GUIDED COGNITIVE REFRAMING AMONG MEXICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS: MAKING SENSE OF CONFLICT WITH FATHER

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Acknowledgements

The 392 families in the Parents and Youth Study

My colleagues on the project: Ross Parke, Scott Coltrane, Sanford Braver, William Fabricius, Delia Saenz, Michelle Adams

Our staff and graduate students: Toni Genalo, Erni Avila, Melinda Baham, Karina Horowitz, Anna Berlin, Eric Vega, Thomas Schofield, Andrea Finlay, Norma Perez-Brena, Scott de Guzman, and many more

Our interviewers who are too many to name
Changes in ethnic diversity among families in the United States

Today

Projected for 2035

65% of Latinos are of Mexican ancestry

65% of Latinos are of Mexican ancestry

2006-2008 American Community Survey
Adolescence and parent-child relations

- Two qualities of parent-child relations during the adolescent transition (Lichtwarck-Aschoff et al., 2009)
  
  Mutual disclosure
  
  Interpersonal conflict

  Conflict tends to be a temporary part of adolescence

  HOWEVER

  1) It may persist and erode p-c relationship (Laursen & Collins, 1994)
  
  2) Even small amounts are distressing (Chung, Flook, Fuligni, 2009)
  
  3) High levels of conflict are linked to emotional and psychological adjustment among Mexican American children (Rumbaut, 2000)
Research on parent-adolescent conflict

1) Most has focused on mom
2) Most has emphasized antecedents and consequences

OUR APPROACH

1) Consider father-child relations
2) Explore the cognitive and affective experiences of the child
“Perhaps I’ll enjoy sharing what’s on your iPod, honey, when Hell freezes over.”
What might this child do?

1. Internalize the message she’s not valued by the parent (Cummings & Davies, 1991)
2. Argue with dad and escalate conflict
3. Seek out someone to talk to
   - Mom or dad
   - “Very important” nonparents (Greenberger et al., 1998; Rishel et al., 2007)
Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory (Lazarus, 1991)

Emotional event

Self relevant threat?

YES

Threat to social status?

Threat to view of self?

Am I or the other person to “blame”?

Evaluation of the event

Forecast for the future

No? No problem and no emotion!
Our theory of Guided Cognitive Reframing

Seek out source → Provide reason → Feel better about self

Seek out source ← Criticize/Support ← Feel better about dad
Cognition mediates frequency

Seek out source

Provide reason

Feel better about self

Feel better about dad

Criticize/Support
Parents & Youth Study: PAYS
http://bss.sfsu.edu/devpsych/pays

Arizona State University: Sanford Braver, Ph.D., Bill Fabricius, Ph.D., Toni Genalo, & Karina Sokol

UC-Riverside: Scott Coltrane, Ph.D., Ross Parke, Ph.D., & students

San Francisco State University: Jeff Cookston, Ph.D.
Parents & Youth Study: PAYS
http://bss.sfsu.edu/devpsych/pays

5-year, 3 wave longitudinal study

Target participants were adolescents in transition from middle school to high school

2 sites: Phoenix, AZ & San Bernardino, CA
200 families per site (final n = 393)
49% of the sample Mexican American

45% step-families (child, bio mom, stepdad)

52% girls

12.5 years mean age (range 11-14)

$40K modal income (4.2K to 430K)
PAYS Methodological Approach

Interviews with target child, biological mom, father/stepfather

3 Waves of data collection

Wave 1 (2004) 2-hour in-home interviews

Wave 2 (2005) 90-minute phone interviews

Wave 3 (2006-) 2-hour in-home interviews
Measures – Sources of reframing

Now I would like to ask you some questions about who you talk with about your (dad/step-dad) when you are upset or bothered about your relationship with him, or about the things he says or does.

When you are upset with your (dad/step-dad) or about your relationship with him, do you ever talk to…

Your mom about your (dad/step-dad)?
Your (dad/step-dad) about it?
Anyone else about (dad/step-dad)?
Context of reframing – Seeking out source

When you are upset with your (dad/step-dad), or bothered by his behavior, how frequently do you and YOUR MOM talk about him? This could be times she brought it up as well as times you brought it up.

1) Never
2) Hardly ever
3) Seldom
4) Sometimes
5) Often
6) Very often
7) Almost always
Context of reframing – Obtaining a reason from the source

At times like this, when you and your mom have talked about your (dad’s/step-dad’s) behavior that is upsetting you, how often does she give you a reason for why he acted the way he did?

1) Never
2) Hardly ever
3) Seldom
4) Sometimes
5) Often
6) Very often
7) Almost always

Repeated item for dad and other sources
Context of reframing – Likelihood the source will criticize him (Mom and other)

- When your mom gives you a reason for the things your (dad/step-dad) does that upset you, is she more likely to criticize him or more likely to support him for what he said or did?

1) Very likely to criticize him or what he said or did
2) Somewhat likely to criticize him or what he said or did
3) She does both equally
4) Somewhat likely to support him or what he said or did
5) Very likely to support him or what he said or did

Repeated item for other source BUT…
Context of reframing – Likelihood the source will criticize him (Dad)

• When your dad gives you a reason for the things he does that upset you, is he more likely to apologize, or admit he was wrong, or more likely to defend himself for what he said or did?

1) Very likely to apologize, or admit he was wrong
2) Somewhat likely to apologize, or admit he was wrong
3) He does both, apologizes and defends himself
4) Somewhat likely to defend himself for what he said or did
5) Very likely to defend himself for what he said or did
6) Very likely to support him or what he said or did
Context of reframing – Affective sense of dad

When you and your mom talk about your (dad/step-dad)’s behaviors that upset you, does it make you feel…

1) A lot worse about your (dad/step-dad) or your relationship with him

2) Somewhat worse about your (dad/step-dad) or your relationship with him

3) No different than before you talked with her

4) Somewhat better about your (dad/step-dad) or your relationship with him

5) A lot better about your (dad/step-dad) or your relationship with him

Repeated item for dad and other sources
Context of reframing – Affective sense of self

When you and your mom talk about your (dad/step-dad)’s behaviors that upset you, does it make you feel...

1) A lot worse about yourself
2) Somewhat worse about yourself
3) No different than before you talked with her
4) Somewhat better about yourself
5) A lot better about yourself

Repeated item for dad and other sources
Theory of Guided Cognitive Reframing

- Seek out source
- Provide reason
- Criticize/Support
- Feel better about self
- Feel better about dad

Limitation: Single item indicators
Other measures

- Adolescent report
  - Internalizing score
    - (Kovacs, 1992)
  - Externalizing score
    - 12 items (alpha = .81) from the Behavior problems inventory (Peterson & Zill, 1986) that assess delinquency and aggression
Results
Who do adolescents seek out?

[Bar chart showing responses for different categories such as Yes/Mom, No, Yes/Dad, No, Yes, Other, No.]
Who talks to mom?

\[ \chi^2 = 0.02, \text{ NS} \]

\[ \chi^2 = 0.06, \text{ NS} \]
Who talks to dad?

\[ \chi^2 = .08, \text{ NS} \]

\[ \chi^2 = .001, \text{ NS} \]
Who talks to other?

\[ \chi^2 = .14, \text{ NS} \]

\[ \chi^2 = 10.87, p < .001 \]
Who are the others?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>birthdad</th>
<th>sibling</th>
<th>step-brother/sister</th>
<th>grandparent (mom)</th>
<th>grandparent (dad)</th>
<th>step-grandparent (stepdad)</th>
<th>aunt/uncle (mom)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
<td>25.40%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>aunt/uncle (dad)</th>
<th>aunt/uncle (step-dad)</th>
<th>friend</th>
<th>other adult relative</th>
<th>other child relative</th>
<th>professional</th>
<th>non-relative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20.70%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary so far

• Mothers
  o

• Fathers
  o

• Other
  o
  o
  o
  insight about dad
Testing our Theory of Guided Cognitive Reframing

Step 1 – estimate the relations with separate paths for intact and step-families
Testing our Theory of Guided Cognitive Reframing

Step 2 – determine whether we can drop paths from seeking out source to affective responses
Step 3 – explore whether we can fix paths to be common between intact and step-families
Path analysis step 4 – Do context of reframing models predict depression and externalizing after controlling for the other problem behavior.

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms → Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F) → adolescent Depressive Symptoms

Seek out mom → Provide reason → Feel better about self

Provide reason → Criticize/Support → Feel better about self

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms → Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F) → Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Limitations to be aware of

• All one reporter with data gathered in interview, thus, shared method variance
• Cross-sectional data from our Wave 1 interview only
• Limited sample size especially for children who seek out step-dad (n=32)
Reframing with mom
MI = 72   MS = 60
Saturated model

CFI 1.000
RMSEA .000
Chi-square of model = 97.213
Df = 20, p = 0.00

Seek out mom
Criticize/Support
Provide reason

Feel better about self
Feel better about dad

.25*, .45***
.05, .14
-.05, .14
-.19*, .02

.31*, .11
.21*, .14
.13, -.25+

.08, .18+
.26**, .57***
.28*, .29*
Reframing with mom
MI = 72   MS = 60
Testing the cognitive pathway

CFI  1.000
RMSEA  .000
Chi-square of model = 3.31
Df = 4, p = 0.51

Seek out source

.25*, .45***
-.19*, .02

Source provides reason for behavior

.10, -.25**
.31*, .11

Source criticizes or supports dad

.19*, .20*
.11, -.25+

Adolescent feels better about self

.26**, .60***

Adolescent feels better about dad

.30**, .28*

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with mom
MI = 72   MS = 60
Fully constrained

Seek out mom

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about self

Feel better about dad

.35***

.18**

.20**

.24*

.29**

.42***

-.09

-.05

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***

CFI .928
RMSEA .084
Chi-square of model = 17.56
Df = 12, p = 0.12
Reframing with dad
MI = 36  MS = 32
Saturated model

Seek out dad

Provide reason

Apologize/ Defend

Feel better about dad

Feel better about self

CFI  1.000
RMSEA  .000
Chi-square of model = 91.481
Df = 20, p = 0.00

Saturated model

.60***, .01

.27**, .13

-.22*, .02

-.36**, .33+

.12, .15

.07, .29+

-.17, -.04

.05, -.07

-.24*, -.06

.11, .66**
Reframing with dad
MI = 36  MS = 32
Testing the cognitive pathway

Seek out dad
Provide reason
Apologize/Defend
Feel better about self
Feel better about dad

.60***, .01
-.36***, .33+
.11, .15

.17*, -.07
.17*, .26
-.33*, -.00

.17*, .66**
-.37***, -.08

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with dad
MI = 36   MS = 32
Fully constrained

Seek out dad
- .60***, .01
- -.37***, .33+

Provide reason
- .12
- .10
- -.23*
- -.30**

Apologize/Defend

Feel better about self
- .20**

Feel better about dad
- .17*, .73**

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***

CFI  .873
RMSEA  .172
Chi-square of model = 18.09
Df = 9, p = 0.03
Reframing with other
MI = 57  MS = 43
Saturated model

CFI  1.000
RMSEA  0.00
Chi-square of model = 61.526  
Df = 20, p = 0.00

Seek out other

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about self

Feel better about dad

.15, .32**

.05, .53

.21**, .05

.08, .07

.25*, .45***

-.09, .00

.08, .02

-.16, -.32*

-.20, -.12

.36*, -.07

*.36, -.07

-.16, -.32*
Reframing with other
MI = 57   MS = 43
Testing the cognitive pathway

CFI  1.000
RMSEA  0.000
Chi-square of model = 2.05
Df = 4, p = 0.73

Seek out other

Provide reason

Feel better about self

Criticize/Support

Feel better about dad

.36*, -.04

.07, 47

.15**

-.15

.21**

.34***

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with other
MI = 57   MS = 43
Partially constrained

CFI  1.000
RMSEA  0.000
Chi-square of model = 9.08
Df = 10, p = 0.53

Seek out other

.36*, -.04

Provide reason

.07, .47

Criticize/Support

-.15

Feel better about self

.07

.15**

Feel better about self

.34***

Feel better about dad

.21**

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with mom predicting adolescent depression

CFI = .87
RMSEA = .07
Chi-square of model = 52.13
Df = 35, p = 0.03

NO SIGNIFICANT PATHS

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F)

Seek out mom

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about self

Feel better about dad

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

.68***

-.81
Reframing with mom predicting adolescent externalizing

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F)

Seek out mom

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about dad

Feel better about self

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

CFI = .88
RMSEA = 0.07
Chi-square of model = 51.25
Df = 35, p = 0.04
Reframing with dad predicting adolescent depression

- CFI = .94
- RMSEA = .04
- Chi-square of model = 39.83
- Df = 33, p = 0.19

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors → Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

Seek out dad → Criticize/Support → Feel better about dad

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F) → Provide reason

-1.17* → 0.67***

-0.81**
Reframing with dad predicting adolescent externalizing

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F)

Seek out dad

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about dad

Feel better about self

CFI = .793
RMSEA = 0.092
Chi-square of model = 59.77
Df = 33, p < 0.001

NO SIGNIFICANT PATHS

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

.24***

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with other predicting adolescent depression

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F)

Seek out other

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about self

Feel better about dad

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

.80***

-1.10*

.27*

CFI = 1.00
RMSEA = .00
Chi-square of model = 32.344
Df = 33, p = 0.50

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Reframing with other predicting adolescent externalizing

Adolescent Depressive Symptoms
Adolescent Gender (1=M; 2=F)

Seek out other

Provide reason

Criticize/Support

Feel better about dad

Feel better about self

NO SIGNIFICANT PATHS

Adolescent Externalizing behaviors

CFI = .949
RMSEA = 0.038
Chi-square of model = 37.57
Df = 33, p = 0.27

.10 = +, .05 = *, .01 = **, .001 = ***
Discussion

• All three models were very similar
• Dad apology related to better feelings about dad
• Most patterns similar for step-fathers and biological father
• Links between reframing and depression only for dad and other
• Reframing linked to adjustment through feelings about father
“I still don’t have all the answers, but I’m beginning to ask the right questions.”

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