

Early Adolescent Needs and Family Decision-Making Environments

A Study of Person-Environment Fit

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Abstract

This paper emphasizes the importance of a bidirectional perspective in the study of environmental fit to the early adolescent's emerging needs. Two studies are reported in this paper. Study I examines the congruence of parents' perceptions of child temperament and the decision-making environment that parents report in their families. Parents report more parent-child conflict with children that are immature. They also report that they allow their child to participate in family decisions if they feel s/he is mature and able to solve problems.

Mothers and fathers have similar perceptions of their child's temperament and of the decision-making practices in the family. Neither parents' perceptions of decision-making are strongly correlated with the child's perceptions. Finally, the young adolescent's perceptions of fit between how much say they should have in decisions and how much say they do have is positively correlated with their perceptions of autonomy and negatively correlated with their perceptions of parent-child conflict and high parent control.

Study II compares the perceptions of family decision-making for mothers and young adolescents in one-parent families with a control group of mothers and young adolescents in two-parent families. Both daughters and sons in one-parent families report less parental control than their peers from two-parent homes. Girls in one-parent families report less parent-child conflict and more opportunities for participating in decision-making than boys in one-parent homes or than girls or boys in two-parent homes.

The reports of mothers showed fewer differences. However, single-parent mothers report significantly more conflict with their sons than with their daughters.

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Early Adolescent Needs and Family-Decision Making Opportunities: A Study of Person-Environment Fit

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Early adolescence is a stage when children begin the transition from dependence on adults towards a more self-determined identity. For many children, asserting independent opinions and making judgments on their own are considered important developmental tasks. In general, the family is the safest setting for testing the waters of independence and it is at early adolescence that the asymmetrical parent-child authority relationship begins to accommodate to the new demands of the developing person (Grotevant, 1983; Hill, 1980; Youniss, 1980).

Convergent evidence suggests that family environments that provide opportunities for personal autonomy and allow the adolescent a voice in family decision-making are associated with such positive outcomes as high self-esteem, advanced moral reasoning, and a mastery orientation towards problem-solving in the classroom (Elder, 1963; Flanagan, 1985; Litovsky and Dusek, 1985). In addition, during early adolescence, freedom to make decisions with adult supervision may be especially critical to boys' self-esteem (Streitmatter and Jones, 1982). Conversely, an authoritarian and coercive parenting style is associated with greater self-image disparity, greater self-consciousness, lower confidence in the self, and a more restricted ability to use one's own judgment to guide behavior (Leahy, 1981; Yee and Flanagan, 1985).

This work has enriched our understanding of decision-making and parent-child relationships during the early adolescent period. However, just as the child's identity is shaped by the environment, so does s/he shape the family environment. Parent behavior does not take place in a vacuum and, as Neuman and Murray (1983) suggest, parent styles must be considered as a product as well as an antecedent of adolescent identity formation. This paper takes a more bidirectional perspective on family decision-making. It looks at within family congruity on perceptions of decision-making practices and attends to the fit between parental judgments of their child's temperament and the kind

of decision-making practices they report.

Early adolescence is also a time when children's impressions of what is real are informed by their ability to imagine ideal possibilities (Leahy, 1981). The lack of fit between the child's felt needs and the provisions of her/his environment may become an issue of conflict for some parents and their young adolescents (Montemayor, 1983). Yet, as has been demonstrated, harmony, close relationships, and communication may also characterize the parent-child relationship at this stage (Richardson et al., 1984). In their discussion of the model of person-environment fit, Hunt and Sullivan (1974) emphasize the importance of considering the developmental continuum along which "growth toward independence and less need for structure is the long-term objective".

This paper is an effort to enlarge our understanding of how families are variously responding to these emerging needs of their young adolescent children. Specifically, two studies are described.

Study I discusses the congruence within families on perceptions of decision-making practices -- the fit of mother's perceptions with father's and of each parent with their young adolescent's perceptions. In addition, it looks at the association between parents' perceptions of their young adolescent's maturity and ability to handle independent decision-making with the kind of decision-making environment the family provides.

Study II examines these same issues within a sub-set of families, comparing one-parent mother-headed households with a group of two-parent households controlled for family income and mother's education level. The rationale and results for each study will be discussed separately.

Study I

Socialization within the family is a reciprocal process with children's identities and behaviors being shaped by the family environment and family processes responding and adapting in response to the new needs of their members (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Although the general trend of development at the early adolescent stage is towards independence in decision-making, individual differences in families exist. These appear in children's differential desire for independence, in parental assessments of their child's ability to make mature decisions and handle independence and in parents' willingness to

adapt their child-rearing practices.

The following hypotheses are tested in Study I:

- 1) Maternal and paternal perceptions of their sons's or daughter's level of maturity and ability to face and solve problems will be congruent with their perceptions of the decision-making opportunities they provide for that child. That is, to the extent that the parent trusts the young adolescent's good judgment and general maturity, the parent will provide an environment in which the child can enjoy the independence that the parent thinks s/he can handle. The kind of decision-making environment parents provide should be a good fit for the kind of person they believe their child to be. Parental expectations for the relative ease or trouble their child will experience as s/he reaches adolescence should be similarly, though less strongly associated, with the parent's present reports of conflict, parental control, and child participation.
- 2) Mothers' and fathers' perceptions of the family decision-making environment will be more congruent than either parent's perceptions will be with those of their young adolescent. Research on classroom environments has found that student and teacher perceptions of the same classroom are significantly different (Humphrey, 1984; Moos, 1979). Midgley and Feldlaufer (1986) found that students in early adolescence report significantly fewer classroom decision-making opportunities than their teachers report. In line with this research it is expected that adolescent's perceptions of their family decision-making environment will be informed by their desire for increasing independence and will not be strongly related to either their mother's or their father's perceptions.
- 3) The young adolescent's assessment of fit between real and ideal opportunities for decision-making at Time II will be associated with their perceptions of actual opportunities at Time I (six months prior in time); i.e., children who report high parent-child conflict or high parental control at Time I will report high discrepancy between real and ideal opportunities for having a say in decisions at Time II.

Sample and Methods

The data reported in this paper were collected at Waves I and II of a four-wave longitudinal study of the transition of fifth/sixth graders to middle/junior high school. Data were collected from 3246 students, their parents and teachers in twelve middle and working class communities in southeastern Michigan. Student and teacher data were collected by group questionnaire administration in classrooms. Parents' questionnaires were mailed to the family's home.

The analyses reported in Study I are family level comparisons based on data where parent(s) and child are matched by case of child. N's range from a low of 1228 families where there are data for mother, father, and child to a high of 1940 where there are data for mothers and their child. Data in Study II are based on 180 divorced or separated mothers and their young adolescents and on 115 mothers and their adolescents from two-parent homes. This latter group was matched on background characteristics of income (less than \$20,000) and mother's education (high-school or some college) with the one-parent mother sample.

Measures

Family Decision-Making was measured by a modified version of the Epstein and McPartland (1977) Family Decision-Making Scale (FDM). The original dichotomous format that Epstein and McPartland used with students was broadened to a 4-point Likert style format and parallel items were constructed for mothers and fathers based on the student version of the scale.

Students' ideal decision-making family environment was measured by changing the wording of two items in the FDM scale from do you to should you. Thus the perception of real decision-making reads: "How often do you take part in family decisions that concern you?" with "always" as the high point of the scale. The ideal counterpart to this item reads: "How often should you take part in family decisions that concern you?" Discrepancy or congruence between real and ideal decision-making was measured by creating a difference score, subtracting their ideal (should) rating on the item from their perceived real (do you) rating.

Parents were also asked to assess their child's maturity and adjustment. (See Table 2 for specific items). In addition, parents were asked a series of closed ended questions

about their expectations for their child's adolescent behavior. These included a range of questions assessing interest in school, changes in the parent-child affective tie, social interests, and increasing independence and responsibility. (See Table 3).

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Analyses

Factor analysis and a Scree extraction criterion were used to define underlying constructs. Composites were constructed based on the average of the means of items loading on a factor.

Separate factor analyses of the parent and student items yielded a three factor solution as the most interpretable solution. Two items were dropped from the parent composites because they failed to load strongly on any parent factor. Three distinct factors emerged -- Parent-Child Conflict, Autocratic Parenting/High Parent Control, and Child Participation. Similar factors with slightly different loadings were found for students. (See Table 1 for a description of Parent Factors and Table 4 for a description of Young Adolescent Factors).

Two factors emerged from the questions asking parents about their child's temperament -- Factor I -- a mature, even-tempered child who can solve problems; Factor II -- a withdrawn child who gives up when faced with a difficult problem. While this paper does not deal with teacher data from the Junior High School Transitions Project, teachers were asked to assess individually the students in their math classes on a variety of competencies. Four of these items provide a good means of confirming parental reports of individual children's mature vs. withdrawn behavior. Teachers' reports that a child handles stress and frustration well, does not give up when faced with a difficult academic problem or situation, does not fight with others, and gets along well with others is positively correlated with parental reports that the same child is mature and even-tempered and negatively correlated with the parents' reports that the child is withdrawn and gives up when faced with a difficult problem. Since parallel questions were not asked of teachers and parents and because children's behavior should be partially determined by the uniqueness of any setting, the reports of teachers are only used in this analysis as a second "reading" of the child. Disconfirming reports from teachers (such as very weak or negative correlations between teachers' judgments of a

child's ability to handle problems and a parents' assessments of that child's ability) would call parental reports into question. As this is not the case, we conclude that parents are not simply projecting their own unique perceptions onto their children. Their assessments of their child's temperament is corroborated by an adult who interacts with the child in another setting.

Two distinct factors emerged from the "expectations for daughter's or sons's adolescence" items. Factor I, Normal Adolescent Adjustment, describes positive identity development and individuation. Items loading on this factor include expectations that the child will take on more responsibilities, be more concerned with her/his appearance, socialize more and be more interested in the opposite sex, and also take school work more seriously. In contrast, Factor II, Troubled/Maladaptive Adjustment, represents a tumultuous transition to adolescence. Items that load on this factor are parental expectations that the child will be more difficult to get along with, will be clumsier, less interested in school, and more concerned with what her/his friends think than with what the parent thinks.

Relational Analyses

Mother/Father Congruence on Perceptions of their Child

Maternal and Paternal perceptions of their child's temperament were highly correlated. Mother's report of a mature problem-solving child was positively correlated with father's report that the child was mature ($r=.57, p<.0001$) and negatively correlated with his report that the child was withdrawn and gives up in the face of problems ($r=-.42, p<.0001$). Mother and father expectations for a normal adolescent adjustment and for a troubled/maladaptive transition to adolescence were positively, though less strongly correlated ($r=.31, p<.0001$; $r=.35, p<.0001$) respectively. Thus, parents appear to hold similar views of their child's temperament and similar projections for their child's transition to adolescence.

Parents' Perceptions of Child's Temperament and Decision-Making Environment

Two of the three FDM factors show the predicted relationships with parental reports of their child's temperament. Perceptions that the child is mature and faces problems are positively correlated with parent reports of high child participation and autonomy in family decision-making. This same temperament composite is negatively

correlated with reports of parent-child conflict. These patterns are consistent for mothers and fathers suggesting that both parents perceive a fit between the needs of their early adolescent and the decision-making environment they provide. (See Table 5)

The Authoritarian Parent/High Parent Control factor is an exception to this pattern. For both parents, reports of high parent control of decision-making is essentially uncorrelated with their perceptions of child temperament. One possible explanation for this finding is that the items that load on this factor weight parental attitudes about child rearing and discipline more than actual practices and use the parent rather than the child as referent. For these reasons this factor may be less sensitive to child temperament.

The only relationship of the FDM factors with parental expectations for adolescence is that parent-child conflict is positively correlated with expectations of a troubled adolescence; this pattern is true for fathers and mothers. This relationship between present conflict in the relationship and parents' projections for the child's future stormy transition suggests an interesting link to follow longitudinally. Parent expectations for a stormy adolescence may predict increased rigidity in their control and discipline of their child as s/he approaches adolescence and act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Alternatively, to the extent that parents gradually adapt their practices to include the child in FDM, an immature child at Time I may make a more successful transition to adolescence and be reported by parents as a mature problem-solving child at Time II.

Family Congruence on Perceptions of Family Decision-Making Practices

Mothers and fathers are in general agreement on their perceptions of the family decision-making environment. Mothers' perceptions of conflict, child autonomy, and authoritarian parenting are correlated .51, .40, and .34 respectively with fathers' perceptions. Each of these is significant at $p < .0001$. This is clearly far from perfect agreement. It should be remembered, however, that each parent is reporting her/his own beliefs and practices and not "family" practices (i.e., I do not like my child to disagree with me when my friends are around). Thus, we would expect some individual differences in mother and father practices. Thus, as a group, children in this sample are getting fairly congruent messages from their parents about decision-making practices.

Young adolescents' reports of child autonomy and high parent control are in agreement with mothers' and fathers' reports but the relationship is not strong. The

strongest correlation between parents' and adolescents' perceptions is on the parent-child conflict factor ($r = .23, p < .0001$ and $r = .21, p < .0001$ for father/adolescent and mother/adolescent respectively). This may be due to the fact that items on this factor such as mistrust and arguments over rules are more salient or disturbing dimensions of parent-child interactions.

Young adolescents' perceptions of fit between actual and ideal FDM opportunities

Difference scores were computed for the two actual - ideal family decision making practices. Although the wording of these items is slightly different, both tap the extent to which the child feels s/he does-should decide issues of personal concern within her/his family. Thus, it is not surprising that the distribution on the difference scores was similar for both yoked pairs. 59.8 percent of the students (1801) noted no discrepancy between how decisions are made in their families vs. how they should be made; 31.2 percent (940) of the students felt that they should have more say in decisions that concerned them than they were actually getting; 9.0 percent felt that they had more say than they wanted. It should be noted that of the more than one-third that felt that they should have a greater voice than they were getting, 23.2 percent (699) of these reported only a slight discrepancy between actual and ideal opportunities. Thus, these discrepancies may reflect a creative tension in parent-child relations with young adolescents looking for slightly more voice than their parents are allowing them. The distribution for "How often you take part/should take part in decisions that concern you" was 52.4 percent (1567) no discrepancy; 39.7 (1567) percent reporting less opportunities than they desired (28.9 percent of these were only slightly discrepant); and 7.9 percent (236) reporting more opportunities than they wanted.

As Table 9 shows, the child's perceptions of fit between real-ideal decision making opportunities at Time II are correlated with their reports of actual practices at Time I although the relationships are not strong. High parent-child conflict at Time I is negatively correlated with congruence between real-ideal opportunities on How Decisions are made ($r = -.238, p < .0001$) and with Frequency of Child Participation in Decision Making ($r = -.186, p < .0001$) at Time II. The High Parent Control factor is, likewise, negatively correlated with these two perceptions of fit ($r = -.108, p < .0001$) and ($r = -.126, p < .0001$) respectively. On the other hand, children who report more participation in

decision making at Time I perceive a more positive fit of opportunity and need at Time II. The Child Participation factor correlates .25 and .20 with the two perceptions of fit.

Study II

Comparisons of Decision-Making Styles in One-Parent Mother Headed Families with Two-Parent Families

During the last decade we have witnessed a doubling in the numbers of children living with divorced mothers. Estimates based on recent trends suggest that as many as one-half of the children born in 1979 will spend a significant part (an average of six years) of their developing years in a single-parent family (Bane, 1976; Furstenburg et al., 1984; Glick, 1979). Numbers alone should dictate some research on parent-child processes in this prevalent family form.

A small body of research has looked specifically at various ways in which children in one-parent homes may be pushed to an earlier maturity (Weiss, 1979) in the form of an increased domestic role, less parental chaperonage, or a greater confidant role with their mothers than their peers from two-parent families. Devall, Stoneman, and Brody (1986) found that while early adolescents from one-parent homes were not taking on more domestic duties, they did report a significantly greater confidant role than their two-parent peers, a report confirmed in the data from mothers. Fox and Inazu (1982) studied a group of 449 mothers and their 14- to 16-year-old daughters. They found more reciprocal confiding between mother and daughter in one-parent homes. They also found limited evidence that there is less parental chaperonage of daughters but only in black one-parent families.

Dornbusch, Carlsmith, Bushwall, Ritter, Leiderman, Hastorf, and Gross (1985) used data from a nationally representative sample of 12-17 year-olds to compare the decision-making reports of adolescents from one-parent mother headed and two-parent households. Controlling for family income and parent education, they found that decision-making in mother headed families was characterized by a joint parent-child or an independent child style in the choice of friends, clothes, and on issues of curfew and spending money. In contrast, it was only in two parent homes that adolescents reported their parents alone decided such issues. When these aggregate differences were analyzed separately for girls and boys, the data revealed more information about parent-

their adolescents from divorced and separated families and a control group of mothers and their adolescents from two-parent families. The control group of two-parent families reported a similar family income (less than \$20,000) and a similar educational level for the mother (high school completion or some college) as the mothers in one-parent families reported. Only divorced and separated mothers, not divorced fathers or never married mothers are included in these analyses.

Parents were also asked two general questions regarding their beliefs about including children in major or difficult problems that the family faces. These items were:

- 1) When our family faces a serious problem or decision, I think it is important to discuss it with the children.
- 2) I think it is important to protect the children from any problems we may face as parents.

Results and Discussion

Girls in one-parent mother headed households report the least conflict in parent-child relationships. This is true when compared to girls from two-parent homes $F(1, 158) = 5.65, p < .02$; boys from two-parent homes $F(1, 159) = 6.0, p < .02$ as well as in comparison with boys in one-parent homes $F(1, 176) = 7.13, p < .009$. This group also reports the most opportunities for participating in decision-making, although the differences are only significant when compared with boys in one-parent homes $F(1, 176) = 4.67, p < .03$. Finally, both girls and boys in one-parent homes report less parent control than their peers in two-parent families $F(1, 289) = 5.96, p < .02$ and again, girls in these families report less parent control than boys, though the differences are not significant. (See Table 10).

Since the questions in the family decision-making measure that refer to parents are not asked separately for mothers and fathers, children in two-parent homes are answering for both parents whereas those in one-parent homes are, for the most part, responding for the mother only. Thus, although both daughters and sons in one-parent homes are reporting less parent control than their peers in two-parent homes, this may reflect lower parent control by mothers as a group. The higher reports of parental control by students from two-parent families may reflect their perceptions of paternal control. Nonetheless, the family decision-making environment that young adolescents in

child decision-making and chaperonage in different family structures. Daughters in two-parent homes were more likely than their one-parent counterparts to report that "parent alone" makes decisions whereas sons from female-headed homes were more likely than their counterparts to report independence in decision-making.

These studies were conducted with an older sample of adolescents. Yet, we would expect that the milieu of the one-parent home is likely to be fostering more discussions over important issues, more joint parent-child decision making and less conflict than the two-parent home. The absence of another adult places a certain psychological burden on the remaining parent and the child in middle or late childhood is more likely than an age peer from a two-parent home to be invited into discussions of "family" issues or to share the parent's concerns, plans, etc.

The hypotheses of Study II are:

- 1) Mothers and young adolescents from one-parent families will report less conflict and more child participation in family decision-making than mothers and young adolescents in two-parent families.
- 2) This effect is expected to be stronger for daughters than for sons in one-parent mother-headed families.

Past work has demonstrated that as boys reach the apex of their pubescence they take on a more assertive role, interrupting their mothers in conversations and deferring to their fathers (Steinberg, 1981). In one-parent mother-headed families it may become increasingly difficult for mothers to chaperone and enforce rules with their sons. Although boys in fifth/sixth grade are not well advanced in their pubertal development, girls are also likely to be judged by their mothers as more mature than boys. Thus, it is expected that mothers in one-parent families will report more conflict with their sons than with their daughters.

Finally, the parent's general belief regarding confiding with children about more serious issues that the family or parent faces is expected to be stronger in the one-parent family.

Methods

The measures used in this study are the same as those discussed in Study I. The sample is a sub-group of the sample discussed in Study I. It includes 180 mothers and

one-parent homes experience is perceived as having less parent control.

There are fewer differences in the mothers' reports of their family decision-making practices. There are no main or interaction effects of child sex or family structure on mothers' reports of parental control or child participation. On the parent-child conflict factor single-parent mothers of sons report more conflict than single-parent mothers of daughters $F(1,178) = 6.44, p < .01$ and than mothers of sons in two-parent homes $F(1,131) = 5.64, p < .02$.

Finally, mothers in one-parent families were significantly more likely $F(1,293) = 3.82, p < .05$ than mothers in two-parent families to endorse the belief that children should know about and be able to discuss serious problems that the parents/family faces.

The results of this study extend earlier work on parent-child relationships in one parent homes to a younger age group. The reports of higher parent control in two parent homes and more child participation in one parent homes in this study is consistent with the Dornbusch et al. (1985) findings among 12-17 year olds.

The sex differences in one parent homes in the present study show a somewhat different pattern. Sons from one parent homes in the Dornbusch et al. study report the most independence in deciding issues whereas, in the present study, it was daughters in one parent families who reported the most participation in decision making as well as the least conflict with parents. These patterns coupled with the single parent mothers' reports of greater conflict with their sons may highlight a developmental trend. Sons at this age may be demanding greater independence and thus experiencing more conflict with their mothers. In their adolescent years, it appears that they have achieved such independence.

Children in this study were not asked about their confidant role with mothers. However, single parent mothers show a stronger commitment than mothers in two parent homes to informing and including their children in discussions of serious issues. This is consistent with Fox and Inazu's (1982) report of greater reciprocal confiding between mothers and 14- to 16-year-old daughters in one parent homes. Again, the present study included a younger (10 - 12 year old) age group and suggests that the definitions of appropriate issues for parent-child discourse may differ in one and two parent families.

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TABLE 1

Parents' Perceptions of Family Decision-Making

Dimensionality and Internal Consistency Reliability

ITEMS IN COMPOSITE	Factor Loading	Alpha
Factor I: Parent-Child Conflict		
I worry that my child is up to something I won't like.	.55	.50
I trust my child to do what I expect without checking up on him/her.	-.47	
My child does not know why s/he is supposed to do what I tell him/her to do.	.36	
My child often argues with me about my rules and decisions for him/her.	.46	
Factor II: Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control		
.48		
I want my child to follow my directions even if s/he disagrees with my reasons.	.58	.48
My child has to ask my permission to do most things.	.42	
I do not like my child to disagree with me if my friends are around.	.46	
Factor III: Child Participation		
.48		
In general how do you and your child arrive at decisions? (High score indicates parent gives opinion but child decides)	.58	.52
How often does your child take part in making family decisions that concern her/himself? (High score indicates often)	.52	

TABLE 2

Parent Composites

Dimensionality and Internal Consistency Reliability

ITEMS IN COMPOSITE	Factor Loading	Alpha
PARENTS' PRESENT PERCEPTIONS OF CHILD		
Factor I: Mature Child		.47
My child acts very mature for his/her age.	.46	
My child is even tempered and not moody.	.40	
My child gives up when faced with a difficult problem.	-.47	
Factor II: Immature difficult child		
My child keeps to him/herself or tends to withdraw.	.48	
My child gives up when faced with a difficult problem.	.45	

TABLE 3

Parent Composites

Dimensionality and Internal Consistency Reliability

ITEMS IN COMPOSITE	Factor Loading	Alpha
PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS FOR ADOLESCENCE		
Factor I: Normal Adolescent Development		.64
I expect that when my child reaches junior/middle school ...		
- s/he will take on more responsibilities.	.45	
- s/he will be more concerned about his/her appearance.	.61	
- s/he will become more involved in social activities.	.67	
- s/he will take school work more seriously.	.43	
- s/he will socialize more with members of the opposite sex.	.46	
Factor II: Troubled Adolescence		.63
I expect that when my child reaches junior/middle school...		
- s/he will be more difficult to get along with.	.58	
- s/he will be clumsier.	.47	
- s/he will be less interested in school.	.56	
- s/he will be more concerned with what his/her friends think than what I think.	.59	

TABLE 4

Young Adolescents' Perceptions of Family Decision-Making

Dimensionality and Internal Consistency Reliability

ITEMS IN COMPOSITE	Factor Loading	Alpha
Factor I: Parent-Child Conflict		.66
My parents worry that I'm up to something they won't like.	.46	
My parents get upset if I disagree with them when their friends are around.	.41	
I do not know why I'm supposed to do what my parents tell me to do.	.48	
I count on my parents to solve many of my problems for me.	.32	
I have a lot of fights with my parents about their rules and decisions for me.	.59	
My parents treat me more like a little kid than like an adult.	.57	
Factor II: Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control		.56
My parents want me to follow their directions even if I disagree with their reasons.	.51	
My parents worry that I'm up to something they won't like.	.40	
I have to ask my parents for permission to do most things.	.40	
My parents get upset if I disagree with them when their friends are around.	.44	
Factor III: Child Participation		.48
My parents treat me more like a little kid than like an adult.	-.37	
How are most decisions made in your family? (High score indicates Child decides; Low score indicates parent decides).	.42	
How often do you take part in making family decisions that concern you? (High score = often).	.39	
My parents are (1=very strict, 4=not at all strict).	.37	

N's range from 3166 to 3203.

TABLE 5

Zero Order Correlations
Parents' Perceptions of Child as a Person and Family Decision-Making Environment

		MOTHERS			
Family Practices	Perceptions of child		Expectations for Child's Adolescence		
	Child's Mature	Child's Withdrawn	Normal Adolescent Adjustment	Troubled/Maladaptive Adjustment	
Parent-Child Conflict	*** -.43	*** .30	-.04	*** .28	
Child Participation	*** .25	*** -.16	* .07	** -.08	
Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control	-.04	-.04	** .08	.03	
		FATHERS			
Family Practices	Child's Mature	Child's Withdrawn	Normal Adolescent Adjustment	Troubled/Maladaptive Adjustment	
	*** -.43	*** .29	-.06	*** .25	
Child Participation	*** .24	*** -.17	* .09	** -.09	
Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control	* -.08	.06	* .07	.05	

* p < .01

** p < .001

*** p < .0001

N's for mothers range from 1904 to 1956

N's for fathers range from 1244 to 1326

TABLE 6

Zero Order Correlations
Congruence of Mothers' and Fathers' Perceptions of their Child
and Expectations for their Child's Adolescence

		MOTHERS			
FATHERS		Perceptions of child		Expectations for Child's Adolescence	
		Child's Mature	Child's Withdrawn	Normal Adolescent Adjustment	Troubled/Maladaptive Adjustment
Child's Mature		.57**	-.41**	.11**	-.18**
Child's Withdrawn/ Moody		-.42**	.57**	-.13**	.23**
Expectations for Adolescence					
Normal Adjustment		.07	-.08	.31**	.02**
Troubled Adjustment		-.15**	.15**	-.02	.35**

** p < .0001

TABLE 7

Congruence within the Family on
Perceptions of Family Decision-Making

		MOTHERS		
FATHERS	Parent-Child Conflict	Child Participation	Authoritarian Parent /	Authoritarian Parent /
	Parent-Child Conflict	.51**	-.19**	.06**
	Child Participation	-.20**	.40**	-.16**
	Authoritarian Parent	.07	-.13**	.34**
FATHERS				
YOUNG ADOLESCENT				
	Parent-Child Conflict	.23**	-.13**	.07
	Child Participation	-.11**	.16**	-.05
	Authoritarian Parent	.07	-.08*	.11**
MOTHERS				
	Parent-Child Conflict	.21**	-.10**	.06
	Child Participation	-.11**	.12**	-.10**
	Authoritarian Parent	.06	-.06	.14**

* p < .001 N's for mother-father response pairs range from 1228 - 1263

**p < .0001 N's for father-child response pairs range from 1320 - 1337

N's for mother-child response pairs range from 1877 - 1940

Table 8

Zero-Order Correlations of
 Young Adolescent's Perceptions of Family Decision-Making Practices (Wave I)
 with their Perceptions of FIT between Real and Ideal Decision-Making (Wave II)

Young Adolescent's Perception of Fit	Family Decision-Making Styles		
	Parent- Child Conflict	Child Partici- pation	High Parent Control
How Decisions are Made 1=Parents Decide 4=I Decide	-.215**	.234**	-.10**
How Often You Take Part in Decisions	-.166**	.189**	-.123**

1=High Discrepancy between Real-Ideal Opportunities
 4=High Congruence between Real-Ideal Opportunities

** p < .0001

N's range from 2925 - 2981

Table 9

Zero-Order Correlations of
 Young Adolescent's Perceptions of Family Decision-Making Practices (Wave I)
 with their Perceptions of FIT between Real and Ideal Decision-Making (Wave II)

<u>Young Adolescent's Perception of Fit</u>	<u>Family Decision-Making Styles</u>		
	Parent- Child Conflict	Child Participa- tion	High Parent Control
How Decisions are Made 1=Parents Decide 4=I Decide	-.238**	.249**	-.108**
How Often You Take Part in Decisions	-.186**	.199**	-.126**

1=High Discrepancy between Real-Ideal Opportunities
 4=High Congruence between Real-Ideal Opportunities

Excludes 250 cases who say they are getting more opportunities to make
 decisions than they think they should have

** p < .0001

N's range from 2664 - 2731

TABLE 10

Family Decision Making Comparisons
One-Parent and Two-Parent Families

Family Practices	YOUNG ADULESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS			
	One-Parent Families		Two-Parent Families	
	With Daughters N = 103	With Sons N = 75	With Daughters N = 57	With Sons N = 58
Parent-Child Conflict *	1.95	2.20	2.19	2.19
Child Participation	2.45	2.23	2.36	2.36
Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control +	2.56	2.64	2.81	2.78
MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS				
Parent-Child Conflict ++	2.01	2.15	2.10	2.00
Child Participation	2.74	2.75	2.68	2.72
Authoritarian Parent/ High Parent Control	2.76	2.74	2.74	2.69
Important to Include Children + Discussion of Serious Problems Family or parent Faces	4.17	4.06	4.00	3.86

+ p < .10

++ p < .05

* p < .025

Perceptions of Fit Real-Ideal Participation in Family Decision Making

