children's experiences of conflict, in general, may also help to understand their expectations regarding the specific long-term impact of interpersonal violations with friends. General conflicts present situations that may be crucial turning points in the friendship; children may either resolve the conflict to suit both members or dissolve the friendship if an egalitarian solution cannot be reached. Children's reactions to general problematic interactions indicate that they are motivated to protect friendships. Typically, researchers examine a variety of conflict situations (e.g., taking a toy, hitting another child, invading personal space) with a variety of peers, with interpersonal violations being just one of many types of problematic interactions. Children's short-term responses to and resolutions of conflict have been shown to vary by the closeness and amount of investment made in the friendship (Laursen, Hartup, & Koplas, 1996). Although friends and nonfriends do not differ on the number and duration of conflicts (Hartup, Laursen, Stewart, & Eastenson, 1988), friends' conflicts are typically less intense, are resolved more equally and constructively, involve less anger expression, and involve the pursuit of friendlier goals than do conflicts between nonfriends (Fabes, Eisenberg, Smith, & Murphy, 1996; Rose & Asher, 1999; Whitesell & Harter, 1996).

Findings pertaining to conflict among friends indicates that children are able to partially account for the potential impact of conflict on the interactions and may become sensitive to the dangers of imbalanced power within the friendship, such that they may be more likely to react to save rather than dissolve the friendship. Thus, they may not expect violations to have a great impact. Overcoming general conflict interactions may make

salient the potential long-term impact of interpersonal violations on friendships. Past experience with conflicts may show children the subtle changes that can result from an inequitable resolution.

Summary

Given the lack of research specifically pertaining to children's interpersonal violations with friends, the main goal of the present study was to examine how children respond to interpersonal violations by their best friends. Following interpersonal violations, children must evaluate the impact of events, both short-term and long-term. Children must decide first if the violations were in fact violations and why they viewed the situation as okay or not okay (justifications). After that initial judgment, children must decide if they will forgive or seek revenge to balance the interpersonal debt that was created by their best friends' actions. When determining whether to forgive or seek revenge, children's motivation regarding the friendship and the self must be considered (willingness to overcome: occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasoning about overcoming). In addition to considering the short-term impact, the long-term impact must be assessed (negative impact). Victims of interpersonal violations need to weigh the benefits and costs of remaining friends with the offender, if the violations will negatively change the current friendship, or if they think their friend will commit the violation in the future. Furthermore, justifications and willingness to overcome may help children determine the negative consequences of violations and whether they will terminate or try to save the friendship. Specifically, children's justifications may indicate a relational or self bias in reasoning and consequently a bias in their reasoning

about forgiveness and revenge. In addition, children's willingness to overcome violations may influence the amount of perceived long-term negative impact.

The primary goal of the present study was to examine children's reactions to interpersonal violations in detail during middle childhood. But, to fully understand children's reactions to interpersonal violations, the developmental changes that occur in middle childhood must be considered and their potential impact on children's reactions must be determined. Specially, developmental changes across middle childhood in cognitive ability and emotional functioning may influence children's reactions to violations.

Interpersonal Violations in Relation to Social Cognitive and Emotional Skills

Theory and research (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Halberstadt, Denham, & Dunsmore, 2001) suggest that as social cognition and emotional skills develop with age, children may be likely to respond differently to social interactions and more specifically, problematic interactions. Social cognitive skills that are developing across middle childhood include friendship understanding and emotional understanding, both of which are vital for adept social interactions. Therefore, to fully examine children's reactions to interpersonal violations, friendship understanding and emotional understanding must be considered for their potential consequences on children's processing.

Friendship Understanding

Friendships are important interpersonal relations to examine because during middle childhood, children are spending considerably more time with peers, especially those of the same-sex and same age (Hartup, 1992). Therefore, the time that children

spend with their friends and best friends will play an even more important role in social, cognitive, and emotional development. Friends help children understand and practice social interactions in a cooperative context that allows for the exchange of resources. Basically, friendships are one of the first out-of-family relationships that children can use to gain a better understanding of their self concept and self worth (Hartup, 1992). In addition to social benefits, friendships facilitate perspective taking skills and cooperative exchange (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989). Friends are vital for the acquisition of skills, and competencies associated with cognition, emotions, and other social relations (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). Perhaps, good social interactions with friends lead to better adult relationships and may even help buffer the negative effects of less positive relationships (Hartup & Laursen, 1999).

The benefits of friendships are numerous but not all friendships are the same for every child and friendship can vary by dyadic context. Friends impose standards of behavior, communication, and conduct within the relationship and help regulate the actions of the other members. Likewise, friendships vary by the individual characteristics of their members (Newcomb, Bukowski, & Bagwell, 1999). For example, if child A in the friendship has an aggressive tendency, child B may be more likely to acquiesce in a situation because of child A's aggression. However, if both child A and child B are cooperative, the interactions may be more positive for both friends. Nonetheless, research suggests that friendship benefits are not related to the quality of the friendship but to the specific offering of resources, such as companionship, help, intimacy, reliability, emotional security, and self-validation (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996).

The benefits of friendship increase as the complexity and reciprocal nature of relationships increases. Across middle childhood, the understanding of the role and importance of friendships change. As children age, friendships change to reflect the members' increased skills at perspective taking and social information processing (Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, & Brown, 1986; Selman, 1980). The general developmental trend suggests that from preschool through adolescence friendships become more intimate, self-disclosing, loyal, committed, and important (for a meta-analysis see, Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). Specifically during middle childhood, Selman (1980) concluded that friendships become less self-centered and more egalitarian. Friendships during the early years of middle childhood are considered one-way friendships; with the members of one-way friendships looking to serve self-interests not relationship interests, reporting egocentric motives and qualities, and focusing on behavior aspects of friendships. From the one-way friendships, children learn that people need friends for companionship and interaction leading to less selfish friendships. Children begin to report ideas of reciprocity, mutual sharing, intimacy, and disclosing internal states. By the end of middle childhood, friendships become focused on interpersonal aspects of the friendship: intimacy, trust, and sharing.

Indeed, research supports the general theoretical trend of friendship development. By age 4 or 5 years, children have "best friends." Preschoolers can reliably and stably identify their friends, who they like, and who they dislike (Denham, McKinley, Couchoud, & Holt, 1990). However, across middle childhood, reciprocal friendship nominations increase, such that when children nominate other children as their best friend, those children are more likely to nominate them as well (Hartup, 1992). In

addition, preschoolers' friendships are focused on self-interests but as sharing increases the focus begins to shift from self to relationship (Birch & Billman, 1986). During middle childhood then, friendships are cooperative and balanced; however, conflict is still not tolerated. But, conflict tends to be resolved in more egalitarian ways and is seen as less disruptive to the friendship long-term (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996). Also, during middle childhood, friendships are more exclusive. Children have stricter criteria for friends and often choose friends with qualities that foster the durability of the friendship (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996). Therefore, during middle childhood, children are placing more emphasis on the roles friends play and have strengthened the lines of expectation and violations of expectations. Also, during middle childhood, children have the cognitive skills to aggregate information across situations and events to gain a consistency perspective of their friendship (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000).

As friendship understandings become focused on the relationship (i.e., maintaining affiliation, reflecting personal concerns; Selman, 1980), children's reactions to and the impact of interpersonal violations may change as well, with children becoming more focused on overcoming interpersonal debt to maintain the friendship. Children have invested much time and resources in their best friendships (Hartup, 1992) with the desire that the friendship continues to support their social, cognitive and emotional needs (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1998). In addition, children who understand that friendships are long-term, are durable, and are based on companionship may see the need to resolve interpersonal violations to save the friendship and its stability. The increased levels of cooperation and reciprocal exchange (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989) may be important

enough to help salvage the friendship even after an interpersonal violation. They may see a few interpersonal violations as not standard within their friendship and therefore not likely to routinely occur. Therefore, throughout middle childhood, children may be more likely to focus on the relationship in their justifications and reasons to forgive or seek revenge, as well as report more occurrence of forgiveness and less occurrence of revenge. In addition, children may anticipate less negative changes in the friendship, further indicating their ability to overcome the interpersonal debt because of their understanding of the roles friends play.

Emotional Understanding

Along with the social cognitive benefits of friendship and friendship understanding, emotional understanding is vital to social interactions. Halberstadt, Denham, and Dunsmore (2001) assert that emotions should be included in the basic social cognitive process because emotions are self-factors that children bring to social situations. In addition, Crick and Dodge (1994) briefly discuss the impact emotions and emotional expression could have on the social cognitive model but do not directly incorporate emotional understanding into their model. Children may use emotional knowledge and skills to attend to, process, and select behaviors during interactions with friends. If children are able to affectively communicate their own emotions, interpret and respond to others' emotions, and have an awareness, acceptance, and maintenance of emotions during interactions, it is possible that problematic interactions would be resolved more quickly, with more ease, and be more equitable for both members. Children who can read and process their friends' emotions may be better able to provide support and resources within their friendships, in turn making their friendships more

complex and satisfying. Therefore, emotional skills are a very important component of social functioning, in general, and social communication and friendship violations in particular.

Two basic skills that may be of particular importance are display rules and multiple emotions. Display rules instruct children when, how, and to whom to express their emotions. Children learn through feedback from more experienced social members the standards of emotional display relevant to their culture. This developmental process becomes particularly important during middle childhood, when cognitive skills are becoming more complex as well. In addition to display rules, children's understanding of multiple emotions and their causes develops during middle childhood. Generally, children come to understand that people can hold more than one emotion directed at the same target. However, as with friendship understanding, emotional understanding develops with age.

Emotional Display Rules

The understanding of emotional display rules requires children to apply expectations of emotions during social interactions. Cultural rules dictate when, where, how, which, and how much emotion can be expressed. Children learn the cultural rules of when it is okay to express happiness, sadness, and anger and when it is not okay to express those emotions. In addition, children learn the appropriate emotional disguises to hide their true emotions. The display rules to hide an emotion are considered successfully applied when people feel one emotion internally but display another emotion externally. By preschool, children are able to spontaneously and voluntarily control emotion when mildly disappointed by feigning a more positive emotion (Cole, 1986). In

addition, with age, children become better able to monitor their own emotional expressions (Saarni, 1984) and become more aware of the finer distinctions of disguising emotions (Saarni, 1989). Elementary school children become increasingly sensitive to when to express emotions, the social risks of not disguising emotions, and the complexity of what they are truly feeling internally (for review see, Saarni & Weber, 1999).

Also across middle childhood, children become better able to explain occasions regarding why and when to hide emotions. Children reported the closeness with the confidant, the intensity of the emotions, and the controllability of emotions affected if and when they would display genuine emotions (Saarni, 1979). Therefore, children are able to understand the more subtle social constraints on expressing emotions. Specifically, children understand that it is okay to display emotions with someone whom they trust, when the emotions are so intense as to almost burst out of them, and to whom they can display their true emotions. Understanding the nuances of emotional display rules may help children interact in friendships and may help children assess interpersonal violations.

The understanding of emotional display rules is just one aspect of general emotion regulation, which indeed has been shown to impact children's interactions with peer groups. For example, children who do not control negative emotional expressions are less liked by their peers (Hubbard & Coie, 1994) and show more aggression during peer interactions (Denham, Bouril, & Belouad, 1994) than children who regulate negative emotions. Conversely, children who regulate positive emotional expression are typically preferred as playmates by peers (Garner & Estep, 2001). The control of emotions with friends may be more important than control with peers because children typically have a

high investment in friendships. Thus, during these important years, as skills of emotional display rules become increasingly complex, children may be more aware of the importance of disguising emotional reactions to effectively react to and overcome interpersonal violations. They may be more likely to be concerned about their emotional expressions on peers, may be better able at predicting and reading emotions of others, and may be better able at monitoring their own emotions in situations. Therefore, children who are better able to understand the importance of disguising emotions in peer situations may be more likely to judge the violation from a relationship view, report more occurrence of forgiveness, report less occurrence of revenge, forgive or seek revenge from their friend to save the relationship and may be better able to continue with the friendship.

Multiple Emotions

Also across middle childhood, children begin to understand multiple emotions. Specifically, children develop the understanding that individuals can hold simultaneously multiple emotions, even those of opposite valence, directed to the same target (Harter, 1986; Harter & Buddin, 1987; Whitesell & Harter, 1989). At the beginning of middle childhood (age 7 years), children can report two same valence emotions (e.g., mad and sad) directed at different targets (e.g., their mother and their father). Shortly thereafter (age 8 years), children report two same valence emotions towards the same target, such as being mad and sad at their mother. Then around age 10 years, children report two opposite valence emotions, such as sad and happy, yet again each emotion is directed at different targets. By the end of middle childhood, children report two opposite valence

emotions directed at the same target; for example, children understand that they can be both mad and happy with their mother.

Little research has examined the link between children's understanding of multiple emotions and peer relations; however, a link between multiple emotional understanding and peer interactions is likely. Children who are able to recognize that people can hold multiple emotions at one time may also be more likely to understand that a situation may not be black and white. Children who are able to see the grey areas of subtle emotional expression may be more apt to see the grey areas of interpersonal violations. Specifically, children with sophisticated understandings of multiple emotions may be able to hold positive feelings toward their friends and yet also feel negative emotions associated with problematic interactions. With the understanding of multiple emotions, children may not see emotions in clear black and white terms; they may be able to see the distinction between being angry at a peer right now and being angry at a peer for the long-term. Therefore, children may adjust their reactions to and recognize the impact of interpersonal violations as their understanding of complex multiple emotional states changes. Specifically, children with complex multiple emotions understandings may be more likely to judge the violation from a relationship orientation, more likely to forgive, less likely to seek revenge, more likely to reason about forgiveness and revenge from a relationship perspective, and anticipate less negative impact post-violation.

Summary

The development of friendship understanding and emotional skills across middle childhood are likely to impact children's reactions to interpersonal violations. Theoretical framework (Selman, 1980) suggests that friendship understanding helps

children comprehend the complexities of interpersonal violations. In addition, emotional skills may highlight the need to overcome interpersonal debt to save the relationship (Harter, 1986; Harter & Buddin, 1987; Saarni & Weber, 1999; Whitesell & Harter, 1989). Thus, another goal of the present study was to examine children's reactions to interpersonal violations in relation to friendship understanding and emotional understanding (i.e., display rules, multiple emotions). In addition, the joint impact on children's reactions to interpersonal violations by friendship understanding and emotional skills must be considered in light of the theoretical link between the skills associated with friendship and emotions.

Crick and Dodge (1994) and, more recently, Lemerise and Arsenio (2000), stress the importance of considering a variety of aspects of emotions when investigating children's social cognitive processing of interactions because both emotions and thought are part of one social cognitive processing system. Emotions motivate behaviors and behaviors influence emotions; children may act aggressively because they are angry, on the other hand because they were the victims of aggression, children may become angry. Moreover, children enter interactions with past experiences and social cognitive understandings (e.g., friendship understanding), in which a variety of types of emotional aspects may be included (e.g., emotional display rules and multiple emotions). When interacting with a peer, children can use the experiences from previous interactions, their basic understanding of how interactions should proceed, and a set of expectations of socially correct behaviors, emotions, and thoughts. For example, children may use friendship understanding to help evaluate interactions and understand emotions based on the relationship qualities.

In addition, children may rely on their emotional understanding to help them comprehend the complexities of the impact of interactions on their friendships. Although just beginning to be addressed from a developmental perspective, the basic link between cognition and general emotional states is supported by research with adults-- mood can impact individuals' memories of events (for review see, Singer & Salovey, 1988), types of judgments made about situations (Forgas, 1995), and the use of cognitive strategies (for review see, Taylor, 1991). Given the likely association of friendship understanding and emotional understanding, it is not probable that these are independent predictors of children's reactions to interpersonal violations. The third goal of the present study was to examine friendship understanding and emotional skills as simultaneous predictors of reactions to hypothetical interpersonal violations, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities of interpersonal violations than examining either alone. It is likely that a greater proportion of variance in children's reactions to interpersonal violations and their impact on friendships would be accounted for when both variables are examined together.

The Present Study

Little empirical work has examined children's reasoning about interpersonal violations in general, and even less has examined the impact of friendship understanding and emotional skills on children's reactions to interpersonal violations. Therefore, the present study had three goals to examine: 1) children's understanding of friendship violations; 2) the role of friendship understanding and emotional skills in children's reactions to interpersonal violations; and 3) the joint and unique effects of friendship

understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions on children's reactions to, reasoning about, and evaluation of interpersonal violations across middle childhood.

To meet these goals, the present study assessed children's friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions, as well as children's reactions to hypothetical interpersonal violations. Because reasoning about interpersonal violations was of interest, elementary school children responded to six hypothetical vignettes to examine the predictions. Following each hypothetical vignette, children completed the situation from the described violation forward; were asked if their best friend's actions were okay or not okay and why their actions were okay or not okay (i.e., permissibility and justifications); about the willingness to overcome interpersonal debt (i.e., occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, and reasonings about overcoming), and about the negative impact of the violations on the friendship (i.e., the anticipated negative changes of friendship, their desire to still be friends, and their negative expectations of friends). Children's justifications were expected to be related to willingness to overcome. Specifically, reports of relationship justifications were expected to be positively related to the occurrence of forgiveness, negatively related to the occurrence of revenge, and positively related to relationship reasons about overcoming. Willingness to overcome was expected to be related to negative impact. Negative relations were expected between the occurrence of forgiveness and long-term negative impact and reasons about overcoming and long-term negative impact. Conversely, a positive relation was expected between the occurrence of revenge and long-term negative impact.

Differences in reaction to violations were expected to be partly a function of age related changes in social cognitive and emotional skills (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). Therefore, age was expected to be related to children's reactions to interpersonal violations and the impact on friendships. Specifically, with age, children were expected to report less permissibility of the violation, more relationship based justifications, more willingness to overcome (i.e., more occurrence of forgiveness, less occurrence of revenge, and more relationship based reasonings about overcoming), and report less negative impact (i.e., negative anticipated change in friendship, still want to be friends, and less negative expectations of friends). Age was further expected to be positively related to both friendship understanding and emotional skills. With age, children were expected to report more complex friendship understandings, indicated by their endorsement of qualities such as intimacy, trust, and loyalty. Also with age, children were expected to be able to increasingly acknowledge the possibility of multiple emotions and emotional display rules, as well as reason about the causes and consequences of each emotional skill.

Friendship understanding and emotional skills were also expected to be related to children's reactions to interpersonal violations. As children report more complex friendship understandings, they were expected to report less permissibility of the violation, more relationship based justifications, more willingness to overcome (i.e., more occurrence of forgiveness, less occurrence of revenge, more reasonings focused on the relationship), and to expect less negative impact (i.e., anticipate less negative changes within the friendship, still want to be friends, and to report less negative expectations of friends). In addition, as children report more complex emotional skills, they may be

better able to overcome interpersonal debts, such that they were expected to report more relationship justifications, more willingness to overcome (i.e., be more likely to forgive, less likely to seek revenge, more likely to reason based on the relationship), and to report less negative impact (i.e., to report fewer anticipated negative changes within the friendship, still want to be friends, and to indicate fewer negative expectations of friends following interpersonal violations).

Friendship understanding and emotional skills were also examined regarding their joint contribution to the explanation of reactions to interpersonal violations. Therefore, regression analyses were used to examine the amount of variance that is accounted for by simultaneous prediction. Further, the unique predictions by both friendship understanding and emotional skills were examined using regression. Although friendship understanding and emotional skills were expected to be related, they each were expected to contribute uniquely to the prediction of children's reactions to interpersonal violations.

Gender also was considered because there are theoretical and empirical reasons that indicate gender may moderate the relations between friendship understanding, emotional skills, and children's reactions to interpersonal violations by best friends. Maccoby (1990) asserts that because of socialization pressures, males and females develop different styles of friendship interaction and emotional expression. Also, Martin and Ruble (1996) suggest that, overall, females may be more relationship oriented and may be more sensitive to violations than males. In addition to theory, empirical work suggests that females, compared to males, prefer smaller groups (i.e., three or less) and focus activities on sharing personal information and emotions (for review see, Gottman & Parker, 1986). Thus, gender effects were anticipated in children's reactions to

interpersonal violations; specifically, females were expected to be more likely to view the violations as wrong, be more likely to forgive their friend, be more likely to reason from a relationship orientation, and anticipate more changes to the friendships than would males. In addition, females, compared to males, were expected to report more complex friendship understandings, reflecting a greater relationship orientation. However, no main effects of gender were predicted for emotional skills. For emotional display rules, research is inconsistent, with some studies finding no gender differences, other studies indicating that males out score females, and still other studies showing that females out score males (for review see, Saarni & Weber, 1999). For multiple emotions, no gender differences typically emerge (for review see, Harter, 1986). Moderating effects were anticipated because of females' tendency to prescribe to a relationship orientation (Martin & Ruble, 1996)—such that friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions were expected to predict reactions to violations (justification, willingness to overcome, and negative impact) better for females than for males.

Finally, perceived social competence also was examined. Theory (Burhmester, 1996) indicates that social competence may affect the way children interact within friendships. Children have skills, behaviors, and knowledge that they use in friendships, all of which they bring to social interactions. Friends bring to the situation their own agendas and needs that must be addressed. Past experience with social interactions in general and this friendship in particular indicate to the participants how their needs will be met and the basic social style of the interactions. Burhmester (1996) indicated that social competence was particularly important during early adolescence however, the foundation for and skills of social competence may start to influence friendships during

middle childhood as friendship understanding and emotional skills change. Thus, overall social competence was considered to examine whether children's reactions to violations are primarily a reflection of general social skills.

Given the lack of research pertaining to children's reactions to interpersonal violations, little is know about how children view, process, and reason about interpersonal violations within best friendships. Therefore the primary goal of the present study was to examine, in detail, children's reported reactions to interpersonal violations. Across middle childhood, children's friendship understanding and emotional skills were also examined in relation to children's reported reactions to hypothetical interpersonal violations. The joint and unique contributions of friendship understanding and emotional skills to the prediction of children's reactions to and long-term expectations of hypothetical interpersonal violations with a best friend were also examined. Gender was also considered as a moderating influence. To examine interpersonal violations, elementary children responded to hypothetical vignettes and completed measures of friendship understanding and emotional skills. Social desirability was also assessed because of the use of self-report measures and the relational nature of the questionnaires.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 105 school-aged children (M=9.00 years, SD=1.25, range=6.80-11.75 years) recruited from five local after-school programs in a metro area. There were 52 boys (M age=9.09 years, SD=1.27, range=7.20-11.25 years) and 53 girls (M age=8.93 years, SD=1.26, range=6.80-11.75 years). Age in months was used as a

continuous variable (35 children were 82-96 mos, 26 children were 97-110 mos, 28 children were 11-124 mos, and 16 children were 125-141 mos). Children were in grades 1-5 (1st grade=6, 2nd grade=36, 3rd grade=21, 4th grade=26, and 5th grade=11). Children were predominately Caucasian (78%), with the rest of the sample being comprised of African-Americans (2%), Hispanics (2%), American Indians (10%), and Asian-Americans (3%). A few participants (4%) identified themselves as other ethnic origins.

Procedure

Local after-school programs were contacted and institutional consent was obtained before recruiting parents. Parents were approached during pick up and/or drop off of children at approved locations. The basic premise of the study was explained to parents and permission to interview as well as audiotape their children was requested. After gaining parental approval, children were informed of their parents' consent and they too were asked to give assent for participation in the study and to audiotape the sessions.

Children participated individually in two measurement sessions on two separate days at the approved after-school program locations; each session lasted approximately one half hour. Sessions were conducted within sight of program staff but far enough away as to not be heard by staff and other children to help ensure confidentiality. Different trained research assistants conducted the two separate sessions to help keep the measures distinct and the research assistants blind to the full details of the study.

In one session, children completed a demographics form, a measure of social desirability, a measure of friendship understanding, two measures of emotional skills, (i.e., one for emotional display rules and one for multiple emotions), and a measure of

social competence. The set of questionnaires was read to the children by trained research assistants, who then circled the answers indicated by the children. The six questionnaires were counterbalanced within the first session to help protect against order effects. A separate session, conducted by different trained research assistants on a different day, assessed children's reactions to and expectations of hypothetical interpersonal violations by best friends. The hypothetical interpersonal violation vignettes were audio taped and later transcribed by research assistants to aid in coding of data. Upon completion of both sessions, children were partially compensated with a "goody bag," which included two pencils, one eraser, and several other small assorted toys (e.g., poppers, bouncy balls, pencil toppers). Children selected the color of the goody bag and the contents of their bags to help ensure the children's satisfaction with the pencils, erasers, and toys.

Measures

Hypothetical Interpersonal Violations

Children were read and asked to respond to six vignettes depicting hypothetical interpersonal violations by a best friend. Because children spend a majority of time with same gender friends and their best friends tend to also be same gender during middle childhood (Maccoby, 1990), the gender of the best friend was made consistent with the participant's gender.

As an introduction to the procedure, children were told,

> "We are going to create some stories about times when you and your best friend are together. I will start the stories and you will finish them. Tell me about what would happen between you and your best friend and then I will ask you some questions about the story we made. Do you understand?"

Then children were instructed to, “think of a boy/girl who is your best friend. Do you have a best friend in mind? Don’t tell me who it is, but think of this person as your best friend in the stories.” Before the start of each vignette, children were reminded, “Now thinking of your best friend, let’s make a story, remember I’ll start the story and you can finish it. Ready?”

To keep children engaged in the vignettes, a felt board and story props were used. When thinking of their best friend, children used blank felt figures to construct themselves and their best friend. The blank figure had no facial features so as not to display emotion, which may have influenced reactions to or emotions during the vignettes. Children selected a colored shirt for them and their best friend and then chose hair that best represented them and their best friend. While the children were constructing the characters, research assistants arranged the props on the felt board for the hypothetical vignettes. After completing each hypothetical vignette, children chose one prize to put in their “goodie bag.” By segmenting the vignettes with the selection of a prize, the break between vignettes helped participants treat the vignettes as separate incidents. Also to help separate the incidents as occurring on different days, children were asked at the beginning of each vignette to choose different colored shirts for themselves and their same best friend.

The six vignettes, presented in random order (complete measures can be found in Appendix A) contained two lie vignettes, two blame stories, and two secret stories, which were created based on types of violations indicated in past research (Jones, Cohn, & Miller, 1991; Rotenberg, 1991). In the lie vignettes, the participant asked the best friend about an event he/she witnessed the best friend doing but when confronted, the best

friend said it did not happen. The blame vignettes involved times when the best friend accidentally caused a disruption in a group setting and when confronted by an adult, blamed the participant for the disruption. The two secret vignettes concerned times when the participant asked the best friend not to tell a benign statement, but the best friend told peers anyway. An example secret vignette is:

> "You and your best friend are at a birthday party for a kid you know from school. Your best friend asks you, 'What did you get him/her for his/her birthday?' You say, 'I'll tell you if you promise not to tell anyone.' Your best friend says, 'Okay, I won't tell. What's the present?' You say, 'I got him/her a soccer ball just like he/she asked for, but don't tell.' 'I won't,' your best friend says. When it came time for the birthday boy/girl to open your present, your best friend tells him/her, 'I know what that is, it's a soccer ball.'"

After each vignette, children were asked to complete the story (i.e., "What would happen next?" and "Why would that happen?") to aid in coding. Children's judgments of the violations were assessed with questions pertaining to permissibility and justifications of the violations. To assess the willingness to overcome interpersonal debt, the forgiveness and revenge questions were used. A general definition of both forgiveness and revenge was included in the question to help ensure that all children were using the term similarly. Finally, the long-term impact of violations on children's friendships was assessed with anticipated negative change, expectations of friends, and desire to still be friends. Specifically, children answered several questions: 1) "Is that okay or not okay? Why or why not?" (permissibility and justifications, respectively); 2) "Sometimes kids forgive their best friend, you know get over it, and sometimes they don't. Is this one of the times you would forgive your best friend? Why or why not?" and "Sometimes kids want to get back at their best friend, you know get revenge, and sometimes they don't. Is this one of the time you would want to get back at your best friend? Why or why not? "

(occurrence and reasoning about forgiveness and occurrence and reasoning about revenge, respectively); 3) "Sometimes friendships change and sometimes they don't. Is this one of the times when your friendship would get worse? Why or why not? How much worse would your friendship be?" (anticipated negative change); 4) "Do you think your best friend would tell your secrets/blame you for things/lie to you again in the future? Why or why not? How often would you expect to your friend to _____ in the future? (negative expectations of friends); and 5) "Would you still want to be friends with him/her? How much? (desire to still be friends). Children rated the anticipated negative change, negative expectations of friends, and desire to still be friends (reversed for analysis) questions using a 5 point scale: 0=No, 1=Tiny Bit, 2=Kind Of, 3=A Lot, and 4=A Whole Lot.

To ensure the vignettes and questions were presented similarly, research assistants went though extensive training prior to data collection. Research assistants were trained to maintain a consistent volume, read the vignettes with the same intensity and emphasis, and to express no emotion during the sessions. Before beginning data collection, research assistants practiced the vignettes with children whose sessions were not used in data analyses.

Data Coding of Hypothetical Vignettes

Hypothetical vignettes were audio-taped and transcribed for coding. All scaled data coding of hypothetical vignettes (i.e., justifications, reasoning about forgiveness/revenge) was conducted by different trained research assistants using typed transcriptions of the sessions. To help ensure reliable coding, a random sample of the data was coded by a second trained research assistant. In the case of disagreement in

coding, a third trained research assistant coded the same information to settle the dispute in coding. The remainder of the questions was transferred into numerical data and all were checked for accuracy. For data analyses, scores were averaged across all six vignettes. Examples of answers for each coded question can be found in Table 1.

View of violations. Based on previous research (Smetana, Killen, & Turiel, 1991), children's responses to the permissibility question "Was that okay or not okay?" were coded categorically. To assess if the violations were acceptable or not acceptable behaviors, children answered yes (1) or no (0). Codes were collapsed across all six vignettes, creating proportion scores; the total number of no (0) divided by the total number of stories completed. Therefore, higher proportion scores for permissibility reflect that children more often indicated the violations as unacceptable.

Also from "Is that okay or not okay? Why or why not?" trained research assistants coded the justification of permissibility adapted from Smetana, Killen, and Turiel (1991). Consistent with previous research (Kohlberg, 1984), regardless of viewing the situations as okay or not okay, all justifications were coded using a 3 point scale. Justifications coded as a 1 reflected personal reasoning, in which children indicated reasons that are based on personal choice, involved control over behavior, or were selfish in nature (e.g., "Because I wanted it to be a surprise for the kid. Because I wanted him to find out for himself and not someone to tell him." and "Because I said, 'don't tell him,' and he promised and he told the birthday boy"). Justifications coded as a 3 reflected relationship reasoning in which children indicated a violation of relationship norms or focused on the impact of the violations on the relationship (e.g., "Because if he keeps telling secrets then he isn't going to have any friends" and "Because she is my best friend.") To gain

information about children's reasoning about events, all responses were collapsed across reports of the event as okay or not okay, as is common procedure when examining children's reasonings about a situation or behavior. Scores were then collapsed across vignettes with higher scores of justifications reflecting greater relationship reasoning about the violations. Coding overlapped for roughly 78% of participants with a high reliability ($r(81)=.87$. $p<.01$).

Willingness to overcome violations. To assess the occurrence of forgiveness, children were asked if they would forgive the other child. If children answered no, answers were coded as 0, however, if answered yes, answers were coded as 1. Using the scores for all six vignettes, proportion scores were created by dividing the occurrence of forgiveness by the number of possible times to forgive. Higher proportion scores indicate children reported the occurrence of forgiveness more often.

Children were asked whether they would seek revenge on the other child. Categorical coding was also used to indicate children's reported occurrence of revenge. If children answered yes they would seek revenge, the responses were coded as a 1; if children answered no, the responses were coded as a 0. Proportion scores for occurrence of revenge were created by dividing the number of times children reported the occurrence of revenge across the vignettes divided by the number of completed vignettes. Therefore, higher proportion scores indicate children would seek revenge more often.

To assess children's reasoning about forgiveness and revenge, trained research assistants coded answers to the "why" or "why not" segment of the forgiveness and revenge questions using a 1-5 scale adapted from Rotenberg (1991). Therefore, two separate variables were created: one reflecting reasoning about forgiveness and another

reflecting reasoning about revenge. Responses coded as a 1, "self focus," reflected reasoning in which forgiveness or revenge focused on the violation's impact on the victim and did not consider contextual reasons for the offender's actions (e.g., in response to why you would forgive "He hurt my feelings but I'll feel better." and in response to why would you seek revenge "I would get back at him, because it's not nice to take other people's things and touch other people's property.") In contrast, responses coded as a 5, "relationship focus" included reasons for forgiveness or revenge that were focused on balancing the power in the friendship, focused on maintaining the friendship, and considered the contextual influences on the offender's actions (e.g., in response to why would you forgive your friend, "Because she's my best friend, you always forgive your best friend" and in response to why would you seek revenge, "We're friends and we don't want to be enemies"). Thus, lower scores reflected reasoning that was self-focused, either forgiving or seeking revenge to gain something for the victim or to punish the offender. Conversely, higher scores suggested reasoning that was focused on saving the relationship with victims seeing the need to balance the friendship and/or return to the status before the violation occurred. Scores were averaged across all vignettes; higher scores indicate that children would forgive or seek revenge in an attempt to balance the power within the friendship and lower scores reflect children would forgive or seek revenge for self-serving reasons. Research assistants overlapped on 66% of participants vignettes with a relatively high reliability score ($r(81)= .95$, $p<.01$). Consistent with the goal literature (Murphy & Eisenberg, 1996; Whitesell & Harter, 1996) in which reasons for various reactions were combined regardless of the type, children's reasons were averaged across reactions, specifically reasoning about forgiveness and reasoning about

revenge, (r(104)= .61, p<.01), to form a reasoning about willingness to overcome variable that was used in all analyses.

Negative impact of violations. Children's responses to the three questions used to assess children's expectations regarding the long-term negative impact (i.e., anticipated negative change, negative expectations of friends, desire to still be friends) were significantly intercorrelated (rs(104) range from .25 to .57, all ps<.01). The desire to still be friends variable was reversed coded to reflect the amount of negative impact. Then, responses to the three questions were averaged to form a long-term negative impact variable that was used in all analyses.

Demographics and Social Desirability

Children were asked to complete a demographics form to gain information about their age, grade level, gender, and ethnicity. In addition, children completed a shortened version of a social desirability scale (Crandall, Crandall, & Katkovsky, 1965). This 14-item measure assessed children's presentation of the self. Example questions are "Do you always listen to your parents?" and "Have you ever felt like staying home and not going to school, even though you were not sick?" Children answered either yes or no; research assistants circled the corresponding answer. Children were given a 1 for each socially desirable answer endorsed and then scores were averaged to create a total score for social desirability (α=.67 for 14 items) Complete measures of both the demographics information and social desirability can be found in Appendix B.

Social Competence

A measure of social competence adapted from Harter's (1979) Perceived Competence Scale for Children was used to assess children's perception of their own

social skills with peers. Twelve statements were read to children by trained research assistants. Children selected between two sets of children ("some kids like these" and "other kids like these). One set of children are described as socially competent and the second set of children are described as not socially competent. Example statements are "Some kids find it hard to make friends BUT other kids find it easy to make friends" and "Some kids often get angry at other kids BUT other kids don't often get angry at other kids." After choosing the group of children reflected in the statement most similar to them, children rated if they were "really like these kids" or "kind of like these kids." Answers to statements were coded from 1-4 ranging from the least socially competent to most socially competent. Scores were averaged across all 12 questions to form an overall score of social competence. Higher scores indicate that children perceive themselves as more socially competent. Reliability coefficients were relatively high (α=.68 for 12 items). A complete measure can be found in Appendix C.

Friendship Understanding

A questionnaire adapted from previous research (Furman & Bierman, 1984) assessed children's understanding of friendship qualities. The items are based on 5 main domains, both behavioral and dispositional subscales, of friendship qualities identified by researchers, including support, intimacy, association, similarity, and affection, for a total of 10 subscales (Furman & Bierman, 1984). Items on the questionnaire measured the importance of specific friendship characteristics to children (e.g., "How important is it for friends to help each other do things?" Behavioral Support; "How important is it for friends to be there when you need help?" Dispositional Support).

Children rated all 43 items on a 5-point Likert scale (the complete measure can be found in Appendix D). These 43 items are divided across the 5 main domains with questions addressing both behavioral and dispositional qualities. An additional 5 items were filler items to assess for children's positive bias when using the Likert scale. An example filler item is "How important is it for friends to sing at the same time?" To help children understand the Likert scale, a bar representing each of the five points was used. Children pointed to the size of the bar that best represents their rating of importance, with 0=not important, 1=a tiny bit important, 2=kind of important, 3=a lot important, and 4=a whole lot important. Reliability coefficients were high (α=0.91) for all 43 items. The two main subscales, Behavior and Disposition, were also high (α=.86, 18 items, and α=.81, 20 items, respectively). The reliability coefficients for the five qualities scales were also high for each scale: support (α=.71, 8 items), association (α=.75, 8 items), affection (α=.69, 6 items), similarity (α=.75, 8 items) and intimacy (α=.72, 8 items). Scores were averaged across all questions to gain a measure of overall friendship understanding, across the Behavioral questions (behavioral friendship understanding), across the Dispositional questions (dispositional friendship understanding), and across all five qualities (support, intimacy, association, affection, and similarity). Higher overall scores indicate a more complex friendship understanding.

Emotional Skills

Children completed two measures about emotional skills. Children were asked about their understanding of display rules (Cole, 1986; Saarni, 1984; Saarni & Weber, 1999) and of simultaneously experiencing multiple emotions (Harter & Buddin, 1987; Whitesell & Harter, 1989).

Display Rules

The Social Emotions Questionnaire (SEQ; Underwood, 1997) assessed children's understanding and application of display rules (complete measure can be found in Appendix E). The SEQ consists of 6 vignettes depicting situations in which positive and negative emotions are likely to be induced. Those emotions in the situations are happy, proud, sad, mad, disappointed, and embarrassed. The SEQ begins and ends with positive emotions; it always starts with happy and ends with proud. For each situation, children are asked to imagine themselves in the scenario and feeling the designated emotion.

After each vignette is read, children are asked, "You feel (insert story appropriate emotion). What would you do?" and to choose one of four possible display behaviors. Each possible display behavior represents a point on a continuum ranging from most emotionally expressive (e.g., "smile really big and yell 'alright!'") to most emotionally dissembling (e.g., "frown and say, 'it's not really that big of a deal.'"). The behavioral choice was given a score to represent the amount of emotional display rules used; 1=showing strong emotion, 2= showing muted emotion, 3=showing no emotion (e.g., "try to keep a calm face and say nothing"), and 4=showing another more acceptable emotion. A schematic drawing of a face with each emotion was used to help children select their display behavior choice.

In addition to the display behavior selection, children are asked, "Ok, imagine that other kids are watching, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?" to assess children's understanding of social consequences of their display behavior choice. Children used a 5-point Likert scale: 0=not at all to 4=a whole a lot. The same bar representation used in the friendship questionnaire was used to assist

children with their ratings. Scores from both questions (i.e., display behavior selection and social consequence) were combined into one score and averaged across all six emotions, with higher scores representing more complex understanding of emotional display rules. Again, alpha coefficients were relatively high (α=.62, for all 12 items).

Multiple Emotions

Children's understanding of multiple emotions was assessed using an established set of questions developed by Harter and colleagues (Harter, 1986; Harter & Buddin, 1987; Whitesell & Hater, 1989). First, children were given a set of 15 index cards each with one emotion word and face listed (i.e., mad, sad, scared, proud, shame, happy, glad, excited, worried, guilty, embarrassed, just okay, surprised, grateful, and let down). Children were asked to sort each of these emotions into one of two possible piles; one pile reflected "good feelings" (positive emotions) and one pile reflected "bad feelings" (negative emotions). Research assistants used a checklist to record the piles created by children. After the sorting of the cards into piles, children were told, "Now I want you to think about feelings and what makes people feel that way. Then, we will talk about times when kids feel different things. Do you understand?" This statement was used to start children thinking about emotions in general to lead into more specific contexts in which multiple emotions could be elicited.

While thinking about the emotion words they just sorted, children were asked about each of the four possible combinations of multiple emotion understandings. For combination A (same valence/different targets), children selected two emotions from the same pile that they think they could feel at the very same time and were asked, "Tell me about a time when you felt ___ (first emotion) at one thing and at the very same time, felt

___ (second emotion) at a different thing." For combination B (same valence/same target), children were told, "Using the same piles we made before, choose two emotions from the same pile that you think you could feel at the very same time." Children were then instructed, "Tell me one thing that made you feel ___ and ___ (both emotions selected) at the very same time." For combination C (different valence/different target), children selected two emotions, one from each pile, and were told, "Tell me about a time you felt ___ at one thing and at the very same time, you felt ____ at a different thing." For combination D (different valence/same targets), children were asked to again choose one emotion from each sorted pile and were instructed, "Tell me about one thing that made you feel __ and ___ at the very same thing."

Several aids were used to help children describe multiple emotions (complete measure and aids can be found in Appendix F). First, the same emotion cards that were sorted into the "good feelings" and "bad feelings" piles served to assist children in selecting either same or different valence emotions. Second, after selecting two emotions of appropriate valence, children were asked to place those emotion cards on a schematic representation indicating the chosen emotions were directed toward the same target or toward different targets. For same target combinations, the drawing included two squares to place the emotion cards in and then an arrow from each square pointed to one circle (the target). For different target combinations, the drawing included two squares, again to place the emotion cards, and then an arrow pointed at two different circles (the two targets). This portion of the session was audio-taped and later transcribed for coding.

Data coding. Based on the established coding system used by Harter and colleagues (Hater, 1986; Harter & Buddin, 1987; Whitesell & Harter, 1989), children's

responses to the multiple emotions interview were coded into one of 5 developmental categories. For each combination, children were scored a pass/fail. To be recorded as passing each combination, children had to successfully endorse four aspects of multiple emotions. First, children needed to select two emotions that clearly reflected the same or different valence. Second, for same target combinations (A and D), children had to describe an event that clearly has one object, person, event or represents one situation. However, for the different valence combinations (B and C), children had to describe an event with different persons, objects, events, or different elements of a situation. Third, the descriptions provided had to be plausible examples of the emotion combination that children might feel. Fourth, the emotions had to be described simultaneously, not in temporal order. The sequence also could not show faulty logic and children could not deny the emotions can occur simultaneously.

After coding the four combinations as pass/fail, trained research assistants placed each child into one of five developmental categories (Harter & Buddin, 1987). Each multiple emotions level represents the number of combinations successfully passed; Level 0=did not pass any of the four combinations, Level 1= passed only combination A, Level 2=passed combination A and B, Level 3=passed combination A, B, and C, Level 4=passed all four combinations. All multiple emotion coding was checked by a second trained research assistant. Inter-rater reliability for coding of multiple emotions for an overlap of 100% of participants was perfect; research assistants did not disagree about the coding of multiple emotions.

RESULTS

The present study had three primary goals to examine: 1) children's understanding of friendship violations; 2) the role of friendship understanding and emotional skills in children's reactions to interpersonal violations; and 3) the joint and unique effects of friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions on children's reactions to, reasoning about, and evaluation of interpersonal violations across middle childhood; gender as a moderator of these effects also was examined. Means and standard deviations for all variables are presented in Table 2.

Goal One: Children's Understanding of Friendship Violations

Based on goal 1 of the study, the first step was to determine if, in fact, children viewed the hypothetical violations as wrong (permissibility), even across story types. Second, story effects were examined to determine if the violation issue influenced children's responses. Third, using zero-order correlations, possible relations between social desirability and social competence with children's reactions to interpersonal violations were examined for the need to control for effects in further analyses. Fourth, gender differences were examined using a series of *t*-tests and relations with age were examined with zero-order correlations. Finally, links between composite criterion variables were examined using both zero-order correlations and regression analyses to determine if negative impact was predicted by both justifications and willingness to overcome violations.

Permissibility and Story Effects

Permissibility responses were used to examine if children viewed the hypothetical vignettes as violations in friendship norms. In general, children did view the best friends'

behavior in the violations as wrong (see Table 2). Thus, vignettes seemed to have been successful at depicting friendship violations.

To determine if children responded similarly across the different types of violations depicted in the vignettes (i.e., blame, secret, lie) and to examine the validity of the created composites, a series of 3 (Type of violations) X 2 (Gender) repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted separately for justifications, the willingness to overcome variables (i.e., occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasoning about overcoming), and negative impact. No main effects of gender or interaction effects of gender by type of violation were found. In addition, no story effects for composite criterion variables were found indicating that for the composite variables, children did not view differences between the three types of stories. Thus, the responses to the lie, blame, and secret vignettes were included in all the composite variables.

Relations with Social Desirability and Social Competence

To determine if children primarily were responding to the hypothetical vignettes in socially expected ways, zero-order correlations were conducted with justifications, the willingness to overcome variables (i.e., occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasoning about overcoming), and negative impact (see Table 3). None of the variables were related to social desirability.

To determine if general social competence skills could be affecting children's reactions to interpersonal violations, the possible links between social competence and children's reactions to interpersonal violations were examined with zero-order correlations (see Table 3). Social competence was significantly related to only one of the criterion variables, occurrence of revenge.

Relations with Age

Children's reactions to hypothetical interpersonal violations were examined for a relationship with age to determine a possible developmental component (see Table 3). Zero-order correlations between age and reactions to hypothetical interpersonal violations indicated a significant, positive relationship between justifications and age, as was anticipated. Thus, across middle childhood, children reported higher levels of relationship justifications for why the interpersonal violations were okay or not okay. However, contrary to expectations, age was not significantly related to the other criterion variables (occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasonings about overcoming, negative impact).

Gender Differences

Previous research would suggest that boys and girls may react differently to interpersonal violations (Maccoby, 1990). However, *t*-tests revealed that boys and girls responded to the hypothetical interpersonal violations in a similar manner, *t*s (103)= .10, -.02, -.37, .57, and -1.02, *ns* for justifications, occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasonings, and negative impact, respectively.

Interrelations Among Children's Reactions

To gain further insight into children's reactions to interpersonal violations, the interrelations of criterion variables were investigated using zero-order correlations (see Table 4). A significant positive correlation was revealed between occurrence of forgiveness and reasoning about overcoming violations, as well as a negative correlation between occurrence of forgiveness and negative impact. Occurrence of revenge was negatively related to reasoning about overcoming violations and positively related to

negative impact. Also, reasoning about overcoming violations was negatively related to negative impact.

Regression analyses were used to determine if children's willingness to overcome predicted their assessment of long-term negative impact. The occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, and reasonings about overcoming violations were entered on step one to predict negative impact. Results showed that all three variables combined significantly predicted negative impact. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that each provided unique variance to the prediction of negative impact (see Table 6). Specifically, as occurrence of forgiveness increased and children's reasonings about overcoming violations showed more relationship focus, children expected less long-term negative impact. In addition, as the occurrence of revenge increased, children expected more negative impact. Thus, children's willingness to overcome violations does predict the anticipated long-term negative impact. As children focus more on saving the relationship by forgiving their best friend and reasoning about the violation with a relationship focus, they expect less negative impact from the interpersonal violations. Interestingly, as children report an increased occurrence of revenge, they too expect increased negative impact.

The regression analysis shows that the occurrence and reasons behind forgiveness and revenge each uniquely add to the prediction of negative impact. Thus, the simple occurrence of forgiveness or revenge does not fully explain the expected negative outcome. The reasoning behind the occurrence is essential for a more complete understanding of children's expectations of negative impact post-violation. Both are important indicators of children's reactions to interpersonal violations.

Summary

Overall, composite criterion variables were not significantly related to children's reports of social desirability and social competence. Contrary to hypotheses, males and females showed no significant differences in their reactions to interpersonal violations. In addition, results show a relationship between children's willingness to overcome violations and the anticipation of long-term negative impact. Consistent with expectations, children who reported more willingness to overcome violations also reported less negative impact to their best friendships.

Goal Two: Friendship Understanding and Emotional Skills in Relation to Children's Reactions to Interpersonal Violations

Zero-order correlations were used to examine the relations of social desirability and social competence with age, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions, as well as between the predictors (i.e., age, friendship understanding, multiple emotions, and emotional display rules). Gender differences also were examined with *t*-tests. Finally, the three predictors were examined in relation to the three categories of criterion variables: justifications, willingness to overcome (i.e., occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, and reasonings about overcoming), and negative impact.

Relations with Social Desirability and Social Competence

To determine if children primarily were responding to the friendship understanding and emotional skills measures in socially expected ways, zero-order correlations were conducted between social desirability and age, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions (see Table 5). One

significant relationship emerged between social desirability and age. Specifically, social desirability was significantly, negatively related to age. Because of the lack of relationships with social desirability, social desirability was not considered further.

Social competence may have an impact on general social cognitive skills such as friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions. To determine if social competence could be partially affecting the relationship between specific skills and children's reactions to interpersonal violations, the possible links between social competence and the specific social cognitive skills were examined using zero-order correlations (see Table 5). Social competence was not significantly related to any of the predictor variables: age, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, or multiple emotions. Because of the lack of relationships between social competence and either the predictor or composite criterion variables, social competence was not considered further.[1]

Relations of Age to Friendship Understanding and Emotional Skills

Because the social cognitive skills assessed in the present study develop across middle childhood, the relationships between age and friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions, were assessed using zero-order correlations. Age was expected to be positively related to friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions (See Table 5). Although expected, age was not significantly, positively related to either friendship understanding or emotional display rules. However, as anticipated, age was significantly and positively related to children's multiple emotions understanding. With age, children reported higher levels of multiple emotions. Thus, across middle childhood, children's understanding of multiple emotions

[1] Initial regression analyses were run controlling for both social desirability and social competence, but the findings were not influenced by their inclusion.

becomes more advanced such that with age children are able to recognize that they may feel two opposite valence emotions directed at one target.

Gender Differences

Previous research would suggest that boys and girls may report different levels of social cognitive skills (Maccoby, 1990). Therefore, gender differences were examined in social desirability, social competence, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions with a series of *t*-tests. The only gender difference that emerged was for social competence, $t(103) = -3.45$, $p < .01$. Specifically, girls reported themselves as more socially competent than did boys (see Table 2 for *M* and *SD*). To examine possible moderating effects, gender was included in subsequent regression analyses.

Relations of Friendship Understanding to Reactions to Violations

Associations were anticipated between friendship understanding and the criterion variables (see Table 3). Specifically, friendship understanding was expected to be positively related to justification, as well as to willingness to overcome and negatively related to negative impact. Using zero-order correlations, the composite variables of justification, willingness to overcome (i.e., occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, and reasonings about overcoming), and negative impact were examined in relation to friendship understanding. Results indicated partial support for these expectations and showed that with increased complexity of friendship understanding, children reported more occurrence of forgiveness and less negative impact. Thus, with increased understanding of friendship qualities, children focus more on saving the friendship by forgiving and anticipate less long-term negative impact.

Relations of Emotional Skills to Reactions to Violations

Positive correlations were expected between emotional display rules, multiple emotions and the composite criterions variables (justification, occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasonings about overcoming, and negative impact). However, emotional display rules and multiple emotion understanding did not significantly relate to any of the composite variables. Emotional display was marginally related to children's reasonings about overcoming violations and was included in the regressions. Because of the lack of any findings with multiple emotions, that predictor was not included in the regression analyses.

Interrelations among Friendship Understanding, Emotional Display Rules, and Multiple Emotions

Because friendship understanding and emotional skills are both social cognitive skills and were expected to be aspects of the same social cognitive system used in social interactions, zero-order correlations were used to determine the relationship between friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions. No significant correlations were found (see Table 5). Contrary to expectations, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions appear to be separate components.

Summary

Results for the second goal showed some support for hypotheses. Specifically, age was significantly and positively related to children's justifications and level of multiple emotions understanding. Across middle childhood, children reported more relationship based justifications and higher levels of multiple emotions understanding.

Friendship understanding was positively related to children's reported occurrences of forgiveness and negatively related to their anticipated long-term negative impact. Counter to expectations, no other significant relationships were found.

Goal Three: Joint and Unique Effects of Friendship Understanding and Emotional Skills on Children's Reactions to Interpersonal Violations

To examine the joint and unique prediction of the vignette variables (i.e., justifications, occurrence of forgiveness, occurrence of revenge, reasons for willingness to overcome, and negative impact) by friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and age, regression models were computed.[2] However, because friendship understanding, emotional display rules and age were not significantly inter-correlated and therefore do not share variance, and because more than one of the predictor variables rarely was related to a given vignette variable, conclusions from the regression analyses were similar to those from the zero-order correlations. Thus, the discussion of regression analyses will be brief. Friendship understanding and emotional display rules were entered into the on first step and age was entered on the second step. Results of all regression analyses are presented in Table 6.

Joint and Unique Prediction of Children's Reactions

Justifications

Friendship understanding and emotional display rules neither jointly nor uniquely predicted children's justifications of interpersonal violations on step 1. On step 2, age was a significant unique predictor. Consistent with predictions, results indicate that with

[2] Although multiple emotions was not related to any variables, regression analyses were initially run including multiple emotions. However, including, multiple emotions in the regression models did not influence the results. So for simplicity and parsimony, multiple emotions was excluded in the final analyses.

age, children focus more on the initial impact on the relationship than the initial impact on the self.

Willingness to overcome

The occurrence of forgiveness was significantly predicted jointly by friendship understanding and emotional display rules, but only friendship understanding contributed unique variance to prediction. Age did not significantly add to prediction of occurrence of forgiveness on step 2.

For the occurrence of revenge, no significant predictions by friendship understanding, emotional display rules, or age were obtained on either step. No support for the expected increased occurrence of revenge was found.

In addition, children's reasonings about overcoming violations were significantly jointly predicted on the first step. However, neither was a significant unique predictor.

Negative Impact

Children's assessment of long-term negative impact was significantly predicted on both steps. Specifically, on step 1, friendship understanding and emotional display rules jointly predicted children's expectations of the negative impact. Moreover, friendship understanding predicted unique variance in negative impact and the unique prediction from emotional display rules was marginal. Thus, with increased complexity of friendship understanding and emotional display rules children expected less long-term negative impact on their friendships. However, the addition of age as a predictor on the second step did not add to prediction.

Moderating Effects of Gender

To examine possible moderating effects of gender, separate regressions were run for each social cognitive predictor variable (i.e., friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions). Specifically, the main effects of gender and the designated social cognitive skill were entered on the first step and the possible interaction was entered on the second step. It was anticipated that gender may moderate the relationship between friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and the three composite criterion variables. Each predictor was examined separately with gender in regression analyses to examine just the 2-way interactions between gender and each of the three predictors. However, no significant interactions emerged between gender, friendship understanding, emotional display rules, and multiple emotions and therefore, interaction effects will not be discussed further (see Table 7).

Summary

Overall, the regression analyses indicate some support for hypotheses. Social cognitive skills of friendship understanding and emotional display rules do seem to contribute to the understanding of children's reactions to interpersonal violations by best friends. Because friendship understanding and emotional display rules shared no variance in the present study, each uniquely predicted some aspects of children's reactions.

DISCUSSION

Reactions to interpersonal violations have rarely been studied from a developmental perspective, therefore very little is known about how children respond to violations by their friends. Of particular interest were children's expectations and

reasonings about violations by best friends. This is one of the first studies to examine children's reasonings and meanings of interpersonal violations within friendships. In addition to the main goal of understanding the inner workings of children's hypothetical interpersonal violations, the impact of social cognitive skills (friendship understanding and emotional skills) on subsequent reactions to violations were examined. To learn more about interpersonal violations, children were read hypothetical vignettes about times when their best friend violated friendship expectations (i.e., lied, blamed, revealed a secret). Then, children were asked about their reactions to the violations, specifically their immediate assessment of events, their perception of the short-term impact, and their expectations of long-term negative impact. The present study was a first step in understanding interpersonal violations and children's interpretations and expectations surrounding violations by best friends. Findings provide evidence that children do understand the necessity of overcoming violations, as well as the impact violations can have on friendship; children also may rely on particular social cognitive skills when overcoming violations.

Children's Reactions to Interpersonal Violations

Following a social information processing model (Crick & Dodge, 1994), children must encode, interpret, and select strategies and behaviors during social interactions. When confronted with interpersonal violations, children must assess the immediate events in the interactions and select responses. With each additional behavior selection, social interactions change and new strategies and goals must be selected. Thus, children must continuously adapt their reactions to the expected changes in social interactions during interpersonal violations. A feedback loop is created in which thoughts and

behaviors affect each other. Immediate reactions (e.g., justifications) would affect the short-term reasonings (e.g., willingness to overcome) and strategies that would, in turn, affect the long-term expectations post-violation (e.g., negative impact), thus, creating a complex interwoven situation. However, the direction of causality may not be as linear as social information processing models (Crick & Dodge, 1994) would suggest, such that the anticipation of future violations may influence children's decision to forgive or seek revenge. In addition, if children feel their friendship has experienced irreparable harm, they may not forgive their friend because they may have already chosen to dissolve the relationship. Finally, the desire to still be the offender's friend may increase the likelihood that children would forgive their friends. Thus, the sequencing of reactions is a complicate social cognitive process.

Nonetheless, before children can select appropriate behaviors, they must first recognize when interpersonal violations have occurred. Results from the present study indicate that children are able to identify violations of telling secrets, lying, and blaming their friends for events. Consistent with previous research, children are able to recognize when other people have hurt them or violated their expectations (Wainryb, Brehl, & Matwin, 2005). Moreover, in the present study, results indicated that children viewed the secret, lie, and blame stories as being comparable and responded similarly to each type of violation. Previous experience with conflict and moral transgressions may help children to view interpersonal violations as wrong and to understand that the actions of their best friends are not something that should occur within friendships. Elementary school children do have expectations of secrecy, trust, and truth in their relationships, especially their friendships (Rotenberg, 1991; Watson & Valtin, 1997a; Watson & Valtin, 1997b).

In addition, with age, children were more likely to focus on relationship reasons for why the violations were wrong. This pattern is consistent with research on children's understanding of moral transgression (Wainryb, Brehl, & Matwin, 2005). Children's moral understanding develops from more concrete, self focus in early childhood to a more complex understanding of fairness in middle childhood (Smetana, 2006). By the end of middle childhood, children can apply moral concepts to both straightforward conflicts (e.g., hitting, teasing) and complex moral transgressions (e.g., social conventions, personal choice).

The interrelations among children's reactions to interpersonal violations were also examined using both correlation and regression analyses. Alterations of children's reactions to interpersonal violations may occur at any point during interactions; every selection affects later interactions and the anticipation of future events and interactions. So a continuous feedback loop is created with every response influencing later responses. Children must select and modify behavioral as well as social cognitive reactions to deal with the changing situation (Troop-Gordon & Asher, 2005). Previous research suggests that when social cognitive reactions are selected they impact the later selection of new strategies and the processing of new information (Chung & Asher, 1996, Crick & Dodge, 1994, Renshaw & Asher, 1983). Thus, children's reactions within the violation were expected to be related.

Children's reported occurrence of forgiveness was positively correlated with children's reasoning about overcoming. Specifically, children who tended to forgive their friend tended to focus on the relationship when reasoning about overcoming. Laursen and Collins (1994) suggest that children may use forgiveness as a tool to balance

the friendship and therefore save the relationship. Children may see forgiving their friend as a positive step in the process of resolving the conflict and moving past the violation. Although there has been theorizing about children's use of forgiveness, the present study is among the first to provide empirical evidence.

Laursen and Collins (1994) have theorized that children might also use revenge to reacquire some of the lost status and power within a relationship. Revenge may not be a negative act used to gain an upper-hand but rather victims of violations could use revenge to level the field. However, current findings indicate that children use revenge to obtain selfish outcomes or goals. Specifically, the occurrence of revenge was negatively related to reasoning about overcoming, such that children who were more likely to report the occurrence of revenge gave less relationship based reasons for willingness to overcome. This finding is contradictory to Laursen and Collins (1994) idea for the use of revenge suggesting that children may use revenge to level the relationship. Typically during middle childhood, children have been taught by parents and teachers that getting back at children is wrong and that they should work out problems using words (Eisenberg & Murphy, 1995). Indeed, children do seem to have some understanding that nice friends do not intentionally hurt another friend and that revenge may be viewed as a selfish act only used to obtain the upper hand in friendships (Rotenberg, 1991) rather than a potential relationship leveler. Laursen and Collins' (1994) theoretical ideas of positive uses for revenge may not be the socially conscious response for children to report at this age given the emphasis on prosociality taught by parents and teachers. Consistent with the assertion that children view revenge as a negative social act, social competence was significantly negatively related to occurrence of revenge. Specifically, children who

reported higher levels of social competence were less likely to seek revenge for violations. Again, this may demonstrate that children, and socially skilled children in particular, may not view seeking revenge as a socially accepted tool for leveling a debt.

It is also interesting to note that the occurrence of forgiveness was negatively related to negative impact, such that the more children reported forgiving their best friend the less negative impact they expected post-violation. Results indicate that children understand that after a violation or conflict, they must forgive their friend to be able to continue with the friendship. Forgiving friends may be one way to put aside the violation and return to the friendship status quo. Indeed, the occurrence of revenge was positively related to negative impact. Children may understand that by seeking revenge on their best friends, they may be escalating the conflict within the situation. This suggests that children who select the strategy of revenge are aware of the potential consequences of doing so. Indeed, in the social psychological literature dealing with adults, McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick, and Johnson (2001) found that people who seek revenge reported less life satisfaction and difficulty in maintaining happy interpersonal relations. Children, as well, may understand this link between seeking revenge and negative interpersonal interactions, which may cause them to see revenge as a negative action rather than as a relationship leveler.

Taken together, the occurrence of forgiveness and the occurrence of revenge add to previous research, which indicates that children do use strategies that minimize the negative outcome with their friends (Fabes, Eisenberg, Smith, & Murphy, 1996; Rose & Asher, 1999; Whitesell & Harter, 1996). Children may view revenge as likely to increase the negative outcome of conflict and therefore, may seek revenge less with their friends,

even when their friend has violated them. Furthermore, with increased occurrence of forgiveness, children may be more likely to give their friend the benefit of the doubt and dismiss negative actions, especially when faced with saving or dissolving the friendship.

Finally, children's reasoning about overcoming was a unique predictor of expectation of negative impact after controlling for the occurrence of forgiveness and revenge. Reasoning about overcoming was negatively related to negative impact indicating that children who focused on relationship aspects for strategy selection expected less long-term negative impact on their friendships. Children may recognize that acting selfishly in friendships is bad under all circumstances. Possibly by focusing on saving the relationship when reasoning about overcoming, children are able to consider the long-term consequences of both their actions and the actions of their friends. Children believe friends should be nice to one another and resolve issues in a way that satisfies both members (for meta-analysis see, Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). Moreover, conclusions from the current study are consistent with findings that selfish goals and desires are used less than relationship desires and goals (i.e., negotiation and cooperation) during middle childhood (Iskander, Laursen, Finkelstein, & Fredrickson, 1995).

Taken as a whole, the interrelations among children's reactions suggest that children select behaviors, goals, and desires aimed at reducing conflict and negative impact, as well as increasing the likelihood of future positive interactions and relations with their best friends. Children do evidence an understanding that to save a friendship after violations have occurred they must focus on the relationship rather than on the self. Revenge is seen as selfish and detrimental to the friendship, whereas forgiveness is seen

as positive and relationship enhancing. Thus, children may associate forgiveness with being a good friend and revenge with being a bad friend.

Given that the present study is one of the first studies to examine children's reactions to interpersonal violations by a best friend, findings emphasize the need to further examine the impact of these violations on children's friendships. Willingness to forgive, willingness to seek revenge, and children's reasons for doing so are overlooked research areas. In addition, the inter-relations of justifications, willingness to overcome, and negative impact may not be linear, with one affecting the next and so forth. Using the current findings as a basis, future research must investigate the complex components involved in the potential circular nature of children's reactions.

It is important to note that in the present study forgiveness and revenge were examined in the context of best friendships and that forgiveness and revenge processes may be different within other relationships (e.g., non-friend, acquaintances, unknown). For example, children could use revenge more frequently within the peer group than within close friendships as a tool to maintain social status in the group. Also, children may use revenge as a way to show their peers that they will not be victimized and/or bullied. By demonstrating their strength with revenge, children could be using revenge to reassert their status in the peer group. Indeed, children report wanting to get back at a peer to show them who's boss (Murphy & Eisenberg, 2002). On the other hand, children may avoid revenge tactics so as to not look mean and be viewed negatively by their peer group. The frequent use of revenge could lead to social exclusion by the peer group. Thus, future studies should look at the peer groups' influences on the use of forgiveness and revenge following conflict and interpersonal violations.

Role of Social Cognitive Skills

In addition to examining reactions to violations in detail, a second goal was to examine reactions in relations to social cognitive skills. Social cognitive skills influence the behaviors and goals children have during all social interactions. This influence may be particularly important when children are involved in very emotional and potentially relationship threatening events like interpersonal violations. Specifically, Crick and Dodge (1994), as well as Lemerise and Arsenio (2000), suggest that the social cognitive system would be impacted by interpersonal understanding (friendship understanding) and emotional states (emotional display rule knowledge and multiple emotions) and that both friendship understanding and emotional understanding are components of the same information processing system. Because hypothetical violations by a best friend are both relationship and emotion oriented, children may use both sets of skills to help process and anticipate events from the violations. In addition, both friendship understanding and emotional understanding are developing across middle childhood, so this developmental period provides a salient time in which to examine their unique and joint contributions.

Interestingly, friendship understanding and emotional skills were not significantly interrelated. Perhaps because both friendship understanding and emotional skills are in a process of development, both social cognitive aspects may not be mature enough yet to be significantly related. Possibly, development may occur independently for each; once a level of development has been reached, the skills start to become integrated into the whole social cognitive system.

Indeed, researchers (Branden-Muller, Elias, Gara, & Schneider, 1992) have suggested that there may be several components to a social cognitive system in which

interpersonal problem solving, emotion, and friendship interactions may be independent aspects that may require a large grasp of cognition. For example, children must use perspective taking abilities that they obtain across middle childhood (Miller, Kessel, & Flavell, 1970). However, simply being able to reason from another's perspective may eventually lead to a focus on the relationship because children are better able to see the situation from their best friend's point of view. With increases of the social cognitive skill of perspective taking, children should become better at predicting emotions in a situation (Branden-Muller, Elias, Gara, & Schneider, 1992). Thus across middle childhood, as social cognitive experience increases and influences how children view social interactions, the links between emotional skills and friendship understanding may become stronger. The foundation of the social cognitive system may be laid in middle childhood and expanded upon later in development. But, for the present study, results indicated that during middle childhood, children may use friendship understanding and emotional understanding somewhat uniquely to process information from or about interpersonal violations.

Justifications

Friendship understanding and emotional skills were not significantly related to children's reported justifications of interpersonal violations despite theoretical implications (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). For example, Selman (1980) would also support a link between social cognitive skills and children's justifications about violations. Children across middle childhood come to have an equitable and reciprocal relationship focused perspective on their friendships. Maintaining harmony and fairness within friendships is important to being a good friend.

Thus, with increased friendship understanding, children should be more likely to reason from a relationship perspective rather than a self-based perspective. In addition, with the increased focus on relationship harmony, children interpret their friend's emotional displays and emotional expression's based on the potential impact on the friendship, again increasing the likelihood that children would focus on relationship implications rather on than self implications.

Willingness to Overcome

Friendship understanding was uniquely related to occurrence of forgiveness. Particular characteristics of children's understandings of the expectations and longevity of friendships might make salient the need to forgive or seek revenge to remain in the friendship. Children who reported more complex understandings of friendships forgave their best friend a greater proportion of the time. This supports the hypothesis that as children come to see their friendships as long-term and mutual, they may invest more social cognitive skills in settling problems rather than giving up on the friendship. General conflict literature supports these findings, such that friends resolve conflicts in a more egalitarian and mutually benefiting way than non-friends (Fabes, Eisenberg, Smith, & Murphy, 1996; Rose & Asher, 1999; Whitesell & Harter, 1996), which helps maintain the friendship.

The lack of emotional relations could be because emotions may be most intense during the first reactions to violations. With later thought and reflection, forgiveness may cause children to put their emotions aside with the focus being on saving the relationship. In addition, display rules and multiple emotions may become important in later reasoning after children have time to process information and compare this experience with

previous experiences. Other emotional aspects may be important to immediate reactions to violations, such as intensity of emotions (emotionality) or emotion regulation.

Indeed, emotional display rules, which is a component of emotion regulation, was marginally significant with children's reasonings, such that as children understood the appropriate context to display emotions, they were somewhat likely to reason about overcoming with a focus on balancing the relationship. Children have been shown to hide anger in different contexts, such as with peers and parents (Underwood, Coie, & Herbsman, 1992). Although a cautious interpretation of marginal findings is warranted, knowing the appropriate times and places to display emotions may help children focus on the friendship rather than the self.

Children's reasonings about overcoming suggest that a foundation is being laid in middle childhood and that children may start to integrate friendship understanding and some aspects of emotional skills. Specifically, friendship understanding and emotional understanding jointly predicted children's reasoning about forgiveness, although neither provided unique variance to prediction. As children understood more about friendship qualities and social implications of displaying emotions, they increasingly focused on relationship reasons to forgive/not forgive their best friend following interpersonal violations. For example, children reported relationship reasons such as "I should forgive them because they are my best friend and I want to stay best friends because I really like them and we have fun together" and "Best friends sometimes mess up and best friends should forgive each other when they mess up. It happens sometimes." Children's reasonings indicate that they expect their best friends to sometimes violate their

expectations but they are able to hide negative emotions and focus on saving the friendship.

Expectations of Negative Impact

Children's understanding of friendship and emotional display rules together predicted their expectations of negative impact; in addition friendship understanding was a unique predictor but emotional display rules was only a marginally unique predictor. As friendship understanding and emotional display rule knowledge increased, children expected less negative outcomes following hypothetical interpersonal violations. As children came to understand that their friendships were enduring and mutual, as well as better able to understand the social implications of displaying emotions, they were less likely to expect negative impact. Research shows that children are able to mentally represent the conflict as a result of both parties' actions not just the self (Joshi & Ferris, 2002). Therefore, they may be able to separate the violation from hurting the self and hurting the relationship allowing children to still hold previous expectations of trust and loyalty. In addition, children view the causes of conflict as impermanent in relationships (Hoffman & Bizman, 1996).

Children may see the violations as a bump in the friendship not as customary, causing children to continue in the relationship because of the amount of trust and loyalty already invested. Also, children must examine the amount of investment and return within friendships (Laursen & Collins, 1994; Laursen, Hartup, & Koplas, 1996). As children come to understand the complexity of friendships, they may also come to understand that friends involve a level of work and commitment and therefore are worth saving. Children may invest more in their friendships as they come to focus on the

relationship and may work harder to save it in times of problematic interactions. In addition, if children know that their best friend wants to be with them and enjoys time together, they may be more likely to invest more social cognitive resources in that relationship. Therefore, friendship understanding may not be an all-or-nothing social cognitive skill; it may involve levels or variations of aspects during the transition from one-way friendships to two-way friendships. More detailed research is needed to track when and how mature aspects of friendships develop during middle childhood and become important in the response to interpersonal violations.

Effects of Gender and Age

Even though gender could have moderated the relationship between social cognitive skills and children's reactions to violations, no significant interactions were found. Overall, the lack of findings is not that surprising however. Even gender differences that are found in adults are not consistently revealed in studies and when differences do emerge they are often small and account for little variance (Halpern, 2000; Monsour, 2002). Nonetheless, it is important to examine children's reactions in great detail to better understand gender differences or lack thereof. For example, future studies should examine the degree of permissibility (e.g., how okay or not okay was the violation). Given that girls focus on intimacy and self disclosure in friendships (Maccoby, 1990), they may find breaches of secrecy more intolerable than other types of violations. Boys, on the other hand, may be more affected by violations based on loyalty and assistance (Maccoby, 1990). So, possibly including more detailed questioning about the permissibility of the event would make salient potential gender differences.

Age was also examined for a possible developmental component to social cognitive aspects. Age was anticipated to be positively related to both friendship understanding and emotional skills (emotional display rules and multiple emotions). However, age was only positively related to multiple emotions. With age children understood more complex multiple emotion situations and were better able to provide examples of situations when two emotions, even opposite valiance emotions, could be expressed. These findings are consistent with other research. Specifically, previous research indicates that during middle childhood, children begin to understand and, more importantly, implement the emotional display rules of their culture in social situations (Saarni, 1979; Saarni, 1984; Saarni 1989; Saarni & Weber, 1999; Underwood, 1997). Also, current findings lend support to research by Harter and colleagues that children gain multiple emotion skills across middles childhood (Harter, 1986; Harter & Buddin, 1987; Whitesell & Hater, 1989, Wintre & Vallance, 1994).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

In general, the current findings shed some light on the understanding of children's experiences of interpersonal violations; however, much work still needs to be done. It is possible that the type of relationship (e.g., with parents or siblings) may influence children's reactions to violations. Previous research by Laursen and Bukowski (1997) does suggest that different types of relationships may require different social organization. For example, relationships with parents are not voluntary; children must interact with their parents. Post conflict, children cannot dissolve the relationship with their parents. Plus, parent-child relationships do not have equal power or status meaning that children's processing of conflict information with parents may be different given the

social restraints. Similarly with siblings, the sibling relationship cannot be terminated; children must continue to live with their siblings regardless of the outcome of conflict and violations. Friendships are one of the first equal and voluntary relationships that children can use to practice their social cognitive skills. This factor alone makes friendships unique and important to study.

Nonetheless, lack of experience with important and mutual friendships may cause children to apply other relationship experiences (with parents, siblings, and adults) to their friendship experiences. Children may not have had enough time to cognitively distinguish and integrate social cognitive experiences with their friends relative to other relationships. Integrated social cognitive understandings may not have developed yet in relation to best friendships because friendships are becoming increasingly important across middle childhood (Hartup, 1992). As children come to spend more time with their friends and place more importance on their friendships, social cognitive skills, such as friendship understanding, may become more influential in interpreting social interactions. Children come to understand that their friendships are unique relationships that are worth maintaining.

In addition to exploring other types of relationships, research could include other emotion laden situations with type of relationship to paint a more detailed picture of the influence of social cognitive skills. Specifically, if emotional laden situations with parents were examined in addition to those situations with peers, it may be possible to compare the type of relationship and the skills demanded by each relationship. As well as interpersonal violations with best friends, perhaps the inclusion of acquaintances could make distinct the social cognitive skills necessary for close relationships (those with

parents and best friends) versus casual relationships (those with classmates and other age-mates). The examination of violations in varying relationships may highlight the developmental significance of conflict management and resolution. Indeed, conflict has been shown to be important for psychological growth and experiencing conflict within relationships is essential for social development (Shantz & Shantz, 1985).

Another area that needs attention is age. Perhaps an expanded age range would help researchers understand more details concerning children's interpersonal violations and may capture the organization and integration point of the social cognitive system. With a larger age range, more distinct groups could be examined. Possibly the comparison of age between months and years may have led to more significant findings if the present study would have examined preschool through early adolescence to cover the whole range of social cognitive development. The current age group may have been too homogenous in social cognitive skills to truly find a difference based on age. Middle childhood is one period of development and the greatest differences are found between larger periods, such as between preschool and middle childhood, not within a period. Indeed, Selman (1980) suggests the most changes occur across developmental periods rather than within developmental periods.

Several methodological limitations must also be considered for future research. The interpersonal violations in the present study were hypothetical, so the impact and intensity of these hypothetical events may not be as strong as real-life events. The hypothetical events may not elicit as intense emotional reactions that real-life violations would. Also, children's reasonings and meaning in real-life, fast-paced social interactions may not be as systematic as the questions following the hypothetical

vignettes. Indeed, a meta-analysis by Laursen, Finkelstein, and Townsend (2001) indicated that hypothetical vignettes do not reflect true life behaviors. However, Mize and Ladd (1988) concluded that the use of props to engage children in the story , as was done in the present study, may increase the reality of hypothetical situations.

Additionally, the hypothetical situations may not reflect the severity of actual violations. The process of evaluations and behavior selection involves many complex components. The structure of the questions following the vignettes is linear and real-life events are more likely circular events. For example, as the events become more severe, children's anticipation of future violations may impact the immediate selection of behaviors, their reasonings, and their willingness to overcome. More severe violations may make salient the need to dissolve the relationship or may require children to work harder to save the relationship.

However, given the lack of knowledge about children's reasonings, an appropriate beginning methodology is hypothetical vignettes as this method allows researchers to examine internal aspects like children's expectations and reasonings about violations. The self-report nature of hypothetical vignettes provides information about how children understand and use forgiveness and revenge in violations. Then, once information about children's reactions and expectations of violations is obtained more behavioral based methods could be used and other factors (e.g., situational factors, the presence of others, group size, type of interaction when event occurred, etc.) could be considered. Future research should consider using other methodologies to explore children's reactions, such as interviewing children about past but actual interpersonal violations, using an observation method to determine real behaviors post-violations, or using a combination

of interview with observation procedures to obtain children's immediate reasonings and reactions post-violations. Future research should also consider using this study and methodology as a starting point to explore the relationship between friendship understanding and emotional skills in more detail. Nevertheless, hypothetical vignettes still provide information about children's understanding and thinking about violations; these conceptualizations are likely to guide their reactions in real-life situations (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Therefore, this line of research proves to be a viable topic that deserves more consideration.

Finally, intensifying all the vignettes to make the interpersonal violation more threatening to the friendship might also be an interesting line of exploration. Perhaps, children's reactions would vary with the intensity of the violation. More intense violations could make salient the need to use revenge and the importance of emotional skills. Possibly, the lack of findings related to emotional display rules and multiple emotions may have been due to the lower emotional situations of the hypothetical vignettes rather than real-life situations. Thus, as the emotional intensity of the violations increase, children may be more likely to seek revenge to balance the debt that has been created and be more likely to use emotional skills when reasoning about violations.

Summary

The present study was designed to help understand children's reactions to interpersonal violations. Although just a first step, findings do indicate that children's interpersonal violations are an important area of study. The occurrence of forgiveness and revenge has been shown to impact the later actions of victims of violations. Still little is known about why and how children use forgiveness and revenge within a

friendship. In addition, children do select behaviors that minimize the negative impact of violations on the long-term friendship. The interrelations of children's reactions show that children are able to select strategies that benefit both members of the friendship. Even with limited joint and unique prediction, social cognitive skills still may be important to children's reactions to violations. Moreover, in the present study children did use the social cognitive skills of friendship and emotional understanding when deciding how to react to hypothetical interpersonal violations, indicating that children may be able to see that the friendship is a long-term investment that must be fostered and nourished to be maintained and that small violations do not disturb the foundation built.

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Table 1

Examples of Children's Responses[a]

Justifications
Coded 1 (Personal Reasoning)
"Because he lied, it made me mad. It made me sad."
" She blamed it on me and I didn't do it."
Coded 2 (Mix of Personal and Relationship focus)
"You're not supposed to you could go to jail and it's mean."
"You could get in trouble and no one would like you."
Coded 3 (Relationship Reasoning)
"When someone trusts you, you don't break it."
"That's what best friends do. Protect each other."
Reasonings about Overcoming Violations
Coded 1 (Self-Focus)
"It would make me feel better."
"He broke a promise. So I might break one to hurt him too."
Coded 2 (Some Self-Focus)
"I didn't really like him lying to me about stuff."
"I didn't want to get in trouble either but it's just not nice to do that."
Coded 3 (Mix of Self-Focus and Relationship-Focus)
"I might not want to be her friend today but I'll forgive her tomorrow."
"I was mad but he's my friend."
Coded 4 (Some Relationship-Focus)
"Because he promised not to. He's my friend and it's mean."
"I wouldn't do that to my friend."
Coded 5 (Relationship Focus)
"We're friends and we don't want to be enemies."
"She's my best friend. I still want to be her friend. I love her."

[a]Responses taken from actual children's answers to hypothetical interpersonal violation vignettes.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations

Measure	Total (n=105)	Boys (n=52)	Girls (n=53)
Responses to Hypothetical Vignettes			
Permissibility[a]	.95 (.13)	.96 (.10)	.94 (.15)
Justifications[b]	1.71 (.44)	1.67 (.43)	1.75 (.46)
Willingness to Overcome			
Occurrence of Forgiveness[a]	.77 (.28)	.78 (.28)	.78 (.28)
Occurrence of Revenge[a]	.25 (.30)	.24 (.31)	.26 (.28)
Reasoning about Overcoming[c]	3.14 (.72)	3.18 (.71)	3.09 (.73)
Negative Impact[d]	1.47 (.62)	1.40 (.60)	1.53 (.63)
Predictors			
Social Desirability[e]	.53 (.20)	.22 (.19)	.51 (.21)
Social Competence[f]	3.09 (.46)	2.94 (.46)	3.24 (.41)
Friendship Understanding[g]	3.23 (.44)	3.22 (.51)	3.24 (.36)
Emotional Display Rules[f]	1.91 (.51)	1.94 (.54)	1.88 (.48)
Multiple Emotions[h]	2.85 (1.31)	2.96 (1.19)	2.75 (1.43)

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses.
[a]Proportion scores.
[b]Ratings could range from 1to 3.
[c]Composite of reasons for forgiveness and reasons for revenge; ratings could range from 1 to 5.
[d]Composite of negative change, still friends, and negative expectations; ratings could range from 0 to 4.
[e]Ratings ranged from 0 to 1.
[f]Ratings could range from 1 to 4.
[g]Ratings could range from 1 to 5.
[h]Multiple emotion levels could range from 0 to 4.

Table 3

Relations of Predictors and Criterions Variables

	Age	Soc.[a] Des.	Soc.[b] Comp.	Frd.[c] Und.	Emo.[d] DisRule	Mult.[e] Emo
Justifications	.31**	-.13	.01	.05	.05	.13
Willingness to Overcome						
Occurrence of Forgiveness	.09	-.14	.04	.24*	.07	.06
Occurrence of Revenge	.05	-.07	-.30*	-.15	.04	-.08
Reasonings	-.06	-.00	-.06	.16	.18^{+}	.12
Negative Impact	.04	-.18^{+}	.00	-.25*	-.16	-.02

[a]Social Desirability
[b]Social Competence
[c]Friendship Understanding
[d]Emotional Display Rules
[e]Multiple Emotions
$^{+}p < .10$
$*p < .05$
$**p < .01$

Table 4

Correlations between Composite Criterion Variables

	Justifications	Occurrence of Forgiveness	Occurrence of Revenge	Reasonings
Justifications	1.0			
Willingness to Overcome				
Occurrence of Forgiveness	.02	1.0		
Occurrence of Revenge	-.11	.13	1.0	
Reasoning	-.09	.60**	-.30**	1.0
Negative Impact	-.03	-.49**	.32**	-.56**

**$p<.01$

Table 5

Relations of Age, Social Desirability, Social Competence, Friendship Understanding, Emotional Display Rules, and Multiple Emotions

	Age	Social Desirability	Social Competence	Friendship Understanding	Emotion Display Rules
Social Desirability	-.41**				
Social Competence	-.00	.26**			
Friendship Understanding	.08	.08	.11		
Emotional Display Rules	.11	.03	.04	-.01	
Multiple Emotions	.29**	-.16	-.04	-.02	-.03

**$p < .01$

Table 6

Joint and Unique Effects Regression Analyses

	Adjusted R^2	R^2 Change	*F* Change	Standardized Beta
Justifications				
Step 1:	-.02	.01	.26	
Friendship Understanding				.05
Emotional Display Rules				.05
Step 2:*	.07	.09	10.13**	
Age				.30**
Occurrence of Forgiveness				
Step 1:*	.05	.06	3.46*	
Friendship Understanding				.24**
Emotional Display Rules				.07
Step 2:$^{+}$	.04	.00	.42	
Age				.06
Occurrence of Revenge				
Step 1:	.01	.02	1.28	
Friendship Understanding				-.15
Emotional Display Rules				.04
Step 2:	.00	.00	.35	
Age				.06
Reasonings				
Step 1:*	.04	.06	3.19*	
Friendship Understanding				.16^{+}
Emotional Display Rules				.18^{+}
Step 2: $^{+}$	.04	.01	.88	
Age				-.09
Negative Impact				
Step 1:**	.07	.09	4.86**	
Friendship Understanding				-.25**
Emotional Display Rules				-.16^{+}
Step 2:*	.07	.01	.76	
Age				.08
Willingness to Overcome Predicting Negative Impact				
Step 1:**	.37	.39	21.04**	
Occurrence of Forgiveness				-.26**
Occurrence of Revenge				.18*
Reasonings				-.36**

$^{+}$ $p < .10$
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

Table 7

Gender and Predictor Interactions

	F	Significance
Justifications		
Gender	.32	.57
Friendship Understanding	.64	.92
Gender X Friendship Understanding	.57	.92
Gender	.02	.89
Emotional Display Rules	.91	.59
Gender X Emotional Display Rules	.56	.89
Gender	.07	.80
Multiple Emotions	1.53	.20
Gender X Multiple Emotions	.59	.67
Occurrence of Forgiveness		
Gender	.17	.68
Friendship Understanding	1.20	.30
Gender X Friendship Understanding	1.31	.24
Gender	.19	.66
Emotional Display Rules	.57	.94
Gender X Emotional Display Rules	.50	.93
Gender	.02	.89
Multiple Emotions	.44	.78
Gender X Multiple Emotions	.54	.71
Occurrence of Revenge		
Gender	.00	.98
Friendship Understanding	1.01	.51
Gender X Friendship Understanding	.80	.72
Gender	.44	.51
Emotional Display Rules	1.08	.39
Gender X Emotional Display Rules	1.07	.40
Gender	.34	.56
Multiple Emotions	.88	.48
Gender X Multiple Emotions	.50	.74

Table 7

Gender and Predictor Interactions Continued

	F	Significance
Reasonings		
Gender	.36	.55
Friendship Understanding	.75	.82
Gender X Friendship Understanding	.51	.95
Gender	.63	.43
Emotional Display Rules	1.22	.25
Gender X Emotional Display Rules	.40	.98
Gender	.69	.41
Multiple Emotions	.48	.75
Gender X Multiple Emotions	.58	.68
Negative Impact		
Gender	2.26	.14
Friendship Understanding	1.54	.10
Gender X Friendship Understanding	1.14	.36
Gender	.39	.54
Emotional Display Rules	.83	.70
Gender X Emotional Display Rules	.73	.75
Gender	4.65	.03
Multiple Emotions	.46	.77
Gender X Multiple Emotions	1.48	.22

Appendix A

Hypothetical Interpersonal Violation Vignettes

Introduction

We are going to create some stories about times when you and your best friend are together. I'll start the stories and you can finish it. Tell me about what would happen and then I'll ask you some questions about the story we made. Do you understand? Okay, remember I'll start the story and you will finish it. And we will do this for six stories. Ready?

First, I would like you to think of a boy/girl who is your best friend. Do you have a best friend in mind? Don't tell me who it is, but think of this person as your best friend in the stories.

This is our felt board that we are going to use to help us tell our stories. But I'm going to need your help before we get started. This is your best friend and this is you. Let's pick out hair for you. Okay, now the hair for your best friend. Now, let's pick our a shirt for you and your best friend.

Start of each subsequent story introduction:

Now, I still want you to think about the same boy/girl as before when we do this next story. Do you still have that boy/girl in mind? Okay. Now it's a new day so we need to take these old shirts off and put on new ones. What color shirt do you want you and your best friend to wear for this day?

Secret #1 (Party)

You and your best friend are at a birthday party for a kid you know from school. Your best friend asks you, "What did you get him/her for his/her birthday?" You say, "I'll tell you if you promise not to tell anyone." Your best friend says, "Okay, I won't tell. What's the present?" You say, "I got him/her a soccer ball just like he/she asked for, but don't tell." "I won't," your best friend says. When it came time for the birthday boy/girl to open your present, your best friend tells him/her, "I know what that is, it's a soccer ball."

Secret #2 (Picture)

Every week one kid in your class gets to pick a new picture for your art class to make. This week it's your turn. Your best friend asks you, "What picture did you pick for the class to make?" You say, "I don't want to tell you unless you swear not to tell anyone." Your best friend says, "I swear." You show him/her the picture you've picked out. He/she turns to the kid next to him/her and says, "Hey you wanna see the picture for this week?" and shows the other kid your picture.

Lie #1 (Lunch)

You and your best friend are eating lunch together. You get up to go get a spoon, and while you're gone, you see your best friend eat your dessert. When you get back to the

table, you say, "Hey, what happened to my dessert!?! Did you eat it?" Your best friend says, "No, I didn't eat it. I don't know what happened to your dessert."

Lie #2 (Markers)

You and your best friend are in class working on a project. You drop one of your markers on the floor. When you bend down to pick it up, you see your best friend take one of your markers from your area. You say, "Hey! Is that my marker? Did you take it?" Your best friend says, "No! It's mine. I got it from my area."

Blame #1 (Books)

You and your best friend are picking up books before lunch. When your best friend puts his/her stack of books on the desk, he/she knocks over the teacher's favorite mug. The teacher comes over to see what happened and says, "How did my mug fall on the floor and break?" You say, "It was an accident." Your best friend points at you and says, "He/she put his/her books on your desk and knocked the mug on the floor and broke it."

Blame #2 (Ball)

You and your best friend are playing ball at recess. Your best friend throws the ball and it bounces off a pole into a group of kids playing another game. The teacher asks, "How did the ball get into their game?" You say, "We were just playing." Your best friend says and points at you, "The ball bounced over there because he/she threw the ball."

Questions

What would happen next? Why would that happen (for each event offered by child)?

When (fill in with event) happened, was that okay or not okay? Why/Why not?

Sometimes kids forgive their best friends and sometimes they don't. Is this one of the times you would forgive your best friend? Why or why not?

Sometimes kids want to get back at their best friends and sometimes they don't. Is this one of the time you would want to get back at your best friend? Why or why not?

Do you think your best friend will tell your secrets in the future? **OR**
Do you think your best friend will blame you for things in the future? **OR**
Do you think your best friend will not tell you the truth in the future?
If yes, how often do you think your best friend would (fill in action)?
Why/why not?

Sometimes kids still want to be friends after something like this happens and sometimes they don't. Would you still want to be friends with him/her? How much would you want to be friends with him/her? Why or why not?

Sometimes friendships change and sometimes they don't. Do you think this is one of the times when your friendship would get worse? If yes, how much worse would our friendship be? Why/why not?

Appendix B

Description of Me

1. Age_____ Birthdate_____

   Grade_____

2. Gender (circle one): Boy Girl

3. Racial/Ethnic Group (circle one):
   a. Native American
   b. Black
   c. Hispanic
   d. Asian
   e. White (non Hispanic)
   f. Other _____

ID# _____

CSDS

Please answer yes or no to these questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Are you always polite to older people?	YES	NO
2. Have you ever felt like saying unkind things to a person?	YES	NO
3. When you are in class, do you always pay attention?	YES	NO
4. Have you ever argued with your parents to let you do something they did not want you to do?	YES	NO
5. Are you always glad to share your things with others?	YES	NO
6. Do you sometimes get mad when people don't do what you want them to do?	YES	NO
7. When you make a mistake, do you always admit that you are wrong?	YES	NO
8. Do you always listen to your parents?	YES	NO
9. Have you ever bragged to your friends about what you can do or what you have?	YES	NO
10. Are there times when you don't like it if somebody asks you to do something for him/her?	YES	NO
11. Do you always enjoy yourself at parties?	YES	NO
12. Have you ever felt like staying home and not going to school, even though you were not sick?	YES	NO
13. Do you sometimes feel like making fun of other people?	YES	NO
14. Have there been times when you've been quite jealous of others?	YES	NO

Appendix C

For each number, there are two statements that describe two different groups of kids. Pick out the group of kids that you are most like (one on the right or one on the left). Then rate if you are really like these kids or just sort of like these kids.

	Really Like These Kids	**Sort of Like These Kids**			**Sort of Like These Kids**	**Really Like These Kids**
1.	_____	_____	Some kids find it <u>hard</u> to make friends.	BUT	Other kids find it <u>easy</u> to make friends.	_____
2.	_____	_____	Some kids get bothered and teased a lot by kids.	BUT	Other kids don't get bothered and teased a lot by kids.	_____
3.	_____	_____	Some kids don't like to be with other kids their age.	BUT	Other kids like to be with other kids their age.	_____
4.	_____	_____	Some kids often get into arguments with other kids.	BUT	Other kids don't often get into arguments with other kids.	____
5.	_____	_____	Some kids usually help other kids.	BUT	Other kids don't usually help other kids.	_____
6.	_____	_____	Some kids often get angry at other kids.	BUT	Other kids don't often get angry at other kids.	_____
7.	_____	_____	Some kids usually don't do things to get them in trouble.	BUT	Other kids do things to get them in trouble.	____
8.	_____	_____	Some kids are popular with kids their own age.	BUT	Other kids are not popular with kids their own age.	____

	Really Like These Kids	**Sort of Like These Kids**			**Sort of Like These Kids**	**Really Like These Kids**
9.	_____	_____	Some kids don't behave themselves	BUT	Other kids behave themselves.	_____
10.	____	_____	Some kids have lots of friends.	BUT	Other kids don't have lots of friends.	_____
11.	____	_____	Some kids do what they are supposed to do.	BUT	Other kids don't do what they are supposed to do.	_____
12.	____	_____	Some kids find it <u>hard</u> to make friends.	BUT	Other kids find it <u>easy</u> to make friends.	_____

Appendix D

Friendship Understanding Measure

These questions are about some things that friends do. You might think that some of these things are very important for friends to do and other things are not very important for friends to do. Each questions asks you what you think. How important you think it is for friends to do certain things. For each question, tell me how important you think that is for friends to do either (show child scale):

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all	**A Tiny Bit**	**Kind of**	**A Lot**	**A Whole Lot**

Okay let's do two practice questions.

How important is it for friends to say hi to each other? 0 1 2 3 4

How important is it for friends to say goodbye after school? 0 1 2 3 4

Do you understand? Okay

Remember tell me how important it is for friends to do these things:

1. How important is it for friends to do things together? 0 1 2 3 4

2. How important is it for friends to like each other? 0 1 2 3 4

3. How important is it for friend to stick up for each other? 0 1 2 3 4

4. How important is it for friends to spend time together? 0 1 2 3 4

5. How important is it for friends to accept each other just the way they are? 0 1 2 3 4

6. How important is it for friends to hang out with each other? 0 1 2 3 4

7. How important is if for friends to sing at the same time? 0 1 2 3 4

8. How important is it for friends to help each other? 0 1 2 3 4

9. How important is it for friends to both understand each other? 0 1 2 3 4

10. How important is it for friends to have fun together? 0 1 2 3 4

11. How important is it for friends to think the same 0 1 2 3 4

stuff is important?

12. How important is it for friends to be loyal to each other?	0	1	2	3	4
13. How important is it for friends to be considerate and thoughtful of each other?	0	1	2	3	4
14. How important is it for friends to eat the same foods?	0	1	2	3	4
15. How important is it for friends to stay friends even when they get mad at each other?	0	1	2	3	4
16. How important is it for friends to talk to each other about their feelings?	0	1	2	3	4
17. How important is it for friends to keep each other's secrets?	0	1	2	3	4
18. How important is it for friends to play together?	0	1	2	3	4
19. How important is it for friends to talk to each other about how they feel about things?	0	1	2	3	4
20. How important is it for friends to understand how the other one feels about things?	0	1	2	3	4
21. How important is it for friends to like the same cartoons?	0	1	2	3	4
22. How important is it for friends to faithful to each other?	0	1	2	3	4
23. How important is it for friends to express their feelings for each other?	0	1	2	3	4
24. How important is it for friends to like each other even if they aren't good at some things?	0	1	2	3	4
25. How important is it for friends to trust each other?	0	1	2	3	4
26. How important is it for friends to think about how the other one feels?	0	1	2	3	4
27. How important is it for friends to believe the same things are important?	0	1	2	3	4
28. How important is if for friends to say the same things?	0	1	2	3	4

29. How important is it for friends to talk to each other about secrets?	0	1	2	3	4
30. How important is it for friends to depend on each other?	0	1	2	3	4
31. How important is it for friends to give things to each other?	0	1	2	3	4
32. How important is it for friends to like the same things?	0	1	2	3	4
33. How important is it for friends to rely on each other?	0	1	2	3	4
34. How important is it for friends to admire and respect each other?	0	1	2	3	4
35. How important is if for friends to like the same ice cream?	0	1	2	3	4
36. How important isit for friends to have the same interests?	0	1	2	3	4
37. How important is it for friends to be around each other?	0	1	2	3	4
38. How important is it for friends to lend a hand to each other?	0	1	2	3	4
39. How important is it for friends to do stuff together?	0	1	2	3	4
40. How important is it for friends to talk to each other about special things they don't tell other kids about?	0	1	2	3	4
41. How important is it for friends to admire and respect each other and think the other one is a neat person?	0	1	2	3	4
42. How important is it for friends to think the other one is a cool person?	0	1	2	3	4
43. How important is it for friends to share with each other?	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix E

SEQ

We are going to read six stories, and I want you to imagine yourself in each of these stories and feeling each emotion. Then you'll answer questions about the stories.

A. Imagine that your school is having a lottery, that means everybody puts their name in a hat and whoever's name gets drawn wins a prize. The person whose name is drawn gets a $100 gift certificate to spend at the mall. On the day of the lottery, you are sitting at your desk in your classroom and the school principal announces over the loudspeaker that you have won the lottery and that you are the person who wins the $100 prize. Everybody else in the class is looking at you to see what you will do.

You feel really happy. What would you do?

Smile really big and yell, "All right!"	Sort of smile, and say kind of quietly, "I can't believe I won."	Keep a calm face and say nothing.	Frown and say, "It's really not that big of a deal."

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

B. Imagine that one day you walk to school and it is raining outside very hard. Your favorite sneakers get really wet, so you take them off to dry and put on some other shoes you were carrying in your bag. At the end of the day, you go to your bag to put on your sneakers that you really like a lot, but someone has taken them. You start digging through your bag and asking other people if they have seen your sneakers. Lots of other kids start talking about how someone took your sneakers. Everyone is looking at you to see what you will do.

You feel really sad. What would you do?

Look really sad and say, "This is really bad, those were my favorite shoes."	Sort of look sad, and say kind of quietly, "I can't believe my favorite shoes are gone.	Keep a calm face and say nothing.	Smile and say, "Who cares? I was hoping for some new shoes."

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

C. Imagine that your teacher calls you and some other kids up to the board to solve a really hard math problem, and tells you to race to see who can solve it first. You solve the problem the fastest. While the teacher is out of the room for a minute, one of the other kids in the class says, "You're such a big head, thinking you're so great just because you can solve one silly math problem." Lots of kids hear this, and they laugh. Everyone is watching you to see what you will do.

You feel really angry. What would you do?

Make a mad face and say, "Stop it!" in a mad voice.	Give the person a kind of mad look and say, "Oh, be quiet!"	Keep a calm face and say nothing.	Laugh it off and say, "I'm just good at math, what can I do?"

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

D. Imagine that your teacher has made a deal with all of the students in your class at school. Everyone who gets 20 out of 25 spelling words right will get to go on a special field trip to the zoo. On the day the teacher announces who will get to go on the trip, she tells you beforehand that you cannot go because you only got 19 words right. Most of the kids in your class get to go on the trip. When your name is not called, some kids look at you to see what you will do.

You feel really disappointed. What would you do?

Look really sad and say, "What a bummer-I thought I was going to get to go."	Look sort of disappointed and say quietly, "Oh, well."	Keep a calm face and say nothing.	Smile and say, "I'm glad I'm not going. I think the zoo is boring."

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

E. Imagine that one day you are walking down the hall to the lunchroom with the rest of your school class. You slip on a wet spot on the floor and fall. As you fall, you hear a loud tearing sound and you realize that your pants have split. Everyone is watching you to see what you will do.

You feel really embarrassed. What would you do?

Look really upset and say, "Oh, no- don't look" and walk away as fast as you can.	Look down and say, "Uh-oh!"	Keep a calm face and say nothing	Smile and say, "I did that on purpose, just to make you laugh."

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

F. Imagine that your teacher is handing out papers from a really hard social studies test. She announces that you got the very highest grade in the class. Everyone turns around to look at you to see what you will do.

You feel really proud. What would you do?

Smile really big and say, "All right!"	Smile just a bit and say, "I studied hard."	Keep a calm face and say nothing.	Shrug and say, "Oh, it's not that big of a deal."

Ok, imagine that other kids are watching: Using this scale, where this bar means not at all, this bar means a tiny bit, this bar means some, this bar means a lot, and this bar means a whole lot, how much do you think that _____ will make other kids like you?

Rating:_____

Appendix F

Multiple Emotions

Introduction

Let's talk about how kids feel. Kids can feel lots of different things for lots of different reasons. There are no right or wrong ways to feel; sometimes we just feel things for lots of reasons. We are going to talk about different ways that kids can feel, what it means to feel a certain way, and why kids feel things sometimes. Do you understand? Okay, let's talk about how you feel.

Emotion Sorting

I have some cards with feelings on them. Let's go through each of these cards to make sure we understand what each of the words mean. Sometimes kids can feel all of these, and sometimes kids feel none of these. Tell me if you have ever felt any of these emotions and we'll make two piles. One pile for the emotions that are good emotions to feel (interviewer put out pile label) and one for the emotions that aren't good to feel (put out pile label). Do you understand? Okay, this card says _____. Which pile would you put that on?. (Read the emotion cards, one at a time to the child for them to place the cards on corresponding pile)

Emotions for Emotion Cards

Mad	Happy	Embarrassed
Sad	Glad	Just Okay
Scared	Excited	Surprised
Proud	Worried	Grateful
Shame	Guilty	Let Down

Understanding of Multiple Emotions

Now I want you to think about these feelings and what makes people feel that way. Then, we'll talk about times when kids feel different things. Do you understand?

Combination A (same valence/different targets):

Using the piles that we made before, I want you to choose two feelings from the same pile that you think you could feel at the very same time. (Child picks emotions).

You can feel ____ and ___ at the same time? Okay. Let's put the feeling words on this drawing. (Have child place emotion cards, one on each box). This drawing means that you felt ____ and ____ (point to the emotion card) at the same time at two different things (point to circles).

Now, can you tell me about a time you felt ___ at one thing and at the very same time, you felt ____ at a different thing?

Combination B (same valence/same target):

Using the piles that we made before, I want you to choose two feelings from the same pile that you think you could feel at the very same time. (Child picks emotions).

You can feel ____ and ___ at the same time? Okay. Let's put the feeling words on this drawing. (Have child place emotion cards, one on each box). This drawing means that you felt ____ and ____ (point to the emotion card) at the same time at one thing (point to circle).

Now, can you tell me about one thing that would made you feel ___ and ____ at the very same time?

Combination C (different valence/different targets):

Using the piles that we made before, I want you to choose two feelings from different piles that you think you could feel at the very same time. (Child picks emotions).

You can feel ____ and ___ at the same time? Okay. Let's put the feeling words on this drawing. (Have child place emotion cards, one on each box). This drawing means that you felt ____ and ____ (point to the emotion card) at the same time at two different things (point to circles).

Now, can you tell me about a time you felt ___ at one thing and at the very same time, you felt ____ at a different thing?

Combination D (different valence/same target):

Using the piles that we made before, I want you to choose two feelings from different piles that you think you could feel at the very same time. (Child picks emotions).

You can feel ____ and ___ at the same time? Okay. Let's put the feeling words on this drawing. (Have child place emotion cards, one on each box). This drawing means that you felt ____ and ____ (point to the emotion card) at the same time at one thing (point to circle).

Now, can you tell me about one thing that made you feel ___ and ____ at the very same time?