

MENDING TIES: A 3 YEAR EXAMINATION OF CHANGE IN MOTHER-ADOLESCENT
CHILD RELATIONSHIP QUALITY FOR REFORMED DELINQUENTS

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ABSTRACT

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Considerable research has confirmed the importance of parent-child relationship quality for deterring adolescents' delinquent behavior; less research has examined the influence that change in delinquent behavior has on improving previously strained parent-child relationships. This thesis explored the effect that desisting from delinquent behavior, including school suspension/expulsion, arrest, juvenile incarceration, and self-reported delinquent behavior, has on perceived mother-child closeness, identity support, and coercive parenting using the longitudinal Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS) (n = 535). Baseline associations between delinquent and non-delinquent youths and (a) mother-child relationship closeness, (b) identity support, and (c) coercive parenting were examined. Next, change in mother-child relationship quality among adolescents with three years of desisting behavior was examined. Lastly, differences in the association between daughters' versus sons' persisting delinquent behavior and mother-child relationship quality was examined. Results indicate that desisting adolescents reported higher levels of parent-child identity support and lower levels of coercive parenting. Additionally, daughters, compared with sons, who continued to engage in delinquent behaviors had higher odds of experiencing coercive parenting. Substantively overall, desisting youth appear to be mending ties and strengthening parent-child relationship quality through their desisting behaviors.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family and my closest friends. Thank you for all the love and support! You have taught me about diversity and compassion, most importantly you have taught me resilience and tenacity. Disadvantage can be a weight, but for those who succeed in upward mobility, perspective is your greatest advantage and marketable skill.

Surrounded by love, I am not afraid!

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INTRODUCTION

In the past decade life course scholars increasingly have called for a more complete understanding of intergenerational processes associated with delinquency and crime. There is a need for greater consideration of parent-child relationships as dynamic with an emphasis on the degree to which social ties change over time (Farley & Kim-Spoon, 2014; Kincaid et al., 2022). Adolescence, as a life stage, is of particular interest due to the many developmental challenges young people experience as they transition to adulthood. Linked lives, a key life course theory principle, posits that adolescents' bonds with their parents or caregivers are crucial for social development (Tapia et al., 2015; 2018), are embedded within a larger network of social relationships (Carr, 2018), and are negatively influenced by contact with the criminal justice system, which strains close relationships, including relationships with parents (Buikhuisen & Dijksterhuis, 1971; Keene et al., 2018; Losoncz & Tyson, 2007). Yet much research on parent-adolescent relationships do not examine how relationships might change due to criminal justice contact and subsequent persistence or desistance from risk behaviors.

Parent-child closeness, provision of identity support, and avoidance of coercive parenting strategies all play a well-established role in adolescents' successful transition into adulthood (Cox & Harter, 2003; Longmore et al., 2013; Qu et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2014; Wyatt & Carlo, 2002). As the primary support system, parents have a considerable influence as children transition to adolescents, and as adolescents transition to adulthood, with high-quality relationships associated with prosocial outcomes at all stages of the life course. Farley and Kim-Spoon (2014) define parent-child relationships as high-quality if they are characterized by support, low-negativity, a caring environment, and both parent and child express satisfaction

with the relationship. Yet achieving and maintaining these high-quality relationships can be challenging for both parent and adolescent.

A variety of factors influence parental closeness including demographic characteristics, such as age and gender (Tapia et al., 2018; Van Aken et al., 1999), adolescents' feelings of achievement or failure (Assor & Tal, 2012; Van Aken et al., 1999), as well as behavior (Briegel et al., 2019; Tapia et al., 2015). Although previous research has investigated parent-child relationship quality as a buffer against delinquent involvement (e.g., Johnson et al., 2011; Longmore et al., 2013; Qu et al., 2015; Savell et al., 2019), this study examined the effects that adolescents' delinquent behavior has on change in mother-child relationship quality, and whether desistance from delinquent behavior was associated with improved mother-adolescent relationship quality three years later.

Drawing on a population-based prospective study, the Toledo Adolescents Relationships Study (n = 1,321), as well as insights from the life course perspective, adolescents' persistence versus desistance in delinquent behavior is expected to be associated with perceived changes in mother-child relationship quality including relationship closeness, identity support, and coercive parenting strategies. Models include controls for key sociodemographic covariates related to adolescents' delinquent behavior as well as parent-child relationship quality. This work builds on the literature examining delinquent youth by highlighting obstacles associated with desistance from delinquent and criminal behavior. The findings may have implications for policy affecting probationary outcomes of youth offenders by drawing attention to the emotional burdens experienced by delinquent and justice system-involved families and the difficulties of maintaining high-quality relationships with adolescents who continue to be involved in the criminal justice system.

BACKGROUND

Parent-Child Relationship Quality

Early theory and research on parenting and adolescent well-being has recognized adolescence as a unique life stage consisting of, approximately, the years between 10 and 18 (Hall, 1904; Longmore et al., 2013). During this stage in the life course adolescents experience a variety of biological and social transitions, with many of the social transitions occurring outside of parental purview (Giordano et al., 2009; Longmore et al., 2013). Much research has focused on understanding adolescents' involvement in prosocial and antisocial activities, as well as what parents and caregivers do that discourage adolescents' risky behaviors. Research and theory converge on the conclusion that parent-child relationship quality is critical for prosocial behavior and positive child development (Cox & Harter, 2003; Longmore et al., 2013; Qu et al., 2015; Stafford et al., 2016).

The notion of linked lives, a key life course principle, draws attention to adolescents' connections to others in their social environment who strongly influence their development. For adolescents, the primary source of social support is provided by parents or caregivers, and this relationship is established early on and, according to the family systems perspective evolves in nature depending on individual family members' behavior (Bowen, 1978). Decades of research has linked attachment bonds, including warm, supportive and directive parenting, to a wide array of positive adjustment outcomes for adolescents (Pastorelli et al., 2016; Qu et al., 2015). For example, adolescents who experience a warm and time invested relationship with their parents or caregivers tend to excel in school (Spera, 2005), to display stronger proficiency in emotional adjustment, and to be more likely to engage in prosocial behavior (Johnson et al., 2011; Lindell et al., 2021; Longmore et al., 2013; Stack et al., 2010; Steinberg et al., 1992).

Parents and caregivers influence adolescents' behavior by (1) expressing care and encouraging feelings of attachment, and (2) constraining involvement in specific risk activities (Longmore et al., 2013). Adapting Farley and Kim-Spoon's (2014) definition, parent-child relationships are high quality if they are (1) supportive with low-negativity interactions, (2) characterized as caring, and (3) the adolescent express satisfaction with the relationship itself. Adolescents with high-quality relationships with parents and caregivers are less likely to engage in and/or be formally sanctioned (i.e., school suspension/expulsion or criminal justice involvement) for engaging in delinquent behavior. Conversely, adolescents with weak attachments and poor quality or neglectful relationships with their parents or caregivers experience negative internalizing and externalizing behaviors, including emotional withdrawal, anxiousness, depression, and disruptive, destructive, aggressive behavior (Fomby & Musick, 2018), and are more likely to engage in antisocial and health-risk behaviors, including delinquent behavior (Johnson et al., 2016; Kapetanovic et al., 2019). For example, perceptions that parents care and that they monitor adolescents' behavior are associated with lower odds of criminal offending, net of peer influence and delinquency (Johnson et al., 2011).

Research further underscores the long reach of parent-child relationships by drawing attention to routine socializing behaviors that influence development throughout the life course. Strong parent-child ties have been linked to adolescents' lower rates of dropping out of school (Ghose & John, 2017; McGue et al., 2005), delayed sexual debut (Longmore et al., 2009), and delayed parenthood (McGue et al., 2005). Furthermore, parental negativity, is associated with later reports of intimate partner violence victimization (Giordano et al., 2016), highlighting the reach that these primary bonds have on determining youths' future development and cumulative

disadvantage (Giordano et al., 2016). Importantly, these early bonds are affected by both family demographic and individual level characteristics.

Family and Individual Characteristics

Family demographic characteristics including family structure while growing up, parents' race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status influences parent-child relationship quality and adolescents' risk behavior. King and colleagues (2018) found that there are significant differences in parent-child relationship closeness for single, compared to two-parent households, particularly those households with both biological parents reporting the closest parent-child relationships. Additionally, youths from single parent households, compared with two-parent households exhibited more behavioral problems and expressed lower levels of closeness with parents (Abedini et al., 2017). Research has found that race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status are associated with parent-child relationship quality. In a recent review of the literature, Black families, and families where mothers reported less than a high school degree, reported the highest levels of parent-child closeness (Zhang & Grant, 2023) thus providing evidence that race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status affect parent-child relationship quality.

Individual level demographic characteristics including gender affect parent-child relationship quality. Mothers, compared to fathers, tend to report higher levels of closeness and conflict with their children. Further both mothers and fathers report, on average, greater closeness with daughters compared to sons (Crouter et al., 1993; Driscoll & Pianta, 2011; Fingerman et al., 2020).

Adolescents' age also affects parent-child relationship quality. In a study of 11-14 year old adolescents, parent-child conflict increased, and relationship quality decreased with age, and those findings were amplified for girls (McGue et al., 2005). Scholars have speculated that these

increases in conflict and decreases in closeness are linked to adolescents increasing involvement with peers as part of the dynamics of individuation in which youths rely less on parents and more so on peers for support and advice. Yet, researchers have found that the relationship between age and parent-child closeness is curvilinear in nature. For example, Fang and colleagues, (2021) found that between the ages of 17 and 22 years old, relationship closeness with parents remained relatively stable. It is possible, however, the parent-child relationship quality differs by family structure, race/ethnicity, and age and may differ for delinquent and non-delinquent youths.

Parent-Child Relationship with Delinquent Adolescents

It is generally agreed that adolescents rely on their parents for emotional and instrumental support, especially after involvement with the criminal justice system (Baidawi, 2020; Rozzell, 2013). Delinquent youths with weak parent-child bonds are more likely to have relationships that are characterized by high verbal conflict and coercive parenting (Giordano et al., 2010; 2016). Delinquent youths are also more likely to transition to parenthood status early, a process that, for women, is associated with a higher likelihood of needing financial assistance while having less access to social resources (Copp et al., 2020). Overall, delinquency is strongly associated with reports of high stress and poor health (Clemens et al., 2019).

Summarizing, parent-child relationship quality has the potential to affect systematic disadvantage. Yet this relationship is multifaceted. Adolescents with a history of poor self-regulating behaviors, including delinquent and criminal behaviors, tend to be more difficult to parents, leading to poorer parent-child relationship quality (Cavanagh, 2022; Slagt et al., 2016). Nevertheless, high-quality parent-child relationships may be even more important for at risk youth because parent-child relationship quality is associated with positive self-regulating

compacities, especially for delinquent youth (Johnson et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2022; Tapia et al., 2015, 2018; Wyatt & Carlo, 2002).

Past criminological work has investigated crime and social ties, especially the effects that failure to form social ties to conventional society has on criminal involvement and the transformative effect that relationship quality has on desistance from criminal involvement (Laub & Sampson, 1993). Researchers previously have found that warm and supportive parent-child relationships act as a buffer against juvenile offending (Jacobsen & Zaatut, 2022; Smith et al., 2014; Wright & Beaver, 2005) as well as aiding prior juvenile offenders from future offending, including delinquent behavior that has not resulted in justice system contact.

Further, parent-child relationship quality for delinquent youth is affected by individual characteristics including gender. For example, male, compared to female adolescents tend to have higher involvement in delinquent and criminal activity (Hoeve et al., 2009), yet daughters report greater decreases in parent-child relationship quality (Svensson, 2004). In short, delinquent daughters, compared to sons, report lower parent-child relationship quality. Cavanagh (2022) found stronger negative change to parent-child relationship quality for younger, compared with older, youths. This highlights that parent-child relationship quality is not consistent for all delinquent youths and may differ by adolescents' gender and age.

Life Course, Linked Lives, And the Family Systems Perspective

As noted, the notion of linked lives emphasizes that individuals are embedded in the lives of their family, including those family members from other generations (Elder, 1994). According to Bowen (1978), family systems theory is useful for understanding behavior that defines the family unit in which individual members are influenced by each other's behaviors. Particularly for youths, delinquent or criminal behaviors may strain parent-child relationships (Cavanagh,

2022; Slagt et al., 2016) that, if not addressed, are associated with consequences for youths' future risk behaviors (Copp et al., 2020; Hoeve et al., 2009). Relevant to this study, is whether strained parent-child relationships are mendable?

There is a dearth of research that investigates adolescents' desistance behaviors and change in parent-child relationship quality over time. This study attends to this gap in the literature by investigating change in mother-child relationship quality after years of desistance from delinquent behavior. I examined perceived change in mother-child¹ closeness, identity support, and coercive parenting associated with desisting from delinquent behavior (i.e., suspension/expulsion, criminal justice involvement, and risk behavior). It is important to study relationship closeness, which is broader than emotional support. Closeness encompasses both traditional measures of the mother-child relationship, which are beneficial to social development across the life course (Longmore et al., 2009), as well as the value that youths place on their relationship with mothers, and can be considered as a proxy for emotional independence (Farley et al., 2014; Finkeldey et al., 2020, 2021; Khoirunnisa & Ikrima, 2021).

¹ Fathers/paternal caregivers were removed from analysis due to sample size restrictions (n = 133).

CURRENT STUDY

This thesis examined change in adolescents' reports of mother-child relationship quality after three years of not engaging in delinquent behavior. Relationship quality indicators included (a) parent-child identity support; (b) parent-child emotional closeness, including adolescents' perceived relationship importance; and (c) coercive parenting strategies (verbal and physical confrontations). Independent variables included adolescents' gainful activity (Alvira-Hammond et al., 2014), parenthood status, gender, age, race/ethnicity, family structure while growing up, and mothers' educational level.

I investigated the statistical differences in the change of mother-child relationship quality (emotional closeness, identity support, and coercive parenting) among adolescents who desisted compared to their counterparts who persisted in delinquent activities three years later ($n = 535$). Lastly, I assessed whether effects of persistent delinquent behavior on mother-child relationship quality differed for daughters compared to sons. Drawing on insights from the life course and family systems perspectives, I addressed the following hypotheses:

H₁ Adolescents' persistent delinquent behavior will be associated with lower levels of closeness and identity support, and higher frequencies of mothers' coercive parenting.

H₂ After controlling for previous relationship quality at wave I, adolescents' persistent delinquent behavior will be associated with greater declines in relationship closeness and identity support and higher odds of coercive parenting.

H₃ Daughters, compared to sons, who report persistent delinquent behavior will report greater decreases in mother-child closeness and identity support, and higher odds of coercive parenting.

The models will control for known demographic characteristics associated with both delinquency and mother-child relationship quality including youths' gender, age, race/ethnicity,

family structure, mothers' education, gainful activity, and parenthood status (Gavin et al., 2015; Ramsdal et al., 2015).

This research adds to the literature on delinquent youth and parent-child relationships and delinquent behavior by exploring parent-child relationship change over time, and addressing the question: are parent-child relationships reparable after strain due to delinquency and criminal behavior? The findings may have implications for policy and probationary outcomes of youth offenders by drawing attention to the emotional burden experienced by delinquent and justice system-involved families.

DATA, METHODS, AND MEASURES

Data

The Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS) is a longitudinal study of 1,321 adolescents from Lucas County, Ohio, who were first interviewed in 2000. TARS used a stratified random sampling strategy created by the National Opinion Research Center to select youths across 7th, 9th, and 11th grade from 62 different public schools, across seven different school districts—to ensure a representative sample in which school attendance was not required. Respondents were randomly selected by race, gender, and grade level in school. Black and Hispanic adolescents were oversampled. TARS is an on-going study, currently composed of eight waves of data, as well as a single parent/caregiver administered survey—collected separately from the adolescents’ survey during wave I interviews.

The current study used data from the first wave (2000-2001) and third wave (2004). TARS had an initial sample size of 1,321 individuals and 1,188 parents. After accounting for attrition across the two waves, the full sample at wave III is composed of 1,114 individuals (84% retention rate). Due to a small sample size respondents who reported race/ethnicity as “other” (n = 23) were omitted from the final sample population. The analytic sample used in this study is limited to delinquent adolescents who, had a parent interviewed, were interviewed at waves I and III, and who provided responses to all dependent variables and main independent variables, resulting in a sample of 535. To measure delinquent persistence and desistance from delinquent activities, only respondents with a history of formal sanctions(s) and/or an above mean scores for self-reported delinquent behavior at the first wave were included. Non-delinquent youths were not examined. The final sample population consisted of 265 adolescents who desisted from delinquent activities and 270 adolescents who persisted in delinquent activities. There were

minimal missing categories on the remaining covariates, however, Markov-Chain Monte Carlo multiple imputation was used to accommodate those few missing values.

Measures

Dependent Variables

Relationship Closeness. At wave I and wave III, a scale was created using five items that measured parent-child emotional closeness. These items included: (1) “My parents often ask about what I am doing in school,” (2) “My parents trust me,” (3) “My parents give me the right amount of affection,” (4) “I’m closer to parent than a lot of kids my own age,” (5) “I feel close to my parent” (Copp et al., 2020; Longmore et al. 2009), and (6) “How important is it to you: to gain parent’s approval” ($\alpha = 0.76$). Response options ranged from (1) strongly disagree/not important at all to (5) strongly agree/very important. The scale ranged from 1 to 5, with higher values indicating closer emotional relationships between mother and child.

Identity Support. At wave I and wave III, two items assessed identity support. These included: (1) “My parents seem to wish I were a different person,” and (2) “My parents sometimes put me down in front of other people” ($\alpha = 0.63$). Responses ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree (reverse coded), and ranged from 1 to 5 with higher values denoting mothers’ greater support of adolescents’ identity.

Coercive Parent-Child Relationship. Collected at wave I and wave III this scale measured self-reported frequency of conflict and physical abuse experienced by the adolescent. The items included: (1) “How often do you and your parents have disagreements or arguments about your dating,” (2) “When you and your parents disagree about things, how often do they do the following...” “... call you names or insult you,” (3) “... push, slap, or hit you,” and (4) “...

yell at you” ($\alpha = 0.61$) (Longmore et al., 2001). Responses ranged from (1) “never” to (6) “two or more times a week” with higher scores denoting more coercive relationships.

Key Independent Variables

Persistent Delinquency. Respondents were categorized as those delinquent adolescents who persisted in exhibiting delinquent behavior and those who desisted from delinquent behavior. These categories were developed using three scales/variables that assess delinquency: criminal justice contact, school suspension/expulsion, and self-reported delinquent behavior. Adolescents’ justice contact is measured using a comprehensive measure (Clemens et al., 2019). Initially, parents/caregivers reported (parent questionnaire) adolescents’ previous contact with police at wave I, then measures in wave III used adolescents’ self-reports. At wave I parents were asked, “How many times during the past year has your child has: been in trouble with the police,” and “number of times... your child has had that experience: your child was placed in a juvenile detention facility.” Responses originally ranged from (1) “never” to (8) “almost daily.” However, due to small cell size responses are recoded as (0) never to (1) one time or more. At Wave III adolescents answered the question, “How many times have you been arrested [don’t count minor traffic violations]?” Responses are recoded as (0) never and (1) one time or more. Second, Suspension/Expulsion consisted of a self-reported dichotomous variable collected at Wave III that asked respondents, “Have you ever been suspended (including in-school suspension) or expelled from school?” Responses included (0) no and (1) yes. Self-reported frequency of delinquent behavior was measured using a 9-item summed scale. The prompt asked, “in the past 12 months, how often have you: (1) “stolen (or tried to steal) something worth \$5 or less,” (2) “stolen (or tried to steal) something worth more than \$50,” (3) “been drunk in a public place,” (4) “used drugs to get high (not because you were sick),” (5) “sold drugs,” (6)

“broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around,” (7) “damaged or destroyed property on purpose,” (8) carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocketknife,” and (9) “attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting him/her” ($\alpha = 0.71$). Item responses for individual questions ranged from (0) “never” to (8) “more than once a day.” As a reminder, the analytic study sample was limited to adolescents categorized as delinquent at wave I meaning that only adolescents with criminal justice contact, school suspension/expulsion, and/or above mean self-reported delinquent behavior were included in the sample. Finally, to be categorized as desisting from delinquent activities, adolescents needed to have below average self-reported delinquent behaviors, and no new suspensions/expulsions and criminal justice contact between waves I and III. Otherwise, youths were categorized as persisting.

Sociodemographic Characteristics. The control variables included respondents’ and mother/maternal caregivers’ sociodemographic characteristics. Gender is a dichotomous variable, with (0) male, and (1) female, with male as the reference group in analyses. Age is calculated from adolescents’ self-reported birth date coded as a continuous variable. Ages ranged from 12-17 years ($\mu = 15.3$) at wave I and 15-22 years at the time of wave III ($\mu = 18.2$). Gainful Activity is an index of three binary items including: (1) “Are you attending school [high school, vocational school, or college] this year,” (2) “Are you currently working for pay for at least 10 hours a week,” and (3) “Is this job full-time or part-time” (Alvira-Hammond et al., 2014). Responses were (1) yes and (0) no and (1) “full-time” or (2) “part-time.” Responses were recoded as (1) for those individuals who were either enrolled in school or working full-time at wave III, and (0) for those individuals not working full-time nor enrolled in school at the time of interview. Parenthood status asked respondents, “How many of your pregnancies ended in a live birth?” Responses were recoded as “0” to indicate no children born,

and “1” to indicate the respondent had a child(ren). *Race/Ethnicity* included three attributes, Non-Hispanic White (contrast category), Non-Hispanic Black, and Hispanic. *Family Structure* during adolescence, collected in wave I (2001), is a categorical variable that indicated whether the adolescent resided with (1) “both biological parents,” (2) “a single biological parent,” (3) “a biological parent and a step or cohabiting parent,” or (4) “in another family structure type” (i.e., foster care, grandparents, or other family). *Maternal Education*, collected at wave I (parent questionnaire, 2001), is a proxy for socioeconomic background (Longmore et al., 2022) and was categorized as: (1) “high school education or less,” (2) “some college,” (3) “four-year degree from a university/college,” and (4) “professional training or post graduate education beyond a four-year degree.”

Analytic Strategy

Ordinary least squares regression models are used to examine the association between adolescents’ persisting/desisting behavior and change in mother-child relationship quality at wave III. Analyses were conducted in three stages. First, in order to confirm findings with past research on delinquent youths, baseline measures of delinquent behavior and relationship quality were established using: (a) adolescents perceived emotional closeness, (b) identity support, and (c) coercive parenting (this is shown in appendix A). The primary analyses focused on delinquent youths at the first wave. Analyses examined the association between mother-child relationship quality among desisting versus persisting delinquent youths after three years. The final stage investigated the interaction effect of adolescents’ gender and persisting/desisting status to test whether sons and daughters experience parent-child relationship change similarly or differently.

Descriptive statistics for the overall sample are provided in Appendix A, and includes means/percentages and standard deviations of mother-child emotional closeness, identity support, coercive parenting, gainful activity, and sociodemographic characteristics for both delinquent and non-delinquent youth. Descriptive statistics for this study's analytic sample are provided in Table 1 and include means/percentages, standard deviations of mother-adolescent emotional closeness, identity support, coercive parenting, and sociodemographic characteristics, for waves I and III among desisting and persisting delinquent youths.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

Appendix A shows the distribution analyses of the entire TARS sample for both delinquent and non-delinquent youth ($n = 1,137$). The TARS sample is consistent with current literature in demonstrating that delinquent youths have weaker parent-child relationship quality compared to their non-delinquent counterparts.

Analyses assessed how changes in delinquency may be associated with relationship quality change with mothers. Table 1 is limited to only individuals who qualify as delinquent ($n = 535$) at wave I. At waves I (2001) and III (2004), delinquent respondents report means scores of 3.83 and 3.92 for relationship closeness, 3.87 and 3.98 for identity support, and 2.20 and 2.20 for coercive parenting. The desisting youths have significantly higher levels of relationship closeness and identity support, as well as significantly lower frequency of mothers' coercive parenting strategies, on average. The majority are gainfully active at waves 1 and 3 (84.11% and 78.88%, respectfully). Regarding parenthood status, at wave III (2004) 85.61% of respondents reported no children, 12.34% reported having one child, 1.68% reported having two children, and 0.37% reported having three or more children. Parenthood status was not collected for the wave I sample. Considering gender and race/ethnicity, just over half (53.64%) are male, 46.36% female and approximately half (55.14%) identify as Non-Hispanic White, 30.65% as Non-Hispanic Black, and 14.21% report as Hispanic/Latinx racial/ethnic identity. The mean age for the delinquent sample at wave I (2001) and wave III (2004) are 15.54 and 18.53, respectfully. Approximately two fifths (43.55%) of respondents reported living in a two-biological parent household while growing up, 34.58% in a single biological parent household, 14.95% in a step-parent household, and 6.92% reported "other" households with neither biological parent. Lastly, as a proxy for socioeconomic status, 48.57% of mothers (wave I) reported educational levels of

high school or less, 34.03% some college, 12.81% reported a 4-year degree, and 4.59% reported post-graduate training (e.g., professional training, graduate school).

As shown in Table 1, desisting delinquent respondents have significantly higher levels of parent-child relationship closeness and identity support, and lower frequency of coercive parenting than their persisting counterparts. This sample consists of more female respondents and fewer male respondents, compared to the persisting sample. Both desisting and persisting adolescents report high levels of gainful activity, 81.51% and 76.30% respectively. Regarding parental status 83.77% of desisting and 87.41% of persisting respondents reported no children, and 13.96% and 10.47% of desisting and persisting respondents, respectively, report having one child. Few had more than one child with 1.89% of desisting respondents and 1.48% of persisting respondents report two children, and 0.38% and 0.37% of desisting and persisting respondents, respectively, report having three children.

There are significantly lower percentages of men in the desisting (46.79%) compared to the persisting (60.37%) sample, and significantly higher percentages of women in the desisting sample (53.21) compared to the persisting sample (39.63). Just under half (46.04%) of desisting delinquent respondents and 41.11% of persisting respondents report living in a household with two biological parents, nearly a third, 35.85% of desisting and 33.33% of persisting respondents report living in a single parent household, 12.83% of desisting and 17.04% of persist respondents report living in a stepparent, and 5.28% of desisting and 8.52% of persisting respondents report living in an “other” household without either biological parent. Lastly, the socioeconomic proxy, maternal education, indicates that nearly half of desisting respondents (49.42%) and persisting respondents (47.74%) have mothers who completed high school or less, 34.63% (33.46% for

persisting respondents) have some college, 12.06% (13.53% for persisting populations) have a four-year degree, and 3.89 (5.26% for persisting populations) have “beyond a four-year degree.”

Table 1. Percentages/Means and Standard Deviations for Mother-Child Relationship Closeness, Identity Support, Coercive Parenting, Gainful Activity, and Sociodemographic Characteristics for Delinquent Youth (n = 535).

Variable	Delinquent Sample 2001	Delinquent Sample 2004	Desisting Delinquent Sample 2004	Persisting Delinquent Sample 2004	
Dependent Variables					
Relationship Closeness (range: 1-5)	3.83 (0.67)	3.92 (0.61)	3.98 (0.61)	3.87 (0.61)	*
Identity Support (range: 1-5)	3.87 (0.95)	3.98 (0.92)	4.09 (0.85)	3.88 (0.98)	**
Coercive Parenting (range: 1-6)	2.20 (0.88)	2.20 (0.87)	1.88 (0.83)	2.09 (0.91)	**
Independent Variables					
Gender (%)					
Male	53.64	-	46.79	60.37	**
Female	46.36	-	53.21	39.63	**
Gainful Active (%)	84.11	78.88	81.51	76.30	
Parent Status (%)					
0 Children	-	85.61	83.77	87.41	
1 Child	-	12.34	13.96	10.47	
2 Children	-	1.68	1.89	1.48	
3 Children	-	0.37	0.38	0.37	
Race/Ethnicity (%)					
White	55.14	-	53.58	56.67	
Black	30.65	-	32.45	28.89	
Hispanic	14.21	-	13.96	14.44	
Age	15.54 (1.67)	18.53 (1.71)	18.62 (1.71)	18.46 (1.71)	
Family Structure (%)					
Two-Bio. Parents	43.55	-	46.04	41.11	
Single Bio. Parent	34.58	-	35.85	33.33	
One-Bio. & One Step-Parent	14.95	-	12.83	17.04	
Other	6.92	-	5.28	8.52	
Mother's Education (%)					
High School or less	48.57	-	49.42	47.74	
Some College	34.03	-	34.63	33.46	
Four-Year Degree	12.81	-	12.06	13.53	
Beyond 4-yr Degree	4.59	-	3.89	5.26	
<i>n</i>	535	535	265	270	

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$ + $p \leq .10$

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study—Wave I (2001) and III (2004).

NOTE: Significance denotes a significant difference between persisting populations and desisting populations at wave III (2004). Age has a range of 12-19 at wave I (2001) and a range of 15-22 at wave III (2004). Relationship Closeness and identity Support is coded to denote higher values for stronger positive relationship ties. Coercive Parenting is coded to denote higher values for more coercive parenting (i.e., 6 denotes the most coercive parenting).

Relationship Closeness

Table 2 shows regression analysis measuring relationship closeness for the analytic sample of delinquent youths ($n = 535$) using standardized coefficients. At the zero-order level, persisting delinquency is negatively associated with mother-adolescent relationship closeness at wave III (2004). Additionally, at the zero-order level, prior mother-adolescent relationship closeness at wave I (2001) shows a strong positive relationship with closeness at wave III. Daughters who desisted from delinquent activities, compared with sons, and adolescents with their own children, compared to those who do not have children, report lower levels of mother-child relationship closeness. Furthermore, respondents who lived in single parent, stepparent, and other households report lower levels of closeness compared to their counterparts who lived with two biological parents.

Multivariate results are in Table 2. Model 1 shows that persisting delinquency continues to have a negative association with closeness. Female adolescents report significantly lower levels of closeness. These results endure with the inclusion of sociodemographic indicators in Model 2. Persisting delinquent status has a negative association with parental closeness. Female adolescents still report lower levels of closeness. Additionally, youths who resided in single parent households, step-parent households, and other households report lower levels of relationship closeness compared to adolescents who resided in two-parent households. Lastly, maternal education of high school or less is associated with higher relationship closeness.

After accounting for prior relationship closeness in adolescence, however, persistence is no longer statistically significantly related to closeness (Model 3). Relationship closeness at wave I, which is positive and significantly associated with relationship closeness at wave III, mediates the association between persisting delinquent behavior and relationship closeness at

wave III. These findings indicate that if the respondent report a high levels of relationship closeness at wave I, then their desisting or persisting behavior at wave III will not be significantly associated with their mother-adolescent child relationship closeness at wave III. In addition, prior closeness is the most robust of all the findings. Indicating that for delinquent youths the best predictor of relationship closeness over time is prior closeness and desisting delinquent behaviors was not predictive of change in adolescents' closeness with their mother.

Model 4 tests whether there is a significant difference in the association of persisting delinquency for sons and daughters and the interaction term indicates persistence operates the same way for sons and daughters.

Table 2. OLS Multiple Variable Analysis Examining Mother-Child Relationship Closeness by Persisting Delinquent Behaviors, Gender, and Covariates (n = 535).

Variable	Zero-Order β (SE)		Model 1 β (SE)		Model 2 β (SE)		Model 3 β (SE)		Model 4 β (SE)	
Independent Variables										
Persisting Delinquency	-0.12 (0.05)	*	-0.13 (0.05)	*	-0.11 (0.05)	*	-0.07 (0.05)		-0.07 (0.05)	
Female	-0.12 (0.05)	*	-0.14 (0.05)	*	-0.12 (0.05)	*	-0.10 (0.05)	*	-0.10 (0.05)	*
Wave I Indicator										
Closeness at wave I	0.38 (0.04)	***	-		-		0.38 (0.04)	***	0.38 (0.04)	***
Interaction										
Female*Persisting Delinquency			-		-		-		-0.09 (0.10)	
Sociodemographic Measures										
Gainful Active	0.08 (0.06)		-		0.03 (0.07)		0.03 (0.06)		0.04 (0.06)	
Parenthood Status	-0.11 (0.06)	+	-		-0.06 (0.06)		-0.09 (0.06)	+	-0.10 (0.06)	+
Age	0.01 (0.02)		-		0.01 (0.01)		-0.02 (0.01)		-0.02 (0.02)	
Race/Ethnicity (White used as Reference)										
Black			-		0.04 (0.07)		-0.03 (0.06)		-0.04 (0.06)	
Hispanic	-0.04 (0.06)		-		-0.03 (0.08)		-0.11 (0.07)		-0.11 (0.07)	
Family Structure (Two Bio. Parents used as Reference)										
Single Bio. Parent	-0.13 (0.06)	*	-		-0.12 (0.06)	+	-0.07 (0.06)		-0.07 (0.06)	
One Bio. & One Step-Parent	-0.21 (0.08)	**	-		-0.20 (0.08)	*	-0.17 (0.07)	*	-0.17 (0.07)	*
Other	-0.45 (0.11)	***	-		-0.43 (0.11)	***	-0.34 (0.10)	***	-0.34 (0.10)	***
Mother's Education (Some College used as Reference)										
HS or less	0.09 (0.06)		-		0.13 (0.06)	*	0.10 (0.05)	+	0.10 (0.05)	+
Four Year Degree	0.10 (0.09)		-		0.05 (0.09)		0.05 (0.08)		0.06 (0.08)	
Advanced Degree/Training	0.21 (0.13)		-		0.17 (0.13)		0.14 (0.12)		0.13 (0.12)	
Constant			4.06 (0.05)	***	4.02 (0.34)	***	2.28 (0.34)	***	2.30 (0.35)	***
F Statistic			5.77	**	2.90	***	11.44	***	10.73	***

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$ + $p \leq .10$

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study—Wave I and III

Identity Support

Table 3 shows a regression analysis assessing identity support at wave III for the entire analytic sample of delinquent youth ($n = 535$), using standardized coefficients. Results indicate that at the zero-order, persisting delinquency is negatively associated with identity support at wave III. Prior identity support has a positive association with identity support at wave III. Respondents who resided in other households report lower levels of identity support at wave III.

Model 1 indicates that persisting delinquency is negatively associated with identity support after accounting for gender. Further, although not significant at the zero-order, daughters have lower levels of identity support compared to sons after controlling for persistent delinquency. Model 2 shows that net of controls, persisting delinquency remains negatively associated with identity support. Daughters still report lower levels of identity support after accounting for demographic measures. Living in other households compared to living with two-biological parents is associated with lower levels of identity support at wave III (Model 2).

All significant variables in Model 2 remain significant after controlling for prior identity support at wave I (Model 3). Prior support is positively associated with subsequent identity support indicating that prior relationship quality is again the strongest predictor of later identity support.

Model 3 shows support for hypothesis two; results indicate that persisting delinquency is negatively associated with identity support at wave III, net of prior support. This means that persistently delinquent youths experience a negative change in their identity support with their mothers after controlling for prior indicators of identity support. Those who desist from delinquent behavior experience improvement in identity support from mothers over time. Further daughters experience greater decreases in support, net of prior support (Model 3).

Model 4 tests whether there is a significant difference in the association of persisting delinquency for sons and daughters. The non-significant interaction term indicates that persistence operates the same way for sons and daughters.

Table 3. OLS Multiple Variable Analysis Examining Mother-Child Identity Support by Persisting Delinquent Behaviors, Gender, and Covariates (n = 535).

Variable	Zero-Order β (SE)		Model 1 β (SE)		Model 2 β (SE)		Model 3 β (SE)		Model 4 β (SE)	
Independent Variables										
Persisting Delinquency	-0.21 (0.08)	**	-0.23 (0.08)	**	-0.19 (0.08)	*	-0.18 (0.08)	*	-0.18 (0.08)	*
Female	-0.12 (0.08)		-0.15 (0.08)	+	-0.13 (0.08)	+	-0.13 (0.08)	+	-0.13 (0.08)	+
Wave I Indicator										
Identity Support at wave I	0.36 (0.04)	***	-		-		0.35 (0.04)	***	0.35 (0.04)	***
Interaction										
Female*Persisting Delinquency			-		-		-		0.01 (0.15)	
Sociodemographic Measures										
Gainful Active	0.15 (0.10)		-		0.14 (0.11)		0.14 (0.10)		0.14 (0.10)	
Parenthood Status	-0.04 (0.09)		-		-0.02 (0.10)		-0.01 (0.09)		-0.01 (0.09)	
Age	0.01 (0.02)		-		0.01 (0.03)		0.01 (0.02)		0.01 (0.02)	
Race/Ethnicity (White used as Reference)										
Black	0.02 (0.09)		-		0.14 (0.10)		0.14 (0.09)		0.14 (0.09)	
Hispanic	-0.01 (0.12)		-		0.04 (0.12)		0.03 (0.12)		0.03 (0.12)	
Family Structure (Two Bio. Parents used as Reference)										
Single Bio. Parent	-0.13 (0.09)		-		-0.15 (0.10)		-0.06 (0.09)		-0.06 (0.09)	
One Bio. & One Step-Parent	-0.13 (0.12)		-		-0.12 (0.12)		-0.08 (0.11)		-0.08 (0.11)	
Other	-0.50 (0.16)	**	-		-0.50 (0.17)	**	-0.39 (0.16)	*	-0.39 (0.16)	*
Mother's Education (Some College used as Reference)										
HS or less	0.15 (0.09)		-		0.18 (0.09)	*	0.19 (0.09)	*	0.19 (0.09)	*
Four Year Degree	0.15 (0.13)		-		0.12 (0.14)		0.17 (0.13)		0.17 (0.13)	
Advanced Degree/Training	0.27 (0.20)		-		0.28 (0.20)		0.14 (0.19)		0.14 (0.19)	
Constant			4.16 (0.07)	***	3.78 (0.51)	***	2.34 (0.50)	***	2.34 (0.51)	***
F Statistic			5.00	**	2.00	*	7.86	***	7.33	***

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$ + $p \leq .10$

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study—Wave I and III

Coercive Parenting

Table 4 shows the regression analysis measuring coercive parenting for the sample of delinquent youth ($n = 535$) using standardized coefficients. Results indicate that at the zero-order persisting delinquency is associated with higher levels of coercive parenting strategies.

Daughters compared to sons report greater frequency of coercive parenting. Greater frequency of coercive parenting at wave I (2001) is positively associated with frequency of coercive parenting at wave III (2004). Age is negatively associated with coercive parenting at wave III. Lastly at the zero-order, respondents who reside in a single parent, versus two-parent, household report more frequent coercive parenting at wave III.

Model 1 indicates that persisting delinquency is positively associated with coercive parenting with the inclusion of gender in the model. Daughters report more frequent coercive parenting compared to sons, net of persisting delinquency status. These significant results remain after accounting for sociodemographic measures. Model 2 indicates that desisting respondents as well as sons report less coercive parenting than persisting counterparts and daughters, net of controls. Model 2 further shows that age is negatively associated with coercive parenting, indicating that coercive parenting tends to decrease as youths' age increases.

Model 3 results include prior frequency of coercive parenting. Net of prior coercive parenting, persisting delinquency is positively associated with coercive parenting at wave III. This indicates that desisting delinquency is associated with declines in the frequency of coercive parenting strategies at wave III. Daughters experience greater frequencies of coercive parenting. Prior coercive parenting is the strongest predictor of coercive parenting at wave III. Furthermore, gainfully active respondents, although not significant in prior models, report significantly lower levels of coercive parenting in Model 3.

Lastly, Model 4 tests whether there is a significant difference in the association of persisting delinquency for sons compared with daughters; the interaction term indicates that persistent delinquency operated differently for daughters and sons. Daughters who persisted in delinquent activities report 0.36 unit increase in the frequency of coercive parenting compared to sons who persisted in delinquent activities. These results support the third hypothesis and indicate a cumulative disadvantage experienced by daughters who persisted in engaging in delinquent activities in regard to coercive parenting frequencies.

Table 4. OLS Multiple Variable Analysis Examining Mother-Child Coercive Parenting by Persisting Delinquent Behaviors, Gender, and Covariates (n = 535).

Variable	Zero-Order β (SE)		Model 1 β (SE)		Model 2 β (SE)		Model 3 β (SE)		Model 4 β (SE)	
Independent Variables										
Persisting Delinquency	0.22 (0.07)	**	0.26 (0.07)	***	0.25 (0.07)	***	0.20 (0.07)	**	0.21 (0.07)	**
Female	0.29 (0.07)	***	0.33 (0.07)	***	0.31 (0.08)	***	0.19 (0.07)	**	0.19 (0.07)	**
Wave I Indicators										
Coercive Parenting at wave I	0.40 (0.04)	***	-		-		0.39 (0.04)	***	0.39 (0.04)	***
Interaction										
Female*Persisting Delinquency			-		-		-		0.36 (0.14)	**
Sociodemographic Measures										
Gainful Active	-0.08 (0.09)		-		-0.14 (0.10)		-0.20 (0.09)	*	-0.20 (0.09)	*
Parenthood Status	0.11 (0.08)		-		0.11 (0.09)		0.10 (0.08)		0.11 (0.08)	
Age	-0.08 (0.02)	***	-		-0.09 (0.02)	***	-0.10 (0.02)	***	-0.09 (0.02)	***
Race/Ethnicity (White used as Reference)										
Black	0.10 (0.08)		-		-0.01 (0.09)		0.05 (0.08)		0.05 (0.08)	
Hispanic	0.07 (0.11)		-		-0.03 (0.12)		-0.03 (0.10)		-0.03 (0.10)	
Family Structure (Two Bio. Parents used as Reference)										
Single Bio. Parent	0.22 (0.09)	*	-		0.10 (0.09)		0.09 (0.08)		0.09 (0.08)	
One Bio. & One Step-Parent	0.12 (0.11)		-		0.03 (0.11)		0.02 (0.10)		0.02 (0.10)	
Other	0.10 (0.15)		-		-0.07 (0.16)		-0.06 (0.15)		-0.06 (0.15)	
Mother's Education (Some College used as Reference)										
HS or less	-0.01 (0.08)		-		-0.02 (0.08)		0.01 (0.08)		0.01 (0.08)	
Four Year Degree	-0.11 (0.12)		-		-0.07 (0.12)		-0.10 (0.11)		-0.12 (0.11)	
Advanced Degree/Training	-0.28 (0.19)		-		-0.19 (0.19)		-0.17 (0.17)		-0.16 (0.17)	
Constant			1.70 (0.07)	***	3.47 (0.48)	***	2.93 (0.44)	***	2.80 (0.44)	***
F Statistic			14.04	***	3.92	***	10.92	***	10.73	***

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$ + $p \leq .10$

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study—Wave I and III

DISCUSSION

Strain associated with delinquency has many negative effects on family dynamics. However, adolescence, defined as a transitional stage in the life course, is a particularly vulnerable stage with regard to the destructive consequences of strain associated with delinquency. Life course theory, particularly the notion of linked lives, and the family systems perspectives argue that to understand adolescents' behavior it is essential to understand the evolving family relationships over time. Persistently delinquent youths have significantly weaker parent-child relationship quality compared to youths who desisted from delinquent activities.

Partially consistent with the second hypothesis, desisting behavior can lead to relationship mending between mother and child. This study finds significantly higher mother-child identity support for desisting youths, net of prior levels of identity support. However, as shown in Table 2, closeness, which was significantly associated with persisting delinquency status, was no longer significant when prior relationship closeness is added to the model. This indicates that prior closeness is predictive of mother-child closeness and persisting delinquent youths do not differ in closeness over time from desisting youths. This is consistent with past research arguing that past relationship quality will influence present relationship quality. Additionally, gender, family structure, and maternal education are associated with closeness. Delinquent daughters report lower levels of closeness and identity support compared to delinquent sons. Although this does not support some research on parent-child relationships and gender, which argues that daughters are closer to parents compared to sons, this is consistent with research on delinquent populations.

In regard to identity support, delinquency persisting youths report lower levels of identity support over time, net of controls, compared to their desisting counterparts. This means that

consistent with the second hypothesis, desisting delinquent youths experience improvements in the provision of identity support by mothers over time. Daughters tend to report lower levels of identity support compared to sons. Only individuals from other households (not living with either biological parent) report lower levels of identity support at wave III. Lower socioeconomic status is associated with higher identity support, specifically, mothers who have a high school degree or less report more identity support.

The third hypothesis was not supported indicating that sons and daughters whose delinquent behaviors persists are not statistically different from each other regarding mother-child relationship closeness and identity support. The interactions in Tables 2 and 3 (Model 3) are not significant highlighting the absence of a cumulative disadvantage for delinquency persisting daughters.

With regard to coercive parenting, coercive parenting is found to be higher for persistently delinquent youths compared to their desisting counterparts, net of prior coercive frequencies. This means that desisting delinquent youths experience improvements or declines in the frequency of coercive parenting strategies. This finding is consistent with past research and suggests that persistently delinquent youths tend to have more frequent parent-child conflict, however, the added measure of time, unique to this study, allows for observing changes longitudinally. Importantly, coercive parenting at wave I, similar to the other prior relationship reports, is predictive of coercive parenting at wave III. Age and gainful activity, although not related to measures of closeness and identity support, are predictive of less frequent coercive parenting. Specifically, as age increases, coercive parenting decreases. This is consistent with past research and most likely due to the weakened control that parents have on children as they become older and transition toward young adulthood. Lastly, those respondents who were

gainfully active (i.e., enrolled in school or employed) experience less coercive parenting compared to non-gainfully active counterparts.

The fourth hypothesis was supported. Gender and persisting status interact such that greater frequency in coercive parenting exists for delinquency persisting daughters compared to delinquency persisting sons. Therefore, persistent delinquent activity is associated with weaker parent-child relationship quality as evidenced by greater frequency of coercive parenting, daughters' persisting delinquency appears to be linked to greater frequency of coercive parenting relative to sons' persisting delinquency at wave III. The association between persisting delinquency and parental closeness as well as identity support fail to show significance, therefore they operate in the same manner for sons and daughters.

Overall, these findings highlight the complexities of parent-child relationships. The findings suggest that future research continue to interact assessing in what ways sons and daughters' continued risk behaviors affect parent-child relationship quality. Parent-child relationship quality is an important resource in navigating desistance and the more researchers, parents, and youth advocates understand the predictive factors that enhance or hinder parent-child relationship quality, the more these stakeholders can address barriers to desistance.

Although this study makes an important contribution to the literature on delinquent youths and change in three indicators of relationship quality, closeness, identity support, and coercive parenting, there are some limitations. The measures are from the adolescents' perspective, and not from the parents themselves. In the future, it would be useful to conduct similar research with the inclusion of measures that are assessed from the parents themselves to see if any results differ. Another limitation is that only mother-child relationship were examined.

Past research does indicate that mothers report closer bonds to both sons and daughters compared to fathers; however, future research would benefit from including fathers in examining parent-child relationship quality change. Additionally, delinquent and crime involved respondents in this sample were collapsed into one category. Future work would benefit from differentiating between delinquency with and without criminal justice involvement to see if formal interaction with the criminal justice system influences relationship quality. Third, although population-based TARS is a regional sample.

Nonetheless, the results of this research do provide promising insight into the important role that parental support plays particularly for delinquent youths. The unique contributions of this paper include the inclusion of measures over time, the multifaceted measure of relationship quality, the assessment of persisting delinquency compared to desisting behavior over time, and the cumulative gendered disadvantage for female persisting delinquent populations. Furthermore, these findings highlight that strain caused by delinquency can be improved over time. Important next steps include distinguishing between youths with more formal sanctions (i.e., criminal justice contact) and those with only self-reported delinquency to determine the degree of strain experienced by those families with criminal justice contact.

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APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR DELINQUENT AND NON-
DELINQUENT YOUTH

Table A. Percentages/Mean and Standard Deviations for Mother-Child Relationship Closeness, Identity Support, Coercive Parenting, Gainful Activity, and Sociodemographic Characteristics for Delinquent Youth compared to their Non-Delinquent counterparts at wave I (n = 1,137).

Variable	Full Sample	Non-Delinquent Sample	Delinquent Sample	
Dependent Variables				
Relationship Closeness ^(range: 1-5)	3.94 (0.63)	4.09 (0.54)	3.83 (0.67)	***
Identity Support ^(range: 1-5)	4.01 (0.88)	4.22 (0.73)	3.86 (0.95)	***
Coercive Parenting ^(range: 1-6)	2.10 (0.80)	1.98 (0.65)	2.20 (0.88)	***
Independent Variables				
Gainful Active (%)	84.11	90.61	78.96	***
<i>Sociodemographic Characteristics</i>				
Gender (%)				
Male	46.97	37.79	53.65	***
Female	53.03	62.21	46.35	***
Race/Ethnicity (%)				
White	63.41	79.12	51.98	***
Black	25.51	14.82	33.28	***
Hispanic	11.08	6.05	14.74	***
Age ^(range: 12-19)	15.24 (1.73)	14.89 (1.75)	15.50 (1.67)	***
Family Structure (%)				
Two-Bio. Parents	50.75	64.51	40.73	***
Single Bio. Parent	29.29	21.50	34.95	***
One-Bio. & One Step-Parent	13.98	12.11	15.35	
Other	5.98	1.88	8.97	***
Mother's Education (%)				
Highschool or less	44.34	39.12	48.21	**
Some College	33.45	32.43	34.21	
Four-Year Degree	15.52	19.04	12.91	**
Beyond 4-yr Degree	6.69	9.41	4.67	**
<i>n</i>	1,137	479	658	

* $p \leq .050$ ** $p \leq .010$ *** $p \leq .001$ + $p \leq .100$

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study—Wave I (2001)

NOTE: Significance, on the right side of the table, indicates a significant difference between delinquent and non-delinquent samples. Coercive relationship denotes a coercive relationship between parent and child (for more information see Appendix B). Relationship Closeness and identity Support is coded to denote higher values for stronger positive relationship ties. Coercive Parenting is coded to denote higher values for more coercive parenting (i.e., 6 denotes the most coercive parenting).