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Parent-Child Emotion Talk in Relation to Parental Socialization and Emotion Regulation: The Role of Parent and Child Gender

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Parent-Child Emotion Talk in Relation to Parental Socialization and Emotion Regulation:

The Role of Parent and Child Gender

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Bachelors of Arts in Psychology from
The College of William and Mary

by

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Accepted for Honors

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Abstract

A growing literature base has shown that parents influence children's emotional development, providing them with the skills necessary to regulate their emotions in adaptive ways that are related to psychosocial functioning. Few studies, however, have investigated the contribution of fathers, nor how child age and gender are affected by parental emotion socialization. The current research used parent-child conversations about emotions to understand the role of parental socialization strategies and their relations to children's emotion regulation and psychological functioning. Participants were 60 two-parent families with 68 children (38 sons) in grades 3-5. Children talked with each parent about a past anger- and sadness-provoking event. Video conversations were transcribed and processed using text-analysis software. Parents and children completed measures of children's psychosocial functioning, and children reported on parents' socialization strategies. Findings demonstrated that fathers talk more than mothers about anger, but the opposite pattern emerged for sadness. Interestingly, parents did not talk to their sons and daughters differently, but children's emotion discussion patterns varied as a function of child gender and age. More significant differences occurred for older than younger children, suggesting that these patterns may have been established in earlier development. Children's word use was associated with perceived positive socialization; the opposite was true for parent word use. Mediation analyses indicated that the more children discussed emotions, the more likely they were to successfully manage emotions and have a lower likelihood of internalizing symptoms. Implications from these results include the notion that parents should encourage children to discuss emotions but actively listen rather than talk as children articulate their feelings because it provides more opportunities for children to develop the necessary skills for successful emotion management.

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Parent-Child Emotion Talk in Relation to Parental Socialization and Emotion Regulation:
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Emotion Regulation as a Construct

Emotion regulation has been a steady burgeoning area of study with 82.8% of the research on this subject being published within the past decade (Adrian, Zeman, & Veits, 2011). Despite this growth, researchers have not yet developed an agreed-upon definition of emotion regulation or determined its relationship with emotion. Debate exists between those who argue that emotion precedes emotion regulation (Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004) and those who argue that emotion does not exist in an unregulated form (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004). Larsen and Prizmic-Larsen (2006) posit that the definition of emotion regulation, as with all constructs, depends on the methods used to measure it.

Even with these conceptual differences, Thompson and Meyer (2007) state that researchers share a common intuitive understanding of what is meant by emotion regulation. Components of emotion regulation are shared by some if not most emotion researchers. For example, most researchers believe that emotion regulation is context dependent (Campos et al., 2004) and that efforts to regulate emotion cannot be deemed good nor bad in and of themselves but rather, can only be evaluated within its context. People may use certain regulatory strategies to achieve their own personal goals, but others may view these strategies as maladaptive (Gross & Thompson, 2007). These ideas suggest researchers think of emotion regulation as a tool a person uses to successfully adapt to his or her environment (Campos et al., 2004). This approach to conceptualizing emotion suggests that both positive and negative emotions can be regulated through increasing or decreasing their intensity and frequency (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

Another theoretical tenet is that emotion regulation can occur at different junctures in the emotion process. According to Campos and colleagues (2004), emotion regulation takes place whenever emotion is activated and is even present before the emotion manifests in behavioral, including expressive, ways. Even those who may not necessarily agree with this unitary model support the multifaceted nature of emotion regulation (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

In order for independent studies of emotion regulation to be useful and contribute to the literature, researchers must provide their working definition of emotion regulation. For the purposes of this study, Thompson's (1994) definition was used, as many other similar studies using child samples have found it suitable to their research (Adrian, Zeman, & Veits, 2011; Cassano & Zeman, 2010; Eisenberg & Morris, 2002; Eisenberg et al., 1999). According to Thompson (1994), "emotion regulation consists of the extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, especially in their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish one's goals" (pp. 27-28). This definition includes the goal-oriented aspect of emotion regulation as well as its multifaceted nature. Emotion regulation can occur in the moment of an emotionally arousing event, or it can be used as a preemptive tactic to avoid or reduce the impact of stressful situations. Another important concept included is the idea that emotion regulation can transpire extrinsically and intrinsically, attributing significance to outside influences as well as internal forces. These aspects of emotion regulation are especially salient to parental socialization of emotion.

Parental Emotion Socialization

Parents utilize a variety of methods to socialize their children's emotional expression. There are two global methods: direct and indirect socialization (Zeman, Cassano, & Adrian, 2013). In direct socialization, parents instruct their children on how they should express their emotions and the appropriate contexts in which they should do so. The present study examined indirect socialization which includes parental modeling of emotions and parental response to children's expression of emotion (contingencies). According to the modeling hypothesis, children learn culturally appropriate and family-specific ways to respond to emotional situations based, in part, on how their parents respond to emotion-provoking stimuli (Morris, Silk, Steinberg, Myers, & Robinson, 1997). Research on the effects of parental emotional expressivity on children's emotion regulation indicate that more expressive parents provide more varied opportunities for children to learn about emotions, which would in turn help them regulate emotions more flexibly across different contexts (Morris et al., 1997). However, expressivity alone does not necessarily promote healthy emotion regulation development. High maternal negative expressivity was linked to lower mother-rated emotion regulation abilities in their children (Ramsden & Hubbard, 2002). In this case emotion valence mediated the effects of expressivity, which led to a less desirable outcome for negative emotionality

Another factor influencing children's emotion regulation is parents' response to their children's expression of emotion. According to meta-emotion theory proposed by Gottman, Katz, and Hooven (1997), the way parents respond to their children's emotion and the way they manage their own emotional expression depends on their meta-emotion philosophy, that is, "an organized set of feelings and thoughts about one's own emotions and one's children's emotions" (p. 1). There are two general types of meta-emotion

styles: emotion-coaching and emotion-dismissing. Emotion coaching parents are cognizant of their own emotions and those of their children. When their children experience negative emotions, they use the situation as a teaching opportunity in which they can discuss their emotions and potentially modify them in a constructive way. Emotion dismissing parents view expressing and experiencing negative emotions as harmful. Their goal is to eliminate the emotion and therefore they may use various strategies to do so, such as diverting children's attention away from the emotion, punishing them for expressing the emotion, or even ignoring the children and their emotions altogether. In any case, children with emotion dismissing parents have fewer opportunities than children with emotion coaching parents to learn and practice adaptive emotion regulation strategies (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996).

These emotion philosophies are enacted and observed through parents' use of contingencies in which they set boundaries for acceptable emotion management and enforce those boundaries through the reinforcement or punishment of children's emotion expression and behavior (Zeman, Cassano, & Adrian, in press). A longitudinal study examined the parental socialization strategies used with children ages 6-8 and their effects on their regulation abilities at ages 10-12. Emotion dismissing responses from parents, particularly distress or punishment of emotional expressivity, were linked to inappropriate or avoidant emotion regulation strategies and various problem behaviors (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Murphy, 1996; Eisenberg et al., 1999). Lunkenheimer, Shields, and Cortina (2007) found that even though parental negative reactions contribute to child regulatory difficulties in middle childhood, their positive reactions contribute to their

enhanced emotion regulation skills. Therefore, parental responses to emotions are particularly salient to children's later successful emotion management.

Due to the importance of parent strategies, determining the individual differences that affect the use of these strategies are crucial to understanding the development of children's emotion regulation. Age or developmental level of the child also can influence how parents socialize emotion in their children (Zeman et al., in press). The role parents play in children's emotion regulation differs greatly from infancy to adolescence. Infants have only basic emotion regulation capabilities and depend on their parents to manage most of their emotions by, for example, soothing them when they are distressed or calming them when they are excited (Thompson & Meyer, 2007). In early childhood, children are able to self-regulate, but the parents are the primary source of external influence on their emotion development (Zeman et al., in press). Once children reach middle childhood, peers play a more salient role in this process. By the time they reach 10 years, children's regulatory capacities are approaching adult level sophistication. However, parents still influence emotional well-being by providing support throughout the child's development (Thompson & Meyer, 2007).

Child age also affects parents' beliefs about children's emotions. Cassano, Perry-Parrish, and Zeman (2007) found that parents perceived younger children (grades 1 and 2) as displaying more inappropriate emotional behavior than older children (grades 4 and 5). Accordingly they reported a desire for more change in younger children's ability to display emotion in an appropriate manner. This study also found age affects in the strategies employed by parents. Mothers reported being more likely to use expressive encouragement with increasing child age, whereas the converse was true for fathers.

Parent and child gender also influence parental contingencies. Some of these differences may be accounted for by cultural display rules. Fathers are particularly inclined to have beliefs about emotions that align with stereotypical gender patterns. For example, fathers are more likely than mothers to believe it is appropriate for girls to express sadness and boys to inhibit it, but that it is appropriate for boys to express anger and girls to inhibit it (Cassano et al., 2007). Evidence exists to support the notion that girls are indeed more likely to express sadness than are boys. This may be related to cultural rules, in that girls express sadness because they expect to receive acceptance and understanding (Zeman & Garber, 1996). In another study, girls reported that they are less likely to express anger than boys. However, girls reported expectancies of more supportive responses than boys by parents to their expression of anger (Fuchs & Thelen, 1988).

Although it may be more culturally acceptable for boys to express anger, they inhibit this emotion more than girls in parent-child interaction. This may be due to the strategies employed by parents in socializing their children. According to research by Garside and Klimes-Dougan (2002), sons reported retrospectively being punished significantly more often than girls for their expression of anger. When children express general negative emotion, parents encourage distraction and problem-solving strategies more for sons than for daughters (Morris et al., 1997). Either through punishment or distraction, parents seem to be encouraging sons to inhibit their expression of emotion, which would lead to a different path of development of regulation strategies than daughters. For example, in terms of methods of regulation, girls are more skilled at substituting one emotional display for another, whereas boys tend to neutralize their

emotional expressions (Zeman, Cassano, Perry-Parrish, & Stegall, 2006). Implications from these findings support that differing parental socialization strategies have important effects on children's developing emotion regulation capabilities.

Emotion regulation capabilities play an important role in children's social functioning and possible development of psychopathology. Previous research has linked emotion dysregulation to poor social functioning and internalizing symptoms, i.e., depression or anxiety (Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema, & Schweizer, 2010). Eisenberg et al. (1999), using a sample of children in third to sixth grade, found that children with internalizing symptoms experience sadness more frequently and intensely and are less self-aware of their emotions compared to controls. According to another study using a middle childhood sample, internalizing symptoms were more likely to be present in children reporting high levels of sadness dysregulation, low sadness coping, and high anger inhibition and dysregulation (Zeman, Shipman, & Suveg, 2002).

The two types of parental socialization styles previously discussed (emotion-coaching and emotion-dismissing) may provide insight into the processes underlying the development of internalizing symptoms. Meta-emotion philosophy has been linked to depressive symptoms in adolescence. For example, Katz and Hunter (2007) examined the effect of mothers' meta-emotion style on their children's internalizing symptoms and found that mothers who reported employing emotion dismissing strategies had children with more depressive symptoms. Observational studies of conversations between parents and their depressed children have found that there are different interaction patterns with different emotions. Parental reinforcement (positive and negative) and low levels of anger in response to adolescents' sadness expression were associated with depressive

symptoms, whereas symptoms were associated with reciprocation in response to adolescents' anger expression. Lack of parental reinforcement of positive behavior was also associated with depression (Schwarz, Sheeber, Dudgeon, & Allen, 2012). These results demonstrate the connection between parental socialization practices and internalizing disorders, but further research is needed to understand how parental strategies in response to children's expression of emotion contribute to different developmental trajectories, as well as to elucidate the directionality of influence.

Parent-child Emotion Talk

Emotion discussions between parents and children provide an important avenue for emotion socialization, and therefore examining parent-child emotion conversations will be useful for understanding the pathways to varying outcomes between children with adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation capabilities. Frequency of emotion talk has been linked to a variety of aspects of emotion regulation, including child's identification of emotions, acquisition of culturally appropriate display rules for expression, and regulation of negative affect (Zeman et al., 2006). Gentzler and colleagues (2005) provide an example of how conversations influence children's emotion regulation. A sample of fifth-grade children and their parents answered questionnaires regarding parental response to emotions and participated in a dyadic discussion task about a past event that was upsetting to the child. Parental reactions to children's emotions and emotion openness were related to children's coping on self-report and observational measures, and for both mothers and fathers. According to this study, parent-child emotion talk provides context for parents to offer coping suggestions. If parents are open with their child about emotionally significant topics and accepting of the child's negative

affect, this approach will likely increase the child's support-seeking behavior (a form of coping). This study illustrates the importance of considering bidirectionality of effects in emotion socialization such that parents who encourage their children to be open about their feelings will result in children who initiate emotion discussions with parents.

Forming these approach to emotional expressivity in middle childhood may be beneficial for continuing healthy emotional development that may help with the sometimes stressful transition to adolescence with its increasingly complex social and emotional demands.

A prolific amount of research on emotion socialization has been conducted using preschool samples, indicating that patterns in emotion conversation may be established early in development. For example, gender stereotypical norms of emotion discussion were found in a study examining mother-child conversations (Fivush, Brotman, Buckner, & Goodman, 2000). The dyads discussed times when the child felt sad, angry, and scared. Mothers used more emotion words and conversed more frequently than did fathers, consistent with previous research. Both fathers and mothers discussed the emotional aspects of sad events with daughters more than with sons, even though there were no differences in the amount sons and daughters talked about sadness, indicating that mothers and fathers discuss emotions differently with their children. This pattern that is established in the preschool years may contribute to girls expressing sadness more often than boys in later development as they may be more likely to perceive that parents are receptive to their emotional expressivity.

Frequency of emotion words in parent-child discussions also differ as a function of child and parent sex. A study on early adolescents in 6th and 8th grades illustrates some of these gender differences evident in later development (Aldrich & Tenenbaum, 2006).

Consistent with cultural expectations, daughters used more emotion words than sons, and mothers used more emotion words than fathers. Also, sons and daughters talked about sadness with equal frequency with mothers.

The findings of these studies indicate the importance of examining the variations due to child age, as well as gender differences. Younger children express sadness more than older children (Morris et al., 2007). In the early childhood studies, children did not differ in the amount they discussed their emotions with parents. Using an early adolescent sample, Aldrich and Tenenbaum (2006) found differences in the amounts daughters and sons talked about emotions. It may be that as children grow older, differential treatment by parents manifests in the way children learn to discuss emotions, therefore, gender variations may be more apparent as children approach adolescence.

The Present Study

Based on the growing literature base that indicates the importance of parental socialization in the development of children's emotion regulation, the goal of the present study was to use parent-child conversations about emotions to examine the process of socialization using observational methodology. Theoretically, this approach will provide valuable information on how parental responses to children's negative emotions contribute to children's differing trajectories of emotion regulation skill. The present research utilized a multi-method, multi-source approach to elucidate the connections between parent and child sex, parental response contingencies, and children's emotion regulation.

The method employed by this study involved examining parent-child emotion conversations using a video-taped discussion task. Children discussed with each of their

parents past events that made them angry and another event that made them sad. These conversations were coded using *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count* software (LIWC; Pennebaker, Booth, & Francis, 2007) that indicates the word count for each speaker in each conversation. Words were categorized as indicative of a particular emotion, and then were presented as a proportion score for each discussion. Construct validity studies on this software demonstrate that LIWC measured emotion-word use is highly correlated with self-report and behavioral measures of emotions. These results suggest that emotion word use is an accurate reflection of people's feeling states (Slatcher, Vazire, & Pennebaker, 2008).

The emotion conversations were then examined in relation to self-report data on parental socialization strategies and children's emotion management. Children completed the *Emotions as Child* questionnaire (EAC; Magai, 1996) that provides information regarding perceptions of the types of emotion-coaching and emotion-dismissing strategies employed by parents. Parents completed the *Children's Emotion Management Scales* (P-CEMS; Zeman, Shipman, & Penza-Clyve, 2001), providing information on three facets of emotion management exhibited by children including (a) coping, or the adaptive management of negative emotion, (b) inhibition, or the over-regulation of negative emotion, and (c) dysregulation, or the under-control of negative emotion. To evaluate psychological adjustment, the presence of internalizing symptoms was evaluated using the internalizing scale of the parent-completed *Child Behavior Checklist* (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000) and the child completed *Children's Depression Inventory* (CDI; Kovacs, 1985).

A middle childhood age sample was chosen for this study because this age group is typically understudied despite the importance of this developmental stage in emotional development (Klimes-Dougan & Zeman, 2007). During middle childhood, children's emotion regulation capabilities become increasingly independent as they learn from their experiences with their parents on how to monitor, modify, and modulate their emotional reactions (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Previous research has also indicated that the skills developed in this stage play an important role in adolescence (Gentzler et al., 2005).

Of particular interest were child and parent sex differences in emotion conversation and socialization. If mothers and fathers employ different socialization strategies for their children, this would create different pathways of emotional development for sons and for daughters. For example, if daughters are encouraged by parents to discuss emotions more than sons, then they may have more opportunities than sons to develop emotion management skills and may be better at coping with future emotion-provoking situations (Fivush et al., 2000). The current study aimed to shed light on aspects of emotion conversations that are unique to each parent. Furthermore, this study examined the linkages between these strategies and the differences in sons' and daughters' emotion regulation capabilities, and the associations with children's internalizing symptoms. The inclusion of fathers provides an important addition to this topic, as they have only recently been included and studied in the emotion socialization literature, despite evidence indicating their unique and important role in children's emotional development (Cassano, Adrian, Veits, & Zeman, 2006). Discrete emotions were examined because according to the Functionalist theory of emotion, each emotion serves a specific purpose depending on the context and on an individual's goals (Campos,

Campos, & Barrett, 1989). Moreover, each emotion is socialized differently depending on child and parent sex (Aldrich & Tenenbaum, 2006). Sadness and anger were chosen specifically because of their potential links to internalizing disorders such as depression (Chaplin & Cole, 2005).

Hypotheses

Parent word use

Based on emotion regulation theory and results from previous studies, it was expected that mothers will have higher word counts and use more emotion words in discussions than fathers. Fathers will use more anger words and mothers will use more sadness words. Fathers will use more emotion words in anger discussions and mothers will use more emotion words in sadness discussions. Since fathers are more likely than mothers to conform to gender stereotypes about emotion expressivity (Cassano et al., 2007), they will use more emotion words in anger discussions with sons than with daughters and they will use more emotion words in sadness discussions with daughters than with sons.

Child word use

Children will talk more use more emotion words with mothers and with fathers. Due to findings from previous research which indicate that girls are more likely to express sadness and boys are more likely to express anger (Fuchs & Thelen, 1997; Zeman & Garber, 1996), sons will use more anger words and daughters will use more sadness words. Sons will use more emotion words in anger discussions and daughters will use more emotion words in sadness discussions.

Associations with socialization and emotion regulation

Parents who encourage their children to talk more about emotions will provide them more opportunities to articulate their feelings and develop emotion regulation skills (Gentzler et al., 2005). Parent and child word counts will be associated with greater likelihood of emotion-coaching and less likelihood of emotion-dismissing strategies. Further, families with greater emotion word count and who use more emotion words will have children with higher ratings of emotion regulation capabilities, and lower levels of internalizing symptoms. Conversely, families who talk less about emotions will be more likely to have children with dysregulated emotions, and more internalizing symptoms.

Method

Participants

Participants were 80 two-parent families with 89 children. However, due to missing data for 21 video-discussions, the final sample size was 60 heteronormative, two-parent families with 68 children (38 sons, 30 daughters), as eight families had two children who participated in the study and one family had three participating children. The children were in grades 3-5 (age range = 8-11, M age = 9.6 years, SD = 0.97). There were no age differences by child gender. For theoretical and statistical analytic reasons, children were placed into one of two age groups: 8-9 years (n = 36, 19 boys, 17 girls, M = 8.79 years, SD = 0.42) and 10-11 years (n = 32, 19 boys, 13 girls, M = 10.53 years, SD = 0.51).

The majority of children lived with their biological parents (91.2%) with 5.9% living with adoptive mothers, and 2.9% with stepmothers. Regarding father figures, 86.8% of children lived with their biological fathers, 5.9% with adoptive fathers, 5.9% with stepfathers, and 2.2% with their mother's boyfriend. For caregivers to be eligible for

participation, they must have lived with the child for the past two years. In terms of family structure, 91.2% of children resided with parents who were married, 5.9% had parents who were separated or divorced, and 2.9% had parents who were never married. Using the Hollingshead (1975) system to classify social status, the sample was primarily upper middle class ($M = 49.05$, $SD = 12.77$) with 72.0% of the families falling into the upper two strata of a 5-point categorical system ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.00$; see Table 1). SES did not vary by child gender nor age group. Concerning racial composition, the child sample was 79.4% Caucasian, 5.9% African American, 2.9% Hispanic or Latino, 2.9% Asian, and 8.8% of the sample identified as “Other.”

Measures

Family Demographic Information. Parents completed a form providing demographic information that included child and parent birth dates, race, and gender, as well as marital status and information used to calculate socioeconomic status (i.e., occupation and amount of education obtained, Hollingshead, 1975).

Child Report of Parental Emotion Socialization. The *Emotions as a Child* questionnaire (EAC; Magai, 1996) is a 15-item self-report measure of emotion socialization strategies employed by parents. The children’s version of the EAC was used because it was thought that their responses may be less susceptible to social desirability effects than parents rating their own parenting responses. Children rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all like me*, 5 = *a lot like me*) how likely it was that their parents would respond to their emotional behavior in certain ways. The five subscales of the EAC represent parental strategies of response to children’s anger or sadness displays: *Neglect*, *Override*, *Magnify*, *Reward/Support*, and *Punish*. The Neglect subscale measures the

extent to which parents ignore children's emotion expression (e.g., "When I was angry, my mother did not pay attention to my anger"). The Override subscale measures the degree to which parents respond to the children's emotions in a way that does not actually address the emotion (e.g., "When I was angry, my father told me I was not acting my age."). The Punishment subscale measures the degree to which parents are thought to provide negative consequences in response to their child's expressing anger or sadness (e.g., "When I was sad, my father let me know he did not approve of my being sad"). The Magnify subscale measures the extent to which parent's intensity of negative emotional expression increases as a response to their child's expression of negative emotion (e.g., "When I was sad, my mother got very upset"). The Reward subscale is a measure of the parent's acceptance and positive response to their children's anger or sadness (e.g., "When I was angry, my father asked me what made me angry"). Internal consistencies for these subscales were calculated for children's reports of mothers' anger and sadness reports and fathers' anger and sadness reports, and are as follows in that order: *Neglect*, $\alpha = .50, .50, .67, .39$; *Override*, $\alpha = .63, .54, .62, .48$; *Magnify*, $\alpha = .77, .59, .82, .87$; *Reward*, $\alpha = .75, .81, .83, .75$; *Punish*, $\alpha = .58, .57, .55, .63$.

Parent Report of Children's Emotion Management. The parent version of the Children's Emotion Management Scales for anger and sadness (P-CAMS, P-CSMS; Cassano et al., 2007) consists of 11 items for anger and 12 items for sadness and assesses children's methods of emotion management. Parents completed this measure because their perceptions of their child's emotion regulation efforts may be accurate than children's self-perceptions, particularly for the younger age group. Using a 3-point Likert scale, parents rated how often certain behaviors occurred and the perceptions of their

children's ability to manage their emotions when they experienced anger or sadness. Each scale contains three subscales: *Regulation Coping*, *Inhibition*, and *Dysregulation*. The *Regulation Coping* subscale is a measure of adaptive coping with anger and sadness consisting of four items for anger and five items for sadness (e.g., "My child doesn't let sad things get to him/her"). The *Inhibition* subscale measures over-control or suppression of emotion (e.g., "My child hides his/her anger/sadness") and consists of four items for anger and sadness, although in the present study, one item in the sadness questionnaire was dropped from analyses due to low internal consistency. The *Dysregulation* subscale assesses the under-controlled, potentially maladaptive expression of emotion (e.g., "My child does things like slam doors when he/she is mad") and consists of three items for both emotions, but one item was dropped also due to low reliability. Internal consistencies were calculated for mothers' anger and sadness reports and for fathers' anger and sadness reports, and are as follows in that order: *Regulation Coping*, $\alpha = .85, .72, .81, .58$; *Inhibition*, $\alpha = .82, .80, .79, .73$; *Dysregulation*, $\alpha = .66, .66, .61, .67$.

Child Report of Depressive Symptomology. The *Children's Depression Inventory* (CDI; Kovacs, 1992) is a 27-item self-report measure that assesses the presence of depressive symptoms in children. Children indicated which one of three statements that best describes how they felt over the past two weeks, with the three options corresponding to an absence of symptoms, a mild or probable symptom, or a definite symptom. For example, 0 = *I am sad once in awhile*, 1 = *I am sad many times*, 2 = *I am sad all the time*. The items were summed to yield a total depression score. Past research has established the scale's strong internal consistency and validity among nonclinical populations (Saylor, Finch, Spirito, & Bennett, 1984). For this sample, Cronbach's alpha

was .87. Means did not differ significantly by gender but 16.2% (11 children, 6 girls, 5 boys) received a raw score of 13 or higher, indicating borderline depression, and of that sample, 4 children (1 girl, 3 boys) received a score of 19 or higher, indicating clinical range (Kazdin, 1989; Masip, Amador-Campos, Gomez-Benito, & del, 2010).

Parent Report of Children's Psychological Functioning. The *Child Behavior Checklist* (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001) is a 118-item assessment measuring a variety of facets of children's psychological functioning, including emotional and behavioral problems. Parents are presented with statements and must rate on a 3-point scale to what extent these statements apply to their children (0 = *Not True*, 2 = *Very True or Often True*). For the purposes of this study, the broadband scores for the Internalizing subscale were used ($\alpha = .86$; 31 items), as well as the DSM syndrome scale pertaining to affective problems. Clinical range was defined as having a t-score of 60 or above (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001); for this sample, 42.6% of children (17 boys and 12 girls) fell into the borderline or clinical range for the Internalizing subscale. Clinical range for the DSM syndrome scales was defined as having a t-score of 65 and above (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). As such, 19.1% of the sample were in the clinical range for affective problems (8 boys and 5 girls), 16.2% for anxiety problems (9 boys and 2 girls), and 20.6% for somatic problems (8 boys and 6 girls).

Procedure

After obtaining IRB approval, participants were recruited from local elementary schools. Permission was received by the Executive Director of academic services for the local county to send letters home with children in the third, fourth, and fifth grades. Parents who were interested in participating then contacted the researchers to arrange a

meeting at the lab. After obtaining parents' consent and child assent, parents and their child were taken to separate rooms to complete the questionnaire packets. A trained research assistant read the questions aloud to the child and recorded the answers. The parents and child also participated in the discussion task, described below. After all of the conversations and questionnaires were completed, the participants were debriefed and compensated for their time.

Discussion Task. To examine the process of emotion socialization in real time, each parent-child dyad engaged in a video-taped discussion task, in which each pair discussed past events that the child indicated as being emotion provoking. Before meeting with their parent, children were asked to remember two times when they felt angry and two times when they felt sad. Children were instructed to select an event that fell into a 7-8 range on an intensity scale ranging from 1-10, 1 being the lowest intensity and 10 being the highest. These were written down on paper to be used as prompts for the child. Children then discussed an angry and sad event with each parent. That is, each parent discussed a different event with their child. The order of emotion type was counterbalanced.

The video-taped discussions were divided among nine students and transcribed. Transcriptions were then checked for accuracy by a student that did not originally transcribe the video. The transcription documents were processed using the LIWC (Pennebaker, Booth, & Francis, 2007). Each transcription of the emotion discussion task was separated according to speaker (mom, dad, child) and discrete emotion (anger, sadness) before being processed by the program. The LIWC analyzes written text files one word at a time, calculating the percentage of words that fall into categories

delineating 80 language dimensions, and generating output as a spreadsheet. As each word is processed, the program's dictionary file is searched, looking for a dictionary match with the current word. If the word matches the dictionary word, the appropriate word category scale (or scales) for that word is incremented. As the text file is being processed, counts for various structural composition elements (e.g., word count) are also added. For example, the word "cries" would be incremented in four word categories: sadness, negative emotion, overall affect, and verb. Aside from the descriptor variables, such as word count and words per sentence, output is presented as a percentage of total word use in each text sample. For the purposes of this study, only the word count descriptor variable and the categories pertaining to emotion were used. Specifically, the categories were: total word count, total emotion word count, anger, sadness, anxiety, negative tone, and positive tone.

Content Coding. The conversations were coded for content, based on the type of event the child chose as emotion-provoking by two trained undergraduate students. The content codes are presented below with the percent category endorsement for anger presented first, followed by sadness: (a) conflict with an adult (10.61%, 8.33%), (b) conflict with a peer (61.36%, 15.15%), (c) loss of a friend or family member (1.51%, 23.48%), (d) loss of an item (3.03%, 7.58%), (e) school problems (4.50%, 4.55%), (f) restrictions (9.84%, 3.03%), (g) an unpleasant experience (6.06%, 6.82%), (h) loss of a pet (0%, 25.0%), and (i) other (responses that did not fit a category) (3.03%, 6.06%). Coders examined the same transcriptions in groups of 10 until a reliability score above .90 was attained (after coding 30% of the transcriptions) before proceeding to the next group of 10 transcriptions. Disagreements were resolved by discussions.

Results

Data Reduction

Given the theoretical overlap in certain subscale constructs, their significant inter-correlations, and the low internal consistency for some of the EAC negative parenting scales (i.e., neglect), the subscales of *Neglect*, *Punish*, and *Magnify* were combined into an 8-item measure now termed Emotion Dismissing as previously defined in terms of meta-emotion theory (Gottman et al., 1996). Internal consistencies for fathers' dismissal of anger and sadness were .77 and .57, whereas alphas for mothers' dismissal of anger and sadness were .68 and .58 respectively. These three subscales were also significantly negatively correlated with the *Reward* subscale, a measure of emotion-coaching (see Table 1 and Table 2). The *Override* subscale had low internal consistency and often correlated with both measures of emotion-dismissing and emotion-coaching, and, therefore, was not included in analyses.

Word Count Descriptives and RM-ANOVAs

For each emotion discussion, word count percentages were calculated to determine who (parent or child) was driving the conversation. These were computed by dividing parent word counts by parent word counts plus child word counts (Table 3). The next step in analysis examined mothers' and fathers' emotion discussion patterns using RM-ANOVAs. Parent gender was the within-subjects factor, and child gender and child age were the between-subjects factors. Dependent variables were the word categories in the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC; Pennebaker, Booth, & Francis, 2007), which included word counts and percentages of emotion word use. Mauchly's test of sphericity was conducted to assess the homogeneity of variance of dependent variables.

The sphericity assumption was never violated, therefore the F -values are reported. Significant interactions were examined using t -tests. Means and standard deviations for mother and father conversation variables are reported in Table 4. Child conversation descriptives are reported in Table 5. Only significant findings are reported below.

Total word count. The 2 (child gender) x 2 (age group) x 2 (parent gender) repeated-measures ANOVA yielded no significant effects for parent total word count for anger and sadness discussions combined. Regarding the child portion of the discussion, there was a significant interaction between parent gender and age group for children's total word count, $F(1,57) = 5.82, p = .02, \eta^2 = .09$. This interaction was broken down by examining mother and father differences within each age group. Post-hoc analyses indicated a marginally significant finding in which older children talked more with their mothers than with their fathers across discussions, $t(28) = 1.74, p = .09$. There were no significant parental differences for the younger age group.

Total emotion words. There were no significant effects for the total percentage of emotion word use across discussions for both parents and children.

Total negative emotion words. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of parent gender for the total percentage of negative emotion words across both discussions, $F(1,56) = 7.62, p < .01, \eta^2 = .12$. Follow-up analyses indicated that fathers use more total negative emotion words than mothers in all discussions, $t(60) = -2.39, p = .02$. There were no significant effects for children's use of negative emotion words across discussions.

Total anger words. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded a significant main effect for parent gender was found for the total percentage of anger words, $F(1,56) =$

10.83, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .17$. Follow-up analyses indicated that fathers use more anger words than mothers across both emotion discussions $t(60) = 3.44$, $p = .001$. There were no significant effects for children's total use of anger words across discussions.

Total sadness words. There were no significant effects for the total percentage of sadness words across discussions for either parents or children

Anger Discussions

Word count. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded no significant effects for parents' word count in anger discussions. However, regarding the children's word count, there was a significant interaction between parent gender and age group, $F(1, 57) = 6.98$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .11$. The interaction was best explicated by examining parent gender differences within age group. Post-hoc analyses indicated that older children talk more with mothers than fathers in anger discussions, $t(28) = 2.33$, $p = .03$.

Emotion words. There were no significant effects for the use of emotion words in anger discussions for either parents or children.

Negative emotion words. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded a significant main effect for parent gender regarding parents' use of negative emotion words in anger discussions, $F(1, 56) = 49.33$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Follow-up analyses indicated that fathers used more negative emotion words than mothers in anger discussions, $t(62) = 7.00$, $p < .001$. There was a significant 3-way interaction for children's use of negative emotion words, $F(1, 64) = 3.62$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .06$. The interaction was best explicated by examining mother and father differences within gender within each age group. For boys within the older age group, post-hoc analyses indicated that they used more negative emotion words with mothers than with fathers, $t(12) = -2.72$, $p = .02$. There were no other

significant effects for the younger age group or for girls.

Anger words. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of parent gender for parents' use of anger words, $F(1,56) = 34.12, p < .01, \eta^2 = .04$. Follow-up analyses indicated that fathers use more anger words than mothers in anger discussions $t(62) = 5.98, p < .001$. Regarding children's use of anger words, there was a significant 3-way interaction between parent gender, child gender, and child age group, $F(1, 64) = 4.00, p = .05, \eta^2 = .06$. The interaction was best explicated by examining mother and father differences within gender within age group. For boys within the older age group, they used more anger words in anger discussions with their mothers than with their fathers, $t(12) = -1.85, p = .08$. There were no other significant findings.

Sadness words. There were no significant effects for the percentage of sadness words in anger discussions for either parents or children.

Sadness Discussions

Word count. There were no significant effects for word count in sadness discussions for either parents or children.

Emotion words. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded no significant effects for parents' emotion word use in sadness discussions. For children's emotion word use, there was a significant main effect for parent gender, $F(1, 64) = 4.65, p = .04, \eta^2 = .07$. Follow-up analyses indicated that children use more emotion words with mothers than with fathers in sadness discussions, $t(67) = 2.41, p = .02$.

Negative emotion words in sadness discussions. The 2 x 2 x 2 RM-ANOVA yielded a significant interaction between parent gender and age group for parents' percentage of negative emotion words used in sadness discussions $F(1,56) = 4.47, p =$

.04, $\eta^2 = .07$. Interactions were best explicated by examining mother and father differences within each age group. Post-hoc analyses indicated that mothers used more negative emotion words with younger children than with older children in sadness discussions, $t(36) = 2.10, p = .04$. There was a significant 3-way interaction between parent gender, child gender, and child age group for children's use of negative emotion words, $F(1,65) = 4.97, p = .03, \eta^2 = .07$. Interactions were explicated by examining mother and father differences within gender within age group. Girls within the younger age group used more negative emotion words with mothers than with fathers in sadness discussions, $t(20) = 1.97, p = .06$. There were no significant effects for the older girls nor for boys.

Anger words in sadness discussions. A significant main effect emerged using the $2 \times 2 \times 2$ RM-ANOVA for parents' percentage of anger words, $F(1, 56) = 7.42, p < .01, \eta^2 = .12$. Post-hoc analyses indicated that fathers used more anger words than mothers in sadness discussions, $t(62) = 2.73, p = .01$. There were no significant effects for children's use of anger words in sadness discussions.

Sadness words in sadness discussions. The $2 \times 2 \times 2$ RM-ANOVA yielded a significant interaction of child age group and parent gender regarding parents' percentage of sadness words used in sadness discussions, $F(1, 56) = 5.01, p = .03, \eta^2 = .08$. Examining mother and father differences within gender and age group indicated that mothers use more sadness words with younger children than with older children in sadness discussions, $t(36) = -2.04, p = .05$. There were no age group effects for fathers. There were no significant effects for children's use of sadness words in sadness discussions.

Correlations

The next phase in the analysis examined the relations between emotion discussions and children's report of parental socialization strategies. Correlations were conducted between the LIWC variables and the children's report of the *Emotions as a Child* (Magai, 1996) questionnaire within child gender and age groups.

Parent emotion talk with children's report of parental socialization

Mothers' conversations with boys. Mothers' emotion word use in anger discussions was negatively correlated with mothers' reported anger coaching in the older age group, $r(36) = -.52, p = .04$. Mothers' negative emotion word use in anger discussions was negatively correlated with mothers' sadness dismissing for the younger age group, $r(36) = -.68, p = .004$, and the same pattern was found for mothers' anger word use in anger discussions as well, $r(36) = -.52, p = .04$.

Fathers' conversations with boys. Fathers' emotion word use in anger discussions was negatively correlated with fathers' use of anger coaching in the older age group, $r(36) = -.54, p = .03$. There were no significant findings for relations between fathers' word use and younger boys' reports of socialization.

Mothers' conversations with girls. Mothers' negative emotion word use in anger discussions was negatively associated with mothers' anger support for the older age group, $r(28) = -.76, p = .004$, and the same relation was found for mothers' anger word use in anger discussions, $r(28) = -.75, p = .01$. Mothers' use of negative emotion words in sadness discussions was negatively associated with mothers' sadness coaching in the older age group, $r(28) = -.61, p = .04$. There were no significant findings for the relation between mothers' word use and younger girls' reports of socialization.

Fathers' conversations with girls. Fathers' sadness word use in anger discussions was negatively associated with fathers' anger coaching in the younger age group, $r(28) = -.53, p = .05$. There were no significant findings for relations between fathers' word use and older girls' reports of socialization.

Child emotion talk with their reports of parental socialization

Boys' conversations with mothers. Emotion word use with mothers across discussions was positively correlated with mothers' sadness dismissing in the younger age group, $r(36) = .55, p = .02$. Sadness word use with mothers across discussions was negatively correlated with mothers' sadness coaching for older boys, $r(36) = -.51$. The same pattern was found for emotion word use in sadness discussions with mothers in that age group, $r(36) = -.61, p = .01$. Sadness word use in anger discussions with mothers was negatively correlated with mothers' anger dismissing in the older age group, $r(36) = -.61, p = .01$.

Boys' conversations with fathers. Higher word counts across discussions with fathers was associated with fathers' anger coaching in the younger age group, $r(36) = .53, p = .03$. Word count in anger discussions with fathers was also positively correlated with fathers' anger coaching for that group, $r(36) = .51, p = .04$, and sadness coaching, $r(36) = -.51, p = .04$. Children's anger word use in sadness discussions with fathers was negatively associated with fathers' use of anger dismissing strategies for older boys, $r(36) = -.48, p = .04$.

Girls' conversations with mothers. Emotion word use with mothers was negatively correlated with mothers' anger dismissing, $r(28) = -.63, p = .03$, and positively correlated with mothers' anger coaching, $r(28) = .60, p = .04$, in the older age group.

Negative emotion word use with mothers was positively correlated with mothers' anger dismissing, $r(28) = .60, p = .04$. Emotion word use with mothers was negatively associated with mothers' anger dismissing in both anger, $r(28) = -.70, p = .01$, and sadness discussions, $r(28) = -.61, p = .04$, for younger girls. Emotion word use in sadness discussions with mothers was also positively associated with mothers' anger coaching for that age group, $r(28) = .70, p = .01$. Younger girls' word count in sadness discussions with mothers was positively associated with mothers' sadness coaching, $r(28) = .60, p = .02$, but use of sadness words was negatively associated with mothers' sadness coaching, $r(28) = -.53, p = .03$.

Girls' conversations with fathers. Word count in sadness discussions with fathers was negatively associated with fathers' sadness dismissing for younger girls, $r(28) = -.54, p = .05$. Younger girls' emotion word use in sadness discussions with fathers was negatively associated with fathers' anger coaching, $r(28) = -.58, p = .05$. Emotion word use in anger discussions with fathers was positively correlated with fathers' sadness dismissing for older girls, $r(28) = .59, p = .04$. Older girls' use of anger words in anger discussions with fathers was negatively associated with fathers' anger coaching, $r(28) = -.66, p = .02$. There were no significant findings for the relation between younger girls' word use and fathers' anger socialization.

Mediation Analysis

Mediation models (Baron and Kenny, 1986) were constructed to examine the relation between parent and child emotion conversation variables (LIWC) and child internalizing symptoms (Child Depression Inventory; CDI; Kovacs, 1992) and Child Behavior Checklist; CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001), with emotion regulation

(Child Emotion Management Scales; P-CEMS Cassano et al., 2007) as the mediator. Mediation consists of a series of regressions between the predictor and the outcome variable (Step 1, path c), the predictor and the mediator (Step 2, path a), the mediator and the outcome (Step 3, path b), and the predictor to the outcome while controlling for the mediator (Step 4, path c'). For mediation, the model stipulates that Steps 1-3 must be significant, and, more importantly, the relation between the predictor and the outcome in Step 4 must not be significant. If it is still significant, but weaker, then this is considered partial mediation (Baron and Kenny, 1998). However, recent research has disputed the claim necessitating a direct effect of the predictor on the outcome variable (path c) and supports the existence of mediation if paths a and b are significant, and the predictor-outcome relation while controlling for the mediator (path c') in Step 4 is weaker than path c , indicating an indirect effect (Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011; Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2009). Therefore, mediation models were constructed for variable relations that fit those criteria as well. If mediation criteria were met, a Sobel (1982) test was conducted to assess the effect of the mediator on the predictor-outcome relation. Child age was included as a control for each step.

Mediators for parent word use.

Sadness dysregulation mediating the effect of mothers' emotion word use on children's affective problems. In Step 1 of the model, the direct effect of mothers' emotion word use in anger discussions on children's affective problems (F-CBCL) was significant, $\beta = -.26$, $t(57) = 2.01$, $p = .05$. Step 2 indicated that higher mothers' emotion word use predicted higher sadness dysregulation in children (F-CSMS), $\beta = .27$, $t(59) = 2.15$, $p = .04$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that higher sadness dysregulation

predicted higher likelihood of children's affective problems, $\beta = .39$, $t(57) = 3.05$, $p = .01$.

In Step 4 of the analysis, the path c' , was not significant, $\beta = .15$, $t(57) = 1.21$, $p = .23$. A

Sobel test was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = 1.81$, $p = .04$).

Mediators for child word use.

Anger coping mediating the effect of children's word count in anger

discussions with mothers on children's internalizing symptoms. In Step 1 of the

model, the direct effect of children's word count in anger discussions with mothers on

their internalizing symptoms (M-CBCL) was not significant, $\beta = -.11$, $t(57) = -0.74$, p

$= .46$. Step 2 indicated that higher child word counts predicted higher anger coping (M-

CAMS), $\beta = .35$, $t(57) = 2.39$, $p = .02$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that

higher anger coping predicted lower likelihood of children's internalizing symptoms, β

$= -.32$, $t(57) = -2.02$, $p = .05$. In Step 4 of the analysis, path c' was not significant, but the

predictor-outcome relation was weaker than in path c , $\beta = -0.001$, $t(57) = -0.004$, $p = .99$.

A Sobel test was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = -1.98$, $p = .02$).

Sadness coping mediating the effect of children's anger word use in sadness

discussions with mothers on children's depressive symptoms. In Step 1 of the model,

the direct effect of children's anger word use in sadness discussions with mothers on their

depressive symptoms (CDI) was not significant, $\beta = -.12$, $t(62) = -0.92$, $p = .36$. Step 2

indicated that higher child anger word use predicted higher sadness coping (FPCSMS), β

$= .27$, $t(60) = 2.17$, $p = .03$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that higher sadness

coping predicted lower likelihood of children's depressive symptoms, $\beta = -.42$, $t(60) = -$

3.32 , $p = .002$. In Step 4 of the analysis, path c' was not significant, but the predictor-

outcome relation was weaker than in path c , $\beta = 0.002$, $t(60) = 0.01$, $p = .99$. A Sobel test

was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = -1.82, p = .03$).

Sadness coping mediating the effect of children's emotion word use with fathers on children's depressive symptoms. In Step 1 of the model, the direct effect of children's emotion word use with fathers on their depressive symptoms (CDI) was not significant, $\beta = 1.12, t(61) = -.83, p = .41$. Step 2 indicated that higher child emotion word use predicted higher sadness coping (MPCSMS), $\beta = .37, t(61) = 3.00, p = .004$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that higher sadness coping predicted lower likelihood of children's depressive symptoms, $\beta = -.29, t(61) = -2.12, p = .04$. In Step 4 of the analysis, path c' was not significant, but the predictor-outcome relation was weaker than in path c , $\beta = -.01, t(61) = -.04, p = .97$. A Sobel test was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = -1.73, p = .04$).

Anger coping mediating the effect of children's word count in anger discussions with fathers on children's depressive symptoms. In Step 1 of the model, the direct effect of children's word count in anger discussions with fathers on their depressive symptoms (CDI) was not significant, $\beta = -.08, t(60) = -0.60, p = .55$. Step 2 indicated that higher child word count predicted higher anger coping (MPCAMS), $\beta = .31, t(60) = 2.47, p = .02$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that higher anger coping predicted lower likelihood of children's depressive symptoms, $\beta = -.28, t(60) = -2.06, p = .04$. In Step 4 of the analysis, path c' was not significant, but the relation was weaker than in path c , $\beta = -.01, t(60) = .05, p = .96$. A Sobel test was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = -2.02, p = .02$).

Sadness coping mediating the effect of children's anger word use in anger discussions with fathers on children's affective problems. In Step 1 of the model, the

direct effect of children's anger word use in anger discussions with fathers on their affective problems (M-CBCL) was significant, $\beta = .33$, $t(59) = 2.65$, $p = .01$. Step 2 indicated that higher anger word use predicted lower sadness coping (FCSMS), $\beta = -.31$, $t(59) = -2.41$, $p = .02$. Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that lower sadness coping predicted higher likelihood of children's affective problems, $\beta = -.29$, $t(59) = -2.19$, $p = .03$. In Step 4 of the analysis, path c' was not significant, $\beta = .21$, $t(59) = 1.60$, $p = .07$. A Sobel test was conducted and confirmed mediation ($z = 1.64$, $p = .05$).

Discussion

The goal of this research was to use conversations between parents and children as an avenue through which to investigate mechanisms of parental emotion socialization. Specifically, the current study investigated how parent-child conversations about sadness- and anger-evoking historical events differ as a function of parent gender, child gender, and child age. Word counts and emotion word use were calculated and found to be correlated with measures of parental emotion socialization and mediated the relation of emotion regulation and internalizing symptoms. The implications of these conversation patterns for children's emotional functioning were explored. Results from this study are generally consistent with those found in previous research, but also make new contributions regarding the role of child and parent gender and child developmental status.

Emotion Conversations: Mother and Father Comparisons

Overall, parents demonstrated discussion patterns that confirmed our hypotheses, in that fathers used more emotion words and anger words in anger discussions and mothers used more emotion words and sadness words in sadness discussions. This set of

findings is consistent with previous empirical evidence suggesting that parents, in general, are more comfortable talking about gender-stereotypical emotions (Fivush et al., 2000). Stereotypes regarding emotional expression assume that boys experience and express anger more than girls, and that the converse is true regarding sadness. Regardless of whether this stereotype is actually true, these stereotypes have been reflected in the way parents discuss emotions with children (Kuebli & Fivush, 1992). Although mothers and fathers reflected stereotypical reinforcement of particular emotions in their conversations, some unexpected findings emerged when examining how each parent talked with sons and daughters. Firstly, parents did not talk to sons and daughters differently about emotions, despite other research indicating parental differences in emotion talk as a function of child gender (Cassano, et al., 2007; Fuchs & Thelen, 1988). These apparent inconsistent findings may be due to the use of early childhood age samples in past research on parent-child conversations rather than an elementary school age sample as was used in the current study. A meta-analysis examining gender socialization studies found that parents' differential treatment of boys and girls seems to decrease as children get older suggesting that the socialization of emotion as a function of child gender may occur most overtly in children's toddler and preschool years (Lytton & Romney, 1991). Because children receive different instruction on how to manage emotions from their parents at the early childhood stage, it follows that these patterns continue into middle childhood years and beyond.

Previous research indicates that while children do not differ in the way they talk to parents about emotions in early childhood (Fivush et al., 2000), child gender differences in emotion talk to parents does differ in early adolescence (Aldrich &

Tenenbaum, 2006). Child conversation patterns found in the current study provide support for this developmental finding. Sons and daughters talked more with mothers than with fathers, and older boys discussed emotions more with mothers than fathers.

Parents who provide a family climate that encourages children to be open and expressive about emotions will, in turn, have children who initiate emotion discussions (Gentzler et al., 2005). It may be that mothers in the present study may have encouraged children to discuss emotions more than fathers in early childhood with the result that children learned over time to turn to mothers for support. Previous research using self-report methods has found that elementary-school-age children report expressing sadness, anger, and pain more to mothers than to fathers (Zeman & Garber, 1996; Zeman & Shipman, 1996) because they anticipate a more supportive response from mothers than fathers. The findings from the current study build on this body of literature by demonstrating children's different responses to parental emotion socialization using an observational paradigm (i.e., interaction task).

Emotion Discussions and Children's Perception of Parent Socialization Strategies

Parent and child word use in the conversations were also examined in relation to children's perceived parental socialization strategies. Parent word counts and emotion word use were negatively associated with children's reported parental emotion-coaching and positively associated with children's reported parental emotion-dismissing approaches. Thus, the more that parents dominated the discussion, the less children viewed parents' emotion socialization style as being supportive. Interestingly, the more parents used emotion words in their discussions, the more children viewed parents as adopting an unsupportive response. This finding refutes some research that suggests that

labeling emotions for children is helpful in developing their emotional competencies (Saarni, 1999). Labeling emotions has been established as being part of an emotion coaching response, along with acceptance, recognition, and validation of children's emotions (Gottman et al., 1996). However, it is unclear in these conversations whether parents' emotion word use percentages reflect labeling, as they may also reflect parents' criticizing or invalidating children's emotional expression, which would be more consistent with an emotion-dismissing response (Gottman et al, 1996).

In contrast to the parent findings, children's word counts were consistently associated with perceived parent emotion-coaching and negatively associated with perceived parent emotion-dismissing behaviors. The more children talked about the emotion event, the more likely they were to view their parents as supportive of their emotions. The directionality of this relation is unclear, as it is a correlation. Parents who employ coaching strategies may actively encourage children to express their emotions (Gottman et al., 1996) that, in turn, may lead children to be more comfortable discussing emotions with their parents (Gentzler et al., 2005). Children who talked more in this task may have felt more comfortable doing so with their parents based on their history of supportive parent-child interactions. It is also possible that children who talked more were more extroverted and more verbally skilled than those children who did not talk as much. Future research should evaluate the role of temperament (e.g., behavioral inhibition style versus sociable) to determine how this impacts parental emotion socialization approaches.

Although parent emotion word use was generally associated with dismissing strategies, there is a notable exception. Mothers' sadness word use was negatively

correlated with younger boys' reports of dismissing strategies. This suggests that when mothers directly discuss their boys' sadness experiences using a sadness vocabulary, younger boys view this approach as being less dismissing. Furthermore, younger boys' sadness word use across discussions and emotion word use in sadness discussions with mothers was positively correlated with perceived emotion-dismissing and negatively correlated with perceived emotion-coaching. Younger boys endorsed the opposite pattern of perceived socialization than the other child groups. In this case, mothers may have been helping the younger boys label their emotions, and the boys perceived this as validation of their emotions, consistent with an emotion coaching-response (Gottman et al., 1996)

Children's use of emotion words were associated with both perceived emotion-coaching and emotion-dismissing socialization variables, indicating a need to consider contextual factors when interpreting their functions in discussions. Simply examining word use does not provide a complete emotion socialization picture because it is not clear whether children's negative emotion word use reflects successful emotion management and articulation of feelings, or dysregulated, nonconstructive expression of negative emotion. For instance, a facet of emotion regulation involves identifying and labeling emotion states (Gross & Thompson, 2007). If children discuss anger using anger vocabulary, this may be adaptive, as they are practicing this skill with parental guidance. They then may view the parent as employing emotion-coaching strategies that facilitate their processing of the emotional event. On the other hand, anger vocabulary may be a manifestation of children's dysregulated anger, and it may be used in the context of arguing with the parent, perhaps even in response to the parent's expression of negative

emotion. Research indicates that reciprocal negative affect between parents and children has been shown to be harmful for children's social and emotional development (Allhusen et al., 2003; Kim, Conger, & Lorenz, 2001). Future research needs to examine the specific contexts in which emotion conversations take place in order to understand more completely how the emotion words are being used.

Emotion Talk in Relation to Children's Emotion Regulation and Internalizing Symptoms

To elucidate some of the functions of the conversation variables, emotion regulation was examined as a mediator of the relation between parental word use and children's internalizing symptoms. Emotion regulation mediated this relation for mothers' emotion words and sadness words, but not fathers' word or emotion word use. Mothers' emotion word use was associated with higher sadness dysregulation in children which predicted greater likelihood of affective problems perhaps as a result of using fewer coaching strategies and more dismissing strategies. It is not possible to determine from these findings whether parents' increased talking during the conversation is harmful or beneficial. It is important to note that the children's age and gender were not examined in the analyses of indirect effects, which may account for why mothers' emotion word use was associated with maladaptive outcomes in the mediation model, but parent variables were occasionally associated with perceived emotion-dismissing.

Emotion regulation mediated the relationship between child word use and their internalizing symptoms. Specifically, children's anger coping mediated the relation between their word counts in anger discussions and their depressive symptoms, such that higher word counts with both mothers and fathers were associated with better anger

copied and lower likelihood of depressive symptoms. Thus, in conversations about anger-evoking events, the more children discussed the event, in general, the more it was related to better methods of regulating and coping with anger and fewer endorsed depressive symptoms. These results are consistent with the correlations found between child word counts and perceived coaching strategies. That is, the more children talked across discussions, the more they viewed their parents as using facilitative, supportive responses for both anger and sadness expressions. This is consistent with Gottman et al.'s (1997) assertions about the benefits of a coaching approach to responding to children's emotion.

Children's use of anger words with mothers in sadness discussions and emotion word use with fathers in anger discussions were correlated with perceived parental sadness coaching behaviors. Although these relations appear somewhat intuitive, the mediational analyses revealed a more complex picture. Sadness coping mediated the relation between children's use of anger words in anger discussions with fathers and affective problems, such that the more children used anger words, the less likely they were to cope with sadness and were more likely to be perceived as having affective distress. In examining the correlations, older girls' anger word use in anger discussions with fathers was negatively associated with reported father anger coaching. These findings are along the lines of evidence suggesting fathers may be less accepting of girls' anger expression than boys in early childhood (Fuchs & Thelen, 1988). Historically, fathers may have responded to girls' expression of anger with dismissing strategies which taught them that anger words are not acceptable. The anger word use present in this group

of older girls may reflect dysregulated expression that might have occurred in the discussion due to fathers' unsupportive responses to their anger expression.

Sadness vs. Anger: Is Anger More Salient to Children's Emotional Development?

Anger discussions. Variations in discussion patterns also occurred based on which emotional experience was being discussed. In anger discussions, fathers used more negative emotion words and anger words. Interestingly, older boys mimicked this pattern set by their fathers with mothers but not with fathers. Fathers' emotion word use was negatively correlated with older boys' reports of anger coaching. For older boys, fathers' use of negative emotion words and anger words were perceived as being indicative of disapproval of their son's expression of emotion. This may be why the older sons are instead turning to mothers for support in these conversations. Previous research has shown that mothers discuss anger more often with preschool boys than with girls (Fivush et al., 2000). The older boys may have already learned to turn to their mothers for support. Older boys' sadness word use, a subset of negative emotion word use, in these conversations with mothers was negatively associated with reports of mothers' anger dismissing. Boys who expressed their emotions with mothers were more likely to perceive mothers as less dismissing and critical of their verbalized anger expression. Future research should investigate whether mothers are more tolerant of verbal displays of anger whereas fathers may be more accepting of behavioral anger expressions.

Implications from the patterns found in anger discussions can be further examined in connection with emotion regulation. Anger coping mediated the relation between anger discussions and internalizing symptoms, in that children who talked with mothers in anger discussions were reported to use more frequent anger coping strategies, and were

less likely to report depressive symptoms. But even though older boys were less likely to discuss emotions with fathers, in general, fathers' word use in anger discussions predicted a higher likelihood of children's coping with anger, which was associated with fewer endorsed depressive symptoms. It may be that because fathers used more negative emotion words and anger words, older boys did not have a chance to articulate their own emotions and reported less likelihood of supportive reactions from fathers. In the conversations between fathers and sons, as with every other parent-child pairing in this sample, parent word counts were higher than child word counts, indicating that parents were driving these emotion discussions. From an intervention perspective, the results of this research indicate that fathers (and mothers) need to be mindful to not dominate the conversation when discussing emotion events, and instead encourage and actively listen to children when they express their feelings.

Sadness discussions. In terms of sadness discussions, mothers used more negative emotion words with younger children than older children, and younger girls used more negative emotion words with mothers than fathers. Younger girls' use of sadness words was negatively associated with perceptions of mothers' sadness coaching. However, younger girls' word count with mothers in sadness discussions was positively associated with mothers' coaching response. Young girls who talked more with mothers were more likely to perceive their mothers as supportive, but when they used negative emotion words, they were less likely to perceive their mothers as supportive. It may be that when younger girls are expressing negative emotion, they are doing it in a way that is viewed as inappropriate by mothers, and mothers use negative emotion words to express this disapproval. It is unclear how this disapproval affects young girls, because while

mothers' emotion word use was associated with sadness dysregulation, their sadness word use had the opposite effect. In this instance, it would be helpful to examine the context of mothers' word use. If the use of emotion words did indeed reflect disapproval, this may produce dysregulated sadness (crying, pouting) in their children. However, if the sadness words were used in a coaching context, they may make sadness dysregulation less likely.

It is also important to note that sadness discussion variables were not related to emotion regulation, except for children's anger word use in the sadness discussion. Furthermore, correlation analyses indicated that word use was more associated with anger coaching and dismissing than with sadness socialization. It is unclear why these effects for anger are present more than for sadness. A previous study on emotion discussions in middle childhood found that length of discussions about anger were longer than those about sadness, and anger discussions included more instances of emotion-coaching strategies than sadness discussions (Zeman, Perry-Parrish, & Cassano, 2010). It may be the case that discussions about anger require more parental involvement to help children manage their emotions. This may be due to the nature of children's expression of anger, in that it is typically exhibited through temper-tantrums, screaming, and "acting out," especially in younger children (Giesbrecht, Miller, & Mueller, 2010). Because of these dysregulated behaviors, parents' response to children's expression of anger rather than sadness may have particular salience in their development of emotion regulation skills.

Limitations and Future Directions

The implications of these findings need to be considered and evaluated within the boundaries of the study's limitations. The small sample size limited the power to detect

small effect sizes, especially considering that most of the analyses were conducted after placing children into four groups based on their gender and age. The homogenous sample composition in terms of SES and race limit the generalizability of the findings to other non-White, middle class samples. The goal of the study was to compare mothers and fathers, thus, only two-parent families were observed. Further research should investigate the implications of conversations in single-parent and non-traditional households. Results from this study indicate that sons and daughters talk more and use more emotion words with mothers than with fathers. However, children living with only their father may talk to them as much as children who live with both parents talk to their mothers. Future research should examine conversations in various family structures.

Other limitations involve the nature of the methodology. The dyadic discussion task may not accurately reflect how parents discuss emotions with children outside of the lab. Furthermore, the dyads discussed a past event about which children may not be currently upset. It would be interesting to observe parent-child interactions in more naturalistic settings to better assess how they behave in response to children's emotions when the emotion-provoking event is actually occurring with "hot emotions". The focus on word counts and word use also limits our understanding of these conversations because the words were not analyzed in context. Their functions were examined using correlations and mediation models, but there are still questions as to why, in certain instances, emotion words appeared beneficial to emotion regulation, but in other cases, they appeared to be maladaptive. Future research should examine positive as well as negative emotion word use. Positive expressivity may attenuate the harmful effects of negative expressivity. Finally, the study variables were assessed at a single time-point. A

longitudinal design would provide insight into the stability and function of these conversation patterns throughout children's development.

Despite these limitations, this study offers unique and important contributions to the existing literature. First, the inclusion of fathers helped elucidate the role in their children's development, which addresses a gap in the current research on emotion regulation. Second, as a majority of research conducted on this topic has used an early childhood sample, by examining emotion talk and socialization in middle childhood, this study provides a link between how conversation patterns found in early childhood transition to those in early adolescence. Third, this study utilized a multi-method, multi-source approach that is essential in attempting to understand variegated complex construct, such as emotion regulation (Suveg & Zeman, 2012).

Implications

An important implication reflected throughout the results is that children's word counts and emotion word use were for the most part beneficial. The more children talked and used emotion words, the more likely they were to perceive their parents as emotion-coaching. Furthermore, children's emotion talk was indicative of higher coping and lower dysregulation, and parents and children were less likely to report internalizing symptomology with higher word counts and word use. On the other hand, parents' word count and emotion word use were associated with children's perceptions of their parents responding to emotion in emotion-dismissing way, that were often associated with increased dysregulation and internalizing symptoms. In general, the findings point to the idea that parents may want to talk less and listen more when discussing emotion-related topics with their children.

Findings also indicated that child gender and age need to be taken into consideration when understanding how emotion processes operate, because sons and daughters discuss emotions differently with parents. However, parents did not talk to sons and daughters differently (or younger and older children, for the most part). Evidence from past research suggests these patterns may have been established when the children were younger (Fivush et al., 2000; Lytton & Romney, 1991). For sons, gendered patterns of discussions may be harmful, considering that research indicates that boys are encouraged to inhibit their expressions of negative emotions more than daughters (Fuchs & Thelen, 1988). Boys may not feel comfortable articulating their feelings in later stages of development, and therefore have an increased likelihood of dysregulated expression and internalizing symptoms. For daughters, parents' differential treatment may have harmful effects regarding their expression of anger. Parents, especially fathers, are less accepting of girls' anger expression than that of boys, and therefore may not encourage girls to discuss their anger. Even if fathers are supportive girls' expression of sadness, this may not be enough to compensate for their disapproving responses to anger expressions. Findings from the current study indicate that anger word use was more likely than sadness word use to be associated with children's perceptions of socialization, their regulation of emotion, and their reported internalizing symptoms. These findings suggest that parental response of children's anger expression may have more salience than sadness to their emotional development. Therefore, girls whose fathers disapprove of their anger may still have increased likelihood of dysregulated expression of emotion, regardless of parental responses to sadness.

These patterns of discussion may reflect an intergenerational transmission of gender biases. Mothers and fathers may have received differential socialization due to the biases of their parents that may have been stronger than in the current generation. Although contemporary parents may have different ideas about the acceptability of emotion expression in their children than their parents, they may still hold some of the same values about the acceptability of expressing or controlling emotional displays in their children. Parents need to be conscious of their meta-emotion beliefs and try not to encourage sons to control their expressions of sadness or daughters to inhibit their anger expression as these approaches are related to negative outcomes for their children. Parents should encourage an open dialogue about emotions beginning early on in their children's development and actively listen as children articulate their feelings. This provides more opportunities for children to develop the necessary skills for successful emotion management. In ancient words of wisdom, "We have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen more than we say."

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Table 1

Correlations Among EAC Subscales: Anger Questionnaire

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mother Report											
1. Override	2.93	0.89									
2. Magnify	1.94	0.84	-0.04								
3. Reward	4.15	0.75	0.62**	-0.32**							
4. Punish	2.27	0.85	-0.03	0.24	-0.28*						
5. Neglect	2.01	0.91	-0.46**	0.17	-0.50**	0.27*					
Father Report											
6. Override	2.87	0.90	0.81**	-0.12	0.58**	-0.06	-0.33**				
7. Magnify	1.95	1.07	-0.10	0.71**	-0.29*	0.19	0.17	-0.08			
8. Reward	3.78	0.88	0.50**	-0.38**	0.77**	-0.32*	-0.56**	0.50**	-0.29*		
9. Punish	2.23	0.88	0.05	0.20	-0.23	0.67**	0.22	0.03	0.30*	-0.30*	
10. Neglect	2.06	0.98	-0.45**	0.20	-0.55**	0.34**	0.74**	-0.48**	0.14	-0.62**	0.35**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2

Correlations Among EAC Subscales: Sadness Questionnaire

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mother Report											
1. Override	3.08	0.89									
2. Magnify	1.97	0.84	0.33**								
3. Reward	4.30	0.76	0.42**	0.17							
4. Punish	2.14	0.92	0.22	0.11	-0.20						
5. Neglect	1.81	0.85	-0.30*	-0.23	-0.56**	0.30*					
Father Report											
6. Override	2.94	0.82	0.80**	0.31*	0.52**	0.09	-0.37**				
7. Magnify	1.80	0.89	0.17	0.58**	-0.05	0.08	-0.08	0.15			
8. Reward	4.01	0.92	0.31*	0.13	0.78**	-0.26*	-0.38**	0.52**	-0.07		
9. Punish	2.14	0.94	0.19	0.19	-0.12	0.80**	0.31*	0.06	0.06	-0.26*	
10. Neglect	2.00	0.94	-0.15	-0.11	-0.25**	0.28*	0.60**	-0.25**	-0.14	-0.42**	0.34*

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3

Word Count Percentages for Anger and Sadness Discussions

Category	Mothers %	Fathers %
Anger discussions		
with sons	59.38	61.02
with daughters	53.28	57.50
Sadness discussions		
with sons	65.24	60.40
with daughters	57.19	57.50

Table 4
Mother and Father Word Use in Emotion Conversations: Child Gender and Child Age Comparisons

Category	Mothers		Fathers		<i>F</i> (1,56)	<i>t</i> (36)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Total word count	827.29	527.32	818.55	450.58	0.00	
Child gender					0.59	
Male	846.82	438.43	788.57	418.95		
Female	801.52	550.18	858.12	495.26		
Age group					3.51 ⁺	
8-9	812.00	449.03	933.28	438.18		
10-11	842.59	527.32	703.83	440.49		
Total emotion words %	13.01	2.81	12.57	3.35	0.78	
Child gender					0.38	
Male	12.46	2.76	12.24	3.17		
Female	13.70	2.75	12.30	3.58		
Age group					0.26	
8-9	13.05	2.72	12.36	3.20		
10-11	12.95	2.96	12.85	3.58		
Total negative emotion words %	2.75	2.42	3.70	1.99	7.62**	-2.39*
Child gender					1.58	
Male	2.77	2.99	3.31	1.65		
Female	2.75	1.49	4.18	2.29		
Age group					1.47	
8-9	3.04	3.18	3.56	1.93		
10-11	2.45	1.14	3.86	2.08		
Total anger words %	1.02	1.64	1.82	1.16	10.83**	3.44**
Child gender					0.38	
Male	0.97	1.61	1.63	0.97		
Female	1.08	1.70	2.05	1.34		
Age group					0.01	
8-9	1.15	2.14	1.95	1.30		
10-11	0.88	0.85	1.69	0.99		
Total sadness words %	1.51	1.50	1.74	1.37	1.14	
Child gender					1.08	
Male	1.55	1.75	1.56	1.14		
Female	1.45	1.16	1.96	1.61		
Age group					3.04 ⁺	
8-9	1.69	1.74	1.49	1.19		
10-11	1.31	1.20	2.00	1.51		
Word count in anger discussions	435.45	265.18	426.92	270.70	0.03	

Child gender					0.27	
Male	435.65	252.18	408.12	242.84		
Female	435.19	286.37	451.50	306.58		
Age group					0.97	
8-9	440.81	253.52	474.26	286.12		
10-11	429.72	281.76	376.31	248.13		
Emotion words in anger discussions %	6.34	2.00	6.36	2.03	0.01	
Child gender					0.01	
Male	6.20	1.82	6.14	1.89		
Female	6.51	2.17	6.63	2.19		
Age group					0.46	
8-9	6.43	1.69	6.55	1.92		
10-11	6.22	2.30	6.12	2.17		
Negative emotion words in anger discussions %	0.43	0.63	1.76	1.29	49.33**	7.00**
Child gender					3.29 ⁺	
Male	0.41	0.46	1.42	0.88		
Female	0.45	0.81	2.18	1.58		
Age group					0.32	
8-9	0.43	0.72	2.01	1.45		
10-11	0.43	0.53	1.47	1.03		
Anger words in anger discussions %	0.34	0.60	1.40	1.20	34.13**	5.98**
Child gender					1.05	
Male	0.30	0.35	1.17	0.91		
Female	0.39	0.81	1.63	1.46		
Age group					1.56	
8-9	0.33	0.66	1.59	1.39		
10-11	0.36	0.54	1.13	0.89		
Sadness words in anger discussions %	0.01	0.06	0.32	0.89	7.42**	2.73**
Child gender					1.20	
Male	0.01	0.07	0.20	0.34		
Female	0.01	0.03	0.47	1.26		
Age group					0.35	
8-9	0.00	0.02	0.38	1.10		
10-11	0.02	0.08	0.26	0.57		
Word count in sad discussions	408.66	301.88	397.31	285.20	0.05	
Child gender					0.36	
Male	421.03	245.32	380.79	282.41		
Female	392.96	365.97	418.27	292.90		
Age group					2.46	
8-9	404.60	300.07	464.77	251.88		
10-11	412.86	309.00	327.52	304.72		

Emotion words in sad discussions %	6.68	1.85	6.24	2.40	1.42	
Child gender						0.58
Male	6.26	1.81	6.10	2.30		
Female	7.20	1.80	6.41	2.55		
Age group						1.52
8-9	6.65	2.06	5.87	1.95		
10-11	6.72	1.57	6.73	2.85		
Negative emotion words in sad discussions %	2.31	2.23	1.99	1.23	0.79	
Child gender						0.12
Male	2.29	2.85	1.91	1.20		
Female	2.34	1.04	2.09	1.28		
Age group						4.47*
8-9	2.53	2.85	1.64	0.84		2.10*
10-11	2.05	1.08	2.41	1.49		-1.26
Anger words in sad discussions %	0.62	1.36	0.43	0.63	1.32	
Child gender						1.50
Male	0.59	1.55	0.46	0.67		
Female	0.66	1.08	0.38	0.57		
Age group						0.25
8-9	0.70	1.70	0.32	0.53		
10-11	0.52	0.78	0.55	0.72		
Sadness words in sad discussions %	1.55	1.43	1.49	1.28	0.00	
Child gender						0.54
Male	1.57	1.64	1.38	1.17		
Female	1.52	1.14	1.62	1.43		
Age group						5.01*
8-9	1.71	1.61	1.26	0.91		-2.04*
10-11	1.34	1.17	1.76	1.60		1.48

Note: ⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Children's Word Use in Emotion Conversations with Mothers and Fathers

Category	With Mothers		With Fathers		<i>F</i> (1,64)	<i>t</i> (29)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Total word count	573.16	393.29	571.93	360.72	.08	
Child gender					.48	
Male	499.62	308.19	516.03	331.02		
Female	665.78	469.48	642.33	389.84		
Age group					5.82*	
8-9	563.56	329.09	647.00	382.85		-1.49
10-11	583.76	459.69	489.12	320.95		1.74 ⁺
Total emotion words %	9.88	3.42	9.20	2.86	1.76	
Child gender					1.01	
Male	9.95	3.28	8.84	3.07		
Female	9.78	3.65	9.68	2.53		
Age group					1.85	
8-9	9.69	3.38	8.76	2.39		
10-11	10.11	3.51	9.75	3.32		
Total negative emotion words %	3.09	1.63	3.13	1.71	0.12	
Child gender					0.08	
Male	3.15	1.85	3.13	2.00		
Female	3.02	1.31	3.13	1.25		
Age group					2.40	
8-9	3.01	1.70	2.73	1.35		
10-11	3.19	1.56	3.60	1.97		
Total anger words %	1.61	1.06	1.65	1.20	0.30	
Child gender					2.68	
Male	1.80	1.20	1.58	1.37		
Female	1.35	0.78	1.75	0.93		
Age group					0.80	
8-9	1.51	1.04	1.41	0.79		
10-11	1.73	1.06	1.94	1.51		
Total sadness words %	1.34	1.03	1.39	1.24	0.01	
Child gender					2.40	
Male	1.26	0.95	1.53	1.47		
Female	1.44	1.15	1.21	0.80		
Age group					0.03	
8-9	1.26	1.05	1.25	0.93		
10-11	1.44	1.02	1.57	1.52		
Word count in anger discussions	317.52	234.55	285.84	207.59	2.11	

Child gender					1.29	
Male	268.79	214.53	260.03	217.20		
Female	378.89	248.04	318.33	193.90		
Age group					6.98*	
8-9	317.91	176.61	351.13	247.35		-0.63
10-11	317.52	234.55	213.79	119.81		1.00
Emotion words in anger discussions %	4.65	2.09	4.83	1.93	0.30	
Child gender					1.09	
Male	4.78	2.02	4.64	1.83		
Female	4.49	2.20	5.09	2.06		
Age group					1.80	
8-9	4.20	1.69	4.75	1.95		
10-11	5.22	2.41	4.94	1.95		
Negative emotion words in anger discussions %	1.33	0.88	1.53	1.05	2.15	
Child gender					1.59	
Male	1.38	0.99	1.43	1.08		
Female	1.26	0.71	2.06	0.96		
Age group					0.20	
8-9	1.21	0.70	1.39	1.01		
10-11	1.47	1.04	1.71	1.08		
Anger words in anger discussions %	1.10	0.91	1.16	0.99	0.44	
Child gender					2.60	
Male	1.19	1.04	1.07	0.97		
Female	0.98	0.70	1.27	1.02		
Age group					0.01	
8-9	0.97	0.68	1.06	0.82		
10-11	1.25	1.12	1.28	1.17		
Sadness words in anger discussions %	0.17	0.39	0.33	0.78	3.73+	
Child gender					0.13	
Male	0.18	0.42	0.36	0.88		
Female	0.17	0.39	0.29	0.63		
Age group					0.01	
8-9	0.14	0.37	0.30	0.79		
10-11	0.21	0.42	0.36	0.79		
Word count in sad discussions	255.64	219.33	286.10	220.29	0.90	
Child gender					0.02	
Male	230.82	147.72	256.00	202.85		
Female	286.89	285.48	324.00	238.93		
Age group					0.49	
8-9	245.66	196.25	295.87	191.57		
10-11	266.66	235.37	275.31	251.25		

Emotion words in sad discussions %	5.20	2.29	4.44	2.09	4.65*	2.41*
Child gender					0.38	
Male	5.17	2.29	4.20	2.20		
Female	5.23	2.32	4.74	1.93		
Age group					3.14	
8-9	5.44	2.53	4.14	1.84		
10-11	4.89	1.94	4.81	2.34		
Negative emotion words in sad discussions %	1.74	1.34	1.59	1.38	0.66	
Child gender					0.51	
Male	1.77	1.46	1.69	1.61		
Female	1.71	1.18	1.45	1.00		
Age group					1.69	
8-9	1.77	1.56	1.33	1.01		
10-11	1.72	1.04	1.90	1.69		
Anger words in sad discussions %	0.51	0.89	0.49	0.87	0.01	
Child gender					0.46	
Male	0.61	1.01	0.51	1.03		
Female	0.37	0.70	0.46	0.63		
Age group					1.70	
8-9	0.53	0.94	0.34	0.53		
10-11	0.30	0.70	0.66	1.15		
Sadness words in sad discussions %	1.15	1.11	1.07	1.23	0.50	
Child gender					2.05	
Male	1.08	1.01	1.17	1.47		
Female	1.23	1.24	0.93	0.84		
Age group					0.01	
8-9	1.09	1.11	0.95	0.82		
10-11	1.22	1.13	1.21	1.61		

Note: ⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Appendix A1

Emotions as a Child Scale: Child Report Anger

Think of a few times when you felt **ANGRY** or **FRUSTRATED** in the past year. When you were **ANGRY** or **FRUSTRATED**, how often would your mother respond in these ways?

	Never	Not very Often	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. When I was angry , my mother responded to my anger.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I was angry , my mother told me to stop being angry.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I was angry , my mother helped me deal with the issue that made me angry.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When I was angry , my mother got very angry.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I was angry , my mother told me that I was acting younger than my age.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When I was angry , my mother asked me what made me angry.	1	2	3	4	5
7. When I was angry , my mother told me not to worry.	1	2	3	4	5
8. When I was angry , my mother expressed that she was very angry.	1	2	3	4	5
9. When I was angry , my mother let me know she did not approve of my being angry.	1	2	3	4	5
10. When I was angry , my mother bought me something I liked.	1	2	3	4	5
11. When I was angry , my mother told me to cheer up.	1	2	3	4	5
12. When I was angry , my mother took time to focus on me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. When I was angry , my mother got very upset.	1	2	3	4	5
14. When I was angry , my mother did not pay attention to my anger.	1	2	3	4	5
15. When I was angry , my mother comforted me.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix A2

Emotions As A Child: Child Report Sadness

Think of a few times when you felt **SAD** or **DOWN** in the past year. When you were **SAD** or feeling **DOWN** in the past year, how often would your father respond in these ways?

	Never	Not very Often	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. When I was sad , my father responded to my sadness.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I was sad , my father told me to stop being sad.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I was sad , my father helped me deal with the issue that made me sad.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When I was sad , my father got very sad.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I was sad , my father told me that I was acting younger than my age.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When I was sad , my father asked me what made me sad.	1	2	3	4	5
7. When I was sad , my father told me not to worry.	1	2	3	4	5
8. When I was sad , my father expressed that she was very sad.	1	2	3	4	5
9. When I was sad , my father let me know she did not approve of my being sad.	1	2	3	4	5
10. When I was sad , my father bought me something I liked.	1	2	3	4	5
11. When I was sad , my father told me to cheer up.	1	2	3	4	5
12. When I was sad , my father took time to focus on me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. When I was sad , my father got very upset.	1	2	3	4	5
14. When I was sad , my father did not pay attention to my sadness.	1	2	3	4	5
15. When I was sad , my father comforted me.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B1

Children's Emotion Management Scale: Parent Report, Anger

Instructions: Please circle the response that best describes your child/adolescent's behavior when he/she is feeling **mad**.

1. When my child is feeling mad, he/she can control his/her temper.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
2. My child holds his/her anger in.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
3. My child stays calm and keeps his/her cool when he/she is feeling mad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
4. My child does things like slam doors when he/she is mad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
5. My child hides his/her anger.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
6. My child attacks whatever it is that makes him/her very angry.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
7. My child gets mad inside but doesn't show it.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
8. My child can stop him/herself from losing his/her temper when he/she is mad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
9. My child says mean things to others when he/she is mad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
10. My child tries to calmly deal with what is making him/her mad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
11. My child is afraid to show his/her anger.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3

Appendix B2

Children's Emotion Management Scale: Parent report, Sadness

Instructions: Please circle the response that best describes your child/adolescent's behavior when he/she is feeling **sad**.

1. When my child is feeling sad, he/she can control his/her crying and carrying on.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
2. My child holds his/her sad feelings in.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
3. My child stays calm and doesn't let sad things get to him/her.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
4. My child whines/fusses about what's making him/her sad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
5. My child hides his/her sadness.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
6. When my child is sad, he/she does something totally different until he/she calms down.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
7. My child gets sad inside but doesn't show it.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
8. My child can stop him/herself from losing control of his/her sad feelings.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
9. My child cries and carries on when he/she is sad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
10. My child tries to calmly deal with what is making him/her sad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
11. I do things like mope around when I'm sad.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3
12. I'm afraid to show my sadness.	Hardly Ever 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3

Appendix C

Children's Depression Inventory

Item 1

- I am sad once in a while
- I am sad many times.
- I am sad all the time.

Item 2

- Nothing will ever work out for me.
- I am not sure if things will work out for me.
- Things will work out for me O.K.

Item 3

- I do most things O.K.
- I do many things wrong.
- I do everything wrong.

Item 4

- I have fun in many things.
- I have fun in some things.
- Nothing is fun at all.

Item 5

- I am bad all the time.
- I am bad many times.
- I am bad once in a while.

Item 6

- I think about bad things happening to me once in a while.
- I worry that bad things will happen to me.
- I am sure that terrible things will happen to me.

Item 7

- I hate myself.
- I do not like myself.
- I like myself

Item 8

- All bad things are my fault.
- Many bad things are my fault.
- Bad things are not usually my fault.

Item 9

- I do not think about killing myself.

- I think about killing myself but I would not do it.
- I want to kill myself.

Item 10

- I feel like crying every day.
- I feel like crying many days.
- I feel like crying once in a while.

Item 11

- Things bother me all the time.
- Things bother me many times.
- Things bother me once in a while.

Item 12

- I like being with people
- I do not like being with people many times.
- I do not want to be with people at all.

Item 13

- I cannot make up my mind about things.
- It is hard to make up my mind about things.
- I make up my mind about things easily.

Item 14

- I look O.K.
- There are some bad things about my looks.
- I look ugly.

Item 15

- I have to push myself all the time to do my schoolwork.
- I have to push myself many times to do my schoolwork.
- Doing schoolwork is not a big problem.

Item 16

- I have trouble sleeping every night.
- I have trouble sleeping many nights.
- I sleep pretty well.

Item 17

- I am tired once in a while.
- I am tired many days.
- I am tired all the time.

Item 18

- Most days I do not feel like eating.
- Many days I do not feel like eating.
- I eat pretty well.

Item 19

- I do not worry about aches and pains.
- I worry about aches and pains many times.
- I worry about aches and pains all the time.

Item 20

- I do not feel alone.
- I feel alone many times.
- I feel alone all the time.

Item 21

- I never have fun at school.
- I have fun at school only once in a while.
- I have fun at school many times.

Item 22

- I have plenty of friends.
- I have some friends but I wish I had more.
- I do not have any friends.

Item 23

- My schoolwork is alright.
- My school work is not as good as before.
- I do very badly in subjects I used to be good in.

Item 24

- I can never be as good as other kids.
- I can be as good as other kids if I want to.
- I am just as good as other kids.

Item 25

- Nobody really loves me.
- I am not sure if anybody loves me.
- I am sure that somebody loves me.

Item 26

- I usually do what I am told.
- I do not do what I am told most times.
- I never do what I am told.

Item 27

- I get along with people.
- I get into fights many times.
- I get into fights all the time.

Appendix D

Child Behavior Checklist

Below is a list of items that describe children and youths. For each item that describes your child *now or within the past 6 months*, please circle the 2 if the item is *very true or often true* of your child. Circle the 1 if it is *somewhat or sometimes true* of your child. If the item is *not true* of your child, circle the 0. Please answer all items as well as you can, even if some do not seem to apply to your child.

0 = Not True (as far as you know) **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

- 1. Acts too young for his/her age..... 0 1 2
- 2. Drinks alcohol without parents' approval**
- (describe): _____ 0 1 2
- 3. Argues a lot..... 0 1 2
- 4. Fails to finish things he/she starts..... 0 1 2**
- 5. There is still very little he/she enjoys..... 0 1 2
- 6. Bowel movements outside toilet..... 0 1 2**
- 7. Bragging, boasting..... 0 1 2
- 8. Can't concentrate, can't pay attention for long..... 0 1 2**
- 9. Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions
- (describe): _____ 0 1 2
- 10. Can't sit still, restless, are hyperactive..... 0 1 2**
- 11. Clings to adults or too dependent..... 0 1 2
- 12. Complains of loneliness..... 0 1 2**
- 13. Confused or seems to be in a fog..... 0 1 2
- 14. Cries a lot 0 1 2**
- 15. Cruel to animals..... 0 1 2
- 16. Cruelty, bullying, or meanness to others..... 0 1 2**
- 17. Daydreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts..... 0 1 2
- 18. Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide..... 0 1 2**
- 19. Demands a lot of attention..... 0 1 2
- 20. Destroys his/her own things..... 0 1 2**
- 21. Destroys things belonging to his/her family or others..... 0 1 2
- 22. Disobedient at home..... 0 1 2**
- 23. Disobedient at school..... 0 1 2
- 24. Doesn't eat well..... 0 1 2**
- 25. Doesn't get along with other kids..... 0 1 2

26. Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving.....	0	1	2
27. Easily jealous.....	0	1	2
28. Breaks rules at home, school, or elsewhere.....	0	1	2
29. Fears certain animals, situations, or places, other than school			
(describe): _____.....	0	1	2
30. Fears going to school.....	0	1	2
31. Fears he/she might think or do something bad.....	0	1	2
32. Feels he/she has to be perfect.....	0	1	2
33. Feels or complains that no one loves his/her.....	0	1	2
34. Feels others are out to get him/her.....	0	1	2
35. Feels worthless or inferior.....	0	1	2
36. Gets hurt a lot, accident-prone.....	0	1	2
37. Gets in many fights.....	0	1	2
38. Gets teased a lot.....	0	1	2
39. Hangs around with others who get in trouble.....	0	1	2
40. Hear sounds or voices that aren't there			
(describe): _____.....	0	1	2
41. Impulsive or acts without thinking.....	0	1	2
42. Would rather be alone than with others.....	0	1	2
43. Lying or cheating.....	0	1	2
44. Bites fingernails.....	0	1	2
45. Nervous, high-strung, or tense.....	0	1	2
46. Nervous movements or twitching			
(describe): _____.....	0	1	2
47. Nightmares.....	0	1	2
48. Not liked by other kids.....	0	1	2
49. Constipated, doesn't move bowels.....	0	1	2
50. Too fearful or anxious.....	0	1	2
51. Feels dizzy or lightheaded.....	0	1	2
52. Feels too guilty.....	0	1	2
53. Overeating.....	0	1	2
54. Overtired without good reason.....	0	1	2
55. Overweight.....	0	1	2
56. Physical problems <i>without known medical causes</i>:			
a. Aches or pains (not stomach or headaches).....	0	1	2
b. Headaches.....	0	1	2

c. Nausea, feels sick.....	0	1	2
d. Problems with eyes (not if corrected by glasses)			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
e. Rashes or other skin problems.....	0	1	2
f. Stomachaches.....	0	1	2
g. Vomiting, throwing up.....	0	1	2
h. Other (describe): _____	0	1	2
57. Physically attacks people.....	0	1	2
58. Picks nose, skin, or other parts of body			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
59. Plays with own sex parts in public.....	0	1	2
60. Plays with own sex parts too much.....	0	1	2
61. Poor school work.....	0	1	2
62. Poorly coordinated or clumsy.....	0	1	2
63. Prefers being with older kids.....	0	1	2
64. Prefers being with younger kids.....	0	1	2
65. Refuses to talk.....	0	1	2
66. Repeats certain acts over and over; compulsions			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
67. Runs away from home.....	0	1	2
68. Screams a lot.....	0	1	2
69. Secretive, keeps things to self	0	1	2
70. Sees things that aren't there			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
71. Self-conscious or easily embarrassed.....	0	1	2
72. Sets fires.....	0	1	2
73. Sexual problems			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
74. Showing off or clowning.....	0	1	2
75. Too shy or timid.....	0	1	2
76. Sleeps less than most kids.....	0	1	2
77. Sleeps more than most kids during the day and/or night			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
78. Inattentive or easily distracted.....	0	1	2
79. Speech problem			
(describe): _____	0	1	2
80. Stares blankly.....	0	1	2

81. Steals at home.....	0	1	2
82. Steals outside the home.....	0	1	2
83. Stores up too many things he/she doesn't need (describe):.....	0	1	2
84. Strange behavior (describe):.....	0	1	2
85. Strange ideas (describe):.....	0	1	2
86. Stubborn, sullen, or irritable.....	0	1	2
87. Sudden changes in mood or feelings.....	0	1	2
88. Sulks a lot.....	0	1	2
89. Suspicious.....	0	1	2
90. Swearing or obscene language.....	0	1	2
91. Talks about killing self.....	0	1	2
92. Talks or walks in sleep (describe):.....	0	1	2
93. Talks too much.....	0	1	2
94. Teases a lot.....	0	1	2
95. Temper tantrums or hot temper.....	0	1	2
96. Thinks about sex too much.....	0	1	2
97. Threatens people.....	0	1	2
98. Thumb-sucking.....	0	1	2
99. Smokes, chews, or sniffs tobacco.....	0	1	2
100. Trouble sleeping (describe):.....	0	1	2
101. Truancy, skips school.....	0	1	2
102. Underactive, slow moving, or lacks energy.....	0	1	2
103. Unhappy, sad, or depressed.....	0	1	2
104. Unusually loud.....	0	1	2
105. Uses drugs for nonmedical purposes (don't include alcohol or tobacco) (describe):.....	0	1	2
106. Vandalism.....	0	1	2
107. Wets self during the day.....	0	1	2
108. Wets the bed	0	1	2
109. Whining.....	0	1	2
110. Wishes to be of opposite sex.....	0	1	2
111. Withdrawn, doesn't get involved with others.....	0	1	2

112. Worries..... 0 1 2

113. Please write in any problems your child has that
were not listed above:

..... 0 1 2
..... **0 1 2**
..... 0 1 2