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Same-Sex Parent Socialization: Associations between Gay and Lesbian Parenting Strategies and Child Behavioral Adjustment

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SAME-SEX PARENT SOCIALIZATION: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN GAY AND
LESBIAN PARENTING STRATEGIES AND CHILD BEHAVIORAL ADJUSTMENT

A Thesis Presented

by

MARYKATE OAKLEY

Submitted to the graduate school of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

SAME-SEX PARENT SOCIALIZATION: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN GAY AND LESBIAN PARENTING STRATEGIES AND CHILD BEHAVIORAL ADJUSTMENT

MAY 2015

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Cultural socialization has been linked with child development and outcome, but, to date, the majority of research has focused on race and ethnicity. However, since families headed by gay and lesbian parents experience stigma related to parental sexual orientation, socialization practices may be uniquely important for families headed by gay and lesbian parents. The present study examined same-sex parent socialization among 54 families headed by gay and lesbian parents (52 fathers, 43 mothers, 51 school-aged children) using a cultural socialization framework. Findings revealed that parents engaged in socialization along three dimensions: Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting. Children perceived same-sex parent socialization with less frequency than parents reported engaging in these behaviors across all dimensions. In general, same-sex parent socialization was not associated with child behavioral adjustment. Neither same-sex parent socialization nor child behavioral adjustment was associated with whether parents were gay or lesbian. Results from this study justify the need to broaden our conceptualization of cultural socialization to be more inclusive of these diverse family structures.

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CHAPTER 1

CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION

A. Introduction

Scholars studying family processes have been interested in the ways in which parents transmit values, information, and social perspectives to their children. Collectively these practices are referred to as cultural socialization, a dynamic process by which parents communicate cultural values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors to the child (Lee, 2003). Traditionally, cultural socialization has been examined in the literature as a practice conducted by racial and ethnic minority parents that instills a sense of ethnic or racial pride in their children, primes children for potential race- or ethnicity-related barriers, and helps prepare children for life in mainstream society (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Although research has examined cultural socialization as a family process used by racial and ethnic minority parents, it has yet to be systematically explored among families headed by gay and lesbian parents.

B. Ethnic-Racial Socialization

Scholarly interest in the processes used by parents to enable children to navigate culturally diverse contexts is rooted in racial and ethnic socialization. Historically, research on racial socialization has focused on understanding how African American parents preserve children's self-esteem and prepare them to understand racial stratification in the United States (Peters 2002; Thornton, 1997). The literature on ethnic socialization emerged alongside growing recognition that ethnic minority youths were encountering societal discrimination and devaluation that resulted in unique developmental tasks, such as having to overcome stigma based on ethnic group

membership (Hughes, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006). Although sometimes referring to different phenomenon, it appears that the concepts of racial and ethnic socialization are used interchangeably in the literature, which makes it difficult to synthesize findings across studies (Hughes et al., 2006). To address this, Hughes and colleagues (2006) used the combined term ethnic-racial socialization in their literature review of over 50 empirical articles that investigated how parents transmit messages about race, ethnicity, and cultural heritage to their children. The authors made the argument that broad, general terms such as ethnic-racial socialization are not conceptually or empirically useful, and that it is more important to understand the nature and specific content of messages parents communicate to their children. Thus, by examining studies of ethnic-racial socialization collectively, the authors concluded that most racial and ethnic minority families engage in some form of racial or ethnic socialization, which could be systematically examined along four, measurable dimensions: Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, Promotion of Mistrust, and Egalitarianism (Hughes et al., 2006).

Cultural Socialization refers to an emphasis on racial and ethnic pride, traditions, and heritage. This can be done either explicitly or implicitly (Hughes, Bachman, Ruble & Fuligni, 2006; Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997). Some studies have suggested that parents engage in Cultural Socialization more frequently than other dimensions of socialization (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1999). This is likely because Cultural Socialization shares conceptual space with other social scientific constructs, and studies have shown that parents are more likely to describe promoting cultural pride and knowledge to their children when asked open-ended

questions about parenting (Hughes et al., 2006). Preparation for Bias involves parents preparing children for experiences of racial and ethnic discrimination. Research suggests that parents do not spontaneously disclose talking with their children about discrimination, but promoting awareness of discrimination and preparing children to cope have been emphasized as important aspects of ethnic-racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1999). Promotion of Mistrust includes parental warnings about different races and ethnicities and promotes keeping a distance from these groups. Similar to Preparation for Bias, themes related to Promotion of Mistrust rarely come up in open-ended questions and these behaviors are infrequently endorsed by parents on surveys (Hughes et al., 2006). Finally, Egalitarianism refers to socialization strategies in which parents explicitly encourage their children to value individual qualities over group membership or avoid conversations about race and ethnicity altogether (Spencer, 1983).

Despite a robust body of literature examining ethnic-racial socialization (e.g., Caughy, et al., 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes, et al., 2006; Peters 2002; Spencer, 1983; Thornton, 1997; White-Johnson, Ford, & Sellers, 2010), assessing socialization behaviors empirically continues to pose a challenge. To date, the majority of studies rely on self-report, which is limiting because parents are not always aware of the extent to which they may be engaging in these broad and highly theoretical processes (Hughes et al., 2006). Therefore, researchers have attempted to develop measures that ask about specific parenting behaviors (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Tran & Lee, 2010). To examine the extent to which parents engage specifically in the underlying dimensions of racial socialization, Hughes and Chen (1997) created and validated a 16-item parent self-report measure. Adaptations and modifications to the original measure

have been developed to further understand how and why parent socialize their children around race and ethnicity as well as how these practices are linked to child experience and outcomes (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Tran & Lee, 2010).

Parent motivations for engaging in cultural socialization practices have been more frequently studied than other aspects of socialization and therefore are better represented in the literature. Correlates include parent and child characteristics, experiences, and contextual factors, including parents' ethnic identity and discrimination experiences as well as children's ethnic identity exploration and experiences of unfair treatment (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). In the review by Hughes and colleagues (2006), it was found that preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust increased in frequency with child age, with boys receiving more cultural socialization messages than girls. Additionally, higher SES was associated with parents engaging in more cultural socialization and preparation for bias practices (Hughes et al., 2006). Environmental factors such as racial integration and parental experiences of discrimination also shaped cultural socialization practices (White-Johnson, et al., 2010).

Given that cultural socialization has predominantly referred to how racial and ethnic minority parents instill in their children racial and ethnic values, it is unsurprising that the majority of studies have examined these practices among African American, Mexican/Mexican American, and Korean families (Hughes et al., 2006). However, the increasing diversity of today's families extends far beyond race and ethnicity, and therefore, it is imperative that research examining parent socialization practices keeps pace with these broader aspects of family diversity. It is time that the concept of cultural socialization, which traditionally has had primarily racial and ethnic connotations, is

broadened to encompass other contemporary family structures. For example, adoption is becoming an increasingly common way to form a family in the United States. According to the 2010 census, the number of adopted children under the age of 18 was roughly 1.5 million (Kreider & Lofquist, 2014). Additionally, an estimated 22,000 adopted children are being raised by approximately 16,000 same-sex couples (Gates, 2013). Thus, it is becoming increasingly important for scholars to understand the unique family processes among these diverse family structures.

C. Socialization in Adoptive Families

Increasingly, scholars are endeavoring to examine how adoptive parents socialize their children, particularly given that transracial adoptions are reflecting a surge in the growth of multiracial and multiethnic families. In many ways, cultural socialization in transracial adoptive families is more complicated than non-adoptive racial and ethnic minority families. Lee (2003) refers to a transracial adoption paradox in which adoptees are considered ethnic and racial minorities in society but are often perceived or treated as majority members due to the fact that most adoptive parents are White and of European descent. This paradox led to empirical inquiry about the abilities of parents to effectively socialize children of different races and ethnicities (Ausbrooks & Russell, 2011). Yet, until recently, studies have looked at *either* the psychological challenges or adjustment of transracial adoptees *or* their racial/ethnic identity development – not both (Lee, 2003). Currently, the literature seems to agree that cultural socialization studies provide a framework for examining how parents and children in adoptive families overcome racial and ethnic differences as well as how these efforts are related to child development.

In a review of the limited research on cultural socialization among transracial adoptive families, Lee (2003) identified four strategies commonly used by adoptive parents to address the transracial adoption paradox: cultural assimilation, enculturation, racial inculcation, and child-choice. Cultural assimilation involves parents de-emphasizing or ignoring their child's cultural differences because he or she is constantly and predominantly exposed to the majority culture. Enculturation is similar to the construct of Cultural Socialization in the ethnic-racial literature and refers to the efforts made by parents to teach their child about his or her birth culture. Racial inculcation describes the ways in which parents teach transracially-adopted children the skills necessary to deal with potential experiences of discrimination. Currently, however, there is little empirical evidence examining the extent to which parents engage in this process. Finally, child-choice refers to processes by which parents initially provide children exposure birth cultural opportunities and then adapt socialization practices according to what the child perceives as culturally salient (Lee, 2003).

Although these strategies are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, it has been suggested that the majority of transracial adoptive parents do engage in some form of cultural socialization, and that these behaviors are influenced by parental attitudes about race and their belief in the importance of cultural socialization (Lee, Grotevant, Hellerstedt, & Gunnar, 2006). Despite a growing understanding of how and why transracial adoptive parents socialize their children, similar to the literature on cultural socialization in non-adoptive families, the direct link between socialization and child outcome is not well documented. One study found that parent-child relationships in which parents engaged in cultural socialization predicted better psychological adjustment

among Korean-born adopted adolescents (Yoon, 2001). Another study revealed that promotion of mistrust messages were inversely associated with social competence among a sample of Asian American adopted adolescents (Tran & Lee, 2010). Parent reports of behavior were not included in the latter study, however, so findings were based on adolescent perception of parenting practices. Nonetheless, these findings highlight the need to better understand how adoptive parents engage in cultural socialization strategies as well the associations between cultural socialization and child adjustment.

D. Same-Sex Parent Socialization

Over 22,000 adopted children are being raised by same-sex couples in the United States (American Community Survey, 2011). In fact, same-sex couples are four times more likely to adopt than their heterosexual counterparts (Gates, 2013). Yet, a major gap in the cultural socialization literature involves how gay and lesbian parents socialize their children around their diverse family structure. Although a substantial amount of research has examined child outcomes for children born to and adopted by same-sex parents, few studies have examined the strategies these parents use to help prepare their children for the unique challenges they may face as a direct result of having sexual minority parents. In light of evidence suggesting that family process variables are more strongly related to child outcomes than family structure (Farr, Forssell, & Patterson, 2010), exploring how gay and lesbian parents socialize their children is a question worthy of empirical consideration.

1. Gay and Lesbian Parenting

Before addressing the need to understand the unique socialization processes among gay and lesbian parents, it is important to understand the evolution of literature on

these family structures, dating back to the 1970s. The earliest research on “homosexual” parents used a psychoanalytic framework that assumed gay and lesbian parents were not capable of being suitable role models for their children, particularly as it related to issues of gender identity and socialization (American Psychological Association, 2005).

Research from the 1980’s focused primarily on women as compared to men, and was often prompted by court cases in which a lesbian mother’s custody was contested following a divorce from her former husband (R. Farr, personal communication, February 12, 2015). A review of these studies consistently showed that children of lesbian mothers did not differ from children of more traditional families in their sexual identity and choice of sex roles and that a second parent committed to the child was a more important factor in child development than sexual orientation (APA, 2005; Steckel, 1987).

The 1990’s has been referred to as the “gayby” boom, and research during this decade focused on how children in planned same-sex parented families fared in comparison to those reared in heterosexual-parented families. With respect to gender identity, gender-role behavior, and sexual orientation among children with lesbian mothers, the research suggested no differences between the children of lesbian versus heterosexual mothers (Brewaeys & Van Hall, 1997; Golombok, Spencer, & Rutter, 1983; Golombok, Tasker, & Murray, 1997; Patterson, 1994). Research on these associations for gay fathers was noticeably lacking during this decade, however. Studies of other aspects of personal development among children of gay and lesbian parents including behavior problems (Brewaeys & Van Hall, 1997; Flaks, Ficher, Masterpasqua, & Joseph, 1995; Golombok et al., 1983, Golombok et al., 1997; Patterson, 1994; Wainright, Russel, & Patterson, 2004), personality (Gottman, 1990; Tasker & Golombok, 1997), self-concept

(Golombok et al., 1997; Gottman, 1990; Patterson, 1994; Wainright et al., 2004), and school adjustment (Wainright et al., 2004) echoed other “no difference” findings.

2. Moving beyond “No Difference”

The turn of the millenium signaled a change in the social climate for sexual minority individuals in the United States, and as policies around marriage and adoption grew more inclusive of these groups, there was a surge in the prevalence of gay and lesbian parents. A 2013 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) suggested that there are an estimated 690,000 same-sex couple households in the United States (Gates, 2014). Although these couples remain less likely to have children than heterosexual counterparts, the number of gay and lesbian couples who are becoming parents through diverse means such as donor insemination, in vitro fertilization, surrogacy, foster care or adoption is on the rise (Patterson & Riskind, 2010; Stacey & Biblarz, 2007). In fact, an estimated 19% of the same-sex couples in the NHIS dataset reported raising a child under the age of 18 in the home (Gates, 2014). Additionally, 10% of children raised by gay and lesbian couples are adopted, and same-sex couples are believed to be raising 1.4% of all adopted children under the age of 18 in the United States (Gates, 2013).

In light of the increased presence of gay and lesbian parents, contemporary researchers in the field have suggested broadening the theoretical framework used to study these populations beyond family structure. In 2005, the American Psychological Association (APA) released an official brief on lesbian and gay parenting that concluded, “not a single study has found children of lesbian or gay parents to be disadvantaged in any significant respect relative to children of heterosexual parents” (APA, 2005, p.15). Yet, although the brief based its conclusion on 59 studies, it was not universally

embraced. For example, Marks (2012) argued that the APA's conclusion was not empirically warranted because of an absence of comparison groups, homogenous gay and lesbian samples, a limited scope of child outcomes studied, and a lack of long-term outcome data. Instead, she contended that the brief was intended to influence family law and that to empirically conclude children with gay and lesbian parents are as well adjusted as children with heterosexual parents would require many more representative, large-sample studies. Nonetheless, it appears that a take-away from the publication of the brief is there is greater diversity within gay- and lesbian-headed households than was previously believed. Therefore, efforts have been made over the past five years to move beyond this "no difference" finding (R. Farr, personal communication, February 12, 2015). Instead, current research on gay and lesbian parenting has shifted focus toward understanding the qualitative experiences among these diverse families. Additionally, emphasis has been placed on examining the ways in which context, situational factors, and the social climate affect child development in families with gay and lesbian parents (e.g., Farr & Patterson, 2013; Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Kuvalanka, Leslie, & Radina, 2013; Lick, Tornello, Riskind, Schmidt, & Patterson, 2012).

3. Heterosexism, Discrimination, and Stigma

Despite the growing visibility of same-sex parent families and the increases in affirmative legislation for these couples, research continues to show that sexual minorities contend with sexual-orientation related stigma, both in internalized and enacted forms (Goldberg & Smith, 2011). As a result, these individuals remain at risk for emotional and behavioral challenges across the lifespan (Cochran & Mays, 2000; Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005). Reasons for these disparities however do not

appear to be related to sexual orientation per se, and it is important to note that the majority of lesbian and gay individuals, even as adolescents, achieve similar levels of well-being as their heterosexual peers (Saewyc, 2011). Instead, heterosexism and minority stress theory have been implicated in the literature as two possible explanations for differences in psychosocial outcomes among sexual minorities. Heterosexism has been operationalized as a “process that systematically privileges heterosexuality relative to homosexuality, based on the assumption that heterosexuality, as well as heterosexual power and privilege are the norm and the ideal” (Chesir-Teran, 2003, p. 267). Population-based studies have shown that sexual minorities experience greater risk factors to their mental health simply by virtue of living in a heterosexist society (Cochran, Greer, & Mays, 2003). Furthermore, minority stress experienced as internalized homophobia has been found to interact with experiences of discrimination to negatively impact mental health outcomes for these individuals (Meyers, 1995).

Although it has been well documented that gays and lesbians make capable parents, questions remain about how these individuals cope with stigma, discrimination, and heterosexism and translate these messages to their children (Stacey & Biblarz, 2007). For example, in a study that explored perceived discrimination in pre-school environments, Goldberg and Smith (2013) found that same-sex adoptive parents who lived in less “gay-friendly” communities reported more discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation than those whose communities were more accepting. Thus, there is reason to believe that the social environment not only affects sexual minority individuals but also their family members. One study examining this association directly found that

the level of support for sexual minorities strongly predicted well-being among children of LGB parents, regardless of child sexual orientation (Lick, et al., 2012).

Current research has aimed at further understanding how experiences with sexual stigma affects children of gay and lesbian parents. To date, the majority of research on younger children has focused on enacted stigma by peers, such as teasing and harassment (Kuvallanka, et al., 2013). In general, it does not appear that children with same-sex parents experience increased harassment and victimization as compared to youth with heterosexual parents (Kosciw & Diaz, 2008; Rivers, Poteat, & Noret, 2008; Tasker & Golombok, 1995). However, studies have shown that teasing, homophobia, and negative comments about family structure are not uncommon for children with gay and lesbian parents, particularly in school settings. For example, Bos and van Balen (2008) found that pre-adolescent boys reported being excluded by peers because of their non-traditional family situation while girls were more likely to experience teasing and gossip related to having same-sex parents. Higher levels of stigmatization were associated with lower self-esteem for girls and more hyperactivity in boys (Bos & van Balen, 2008). Similarly, a study investigating the experiences of school-aged children revealed that 23% of students felt unsafe at school because they had LGBT parents (Kosciw & Diaz, 2008). Almost half the students in this sample reported verbal harassment on the basis of their family constellation. Homophobia has also been cited in the literature as a common experience for younger children. Among 78 ten-year-old children of lesbian mothers, 43% reported they had experienced instances of homophobia (Gartrell, Deck, Rodas, Peyser, & Banks, 2005). Interestingly, such experiences were not related to negative psychosocial

adjustment among these children – rather, they were found to have a mature understanding of diversity and tolerance (Gartrell et al., 2005).

There is also reason to believe that stigma related to having gay and lesbian parents could present additional challenges during adolescence, when peer acceptance and heteronormativity may be more salient (Litovich & Langhout, 2004). In fact, van Gelderen, Gartrell, Bos, van Rooij, and Hermanns (2012) found that 50% of the seventy-eight participants in their study reported experiencing homophobic stigmatization – primarily in school contexts and among peers. This is consistent with other data, which have found that enacted (teasing/negative ridicule) and structural sexual stigma were most commonly experienced during the middle and highschool years (Bos & Gartrell, 2010; Kuvalanka, Leslie, & Radina, 2013). For some adolescents, this stigma has resulted in more problem behaviors (Bos & Gartrell, 2010). Thus, although the impact of sexual stigma on children and adolescents with gay and lesbian parents may not automatically yield negative psychosocial outcomes, experiences of heterosexism, and stigmatization related to family structure are still very much the realities for many of these youth.

Therefore, the question remains as to why and how some children and adolescents with same-sex parents are protected from experiences of heterosexism and stigmatization while the psychological well-being of others is negatively impacted. Research attempting to answer this question has primarily adopted a strengths-based approach that examines protective factors within the family that promote resilience and healthy psychosocial adjustment. For example, it has been found that children of gay and lesbian parents employ adaptive strategies such as optimism, seeking social support, confrontation, and decision-making to cope with homophobia and stigmatization

(Gershon, Tschann, & Jemerin, 1999; van Gelderen et al., 2012). Additionally, data have shown that the adverse impact of stigma can be reduced by close, positive relationships with parents (Bos & Gartrell, 2010). Although it seems evident that parent, child, and relationship characteristics can buffer the effects of heterosexism and stigma, research on the protective family processes that facilitate these outcomes remain to be understood.

Patterson and Hastings (2007) concluded that gay and lesbian parents are “effective socialization agents” (p. 342). Yet, to date, few studies have systematically examined the ways in which same-sex parents socialize their children. This is problematic given that we know family process variables are more strongly related to child outcome than family structure (Farr, Forssell, & Patterson, 2010). One aspect of socialization that has garnered some attention in the literature is how gay and lesbian parents talk with their children about family structure. However, findings from these studies are often extrapolated from open-ended questions or anecdotal reports from small sample sizes. For example, using semi-structured interviews from six daughters of lesbian parents, ranging from 7-16 years old, Litovich and Langhout (2004) found that the majority of parents openly discussed heterosexism and prepared their children for possible discrimination in the future. Similarly, a qualitative study using lesbian parent interviews concluded that parents used discourse not only to teach children how their family constellations were different but also to help children make meaning of that difference (Breshears, 2010). However, neither study measured the effect of such strategies on child outcomes. In fact, the only published study to date that has directly looked at this association found no support for the hypothesis that family conversations in anticipation of homophobic stigmatization could reduce its negative impact (Bos &

Gartrell, 2010). It should be noted, however, that preparation for stigmatization was measured in this study by one yes/no item that asked: “Has (have) your mother(s) done anything to help prepare you in case you are treated badly because of having (a) lesbian mother(s)?” Thus, the authors suggested that future studies should examine what factors contribute to more effective communication between same-sex parents and their children. Specifically, they raised whether conversations about family structure need to be timely, such as in response or anticipation of a specific event, age-appropriate, positive, and ongoing (Bos & Gartrell, 2010).

E. The Impact of Cultural Socialization on Child Adjustment

Understanding why and how parents engage in cultural socialization broadly is important because these practices play a pivotal role in the identity development and well-being of children (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). To date, most of what we know about how socialization affects child adjustment comes from the ethnic-racial socialization literature; and the findings have been variable. For example, studies have revealed positive, negative, and no relationships between parent socialization and child outcomes including self-esteem, stigmatization, academic achievement, and psychosocial functioning (Hughes et al., 2006). Yet, this body of research tends to focus on adolescents, and thus, little is known about the impact of cultural socialization during early and middle-childhood. In fact, only one study to date has examined the direct relationship between cultural socialization and child psychosocial outcome for children within this age range (Caughy, et al., 2002). Findings from this study revealed that between 64% and 90% of parents engaged in some form of cultural socialization with children between 3 and 4.5 years of age, and parents’ cultural socialization practices were

associated with fewer total problem behaviors among boys, and marginally fewer internalizing behavior problems among girls (Caughy et al., 2002).

As previously mentioned, cultural socialization outcome research has been cited as an appropriate methodology to examine the ways in which adoptive parents help their children approach and overcome the cultural and psychological challenges related to transracial adoption (Lee, 2003). For example, DeBerry, Scarr, and Weinberg (1996) found that adoptive parents were more likely to encourage a bilingual upbringing of their children during childhood. Yet, the same data showed that parent efforts at cultural socialization decreased in adolescence (DeBerry et al., 1996). Implications of this shift remain speculative. Thus, far more is known about the socialization strategies than the link between cultural socialization and child adjustment. Therefore, there is a need in the adoption literature to better understand the mechanisms by which cultural socialization affects not only racial and ethnic identity development but also the overall psychological adjustment among transracially-adopted children (Lee, 2003).

Taken together, it appears that the majority of literature on the relation between cultural socialization and child outcome remains limited, particularly as it applies to school-aged children (existing research tends to focus on adolescents). Despite evidence suggesting ethnic-racial socialization can promote child outcomes, these associations among diverse families, including adoptive and same-sex parent families, remains nebulous. Nonetheless, there is reason to believe that the processes and skills used by these parents to overcome unique instances of stigma and marginalization may parallel those needed to facilitate the healthy psychosocial development of children (Ausbrooks & Russell 2011).

To date, only two unpublished dissertations have directly examined same-sex parenting through an ethnic-racial socialization lens (Gipson, 2008; Kosciw, 2003). One study used qualitative data from interviews with 26 self-identified lesbian parents of children between the ages of 3 and 10. Findings revealed that lesbian parents engaged in preparation for bias and cultural socialization but not promotion of mistrust or egalitarianism (Gipson, 2008). In total, seven themes emerged among parent behaviors, including emphasizing that their families were “normal” and controlling their child’s environment and social interactions. The author concluded that, according to mothers in the study, these socialization practices had a positive effect on the children, though no outcome data from the children were collected as part of the study. Kosciw (2003) examined the relations between homophobic discrimination, family functioning, and child well-being among a sample of 50 gay and lesbian parents with children between ages 4 and 14. To measure parent socialization, he adapted the Parent Racial Socialization Scale developed by Hughes and Johnson (2001) and added 10 additional items that addressed parent-child involvement with gay cultural events and discussions about homophobic discrimination. Findings from this study revealed that the majority of parents had experienced some form of homophobia in the last year and that parents had more discussions about bias and diversity with older children (Kosciw, 2003). With respect to his adapted socialization scale, Kosciw (2003) found factor loadings for Preparation for Bias/Discussions of Diversity and Cultural Socialization/Awareness. Cultural Socialization but not Preparation for Bias was related to lower internalizing scores on a measure of child behavioral adjustment (Kosciw, 2003).

Given that the available research on the specific socialization practices among same-sex parents is sparse, the present study endeavors to systematically explore these behaviors using a cultural socialization framework. Analogous to racial and ethnic families, families with same-sex parents do experience instances of discrimination and stigmatization (Goldberg & Smith, 2011). Therefore, like racial and ethnic minority parents, gay and lesbian parents may engage in protective and proactive behaviors that promote school-aged children's awareness of their diverse family structures and prepare them for potential stigma-related barriers, such as teasing or victimization (Stevenson, 1994). Specifically, we believe these behaviors can be measured using two dimensions that have been previously identified as important cultural socialization strategies: Preparation for Bias and Cultural Socialization.

CHAPTER II

THE CURRENT STUDY

The present study endeavors to extend our understanding of same-sex parent socialization using a cultural socialization framework in three important ways. First, Gipson (2008) posited that it would be useful to have an instrument that assessed same-sex parent socialization strategies explicitly. Given the overlap between the experiences of sexual, racial, and ethnic minority parents, the present study has adapted a well-established measure of racial socialization to assess socialization practices unique to families headed by gay and lesbian parents. Secondly, none of the literature on socialization among same-sex parenting to date has examined the ways in which children perceive parent behaviors. Finally, because of the fundamental role socialization plays in shaping children's development (Patterson, 2007), it is important to investigate the link between parent socialization and child adjustment. Research questions and hypotheses for the current study are as follows:

- 1) Do gay and lesbian parents engage in socialization practices related to their identity as sexual minority parents? We hypothesize that gay and lesbian parents will report engaging in socialization practices that map onto the existing cultural socialization framework.
- 2) To the extent that gay and lesbian parents engage in same-sex parent socialization, do children perceive these behaviors? We believe there will be a positive correlation between parent reports of socialization strategies and children's perceptions of these practices.

3) How is parent engagement in same-sex parent socialization associated with child behavioral adjustment? We hypothesize that greater parent socialization will be associated with fewer behavioral problems among children.

A. Method

1. Participants

Participants included families from a larger longitudinal study, which examines adoptive family functioning, child development, parenting, and family relationships among families with gay, lesbian, and heterosexual parents (Farr & Patterson, 2013). Participating families were originally recruited from five different adoption agencies throughout the United States. Children were domestically adopted during infancy, and the agencies provided options for openness in adoptions (i.e., communication or information sharing between the adoptive family and birth family). Adoption agencies were selected on the basis of several criteria: 1) agencies were located in a jurisdiction that allowed same-sex couples to legally adopt; 2) agencies worked openly with gay, lesbian, and heterosexual parent families; and 3) agencies had previously placed infants with lesbian and gay parents through domestic adoption.

In Wave 1, 106 families participated (27 lesbian, 29 gay, and 50 heterosexual couples) in the study (Farr et al., 2010). At the end of Wave 1 participation, families signed a “Permission to Re-contact” form. After approximately five years, families from Wave 1 were contacted via email, phone, and Facebook and invited to participate in a second wave of data collection. The final sample for the present study included 51 same-sex parented families. Demographic characteristics of the participants (43 lesbian mothers, 52 gay fathers, 51 children) are shown by family type in Table 1. Forty-four

families had two parents responding, and one parent reported for the remaining seven families. Parents' ages ranged from 35 to 61 years ($M = 47.12$, $SD = 5.42$). Eighty-four percent of parents were White, and 16% identified as Non-White. The majority of parents were well educated, worked full-time, and had family incomes above the national average. The sample included 20% interracial couples. Of the 44 families in which both parents were reporters, seven reported that they were no longer romantically involved with the co-parent. Twenty-five families resided in the Mid-Atlantic region, and others lived in 10 states along the East and West Coasts, or in the Southern United States.

All parents were the legal parents of their children. Children (24 male, 27 female) had been placed as infants, at birth or within the first few weeks of life. The majority of children were reported to be healthy, with no special needs. Children's ages ranged from 6 to 11 years ($M = 8.33$, $SD = 1.60$). Children were 39% White, and 61% Non-White. In the current sample, 53% of families had adopted across race (i.e., transracial adoption). Nearly half of families had some type of direct contact or visitation with birth families a few times per year. All families were English speaking. There were some demographic differences among families. Lesbian mothers were older than gay fathers. Also, lesbian mothers had more daughters, whereas gay fathers had more sons. On average, gay fathers had higher family incomes. The number of interracial couples and transracial adoptions did not significantly differ as a function of family type.

2. Procedure

In Wave 1, all eligible adoptive families were contacted with a letter or email from the director of their cooperating adoption agency describing the study and inviting participation. For Wave 2, families were re-contacted directly via email, phone, and

Facebook and invited to participate in a second wave of data collection. One or two researchers visited participating families in their homes. At the beginning of the visit, the research team described the study and obtained written, informed consent from parents. For the duration of the home visit (about 2-3 hours), participants independently completed a series of online surveys (via Qualtrics survey software).

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and a researcher debriefed all participants about the general and specific aims of the study following the home visit. No financial compensation was provided to participants. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Boards at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the University of Virginia.

3. Measures

a. Same-Sex Parent Socialization

A 20-item parent measure of socialization was developed for this study, intending to assess three underlying dimensions: Preparation for Bias (8 items), Cultural Socialization (5 items), and Proactive Parenting (7 items). Thirteen of the items were directly adapted from the Preparation for Bias and Cultural Socialization subscales of the Racial-Ethnic Socialization scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997, 2001). The original 16-item measure assessed the frequency of parent-reported racial socialization practices along three dimensions: Preparation for Bias, Cultural Socialization, and Promotion of Mistrust. When applied to an African American sample, three unit-weighted scales were developed: Preparation for Bias (7 items; $\alpha = .91$), Cultural Socialization (3 items; $\alpha = .84$), and Promotion of Mistrust (2 items; $r = .68$). There was no theoretical basis for including Promotion of Mistrust as a dimension for our sample. Thus, this two-item

composite was not included in the measure. Instead, we drew on the existing research on gay and lesbian parenting to develop seven additional items that assessed an exploratory dimension we operationalized as Proactive Parenting (See appendix A for all items). Because we had reason to believe that gay and lesbian parents engage in unique behaviors specifically aimed at discussing their same-sex parent family structure and controlling potentially hostile situations (Breshears, 2010; Gipson, 2008), items asked about practices that included comparing their families to those with heterosexual parents, moving to a gay-friendly community, and openly coaching children on how to discuss family structure with others. The reliability for our proposed dimension was .72. The reliability for Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias was .78 and .74, respectively. For all items, parents reported whether or not they had ever engaged in the behavior with their child (Yes/No) and if so, how often in the past 12 months (1 = Never; 5 = Very Often). Those who reported never engaging in a behavior received a 1 for the previous year if they left items blank (see Appendix A for the parent measure).

To assess whether and how children perceived same-sex family socialization, we adapted the 20-item parent scale to ask child participants whether one or both of their parents had ever engaged in behaviors related to preparation for bias, cultural socialization, and proactive parenting (e.g., Have your parents talked to you about what it means to be gay?). If children perceived the behavior (Yes/No), they were asked how often it occurred in the past 12 months (1 = Never; 5 = Very Often). Children who reported that their parents had never engaged in the behavior received a 1 for the previous year (see Appendix B for the child measure).

b. Child Behavioral Adjustment

Children's behavioral adjustment was measured using the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL/6-18) for school-age children (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). The CBCL provides scores of internalizing, externalizing and total behavior problem (see Appendices C). 112 items are rated on a scale from 0 to 2 (0 = not true; 1 = somewhat or sometimes true; 3 = very true or often true). The internalizing behavior subscale assessed children's somatic complaints, anxiety, depression, and withdrawn behaviors. An example item is "unhappy, sad, or depressed." The externalizing subscale assesses children's disruptive, aggressive, and delinquent behaviors, and includes items such as "lying or cheating." The total problem score is a summary score of the internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in addition to sleep, attention, thought, and social problems.

Age- and sex-specific raw scores on the CBCL can be converted into *T* scores, with higher *T* scores indicating greater behavior problems. The CBCL is widely used, and good reliability has been established for measures of internalizing, externalizing, and total behavior problems at the population level, with alphas ranging from .90 - .97 (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000).

4. Analytic Plan and Preliminary Analyses

To evaluate the construct validity of our measure, we factor analyzed the 20 same-sex parent socialization items using a principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Descriptive statistics and endorsement frequencies for the individual socialization items on the parent scale were calculated to determine the extent to which parents are engaging in these behaviors (Hypothesis 1). The same approach was used to evaluate how our same-sex parent socialization measure captured child perceptions of

parent behaviors. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables of interest were then examined. We evaluated parent and child age, parent and child race, child sex, transracial adoptive status, and family type as possible covariates with socialization practices and child adjustment. For correlations among all families, power reached .98 ($\alpha = .05$) for large effects. Preliminary analyses examined possible differential associations for gay fathers and lesbian mothers; no significant differences were found between gay and lesbian parent families in reports of socialization behaviors or child adjustment. To examine the degree to which parents and children were in agreement about socialization practices, we compared factor structures as well as frequencies between parent and child reports on each item (Hypothesis 2).

Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) was used to examine the relation between parent engagement in same-sex parent socialization and child behavioral adjustment (Hypothesis 3). Because same-sex parents represent indistinguishable dyads, a series of models were conducted as described by Smith, Sayer, and Goldberg (2013). In each model, Level 1 provided the within-couple model, in which individual responses were nested within couples. Level 2 provided the between-couples model. A Level 1 file was created that included each child behavioral adjustment subscale (e.g., internalizing, externalizing, total) as an outcome variable and each factor of the socialization scale (e.g., preparation for bias, cultural socialization, proactive parenting) as predictor variables that were centered around grand means.

The conditional models can be generally represented as follows: Level 1:

$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} + r_{ij}$ and Level 2: $\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$. In the Level 1 equation, β_{0j} represents the

average outcome score for each couple and r_{ij} represents the deviation of each member of the couple from the couple average. At Level 2, γ_{00} provides an average outcome score across couples and u_{0j} indicates how much each couple deviates from the overall average across all couples (Smith, et al., 2013). For each conditional model, an underlying dimension of socialization was added as a predictor at Level 1. Because preliminary analyses revealed no significant differences based on family structure, we did not include any additional predictors at Level 2. Nine separate models were run to examine the relation between each predictor (three socialization subscales) and each outcome variable (two child behavior subscales, one total). For example, the equation for the model examining whether proactive parenting predicted externalizing child behavioral problems was:

$$\text{Level 1: } \text{EXTERNAL}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} * (\text{ProAct}_{ij}) + r_{ij}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Level 2: } \beta_{0j} &= \gamma_{00} + u_{0j} \\ \beta_{1j} &= \gamma_{10} + u_{1j} \end{aligned}$$

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics

Endorsement frequencies for items assessing each dimension of same-sex parent socialization are displayed in Table 4. As shown, the majority of parents in the present sample reported same-sex parent socialization, though frequencies varied across the three dimensions. Paired samples t-tests revealed that Cultural Socialization occurred more frequently than Preparation for Bias, $t(94) = 12.05, p < .001$. Additionally, Proactive Parenting occurred more often than Preparation for Bias, $t(94) = 9.50, p < .001$. Cultural Socialization did not significantly differ from Proactive Parenting, $t(94) = .33, p = .745$. Table 2 shows means, standard deviations, and associations for the three dimensions of socialization and major study variables based on family type. No significant differences were found as a function of whether parents were gay or lesbian. Correlations among major study variables are displayed in Table 3. Not surprisingly, Cultural socialization ($M = 2.79, SD = .73$), Preparation for Bias ($M = 1.84, SD = .59$), and Proactive Parenting ($M = 2.76, SD = .89$) were significantly correlated with one another. The correlation between Cultural Socialization and Proactive Parenting was greater than the correlation between either of these and Preparation for Bias. Child age was a significant covariate for Preparation for Bias, such that parents with older children were more likely to engage in these behaviors, $r(95) = .24, p = .020$. Parents were also more likely to use Cultural Socialization with girls ($M = 2.93, SD = .72$) than with boys ($M = 2.63, SD = .72$), $t(93) = 2.01, p = .047$. No significant associations were found between parent socialization practices and parent age, parent race, child race, or transracial adoptive status.

Overall, parents reported children to be well adjusted. Across the sample, means for internalizing, externalizing, and total problems were 47.51 ($SD = 10.93$), 50.29 ($SD = 11.26$), and 49.58 ($SD = 11.88$), respectively (Table 2). Child behavioral functioning was not associated with child or parent age, child sex, child or parent race, transracial adoptive status, or family type.

B. Exploratory Factor Analyses

We factor-analyzed the 20 same-sex parent socialization items using principal axis extraction and varimax rotation. The result was a three- factor solution that accounted for 47.3% of the variance (Table 4). Factor 1 explained 26.3% of the variance and consisted of items stressing equality and education around LGBT history and culture, as well as items promoting diversity and awareness of other cultural groups (cultural socialization). Factor 2 was made up of items concerning prejudice and discrimination of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community (preparation for bias) and accounted for 11.9% of the variance. Finally, Factor 3 explained 9.1% of the overall variance and included items explicitly related to talking about same-sex parent family structures (proactive parenting). Seventeen of the 20 items had factor loadings of .50 or greater. The other three items (e.g., “intentionally done or said things to control the openness of your child’s environment,” “organized events for your child to play with other children of gay and lesbian parents,” and “told your child he/she had to be better than other children to get the same rewards because of who his/her parents are”) were omitted from the subscales. Three unit-weighted measures were constructed to represent Cultural Socialization (7 items, $\alpha = .81$), Preparation for Bias (6 items, $\alpha = .80$) and Proactive Parenting (4 items, $\alpha = .77$).

Although our sample was not large enough to run a confirmatory factor analysis, the factors that emerged from our data were highly consistent with the racial and ethnic socialization literature (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Chen, 2001; Tran & Lee, 2010). For example, all five of the expected Cultural Socialization items loaded onto this factor in our sample. Six out of the eight anticipated Preparation for Bias items hung together for gay and lesbian parents. One of the expected Preparation for Bias items (e.g., “talked about being gay or lesbian with someone when your child could hear”) loaded on the Cultural Socialization subscale, and the other (e.g., “told your child he/she had to be better than other children to get the same rewards because of who his/her parents are”) did not load on any of the three factors. Additionally, five of the seven exploratory items developed for this study loaded onto one of the three dimensions. One item (e.g., “thought of your child as part of the gay community”) loaded onto the Cultural Socialization subscale, and four made up the third Proactive Parenting factor.

We also analyzed the child measure of the 20 same-sex parent socialization items using principal axis extraction and varimax rotation to assess child perception of parent practices. Results yielded a four-factor solution that accounted for 59.0% of the variance. Factors explained 31.6%, 10.3%, 9.1% and 8.0% of the variance, respectively. Similar to the parent measure, Factor 1 accounted for the greatest amount of variance and consisted of items that stressed equality and education around LGBT history and culture, as well as items that promoted diversity and awareness of other cultural groups. Five out of the eight items that loaded onto this subscale for child perception represented items that also loaded on the Cultural Socialization subscale for parents. The internal reliability for this subscale was .83. There was no other overlap among factor loadings between the child

and parent factors. Thus, for all subsequent analyses, the three socialization subscales from the parent measure (Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting) were used.

C. Perceived Same-Sex Parent Socialization

Since the parent and child measures yielded different factor structures, we compared frequencies between child and parent reports at the item level to evaluate our second hypothesis that parents and children would report similar same-sex parent socialization (Table 5). As was the case for parents, child frequencies varied across the three dimensions and ranged from 7% to 76% of the children reporting that their parents have ever engaged in these behaviors. In general, children reported that same-sex parent socialization practices occurred less frequently across all three dimensions than did their parents.

D. Child Behavioral Adjustment as a Function of Same-Sex Parent Socialization

To evaluate our third hypothesis that greater parent socialization would be associated fewer child behavior problems, we conducted HLM analyses (see Table 6). Separate models were run with Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting as predictor variables. Dependent variables included parents' reports of (a) children's internalizing problems, (b) externalizing problems, and (c) total behavior problems. Overall, results demonstrated that parent engagement in same-sex parent socialization was not significantly associated with child behavioral adjustment. However, there was a trend toward significance for Proactive Parenting and externalizing problem behaviors, such that parents who engaged in more of these types of behaviors reported fewer externalizing problems among their children, $t(50) = -1.84, p = .072$.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The current study is among the first to empirically and systematically examine same-sex parenting strategies using a cultural socialization framework. Our findings address gaps in the cultural socialization literature as well as contribute to our understanding of how gay and lesbian parents socialize their children specifically around having same-sex parents. The results suggest that, similar to racial and ethnic minority parents, the majority of gay and lesbian parents have engaged in protective and proactive behaviors designed to promote children's awareness of diverse family structures and prepare them for potential stigma-related barriers. However, within the past year, the frequency with which most parents endorsed these items was predominantly in the "rarely" to "sometimes" range. Our study also sought to examine the frequency and content of socialization as it relates specifically to having same-sex parents, and the findings revealed three underlying dimensions of same-sex parent socialization among these families: Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting.

A. Parent Engagement in Same-Sex Parent Socialization

Same-sex parents in our sample reported greater engagement with messages that celebrated gay and lesbian culture and heritage as compared with communications about the potential victimization their children may experience from having two mothers or two fathers. These findings were consistent with the ethnic-racial socialization literature that suggest parents are more likely to emphasize racial and ethnic pride than potential discriminatory experiences (Hughes & Chen, 1999). However, the fact that same-sex parents do engage in Preparation for Bias around issues related to sexual orientation

highlights awareness among these parents that heterosexism and sexual stigma could uniquely affect their children. Yet, it appears that gay and lesbian parents are more likely to prepare children for these possibilities by emphasizing diversity and engaging in proactive conversations about different family structures. In fact, 100% of the parents in our sample reported they have done or said things to show their children that people are equal regardless of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Additionally, the majority of same-sex parents indicated that they regularly talk with their children about how their families are similar to and different from families with heterosexual parents as well as give them language to discuss their family structures with others. Notably, socialization strategies did not differ depending on whether parents were gay fathers or lesbian mothers. Thus, just as cultural socialization studies have provided a framework for examining how parents in racial- and ethnic-minority and adoptive families address issues of diversity, our findings suggest that same-sex parent socialization is also a useful framework for understanding the unique parenting strategies used by gay and lesbian parents. Such findings highlight the need to broaden our conceptualization of cultural socialization to include these diverse family structures.

B. Child Perception of Same-Sex Parent Socialization

In addition to describing underlying dimensions of same-sex parent socialization, this study raised the potential for the bidirectionality of socialization by examining how children experience their parents' socialization messages. Contrary to our original hypothesis, child reports of parent behaviors were markedly different from parent reports. However, there was significant overlap on items that measured Cultural Socialization. This suggests that children with same-sex parents are perceiving messages about equality

and cultural pride, albeit to a lesser degree than parents report engaging these communications. These findings are also consistent with the ethnic-racial cultural socialization literature. For example, Marshall (1995) found that while African American parents and their 9- and 10- year old children showed agreement with respect to parents teaching about equality, they varied considerably in their reports of how often parents talked about physical differences and racial barriers.

A major difference between children in our sample and those in more traditional cultural socialization studies is that the minority social identity (gay or lesbian) was unique to the parents. In racial-ethnic socialization, even among adoptive families, the child typically either shares his or her families' race or ethnicity or is of a different race or ethnicity. Therefore, it is possible that children in our sample may not have perceived parent messages about being gay or lesbian because it is not their own personal identity. In fact, only 16% of children reported that their parents consider them to be a part of the gay community. This is remarkably different from the 65% of parents who reported they have communicated this message to their children at least once. Thus, perhaps a more likely explanation for why children and parents differed in their reports of same-sex parent socialization has to do with the children's developmental status. Children in our sample were young, between 6 and 11 years old. Therefore, it is unsurprising that asking parents and children about issues related to sexual orientation, would yield different response patterns. In fact, it was found that about half of the children could not define the word "gay" (R. Farr, personal communication, March 14, 2015). Therefore, some of the wording of questions (e.g., "lesbian") had to be modified (e.g., "two mommas") on the child measure for developmental appropriateness. Additionally, results showed that

parents were more likely to engage in Preparation for Bias with older children, suggesting that stigma related to having gay or lesbian parents requires more abstract thinking and could present more challenges as children get older and have more interaction with the broader social context. Nonetheless, with respect to parent socialization strategies that address diversity and conversations about family structure more generally, our findings of child perception are consistent with the existing racial-ethnic socialization literature (e.g., Marshall, 1995). Thus, it appears that whether the content is about race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, examining socialization as a dynamic process between parents and children is challenging because of the synergistic ways in which it is valued, initiated, and perceived.

C. The Relation between Same-Sex Parent Socialization and Child Behavioral

Adjustment

The third aim of this study was to examine how parent engagement in same-sex parent socialization predicted child behavioral adjustment as measured by internalizing, externalizing, and total problem behaviors. In general, children in our sample were all reported to be well adjusted, and no differences were found between children of gay or lesbian parents. This is consistent with the myriad of literature that has found parental sexual orientation is not associated with child behavioral adjustment (e.g., Farr et al., 2010; Golombok et al., 2003). Interestingly, behavioral adjustment did not differ as a function of child sex. Although Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting were not significant predictors of child behavioral adjustment, all trends were in the hypothesized direction. Additionally, the relation between Proactive Parenting and externalizing problem behaviors was marginally significant, suggesting

that openly discussing family structure and giving children language to articulate their family constellation to others could be a unique strategy for helping children with same-sex parents navigate and respond to challenging situations that could otherwise result in children acting out (Bos & Gartell, 2010).

D. Strengths and Limitations

This study has a number of strengths. It addresses a major gap in the cultural socialization literature by systematically examining how gay and lesbian parents socialize their children specifically around having same-sex parents. To date, the literature on specific socialization practices among same-sex parents has generally been inconsistent and anecdotal. By adapting a well-established measure of racial socialization (Hughes & Chen, 1997, 2001) to examine practices unique to families headed by gay and lesbian parents, this study offers an instrument that can assess same-sex parent strategies in a way that is explicit and consistent with how the field has examined these processes among ethnic and racial minority families. Given that gay and lesbian parents continue to experience instances of discrimination and stigma, it is unsurprising there is considerable overlap between the strategies used by these parents and ethnic- and racial- minority parents. Additionally, Proactive Parenting provides a theoretically-grounded dimension of same-sex parent socialization that captures some of the parenting strategies unique to gay and lesbian parents, which highlights the needs for research on cultural socialization to be more inclusive of these families.

Finally, this study extends the literature on same-sex parenting by emphasizing family process variables over family structure (Farr et al., 2010). It is the first empirical study that has examined the ways in which children with gay and lesbian parents

experience specific parenting behaviors as well as the associations between socialization and child behavioral adjustment within this population. Findings from this study corroborate previous research that has shown that gay and lesbian parents are more than capable parents (e.g., Farr et al., 2010; Golombok et al., 1983; Patterson, 1994) and contribute uniquely to the literature by offering same-sex parent socialization as a multidimensional construct made up of protective and proactive behaviors that promote children's awareness of their diverse family structure and prepare them for potential stigma-related barriers.

It is important to interpret the findings of this study in light of some notable limitations. To start, our sample was geographically diverse but relatively small. It is possible that associations between same-sex parent socialization and child behavioral adjustment would have reached significance with a larger sample size. Also, since we only examined child behavioral adjustment, it may be the case that same-sex parent socialization is more closely associated with other child outcomes. Additionally, it is likely that the children in our sample were too young to fully understand the complexities associated with having same-sex parents, which affected how they perceived socialization behaviors related to sexual orientation. Not unlike the majority of ethnic-racial socialization studies, our design was cross-sectional. Therefore, longitudinal data would help clarify how same-sex parent socialization processes change over time as children develop. Research with longitudinal data and larger sample sizes would also enable confirmatory factor analyses to determine whether Cultural Socialization, Preparation for Bias, and Proactive Parenting would continue to emerge as dimensions of same-sex parent socialization.

Although our socialization measure intentionally examined parenting strategies specifically related to their identities as gay and lesbian parents, given that our sample also consisted of transracially-adopted children, it would be interesting to understand how these parents socialize their children around issues of race, ethnicity, and adoptive status, in addition to having same-sex parents. Although this was beyond the scope of the current study, our findings suggest that the “transracial adoption paradox” is further complicated when parents are gay or lesbian; future research should examine the intersectionality of these processes among these families. Another limitation of the current study was that we did not examine the broader context of parenting. Research on ethnic-racial socialization has shown that factors such as parent-child relationship quality, disciplinary behaviors, monitoring, and autonomy-granting practices are powerful predictors of child outcome (Hughes et al., 2006). Similarly, because examining same-sex parent socialization using a cultural socialization framework was somewhat exploratory, we did not examine possible predictors of same-sex parent socialization. It will be important for future research to identify how and why same-sex parent socialization varies as a function of specific parent, child, and contextual factors. For example, parent experiences of discrimination and sexual orientation-related stigma, child identity, and the degree to which communities and schools are accepting of same-sex parented families could be important correlates of same-sex parent socialization.

E. Implications and Future Directions

Despite these limitations, findings from the study present have important conceptual and clinical implications. Our results show that same-sex parents generally use socialization strategies similar to those used by ethnic- and racial- minority parents.

Therefore, using a cultural socialization framework provides a useful way to systematically and empirically examines these dynamic and multidimensional processes. Specifically, Proactive Parenting provides an additional dimension to cultural socialization that includes discussions and behaviors related to how parent structures differ from the traditional mother-father dyad – a dimension that has been noticeably absent in the cultural socialization literature. Thus, our findings justify the need to broaden our conceptualization of cultural socialization to be more inclusive of these diverse family structures.

From a clinical perspective, it appears that gay and lesbian parents are engaging in what appear to be age-appropriate and egalitarian messages about having same-sex parents. It may be useful for these parents to increase the intensity of these behaviors as children mature into adolescence when having gay and lesbian parents could present additional challenges related to peer acceptance and heteronormativity (Bos & Gartrell, 2010; Litovich & Langhout, 2004). Strategies associated with Preparation for Bias might become more necessary as child exposure to the broader social context increases with child age. Additionally, for children who are adopted, having same-sex parents represents another way in which they may be perceived as different. Thus, proactive and ongoing conversations about family structure could provide important opportunities for these children to learn to navigate challenges and share concerns related to issues around family or their own identities.

In conclusion, this study extends the cultural socialization literature as well as research on same-sex parenting. It provides a framework for examining the ways in which gay and lesbian parents socialize their children around having sexual minority

parents and highlights the need for future research on cultural socialization to include this aspect of family diversity. Additionally, this study represents a methodological shift from comparing gay and lesbian parents to their heterosexual counterparts in favor of an approach that emphasizes family process variables over family structure. Although results did not show strong associations between same-sex parent socialization and child behavioral adjustment, this study has important conceptual and clinical implications that open the door for future studies to examine the specific socialization strategies gay and lesbian parents use to help their children understand their family culture within the larger and ever-diversifying social fabric.

Table 1: Descriptive Information About Families Headed by Gay and Lesbian Parents

	Gay Fathers n = 52	Lesbian Mothers n = 43	t-Test or χ^2
Parents (n = 95)			
Mean age at visit	47.73 (5.16)	48.79 (5.30)	t(93) = 2.84**
Race (% White)	89%	79%	$\chi^2 = 1.56$
Education (% college degree)	88%	98%	$\chi^2 = 5.82$
Work status (% full-time)	75%	70%	$\chi^2 = 1.70$
Annual family income (\$K)	238 (163)	129 (96)	t(93) = 3.88**
Interracial relationship	27%	14%	$\chi^2 = 2.38$
Transracial adoption	60%	42%	$\chi^2 = 2.97$
Children (n = 51)			
Mean age at visit	8.23 (1.48)	8.60 (1.69)	t(49) = .58
Sex (% girls)	39%	72%	$\chi^2 = 10.71***$
Race (% White)	37%	47%	$\chi^2 < 1$
Contact with birthparents (% yes)	42%	53%	$\chi^2 = 1.18$

Note. Standard deviations are given in parentheses. Two parents reported in 44 families and 7 families had one parent reporter.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Major Study Variables According to Family Type

Variables	Full Sample N = 95 M(SD)	Gay Fathers n = 52 M(SD)	Lesbian Mothers n = 43 M(SD)	t-Test t(93)
Demographics				
Parent Age	47.12 (5.42)	45.73 (5.16)	48.79 (5.30)	2.84**
Child Age	8.33 (1.60)	8.23 (1.48)	8.60 (1.69)	0.58
Same-Sex Parent Socialization				
Cultural Socialization	2.79 (.73)	2.79 (.70)	2.80 (.78)	0.31
Preparation for Bias	1.84 (.59)	1.89 (.63)	1.79 (.55)	-0.75
Proactive Parenting	2.76 (.89)	2.83 (.80)	2.69 (.99)	-0.74
Child Behavioral Adjustment				
Internalizing	47.51 (10.93)	46.40 (10.95)	48.84 (10.89)	1.08
Externalizing	50.29 (11.26)	49.71 (10.65)	51.00 (12.04)	0.55
Total Problem Behaviors	49.58 (11.88)	48.06 (12.31)	51.42 (11.20)	1.38

Note. For families in which both parents reported, one family score was calculated for each domain of child adjustment.

** $p < .01$.

Table 3: Correlations among Parent Age, Child Age, Child Behavioral Adjustment, and Socialization Dimensions

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Parent Age	--							
2. Child Age	.41**	--						
3. CBCL Internalizing	.06	.06	--					
4. CBCL Externalizing	-.05	-.01	.68**	--				
5. CBCL Total	-.01	.04	.83**	.91**	--			
6. Preparation for Bias	.18	.24*	-.07	-.07	-.05	--		
7. Cultural Socialization	.02	.12	.04	-.07	-.02	.34**	--	
8. Proactive Parenting	.04	-.01	-.06	-.18	-.12	.24*	.37**	--

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 4: Factor Analysis and Endorsement Frequency for Items Measuring Dimensions of Same-Sex Parent Socialization

Item	% of Parents Reporting Item								
	Factor			Ever Y/N	Past Year				
	1	2	3		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Factor 1: Cultural Socialization									
Done things with your child to celebrate gay pride	.80	.14	.03	71%	37.9	21.1	29.5	10.5	1.1
Taken your child to gay cultural events	.78	.17	.03	78%	25.3	30.5	40.0	4.2	0.0
Thought of your child as part of the gay community	.66	.06	-.07	65%	35.8	25.3	18.9	13.7	6.3
Exposed your child to media (music, books, television, internet) about gay culture	.63	.01	.25	79%	22.1	21.1	35.8	16.8	4.2
Talked about being gay or lesbian with someone else when your child could hear	.61	.01	.25	79%	20.0	26.3	34.7	12.6	6.3
Talked to your child about important people or events in the history of cultures different from your own	.53	.20	.37	97%	4.2	10.5	31.6	31.6	22.1
Done or said things to show your child that all people are equal regardless of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation	.51	.17	.46	100%	1.1	3.2	20.2	33.0	42.6
Factor 2: Preparation for Bias									
Told your child he/she may be treated badly because of his/her parents sexuality	.09	.80	-.02	48%	52.6	31.6	11.6	4.2	0.0
Told your child people may try to limit him/her because of his/her parents' sexuality	.10	.76	-.08	17%	82.1	11.6	5.3	1.1	0.0
Explained something that your child saw on TV or social media that showed poor treatment of LGBT individuals	.03	.74	.17	36%	64.5	20.4	11.8	3.2	0.0

Talked to your child about what it means to be gay	.04	.64	.30	91%	9.6	27.7	52.1	7.4	3.2
Talked to your child about things they may learn in school that portray gay people unjustly? (ie., heteronormative language)	.07	.59	.08	37%	63.2	25.3	9.5	0.0	2.1
Talked to your child about the fight for equality among the LGBT community	.26	.56	.31	78%	23.4	28.7	34.0	10.6	3.2
Factor 3: Proactive Parenting									
Talked to your child about how your family is similar to families with heterosexual parents	-.04	.03	.74	88%	13.6	29.6	43.2	7.4	6.2
Talked with your child about how to discuss your family structure with others (ie., give them language)	.26	.14	.72	83%	19.1	20.2	31.9	16.0	12.8
Said or done things to emphasize to your child that your family is “normal”	.02	-	.70	77%	24.5	18.1	24.5	20.2	12.8
		.04							
Talked to your child about how your family is different from families with heterosexual parents	.19	.08	.69	92%	10.6	22.3	52.1	8.5	6.4
Ommitted Items									
Told your child he/she had to be better than other children to get the same rewards because of who his/ her parents are	.04	.25	-.12	6%	95.8	3.2	1.1	0.0	0.0
Organized events for your child to play with other children of gay and lesbian parents	.22	.03	.39	97%	3.2	4.3	33.0	33.0	26.6
Intentionally done things to control the openness of your child’s environment (ie., move to a specific region, choose a particular school, monitor social interactions with peers)	.38	.05	.25	65%	37.9	18.9	17.9	15.8	9.5

Note. Loadings larger than .50 are shown in bold. Eigenvalues were 5.26, 2.37, and 1.83 for Factors 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

Table 5: Endorsement Frequencies Comparing Parent and Child Reports of Same-Sex Parent Socialization Items

Item	% of Parents Reporting Item (n = 95)	% of Children Reporting Item (n = 45)
Factor 1: Cultural Socialization		
Done things with your child to celebrate gay pride	71%	27%
Taken your child to gay cultural events	78%	44%
Thought of your child as part of the gay community	65%	16%
Exposed your child to media (music, books, television, internet) about gay culture	79%	64%
Talked about being gay or lesbian with someone else when your child could hear	79%	24%
Talked to your child about important people or events in the history of cultures different from your own	97%	73%
Done or said things to show your child that all people are equal regardless of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation	100%	76%
Factor 2: Preparation for Bias		
Told your child he/she may be treated badly because of his/her parents sexuality	48%	29%
Told your child people may try to limit him/her because of his/her parents' sexuality	17%	18%
Explained something that your child saw on TV or social media that showed poor treatment of LGBT individuals	36%	42%
Talked to your child about what it means to be gay	91%	56%
Talked to your child about things they may learn in school that portray gay people unjustly? (ie.,	37%	27%

heteronormative language)		
Talked to your child about the fight for equality among the LGBT community	78%	53%
Factor 3: Proactive Parenting		
Talked to your child about how your family is similar to families with heterosexual parents	88%	56%
Talked with your child about how to discuss your family structure with others (ie., give them language)	83%	36%
Said or done things to emphasize to your child that your family is “normal”	77%	62%
Talked to your child about how your family is different from families with heterosexual parents	92%	47%
Ommitted Items		
Told your child he/she had to be better than other children to get the same rewards because of who his/ her parents are	6%	7%
Organized events for your child to play with other children of gay and lesbian parents	97%	71%
Intentionally done things to control the openness of your child’s environment (ie., move to a specific region, choose a particular school, monitor social interactions with peers)	65%	40%

Table 6: Parent Ratings of Child Behavioral Adjustment Predicted by Socialization Dimensions

		CBCL-Internalizing		CBCL Externalizing		CBCL-Total	
Fixed Effects – Parameter Predictors		Coeff (SE)	t(50)	Coeff (SE)	t(50)	Coeff (SE)	t(50)
Intercept	β_{0j}	47.23 (1.33)	35.51**	50.05 (1.43)	35.07**	49.33 (1.53)	32.33**
Cultural Socialization	β_{1j}	-0.50 (1.51)	-0.34	-1.75 (1.48)	-1.19	-0.99 (1.53)	-0.65
Intercept	β_{0j}	47.35 (1.34)	35.20**	49.99 (1.43)	34.89**	49.30 (1.53)	32.30**
Preparation for Bias	β_{1j}	-0.47 (1.81)	-0.26	0.41 (1.58)	0.26	0.76 (1.67)	0.46
Intercept	β_{0j}	47.30 (1.35)	35.03**	50.12 (1.36)	36.75**	49.53 (1.48)	33.47**
Proactive Parenting	β_{1j}	-1.02 (1.36)	-0.75	-2.50 (1.36)	-1.84 [†]	-2.15 (1.51)	-1.42

Note. Level 2 was included to account for parents nested in families (two parents reported for each child), but no predictors were tested.

[†] $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

APPENDIX A

SAME-SEX PARENT SOCIALIZATION SCALE

Please circle if you have *EVER* engaged in the following behaviors. If *YES*, indicate how often you have engaged in each behavior during the past *12 months*.

	Yes	No	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. Talked to your child about what it means to be gay	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
2. Told your child he/she may be treated badly because of his/her parents' sexuality	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explained something that your child saw on TV or social media that showed poor treatment of LGBT individuals	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
4. Told your child people may try to limit him/her because of his/her parents' sexuality	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
5. Talked to your child about the fight for equality among the LGBT community	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
6. Talked to your child about things they may learn in school that portray gay people unjustly? (ie: heteronormative language)	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
7. Told your child he/she had to be better than other children to get the same rewards because of who his/ her parents are	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

8. Talked about being gay or lesbian with someone else when your child could hear	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
9. Exposed your child to media (music, books, television, internet) about gay culture	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
10. Organized events for your child to play with other children of gay and lesbian parents	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
11. Taken your child to gay cultural events	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
12. Done things with your child to celebrate gay pride	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
13. Thought of your child as part of the gay community	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
14. Done or said things to show your child that all people are equal regardless of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
15. Talked to your child about important people or events in the history of cultures different from your own	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
16. Talked to your child about how your family is similar to families with heterosexual parents	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

17. Talked to your child about how your family is different from families with heterosexual parents	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
18. Said or done things to emphasize to your child that your family is “normal”	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
19. Talked with your child about how to discuss your family structure with others (ie: give them language)	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
20. Intentionally done things to control the openness of your child’s environment (ie: move to a specific region, choose a particular school, monitor social interactions with peers)	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

SAME-SEX PARENT SOCIALIZATION CHILD SCALE

Have your parents *EVER* done any of the following? If *YES*, how often do you remember them doing each thing in the past 12 months?

	Yes	No	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. Have your parents ever talked to you about what it means to be gay?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
2. Have your parents ever told you that people may treat you differently because they are gay?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
3. Have your parents ever talked with you about gay people being treated badly?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
4. Have your parents ever told you that some children may not include you (ie: want to play with you, invite you places) because you have two moms/dads?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
5. Have your parents ever talked about gay people fighting for equal rights, like marriage?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
6. Have your parents ever told you that people at school may say bad things about gay people?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
7. Have your parents ever told you that you have to be better than other children to get the same rewards?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

8. Have you ever heard your parents talk to other people about being gay?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
9. Have your parents ever read you books or shown you movies with gay characters?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
10. Have your parents ever taken you to play with other children who have gay parents?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
11. Have you ever gone to an event with lots of gay people, like parades?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
12. Have your parents ever talked to you about what gay pride means?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
13. Have your parents ever talked with you about how you fit into the gay community?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
14. Have your parents ever told you that all people are equal regardless of what color they are, where they are from, or who they love?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
15. Have your parents ever talked to you about how some groups of people may have different family traditions or celebrate different holidays?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
16. Have your parents ever talked to you about how	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

your family is similar to other families?							
17. Have your parents ever talked to you about how your family is different from other families?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
18. Have your parents ever used the word normal to describe your family?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
19. Have your parents ever told you how to discuss your family structure with other people?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5
20. Have your parents ever talked to you about how your community accepts families with two moms/dads?	Yes	No	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

CHILD BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST

Please print			<h3>CHILD BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST FOR AGES 6-18</h3>			For office use only ID # _____	
CHILD'S FULL NAME First _____ Middle _____ Last _____			PARENTS' USUAL TYPE OF WORK, even if not working now. <i>(Please be specific — for example, auto mechanic, high school teacher, homemaker, laborer, lathe operator, shoe salesman, army sergeant.)</i> FATHER'S TYPE OF WORK _____ MOTHER'S TYPE OF WORK _____				
CHILD'S GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> Boy <input type="checkbox"/> Girl		CHILD'S AGE _____		CHILD'S ETHNIC GROUP OR RACE _____		THIS FORM FILLED OUT BY: (print your full name) _____	
TODAY'S DATE Mo. ____ Day ____ Year ____			CHILD'S BIRTHDATE Mo. ____ Day ____ Year ____		Your gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female Your relation to the child: <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Step Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____		
GRADE IN SCHOOL _____ NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL <input type="checkbox"/>			Please fill out this form to reflect <i>your</i> view of the child's behavior even if other people might not agree. Feel free to print additional comments beside each item and in the space provided on page 2. Be sure to answer all items.				

I. Please list the sports your child most likes to take part in. For example: swimming, baseball, skating, skate boarding, bike riding, fishing, etc. None <input type="checkbox"/> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____		Compared to others of the same age, about how much time does he/she spend in each? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Less Than Average</th> <th>Average</th> <th>More Than Average</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she do each one? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Below Average</th> <th>Average</th> <th>Above Average</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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II. Please list your child's favorite hobbies, activities, and games, other than sports. For example: stamps, dolls, books, piano, crafts, cars, computers, singing, etc. (Do <i>not</i> include listening to radio or TV.) None <input type="checkbox"/> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____		Compared to others of the same age, about how much time does he/she spend in each? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Less Than Average</th> <th>Average</th> <th>More Than Average</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she do each one? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Below Average</th> <th>Average</th> <th>Above Average</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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III. Please list any organizations, clubs, teams, or groups your child belongs to. None <input type="checkbox"/> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____		Compared to others of the same age, how active is he/she in each? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Less Active</th> <th>Average</th> <th>More Active</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Less Active	Average	More Active	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																
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IV. Please list any jobs or chores your child has. For example: paper route, babysitting, making bed, working in store, etc. (Include both paid and unpaid jobs and chores.) None <input type="checkbox"/> a. _____ b. _____ c. _____		Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she carry them out? <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th>Below Average</th> <th>Average</th> <th>Above Average</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																
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Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

V. 1. About how many close friends does your child have? (Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 or 3 ☐ 4 or more

2. About how many times a week does your child do things with any friends outside of regular school hours?
(Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ Less than 1 ☐ 1 or 2 ☐ 3 or more

VI. Compared to others of his/her age, how well does your child:

	Worse	Average	Better	
a. Get along with his/her brothers & sisters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Has no brothers or sisters
b. Get along with other kids?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Behave with his/her parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Play and work alone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

VII. 1. Performance in academic subjects.

Does not attend school because _____

Check a box for each subject that child takes

Other academic subjects—for example: computer courses, foreign language, business. Do *not* include gym, shop, driver's ed., or other nonacademic subjects.

	Failing	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. Reading, English, or Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. History or Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Arithmetic or Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Does your child receive special education or remedial services or attend a special class or special school?

☐ No ☐ Yes—kind of services, class, or school: _____

3. Has your child repeated any grades?

☐ No ☐ Yes—grades and reasons: _____

4. Has your child had any academic or other problems in school? ☐ No ☐ Yes—please describe: _____

When did these problems start? _____

Have these problems ended? ☐ No ☐ Yes—when? _____

Does your child have any illness or disability (either physical or mental)? ☐ No ☐ Yes—please describe: _____

What concerns you most about your child? _____

Please describe the best things about your child. _____

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

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 the item 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			
0	1	2	1. Acts too young for his/her age	0	1	2	32. Feels he/she has to be perfect
0	1	2	2. Drinks alcohol without parents' approval (describe): _____	0	1	2	33. Feels or complains that no one loves him/her
0	1	2	3. Argues a lot	0	1	2	34. Feels others are out to get him/her
0	1	2	4. Fails to finish things he/she starts	0	1	2	35. Feels worthless or inferior
0	1	2	5. There is very little he/she enjoys	0	1	2	36. Gets hurt a lot, accident-prone
0	1	2	6. Bowel movements outside toilet	0	1	2	37. Gets in many fights
0	1	2	7. Bragging, boasting	0	1	2	38. Gets teased a lot
0	1	2	8. Can't concentrate, can't pay attention for long	0	1	2	39. Hangs around with others who get in trouble
0	1	2	9. Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions (describe): _____	0	1	2	40. Hears sound or voices that aren't there (describe): _____
0	1	2	10. Can't sit still, restless, or hyperactive	0	1	2	41. Impulsive or acts without thinking
0	1	2	11. Clings to adults or too dependent	0	1	2	42. Would rather be alone than with others
0	1	2	12. Complains of loneliness	0	1	2	43. Lying or cheating
0	1	2	13. Confused or seems to be in a fog	0	1	2	44. Bites fingernails
0	1	2	14. Cries a lot	0	1	2	45. Nervous, highstrung, or tense
0	1	2	15. Cruel to animals	0	1	2	46. Nervous movements or twitching (describe): _____
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	47. Nightmares
0	1	2	18. Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide	0	1	2	48. Not liked by other kids
0	1	2	19. Demands a lot of attention	0	1	2	49. Constipated, doesn't move bowels
0	1	2	20. Destroys his/her own things	0	1	2	50. Too fearful or anxious
0	1	2	21. Destroys things belonging to his/her family or others	0	1	2	51. Feels dizzy or lightheaded
0	1	2	22. Disobedient at home	0	1	2	52. Feels too guilty
0	1	2	23. Disobedient at school	0	1	2	53. Overeating
0	1	2	24. Doesn't eat well	0	1	2	54. Overtired without good reason
0	1	2	25. Doesn't get along with other kids	0	1	2	55. Overweight
0	1	2	26. Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving				56. Physical problems without known medical cause:
0	1	2	27. Easily jealous	0	1	2	a. Aches or pains (not stomach or headaches)
0	1	2	28. Breaks rules at home, school, or elsewhere	0	1	2	b. Headaches
0	1	2	29. Fears certain animals, situations, or places, other than school (describe): _____	0	1	2	c. Nausea, feels sick
				0	1	2	d. Problems with eyes (not if corrected by glasses) (describe): _____
0	1	2	30. Fears going to school	0	1	2	e. Rashes or other skin problems
0	1	2	31. Fears he/she might think or do something bad	0	1	2	f. Stomachaches
				0	1	2	g. Vomiting, throwing up
				0	1	2	h. Other (describe): _____

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Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

0 = Not True (as far as you know)	1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True	2 = Very True or Often True
0 1 2 57. Physically attacks people	0 1 2 84. Strange behavior (describe): _____	
0 1 2 58. Picks nose, skin, or other parts of body (describe): _____	0 1 2 85. Strange ideas (describe): _____	
0 1 2 59. Plays with own sex parts in public	0 1 2 86. Stubborn, sullen, or irritable	
0 1 2 60. Plays with own sex parts too much	0 1 2 87. Sudden changes in mood or feelings	
0 1 2 61. Poor school work	0 1 2 88. Sulks a lot	
0 1 2 62. Poorly coordinated or clumsy	0 1 2 89. Suspicious	
0 1 2 63. Prefers being with older kids	0 1 2 90. Swearing or obscene language	
0 1 2 64. Prefers being with younger kids	0 1 2 91. Talks about killing self	
0 1 2 65. Refuses to talk	0 1 2 92. Talks or walks in sleep (describe): _____	
0 1 2 66. Repeats certain acts over and over; compulsions (describe): _____	0 1 2 93. Talks too much	
0 1 2 67. Runs away from home	0 1 2 94. Teases a lot	
0 1 2 68. Screams a lot	0 1 2 95. Temper tantrums or hot temper	
0 1 2 69. Secretive, keeps things to self	0 1 2 96. Thinks about sex too much	
0 1 2 70. Sees things that aren't there (describe): _____	0 1 2 97. Threatens people	
0 1 2 71. Self-conscious or easily embarrassed	0 1 2 98. Thumb-sucking	
0 1 2 72. Sets fires	0 1 2 99. Smokes, chews, or sniffs tobacco	
0 1 2 73. Sexual problems (describe): _____	0 1 2 100. Trouble sleeping (describe): _____	
0 1 2 74. Showing off or clowning	0 1 2 101. Truancy, skips school	
0 1 2 75. Too shy or timid	0 1 2 102. Underactive, slow moving, or lacks energy	
0 1 2 76. Sleeps less than most kids	0 1 2 103. Unhappy, sad, or depressed	
0 1 2 77. Sleeps more than most kids during day and/or night (describe): _____	0 1 2 104. Unusually loud	
0 1 2 78. Inattentive or easily distracted	0 1 2 105. Uses drugs for nonmedical purposes (don't include alcohol or tobacco) (describe): _____	
0 1 2 79. Speech problem (describe): _____	0 1 2 106. Vandalism	
0 1 2 80. Stares blankly	0 1 2 107. Wets self during the day	
0 1 2 81. Steals at home	0 1 2 108. Wets the bed	
0 1 2 82. Steals outside the home	0 1 2 109. Whining	
0 1 2 83. Stores up too many things he/she doesn't need (describe): _____	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	
	113. Please write in any problems your child has that were not listed above:	
	0 1 2 _____	
	0 1 2 _____	
	0 1 2 _____	

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