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Parental warmth and social skills in six to seven year old children.

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PARENTAL WARMTH AND SOCIAL SKILLS IN SIX TO SEVEN YEAR OLD
CHILDREN

A Masters Thesis Presented

by

JADE NICOLE LOGAN

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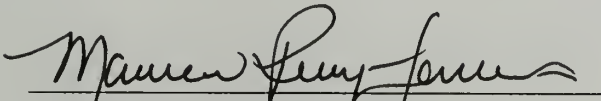
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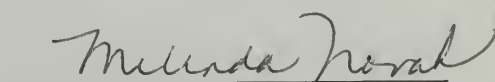

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Middle childhood marks an exciting developmental period for children ages five to 12 years old as they begin to develop more complex social competencies. School-aged children begin to face challenges dealing with maturity issues and peer relationships; in addition, they gain an increasing capacity to reason more complexly (Collins, Madsen, & Susman-Stillman, 2002). They are developing social cognitive skills which include: describing and explaining conditions and events (Whitehurst & Sonnenschein, 1981), deceiving others and detecting their deceptions (DePaulo, Jordan, Irvine, & Laser, 1982; Watson & Valtin, 1997), predicting behavior of other children (Droege & Stipek, 1993; Heyman & Dweck, 1998) and recognizing gender specific roles. During middle childhood, children's social networks are also expanding; they are attending school and building relationships with people outside of the family.

Changes in children's development during middle childhood also bring about changes in parental roles. An important function for parents during middle childhood is to create a supportive environment where children can freely discuss how to negotiate relationships in their new social networks (i.e., peers and teachers). The current study investigates a specific form of parental support, namely *parental warmth*, and how it relates to children's social competencies, specifically *social skills*, during middle childhood, more specifically ages six to seven.

The role of parenting in children's socioemotional and cognitive development has been a central issue in developmental research. Research indicates that, in most cultures, parental attitudes and behaviors toward their child have a long-term impact on parent-

child relationships and the child's adaptive and maladaptive functioning (LeVine, Miller, & West, 1988; Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Among various aspects of parenting, *parental warmth* has received the most attention from theorists and researchers (e.g., Baumrind, 1967, 1971; MacDonald, 1992). *Parental warmth* and affection constitutes a social and emotional resource that allows children to safely explore their environments and develop feelings of security, confidence, trust, and positive orientation towards others (Bowlby, 1969). Moreover, it has been found that *warm and responsive parenting styles* predict cooperative behavior and social competence in children (Booth, Rose-Krasnor, McKinnon, & Rubin, 1994; Hart, DeWolf, Wozniak, & Burts, 1992).

Middle childhood marks a pivotal time point in which the development of children's *social skills* enables them to better negotiate their environments. Researchers who study children's *social skills* examine children's prosocial and cooperative behaviors and/or the quality of their friendships. Past researchers have defined social skills as the ability to achieve personal goals in social interaction while simultaneously maintaining positive relationships with others over time and across situations (Rubin & Rose-Krasnor, 1992). Finally, previous researchers have found that socially skilled children are better able to discern the emotional states of others and are more capable of regulating their own emotions (Denham, von Salisch, Olthof, Kochanoff, & Caverly, 2002).

Previous research has not focused specifically on how *warm parenting practices* are related to children's *social skills* in middle childhood. The current study aims to bridge this gap in the literature. The following literature review will first examine the concept of *warm parenting practices* as they relate to child development more generally. Second, the importance of children's *social skills* in relation to other developmental

outcomes will be explored with an eye towards possible gender differences in the development of social skills. Finally, the role of social context as an important moderator of parent-child relationships will be discussed. Using a multi-method, concurrent research design, the current study aims to determine how *warm parenting styles* relate to children's *social skills*, and how these relationships differ for mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Warm Parenting Practices and Child Development in Middle Childhood

Parental warmth has been conceptualized and operationalized in multiple ways. According to Martin (1989), however, there tends to be reasonable consensus regarding the attributes connected to parental warmth or positive parenting behaviors. These include: (1) a sense of empathic awareness, (2) behaving in a way that will be perceived as consistent by a child, (3) being emotionally available, (4) responding contingently to a child's behavior, particularly during times of distress, (5) offering noncontingent approval, (6) not intruding or overprotecting a child, and (7) being generally sensitive to a child's moods, interests, and expressions of need. *Parental warmth* has received significant attention from theorists and researchers (Baumrind, 1967, 1971; Brody & Shaffer, 1982; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Stated simply, *parental warmth* is the degree to which a parent is accepting and supportive of their child and responsive to his/her needs. Warm parents display a range of verbal (e.g., compliments, encouragement, and/or saying nice things to or about the child) and nonverbal (e.g., hugging, kissing, and/or playful touch) behaviors (Rohner, 1986).

Warm and responsive parenting has been linked concurrently and longitudinally to fewer internalizing (e.g., depression, anxiety, and withdrawal) and externalizing (e.g., aggression, conduct problems, and hyperactivity) problems in children as well as more positive peer relationships (Bronstein, 1996; Dumas, Lafreniere, & Serketich, 1995; Russell & Russell, 1996; Shaw, Keenan, & Vondra, 1994). Even in the earliest stages of child development, researchers have found that warm, responsive, and accepting

mothering styles can decrease hostility, resentment, and anger in children (Hoffman, 1983; Lepper, 1981; Maccoby, 1983). More recently, young children have been found to be less likely to display aggressive behavior and more likely to be sociable with peers if they have parents (mothers and fathers) who show both verbal and nonverbal warmth (Carson & Parke, 1996; Chen, Lu, & Li, 2000; Gottman & DeClaire, 1997; Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, & McNeilly-Choque, 1998; Lindsey & Mize, 2000; Petit, Brown, Mize, & Lindsey, 1998).

Previous research has not focused extensively on the early middle childhood years (specifically 6 to 7 years old) in terms of warm parenting practices and child development. Research has included samples of toddlers, preschool aged children, children in their pre-adolescence to adolescent years, and a combination of children experiencing middle childhood and early adolescence (Eisenberg et al., 2003; Eisenberg Zhou, Spinard, Valiente, Fabes & Liew, 2005; Frosch and Manglesdorf, 2001; Ispa et al., 2004; Kim, Ge, Conger, Brody, Gibbons, & Simmons, 2003). Middle childhood, however, marks a period of less frequent parent-child interactions, with decreasing displays of both affection and negative emotions, as well as a time of increased peer interaction; all changes that could affect the socio-emotional development of children in this phase of life (Hill & Stafford, 1980). On a positive note, some parents become increasingly aware of children's daily activities and become a critical source of social support, enabling children to talk through problems and make decisions about peer relationships (Collins et al., 2002).

Booth, Rose-Krasnor, McKinnon, and Rubin (1994) conducted a longitudinal study in which they investigated maternal warmth and its relation to feelings of security

in four- and eight-year old children. A series of structured and unstructured mother-child interactions were videotaped in a laboratory playroom. Maternal warmth was coded using the Maternal Warmth and Control Rating Scales (Rubin & McKinnon, 1993) which assessed proximity, positive affect, responsivity, and positive control. Child security at age four was measured using observational data. Booth and colleagues (1994) used the Reunion Rating Scale to evaluate the child's security as demonstrated upon reunions with the mother. Findings showed that maternal warmth was significantly related to child security at age four. Furthermore, child security at age four was a significant predictor of fewer internalizing symptoms in children at age eight. Thus, parental warmth is not only related concurrently to children's secure relationships with parents at age four, but also a significant factor in predicting internalizing problems four years later.

Russell and Russell (1996) investigated positive parenting and its relation to boys' and girls' misbehavior during a home observation. The sample included 57 intact, highly educated, white families with a child who averaged seven years of age. Russell and Russell (1996) coded video-taped observations for warm and affectionate mother and father parenting styles and child behavior problems using the Family Interaction Coding Scheme (Patterson, 1982; FICS). Children's aggressive or antisocial behaviors towards parents or siblings were assessed. A composite variable of both maternal and paternal warmth was created and served as an indicator of parental warmth. Results showed that parental warmth and affection was significantly related to fewer displays of misbehavior in daughters but not in sons (Russell & Russell, 1996). Russell and Russell (1996) noted that different types of interactions were occurring between parent-son and parent-daughter dyads. Specifically, emotional aspects of warm parenting were associated with

well-behaved daughters, whereas the day-to-day playful aspects of parenting were associated with interactions among well-behaved sons. These findings are consistent with the literature on gender differences, that suggests that males may be more instrumental or activity oriented and females more expressive or relationship oriented (Balswick, 1988; Block, 1983; Camarena, Sarigiani, & Petersen, 1990).

Stormshak, Bierman, McMahon, and Lengua (2000) investigated the relation of warm parenting practices and child disruptive behavior problems in a diverse group of early elementary school children. Using a sample of 631, at-risk, six and a half year old children, Stormshak and colleagues (2000) used mothers' ratings of warmth and of child oppositional, aggressive, hyperactive, and internalizing behaviors (anxious-depressed and withdrawal) to explore the relation between parental warmth and child outcomes. They found that maternal warmth was significantly related to fewer internalizing, oppositional, hyperactive, and aggressive behaviors in 6 to 7 year-old children. Findings by Russell and Russell (1996) and Stormshak and colleagues (2000) lend support to the notion that warm parenting practices in early middle childhood are significantly related to positive child outcomes.

Since limited research focuses on the relation between parental warmth and social skills for children ages six to seven, the group of interest in the current study, it is instructive to examine research on parental warmth and children's social development across various ages. Frosch and Manglesdorf (2001) investigated warm parenting behavior and preschoolers' behavior problems using a community sample of 78 mothers, fathers, and their preschool-aged children. Participants were primarily White and middle-class families. Frosch and Manglesdorf (2001) measured warm parenting

practices using observational measures developed by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Study (Egeland & Sroufe, 1983; Sroufe, Jacobvitz, Mangelsdorf, DeAngelo, & Ward, 1985; NICHD). Mothers and fathers rated child misbehavior using the Child Behavior Checklist; teachers and observers rated child misbehavior using the Conner's Questionnaire. Findings revealed that both mothers' and fathers' warm and supportive parenting practices were related to fewer behavior problems as rated by teachers and observers while no significant relations were found between mothers' and fathers' warm parenting styles and their own ratings of child behavior problems (Frosch & Mangelsdorf, 2001).

Ispa and colleagues (2004) investigated how warm parenting practices were related to toddlers' social development. Five hundred and seventy-nine European American, 412 African American, and 241 Mexican American families participated in two, video-taped, parent-child interaction assessments when children were 15 months and 25 months old. Using a coding scheme developed by the NICHD Study of Early Child Care, Ispa and colleagues (2004) coded the mother-child interactions for maternal intrusiveness, maternal warmth, child negativity toward the mother, and child engagement at both time periods. Maternal intrusiveness assessed the degree to which the mother controlled the child's play instead of allowing for the child's preferences. Maternal warmth reflected the mother's physical and verbal expressions of love, attentiveness, and respect or admiration for the child. Child negativity toward the mother indicated the degree to which the child showed anger or dislike toward the mother. Child engagement of mother assessed the extent to which the child interacted with the mother in a positive manner, initiating or maintaining eye contact, approaching her, and

responding with positive affect to her initiations. Ispa and colleagues (2004) used hierarchical regression analyses in order to predict child negativity and engagement at 25 months old. After controlling for family demographic variables, child negativity at 15 months, maternal intrusiveness at 15 months, and race/ethnicity, maternal warmth at 15 months, still emerged as a significant, negative predictor of child negativity at 25 months. Similar analyses were run for child engagement at 25 months. After controlling for family demographic variables, child engagement at 15 months, maternal intrusiveness at 15 months, and race/ethnicity, maternal warmth at 15 months still positively predicted child engagement at 25 months.

Turning to pre-adolescent and adolescent functioning, a number of researchers have found relationships between warm parenting and positive child outcomes (Eisenberg et al., 2003; Eisenberg et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2003). Eisenberg and colleagues (2003) investigated children's effortful control and its relation to warm parenting when children were 9 and 13 years-old. Effortful control, an aspect of temperament, is a child's ability of shift their attention and their ability to regulate their emotional expressive behavior. Maternal warmth was defined as the degree of smiling, laughing, positive voice tone, and verbal and physical affection. Results indicated that observational measures of maternal warmth were significantly related to children possessing a greater ability to willfully inhibit or express emotion in appropriate ways (i.e., children are less susceptible to throw temper tantrums). This study lends further support to the notion that warm parenting practices are related to positive developmental outcomes in children, specifically in terms of self-regulation of emotions.

Kim and colleagues (2003) used a multi-informant, longitudinal design to investigate the relation between parenting behaviors and children's depression and conduct problems in a large, community-based sample of 897 African-American children and their families. Depression and conduct problems were measured using the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children Version-IV (DISC-IV) when children averaged 10.5 years-old and again when they averaged 12.3 years old. Maternal warmth was assessed using a 4-point scale in which youths reported the frequency with which their primary caregivers stated verbally that she loved the child, listened carefully to his or her point of view, or had a good laugh with the child about something that was amusing. Children were classified into four groups based on their scores from the DISC-IV: 1) high on depression, 2) high on conduct problems, 3) high on both conduct problems and depression, and 4) non-problem comparison group. It was found that at Time 1, when youths were 10.5 years old, those who displayed both conduct problems and depressive symptoms rated their mothers as displaying significantly lower levels of warmth than children in the depression only group. In contrast, at Time 2 when children averaged 12.3 years old, those who were members of the conduct problems group, depression group, and both conduct problems and depression group rated their mothers as showing less warm parenting practices than children who were part of the no problem group (Kim et. al, 2003). The previously reviewed studies highlight the integral role of parental warmth in the development of children of all ages.

It should be noted that parental warmth and affection most often refers to *maternal* warmth in the literature; the role of fathers has been neglected in the parenting research. Parenting practices of fathers and mothers however, have been found to differ,

both quantitatively and qualitatively, in childcare, childrearing, and parent-child interactions. Throughout childhood and adolescence, fathers spend significantly less time than do mothers in routine caregiving and interaction with children (Lamb, 1987; Parke & Buriel, 1998; Russell & Russell, 1987). Moreover, fathers and mothers appear to display different styles in their interactions with children (Parke, 1995; Russell & Russell, 1987). Whereas mothers are likely to engage in a variety of activities with their children, including affection provision, verbal communication, daily life care, and helping with schoolwork, and arts and crafts, fathers are more actively involved in play activities (Parke & Buriel, 1998). Power and Parke (1982) observed mothers and fathers interacting with their 8-month old infants in a laboratory playroom. Fathers played more bouncing and lifting games, especially with boys, than mothers did. In contrast, mothers played more watching games in which a toy is presented and made visible by moving or shaking it. MacDonald and Parke (1984), in an observational study of the play interaction patterns between mothers and fathers and three and four year old toddlers, found that fathers engaged in more physical play with their children than mothers did, whereas mothers engaged in more object-mediated play than fathers did. The current study will begin to investigate how mothers' and fathers' parenting is differentially related to their sons' and daughters' social skills.

Children's Social Skills and Child Development in Middle Childhood

Similar to warm parenting, conceptualizations of children's social skills have varied in the research and no single definition appears to enjoy widespread acceptance in the literature. According to Merrell and Gimpel (1998), the difficulty in providing an adequate definition of social skills is partly due to the fact that the construct is

deceptively simple, yet relies heavily on a number of other psychological constructs and basic human traits such as personality, intelligence, language, perception, appraisal, attitude, and behavior-environment interaction. When comparing various definitions of social skills it becomes obvious that the similarity among them is probably greater than any differences. The common core elements of social skills are that they are learned, composed of specific behaviors, include initiations and responses, are interactive and situation-specific, and can be specified as targets for intervention (Merrell and Gimpel, 1998).

Rose-Krasnor (1997) proposed the Social Competence Prism as one way to conceptualize social competence. Specifically, Rose-Krasnor posits that certain skills must be mastered in hierarchical order to achieve a comprehensive level of social competence. Each level in the model highlights a particular skill or combination of skills that needs to be mastered before one is able to move onto the next level. The levels of the social competence prism include from lowest to highest: Skills Level, Index Level, and Theoretical Level.

The Skills Level is the lowest level on the social competence prism and is the focus of the current study. This level simply looks at whether someone possesses or does not possess certain skills that allow them to interact positively with others in the outside world. More specifically, these skills include social, emotional and cognitive abilities, and motivations associated with social competence. These skills allow someone to effectively communicate with others, understand others views, express empathy towards others, regulate their own emotions, and effectively engage in social problem solving (Rose-Krasnor, 1997).

The middle level is known as the Index Level. In this level, the emphasis is on how one interacts with others. The Index Level focuses on the quality of interaction sequences (i.e., saying hello, understanding one's social cues, etc), peer status (i.e., how well liked one is with peers), and social self-efficacy (i.e., able to handle ones self effectively in social situations). The Index Level is divided into Self and Other Domains. The Self Domain consists of aspects of social competence in which the individual's own needs take priority (i.e., success in meeting personal goals). The Other Domain includes aspects of competence which involve interpersonal connectedness.

Once elements of the Skills Level and the Index Level have been achieved, one develops a more comprehensive level of social competence referred to as the Theoretical Level. The Theoretical Level is defined as how effectively someone participates and becomes involved in interactions with one or a group of others. For example, a child achieving the Theoretical Level is capable of effectively communicating and relating to others in order to achieve short- or long-term goals (i.e., becoming class president, negotiating a curfew with parents, getting married and starting a family, etc). Rose-Krasnor's model sets the stage for how the development of one's social competence affects how one relates to, and is affected by, the outside world.

Over the last several decades, researchers have studied how children with poor social skills are affected developmentally. Coplan, Rubin, Fox, Calkins, and Stewart (1994) investigated how social reticence was related to maternal ratings of children's shyness and observational measures of children's anxious behaviors. Using a sample of primarily middle-class families, Coplan and colleagues (1994) assigned 48 four-year-old children to groups of unfamiliar same-sex peers and observed them engaging in four

different tasks: (1) unstructured free play, (2) clean-up task, (3) show-and-tell speeches; and (4) a ticket-sorting task. Coplan and colleagues (1994) used the Play Observation Scale to obtain measures of social reticence and anxious behaviors in children. Findings showed that children who were rated as showing higher levels of social reticence were more likely to display anxious and hovering behaviors (Coplan et al., 1994). Findings also revealed that children who were rated by their mothers as being shy were also more likely to show higher levels of social reticence. Both findings lend further support to the notion that children who experience deficits in social skills, which according to Coplan and colleagues (1994) includes lack of assertiveness in social interactions or social reticence, are more likely to be anxious and withdrawn when interacting with children their own age.

Similar results were repeated in Stewart and Rubin's (1995) investigation of the social problem-solving skills of anxious-withdrawn children. Stewart and Rubin split 55 kindergarten, second, and fourth grade children into two groups using teacher and peer measures of withdrawal. Specifically, using peer nomination procedures and teacher ratings, children were grouped as displaying withdrawn behaviors or average behaviors. Children and their mothers then participated in a series of structured and unstructured observational sessions. Child behavior was coded using an adaptation of Rubin and Krasnor's (1986) social problem-solving taxonomy; codes assessed children's initiations during interactions, socially directed goals, strategies to obtain those goals, and consequences of choices that were made. Findings revealed that socially withdrawn children, as compared to more socially capable children, displayed significantly fewer social problem-solving attempts or initiations (Stewart & Rubin, 1994). Socially

withdrawn children also made fewer attempts to elicit an activity from an unfamiliar peer and were less likely to reinitiate a social problem-solving attempt after a failure than their more social age-mates (Stewart & Rubin, 1994). Stewart and Rubin's (1994) investigation further supports the notion that children who experience difficulties with social skills are more likely to be withdrawn.

While the previous studies have shown how social skills deficits are related to more internalizing problems in children, Farmer and Bierman (2002), using longitudinal data, linked deficits in social skills assessed in kindergarten with aggressive and withdrawn behaviors in children when they were in the first-grade. Using a sample of 754 children participating in the Fast Track Program, Farmer and Bierman (2002) grouped first grade children into four group classifications based on first-grade teacher ratings on the Child Adjustment Scale. First grade participants were identified as aggressive, aggressive-withdrawn, withdrawn, and non-problem. When children were in kindergarten, mothers and teachers completed child ratings of prosocial behavior using the Social Competence Scale for Parents and Teachers, respectively. Farmer and Bierman (2002) found that children who were classified as aggressive-withdrawn, aggressive, and withdrawn in first grade displayed more deficits in prosocial behaviors in kindergarten than children for the non-problem comparison group. These findings are intriguing because they show how prosocial behaviors can predict positive outcomes in children whereas deficits in prosocial behaviors are predictive of aggressive and withdrawn behaviors in first grade children.

Using a sample of 12 year old, lower-middle class Chinese children, Chen, Li, Li, Li, and Liu (2000a) assessed prosocial behaviors with both peer and teacher ratings.

Chen and colleagues defined two different components of social skills: sociability and prosocial orientation. Sociability was the degree to which children were able to make and keep friends. Prosocial orientation assessed the degree to which children were able to cooperate and share with others. Findings revealed that teacher ratings of internalizing problems and children's self-ratings of loneliness and depression were negatively related to 12 year-old children's ability to make and keep friends (Chen et al., 2000a). Findings also revealed that teacher-ratings of externalizing problems and self-ratings of loneliness and depression were negatively related to children's ability to cooperate and share with others. Findings also revealed that sociability and prosocial orientation were positively related to academic achievement and children's perceptions of their cognitive competence. An important contribution of this research is that it points to differing aspects of children's social skills that are related to different aspects of their behavior, in particular internalizing problems were related to sociability and externalizing problems were related to prosocial orientation.

Bellanti and Bierman (2000) assessed 387 children on a measure of cognitive ability, using the Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children-Revised, and prosocial behaviors using teacher ratings of the Social Competence Scale when children were in kindergarten. When children were in the first grade, teachers again completed the Social Competence Scale to obtain measures of children's prosocial behaviors. Bellanti and Bierman (2000) found that cognitive abilities in kindergarten were positively related to children's prosocial behaviors in kindergarten. Findings also revealed that children's cognitive abilities in kindergarten were predictive of fewer social skills deficits when children were in the first grade.

Links Between Warm Parenting Practices and Children's Social Skills

Thus far this review has documented links between warm parenting and positive aspects of child development such as fewer internalizing and externalizing problems. Moreover, linkages between children's social skills and child mental health have also been documented. Few studies have been conducted to examine the relation between warm parenting styles and the development of children's social skills, with only a handful of notable exceptions (Chen, Liu, & Li, 2000b; McDowell & Parke, 2005; Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1998; Zhou, Eisenberg, Losoya, Fabes, Reiser, Guthrie, Murphy, Cumberland, & Shepard, 2002). These previous studies have found that there may be a link between warm parenting practices and children's social skills that has yet to be fully investigated.

Chen, Liu, & Li (2000b) explored how parental warmth was related to social competence in 291 Chinese children who were 12 years old at Time 1 and 14 years old at Time 2. In order to assess maternal and paternal warmth, children completed the Children's Report of Parent Behavior Inventory at both time points. Measures of social competence were obtained from peer ratings of the Revised Class Play questionnaire and the Teacher-Child Rating Scale. Chen and colleagues (2000b) defined social competence as a child's prosocial and cooperative behaviors. Findings revealed that after accounting for child gender and stability in social competence, paternal (and not maternal) warmth when children were 12 years old was related to higher levels of peer- and teacher-ratings of social competence in children at 14 years old (Chen et al., 2000b). Chen and colleagues (2000b) study of parental warmth is unique in that it differentiates between

maternal and paternal warmth and its relation to social competence in adolescence, more specifically, paternal warmth, but not maternal warmth, was related to social competence.

Zhou and colleagues (2002) examined maternal warmth and child social functioning in a sample of 169 children. Using observational measures, data were collected when children were nine and 11 years old. Maternal warmth was coded at both Time 1 and Time 2 based on child-directed parental smiling, laughing, positive tone of voice, and verbal and physical affection using an unspecified coding system. Children's social competence was assessed at both time points using mother and teacher ratings on the Harter's Perceived Competence Scale for Children. Social competence in this scale was designed to assess children's socially appropriate behaviors and popularity. Zhou and colleagues (2002) found that maternal warmth when children were nine years-old predicted higher levels of social competence as rated by mothers and teachers when children were 11. In regards to concurrent relationships between maternal warmth and teacher and parent ratings of social competence, no significant results were found.

Webster-Stratton and Hammond (1998) also investigated the effects of warm parenting practices on the development of children's social skills. Four-hundred and twenty-six mothers (half of whom were single) and their 4 ½ year old children were assessed using independent home observations and self-report measures. Mothers and teachers completed the appropriate versions of the Social Competence Scale in order to assess children's social competencies. Social competence was defined as parents' (and teachers') perceptions of the child's prosocial behaviors and emotional regulation; teacher-ratings of social competence also included assessments of peer relationships and academic achievement. During home observations, observers used the Dyadic Parent-

child Interactive Coding System (DPICS-R) and the Coders Impression Inventory (CII) to obtain measures of parental warmth. Parental warmth was defined as positive affect, praise, and physical affection. Similar to previous studies, children were categorized as having social competence problems at home if their behavior fell outside the normal range based on either mother reports or independent observations in the home. Children were categorized as having social competence problems at school if their behavior fell outside the normal range based on either teacher reports or independent observations at school. The final classification yielded four groups: 12% of children displaying pervasive social competence problems, 34% had nonpervasive social competence problems, and 54% had normal social competence both at home and at school. When measuring maternal warmth via the DPICS-R and the CII, children in the normal social competence group displayed more proficient social competencies than children in the nonpervasive and children in the pervasive groups.

Links between parental warmth and children's social skills have also been investigated during pre-adolescent to adolescent years (McDowell & Parke, 2005). McDowell and Parke (2005) linked teacher- and peer-ratings of nine to 10 years old social competence with maternal and paternal positive affect when children were in the fourth grade and again in the fifth grades. Participants included 76 children who were European American and Latino from lower- to upper-middle class, two-parent families. Children's social competencies were assessed using teacher and peer ratings when children were in the fourth and fifth grades. Teachers completed a 12-item classroom behavior inventory originally developed by Cassidy and Asher (1992) to assess children's likeability and behavioral attributes, which included prosocial behavior and friendliness.

Peers nominated up to three classmates for displaying high levels of prosocial behaviors. Maternal and paternal positive affect was assessed using a seven-minute triadic discussion task among the mother, father, and child. Using the Iowa Family Interaction Rating Scale (Melby & Conger, 2001), interactions were coded for parental positive affect which was defined as clarity of expression, intensity of expression, and awareness of child's feelings. Findings revealed that mothers' and fathers' positive affect predicted higher levels of social competencies as rated by teachers. No significant findings were found for peers however.

Thus far, Chen and colleagues (2000b), Zhou and colleagues (2002), Webster-Stratton and Hammond (1998) and McDowell and Parke (2005) have operationalized warmth and children's social skills in similar ways. More recent research, however, has been less consistent in its operationalization of either warmth and/or social skills (Bates, Luster, & Vandenbelt, 2003; NICHD, 2004; Zhou, Eisenberg, Wang, & Reiser, 2004). Although inconsistent methods of measuring both warmth and social skills lead to more unreliable results from which to develop our conclusions, some themes are revealed in this literature. In the following section, I review a number of studies that use varied conceptualizations of warmth and social skills in order to provide more empirical support for the current hypotheses.

Bates and colleagues (2003) investigated warm parenting in relation to social competence for a sample of 83 first graders whose social skills were rated by their teachers. All children were living with their biological, adolescent mothers. Teachers completed the Social Skills Rating System-Teacher Form (SSRS-T) to assess prosocial classroom behaviors such as 'makes friends easily' and 'follows your directions'.

Maternal warmth was assessed as one dimension of a broader maternal quality variable which included: maternal warmth, disciplinary practices, mothers' child-centered behavior, and the supportive/chaotic nature of the home. Maternal quality was assessed using the HOME observation scale and self-report measures completed by the mother's advocate. Findings revealed that children's social skills at 54-months were positively related to HOME observational measures of parenting quality at 36-months and positively related (at a trend level) to advocate ratings of parenting quality at 54-months.

The NICHD research collaborative (2004) conducted a longitudinal study linking parenting, when children were in kindergarten and the first grade, to children's social skills in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. Using 648 predominately White, married couples, researchers measured maternal and paternal warmth using a 15-minute in home video-taped interactions and children's social skills using the Social Skills Rating System which was completed by teachers. The kindergarten parent-child video-taped interaction involved two activities: constructing a Marbleworks series of chutes and ramps and playing with a set of African animal families and jungle props. The first-grade parent-child activities included drawing a sailboat together using an Etch-A-Sketch, a geometric block activity, and a Slap-Jack card game. A pure measure of parental warmth again was not used in this study. Rather, maternal and paternal sensitivity was created using the sum of ratings of supportive presence (warmth), parental respect for the child's autonomy, and parental hostility in each interaction. Similar to Bates and colleagues (2004), the NICHD research collaborative (2004) used the SSRS-T to obtain ratings of children's social skills. Findings revealed that maternal sensitivity was positively related to children's social skills in kindergarten but not related to children's social skills in the

first- or second-grades. Paternal sensitivity, however, was positively related to children's social skills when they were in kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade (NICHD, 2004). These findings support the idea that fathers play an important role in fostering the skills and behaviors children need to be successful in contexts outside of the family, such as in schools with peers and teachers.

Zhou and colleagues (2004) investigated the relationship between maternal warmth and responsiveness with children's social functioning. The mothers of 425 first- and second-grade Chinese children from predominately lower-middle class, two-parent homes completed the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) to obtain measures of warm and accepting parenting. Warmth/Acceptance was the extent that mother expressed affection by hugging, kissing, etc. In order to assess children's social functioning, mothers and teachers completed Harter's Perceived Competence Scale for Children. Social functioning was the extent that children displayed socially appropriate behavior. A social functioning composite score was then computed by averaging the parents' and teachers' reports of socially appropriate behavior. Zhou and colleagues (2004) found that, maternal warmth was related to mothers' ratings of children's social functioning but was not related to teacher's ratings of children's social functioning. The discrepancy between mothers' and teachers' ratings of children's social functioning was not discussed by Zhou and colleagues (2004); the current study will attempt to investigate this discrepancy, however.

Theoretical Approaches to Understanding the Linkages Between Warm Parenting and Children's Social Skills

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that child development occurs within a series of nested contextual levels from the immediate family to broader contexts such as school, neighborhood, work, and culture. Belsky (1984) built upon the work of Bronfenbrenner by combining both an ecological perspective on parenting with the concept of parental competence. Parental competence is defined as sensitivity to the child's developing abilities and communications. According to Belsky (1984), parental competence is influenced by the contextual levels of the ecological model. Specifically, Belsky contends that parental functioning is influenced by a variety of forces, with its three major determinants being the personality/psychological well-being of the parent, the characteristics of child, and the contextual sources of stress and support.

Of importance in the current study are the sources of stress and support in parents' lives that may affect their ability to be warm, supportive parents. The sample for the proposed research was drawn from a very specific ecological niche; namely a group of working-class, dual-earner families. Belsky (1984) argues that parental employment can serve as both a source of support and stress. For example, when parents are employed, children may be required to participate in more household chores and self-care. Hoffman (1963) found that the employed mothers who like their work (compared to those who do not like their work) display more affection and used less severe discipline with their children. Similarly, Yarrow, Scott, DeLeeuw and Heinig (1962) reported that mothers dissatisfied with their employment status expressed more problems in child rearing than mothers who were satisfied with their employment status. In regards to fathers, Parke (1996) found that the more time and energy fathers devoted to their occupations, the more irritable and impatient they were with their children. Moreover, financial stress in

low income families may interfere with parents' time and energy to be supportive parents. Thus, our sample may be at increased risk of experiencing difficulties in parenting due to the numerous roles that each parent plays on a given day, including being a parent, spouse, and economic provider, as well as coping with minimal financial resources.

The Present Study

The purpose of the current investigation is to investigate how mothers' and fathers' warm parenting practices are related to their six and seven year old children's social skills. While the research reviewed thus far reveals the importance of studying parental warmth and children's social skills, the current study aims to build upon the previous literature in a variety of ways. First, both mothers' and fathers' levels of warmth will be considered in relation to children's social skills. Previous research has failed to consider just how influential fathers are in their children's lives (Forehand & Smith, 1986). Maternal and paternal warmth will be measured via self-report and observational methods which will allow me to consider the relative effects of parents' perceptions of their warmth versus observed warmth. For example, a parent may rate themselves as being warmer than an outside observer would. The use of both observational and self-report data allows us to examine these differences. Second, children's social skills will be assessed via mother, father, and teacher reports on the Behavioral Assessment Scale for Children (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992; BASC). The degree of agreement in multiple reporters allows us to not only consider perceptions that parents and teachers have of the children but, also to consider the idea that children may behave differently in different contexts.

As noted, the current sample consists of dual-earner, working-class families all of whom have a child in the first grade and range in ages from six to seven years old. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that in 1999, 64.1% of two-parent families in the United States were dual-earner. It is possible that as a result of mothers working outside the home, fathers are becoming more involved in the caretaking of their children in order to compensate for the mother's absence. Thus the role of paternal warmth may take on added significance in the proposed research.

Finally, previous works have extensively researched how warm parenting practices influence toddlers as well as pre-adolescent and adolescent age groups while neglecting children in middle childhood. The focus on children experiencing early middle childhood (ages ranges from six to seven years old) will allow me to begin to fill an important gap in the developmental literature that links warm parenting practices to children's social skills.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Figure 1 presents the direct relationships tested in this study. My main questions and corresponding hypothesis are the following:

Question 1A. How are maternal and paternal warmth, measured through self-report and observational methods, related to parents' and teachers' reports of children's social skills?

Hypothesis 1A. I hypothesize that maternal and paternal warmth will be positively related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. This hypothesis is supported by the work of Zhou and colleagues (2002) and Webster-Stratton and Hammond (1998) who found, when using observational measures, that

maternal warmth was related to higher levels of social skills in children as reported by mothers and teachers. The current study attempts to enhance these works by adding fathers to the equation. Based on the handful of studies that did include fathers in their analyses, it was revealed that fathers may uniquely contribute to the development of children's social skills. Research conducted by Chen, Liu, and Li (2000) found unique effects of paternal warmth on the development of children's social skills. Their findings revealed that after accounting for the effects of maternal warmth, paternal warmth was related to higher levels of peer- and teacher-ratings of social competence in adolescence.

Research Question 1B. How are maternal and paternal warmth differentially related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' report of boys' and girls' social skills?

Hypothesis 1B. I hypothesized that maternal and paternal warmth will be more strongly related to girls' social skills than boys' social skills. Russell and Russell (1996) noted that different types of interactions were occurring between parent-son and parent-daughter dyads. Specifically, the emotional aspects of warm parenting were associated with well-behaved daughters, whereas the day-to-day playful aspects of parenting were associated with interactions among well-behaved sons. The measure of parental warmth used in this research, which includes more emotional aspects of warmth (i.e., hugging, kissing, compliments) versus behavior indicators (i. e., rough and tumble play) is expected to be more strongly linked to girls' social skills.

Question 2. What is the combined effect of including both maternal warmth and paternal warmth as predictors of mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills?

Hypothesis 2. Although more exploratory in nature, I hypothesized that including both maternal and paternal warmth in the model will predict higher levels of mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills.

Question 3. When gender of the child is added to the model, is the combined effect of maternal and paternal warmth predictive of children's social skills as reported by mothers, fathers, and teachers?

Hypothesis 3. I hypothesized that the combined effect of maternal and paternal warmth will increase mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of boys' and girls' social skills. While no research, to date, has addressed this question, it is important to understand how mothers and fathers warm parenting practices may influence their sons' and daughters' in different ways.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Data were drawn from the Work and Family Transitions Project, which included an initial 5-year longitudinal study with 153 couples experiencing the transition to parenthood and a follow-up visit to each family six years after the birth of their first child. The design of the initial study included four face-to-face interviews and one mail interview with dual-earner couples experiencing the transition to parenthood for the first time. Couples were recruited from prenatal education classes at hospitals in Western Massachusetts. Eligibility for inclusion in the study was based on the following criteria: (a) both couple members were employed full-time prior to the baby's birth, (b) both partners were expected to go back to work full-time after the baby was born, (c) both partners were "working-class," defined as having less than a college degree, and (d) partners were married or cohabiting at the time of the study. Each couple was interviewed five times across the transition to parenthood and were paid \$150 for participating. The current study used data from the follow-up study which was conducted when the couples' first child, the target child, was in the first grade (Phase 6). This study consisted of a single 3-hour visit to the participants' home.

Participants

The current study includes data from 65 mothers, fathers, and their first-born child as well as the child's teacher. The complete sample of 153 participants is not used in the current study since data collection has not been completed. Ninety-five percent of mothers and 94% of fathers are Caucasian. All families were cohabitating or married at the Phase 6 time point. The educational level of the parent participants ranged from less

than a high school degree to holding a two-year Associates Degree. By Phase 6 of data collection, six percent of fathers and four percent of mothers had obtained a Bachelor's Degree. Parents ranged in age from 24 to 48 with men averaging 37.4 years and women averaging 35.5 years. All child participants (29 boys and 36 girls) were in the first grade with an average age of 6.88 years.

Procedures

Families who participated in Phases 1 thru 5 of the project were contacted by telephone and asked to participate in Phase 6 of the Work and Family Transitions Project. Parents were told that their family would be involved in a series of video-taped interactions (mother-child, father-child, triadic, and marital) and a series of interviews (mother-father, mother, father, and child). Once the procedures were explained, families were asked if they would like to participate. After agreeing to participate, a home observation was scheduled when both parents and the first grader would be present. Families were mailed two packets of questionnaires, which were completed independently by the mother and the father prior to the home observation. During the three-hour, in-home interview, parents were videotaped individually interacting with their child in a two structured interactions. For these episodes the videotaping was done with a fixed-position camera so that the researcher would not be present in the room. The completed questionnaire packets were collected from the parents during the mother-father interview. All families received \$200 for their participation and an extra \$30 if they completed the mail packet ahead of time.

Measures

Parental Warmth. Parents' perceptions of their parenting styles were assessed using self-report and home observational measures. Mothers and fathers independently completed the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ; Frick, 1991) which includes six items that assess parental warmth (e.g., "You let your child know when he/she is doing a good job with something," "You reward or give something extra to your child for obeying you or behaving well," "You compliment your child when he/she does something well"). Prior to the home observation, mothers and fathers were asked to rate, on a 5-point scale, how frequently they performed each behavior (1 = never, 2 = almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always). See Appendix A.

A structured parent-child observation was conducted with each parent and the target child (mothers and fathers separately). Parent and child interactions were videotaped during one five- and one ten-minute interaction sequence. To minimize the effects of order, prior to the home visit, interviewers flipped a coin to determine whether the mother-child interaction or the father-child interaction would take place first. Once they determined which interaction would take place first, interviewers then flipped a coin to determine which parent would assist the child in drawing a sailboat or a house on the Etch-A-Sketch, and which parent would assist the child in playing the River Crossing game or the Shape game.

Before the child was brought into the room to participate in the interactions, the parents were given instructions as to how to play the Etch-A-Sketch game and the Shape or River Crossing game. In the first five-minute task, parent and child were given an Etch-A-Sketch and asked to draw a picture of a house or sailboat with the parent using one knob and the child using the other knob. During the second ten-minute task, parents

were asked to “assist their child when needed” to complete a task (Shape or River Crossing game) that was too difficult for the child to complete independently. The goals of these procedures are to assess positive parental strategies. Previous studies using a similar paradigm have found that observations of parent and child behavior during these types of tasks have good convergent validity (Arnold, O’Leary, Acker, & Wolff, 1993). The coding scale developed by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Study which were adapted from Egeland and Sroufe (1983) and Sroufe, Jacobvitz, Mangelsdorf, DeAngelo, and Ward (1985) was revised in order to assess parental warmth, a construct that mirrored NICHD’s measure of parental supportive presence. Graduate and undergraduate assistants coded the parent-child interactions using global ratings for parental supportive presence.

Training of coders consisted of a six training sessions which occurred on a regular basis with weekly small group meetings during the coding period. The first two sessions were dedicated to familiarizing coders with codes for parental warmth. The other four sessions were dedicated to conducting in session coding as well as reviewing homework which was assigned the previous week. Once the graduate and undergraduate students began coding, weekly meetings were conducted with groups of students in order to assure reliability of the measures.

Parental supportive presence (warmth) was coded using a 5-point scale (1 = low, 5 = high). Coding was completed by two trained independent coders who were blind to the couples’ questionnaire responses. In order to assess reliability of coding, intraclass correlations were computed. The interclass correlation coefficients for mothers (Ech-A-

Sketch and game) were 0.69 and 0.68 and fathers (Etch-A-Sketch and game) 0.81, and 0.79. See Appendix B for a copy of the coding scheme.

Children's Social Skills. Mothers and fathers independently completed the Behavioral Assessment System for Children Parent Rating Scale (BASC-PRS; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992) to obtain measures of children's socio-emotional outcomes. The BASC-PRS (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992) is a comprehensive rating scale that assesses a broad range of child psychopathology in children aged 2-and-a-half and older. For the current study, 14 items that yielded scores for the child's social skills were used (e.g., "Says please and thank you," "Congratulates others when good things happen to them," "Volunteers to help with things"). Prior to the home observation, parents rated their children on a 5-point scale indicating how frequently they witnessed their child performing each behavior (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = almost always). See Appendix C.

During the home observation, parents were asked permission for the research team to contact their child's first grade teacher. If permission was granted, teachers were subsequently mailed the teacher version of the BASC-TRS to complete and return in a postage-paid envelope, along with a letter asking for their participation and ensuring them that their responses would be kept confidential. The BASC-TRS assesses the same child behaviors and psychopathology as the BASC-PRS. Similar to the parents, for the current study, 12 items that assess the frequency of the target child's prosocial behavior in their classroom were used (e.g., "Encourages others to do their best," "Has a sense of humor," "Compliments others," "Says please and thank you"). Teachers rated the target child on a 5-point scale, indicating how frequently they witnessed the child performing

each behavior (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = almost always). The teacher version was obtained in an effort to gain greater validity in assessing the child's social skills. All teachers who returned their completed questionnaires received \$20. See Appendix D.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Before addressing the main research questions, descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables were calculated for mothers, fathers and teachers. The means and standard deviations for the main study variables are presented in Table 1. T-tests were conducted to examine mean differences among the main study variables. No significant differences were found between self-report measures of mothers' and fathers' warmth. Mean differences were found however between observational measures of maternal and paternal warmth. Coders rated mothers as displaying more warmth than fathers [$t(60) = 4.64, p < .001$]. Two mean differences were found between mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Mothers' rated children as displaying significantly more social skills than teachers' ratings [$t(62) = 2.13, p < .05$] and fathers rated children as displaying significantly fewer social skills than teachers' ratings of children's social skills [$t(58) = -3.35, p < .01$]. No other significant differences were found among mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Table 2 reports means separately for boys and girls. T-tests were again conducted to examine mean differences between boys and girls. Teachers rated boys as displaying fewer social skills than girls [$t(57) = -1.83, p = < .10$] and fathers' rated girls as displaying fewer social skills than teachers rated girls [$t(33) = -2.67, p < .01$]. For all other variables there were no significant mean differences observed between or within boys and girls.

To examine agreement among self-reports of warmth and observational reports of warmth, bivariate correlations between mothers' and fathers' self-reports of warmth and mothers' and fathers' observational reports of warmth are presented in Table 3. Results revealed only one trend among observational reports of warmth and parental reports of warmth. Fathers' self-reports of warmth were correlated at the level of a trend to observational reports of fathers' warmth, $r = .22, p < .10$. No other significant relationships were found among the independent variables.

In regards to the dependent variables, mothers' reports of children's social skills were significantly correlated with fathers' reports of children's social skills $r = .37, p < .01$. Father reports of children's social skills were also correlated with teacher reports of children's social skills $r = .37, p < .01$. No other significant correlations were found.

Table 4 presents these same relationships by gender of the child. In reference to the independent variables, for boys, no significant relationships were found. For girls however, mothers' reports of warmth were related at a trend level to fathers' reports of warmth $r = .32, p < .10$. No other significant relationships were found among independent variables. In reference to the dependent variables, it is of interest that mothers' reports of social skills were correlated with fathers' reports of social skills $r = .61, p < .01$ for boys, however for girls, this relationship is nonsignificant. In all other cases, the pattern of correlations reflect the same pattern relationships reported in the full sample. Follow-up analyses using R to Z transformational test for significant revealed that the correlation between mothers' reports of boys' social skills and fathers' reports of boys' social skills was significantly different from the correlation between mothers' reports of girls' social skills and fathers' reports of girls' social skills at the level of a

trend. No other correlations between boys' and girls' social skills were found to be statistically different from one another.

One final set of correlations were conducted in order to assess the relationship between child's age and social skills. Previous work has not often considered the child's developmental level when assessing children's social skills. The current study attempts to do so by first determining the relationship between child age and mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills. For the sample as a whole, child age was significantly correlated with teachers' reports of children's social skills $r = .26, p < .05$, such that teachers report more social skills for older children. Examining these results by gender revealed some interesting findings. For boys, no significant correlations were found between child age and mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills. For girls, two significant correlations were found. Child age was significantly correlated with fathers' reports of their daughters' but not their sons' social skills $r = .53, p < .001$. Child age was also significantly correlated with teachers' reports of girls' but not boys' social skills $r = .51, p < .01$. Thus age will be a control variable in future analyses.

The first research question examined how maternal and paternal warmth, measured through self-report and observational methods, are related to parents' and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Correlational analyses presented in the shaded region of Table 3 highlight the relationships between parental warmth and mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Mothers' self-reports of warmth were highly correlated with their reports of children's social skills $r = .61, p < .01$. Similarly, fathers' self-reports of warmth were significantly correlated with their

reports of children's social skills $r = .26, p < .05$. Turning to the observational measures, only fathers' warmth was correlated at the level of a trend to teachers' reports of children's social skills, $r = .23, p < .10$. No other significant correlations were found among observational and self-report measures of parental warmth with reports of children's social skills for the sample as a whole.

The second part of this research question explored how maternal and paternal are warmth differentially related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of boys' and girls' social skills. Correlational analyses presented in the shaded regions of Table 4 report results for boys and girls separately. For boys, mothers' reports of warmth were correlated with mothers' reports of her son's social skills, $r = .52, p < .01$. The same relationship emerged for girls; mothers' self-reports of warmth were significantly correlated with mothers' reports of their daughters social skills, $r = .72, p < .01$. No other significant correlations were found for boys and girls.

The second and third research questions are more exploratory in nature and are aimed at examining the combined effects of maternal and paternal warmth. As shown in Table 4, child age was significantly correlated with father- and teacher-reports of children's social skills; thus, child age was added to the regression model as a control variable. In addition, since interactions among child gender, child age, and parental warmth are going to be examined initial regression analyses were run separately for mothers warmth and then fathers warmth. Maternal warmth, paternal warmth, and child age were centered about the mean. Centering is the process of selecting a reference value for each predictor and coding the data based on that reference value so that each regression coefficient that is estimated and tested is relevant to the research question.

More specifically, centering in the proposed study allowed me to better explain interactions of child gender, age of the child, and measures warmth predicting children's social skills.

An analytic strategy known as model trimming will be used in order to determine the best-fitting model for predicting mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills. Child gender, child age, *maternal warmth*, and all relevant two-way and three-way interactions were entered into a regression model step by step in order to determine which model best predicts mothers' reports of children's social skills.

Regression models were then rerun to determine the best-fitting model using child gender, child age, *paternal warmth*, and all relevant two-way and three-way interactions to predict mothers' reports of children's social skills using paternal warmth. These same analyses were conducted for fathers' reports and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Finally, regression models testing the combined effects of maternal and paternal warmth were examined.

Mothers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

First, in regards to maternal warmth, Table 5 depicts the best fitting model predicting mothers' reports of children's social skills. Child gender, maternal self-reports of warmth, and the interaction of child gender and maternal warmth explained almost 45% of the variance in mother's reports of children's social skills. Child gender and self-reports of maternal warmth were found to be significant predictors of children's social skills ($\beta = 3.12$, $SE\ B = 1.56$, $p < .05$; $\beta = 7.83$, $SE\ B = 2.39$, $p < .01$, respectively). The interaction of child gender and maternal warmth was found to be associated at a trend level to mothers' reports of children's social skills ($\beta = 6.10$, $SE\ B\ 3.34$, $p < .10$).

Follow-up analyses that examined the slopes of boys and girls separately revealed that mothers rated girls as displaying higher levels of social skills than boys as maternal warmth increased (Figure 2). Regressions using self-reports of paternal warmth in the model with child gender and child age to predict mothers' reports of children's social skills revealed no significant results. In addition, observational measures of both maternal and paternal warmth, child gender, and child age were also unrelated to mothers' reports of children's social skills.

Fathers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

In the next step, the best-fitting model predicting fathers' reports of children's social skills was explored. Table 6 presents the best-fitting model predicting fathers' reports of children's social skills using child gender, child age, mothers' reports of her warmth, and the interaction of child age and child gender. This model explains 23% of the variance in father's reports of children's social skills. Child gender, maternal warmth, and the interaction of child gender and child age were significant predictors of father's reports of children's social skills ($\beta = -168.23$, $SE\ B = 51.65$, $p < .01$; $\beta = 4.30$, $SE\ B = 7.49$, $p < .05$; $\beta = 24.66$, $SE\ B = 10.82$, $p < .01$, respectively).

Next, I examined paternal warmth as a predictor of fathers' reports of children's social skills. Table 7 presents the best-fitting model for predicting fathers' reports of children's social skills using child gender, child age, and paternal warmth. This model explains 25% of the variance in father's reports of children's social skills. Child gender ($\beta = -169.66$, $SE\ B = 51.03$, $p < .01$), paternal warmth ($\beta = 5.54$, $SE\ B = 2.29$, $p < .01$), and the interaction of child age by child gender ($\beta = 24.84$, $SE\ B = 7.40$, $p < .01$) were found to be significant predictors of fathers' reports of children's social skills. Figure 3

depicts follow-up analyses that examined the slopes of boys and girls separately which revealed that fathers report an increase in daughters' social skills as they become older while they report their sons social skills decrease as they get older. No significant results were found for observational reports of maternal and paternal warmth predicting father's reports of children's social skills.

Teacher's Reports of Children's Social Skills

Using similar analytic strategies as the previous two sections, the best-fitting model found for teacher's reports of children's social skills is presented in Table 8. We notice that child gender ($\beta = -197.82$, $SE\ B = 71.53$, $p < .01$) and the interaction of child gender and child age ($\beta = 29.26$, 10.36 , $p < .01$) significantly predicted children's social skills as rated by teachers. This model explains about 23% of the variance in children's social skills. It is also important to note that when predicting teachers' reports of social skills, no measures of parental warmth are significant predictors. Figure 4 presents follow-up analyses that investigated the slopes of boys and girls social skills. Similar to fathers' reports of children's social skills, teachers are reporting that as girls get older their social skills capabilities are increasing and as boys get older their social skills capabilities are decreasing. Neither self-reports nor observational measures of warmth were found to be significant predictors of children's social skills as rated by teachers.

The final aim of the current investigation was to examine the combined effects of maternal warmth and paternal warmth in relation to mother-, father-, and teacher-reports of children's social skills. In the following regression models child gender, child age, maternal warmth, and paternal warmth was predictors. All two-way and three-way interactions were examined.

Mothers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

Referring back to Table 5, I found that the best-fitting model to predict mothers' reports of children's social skills included child gender, self-reports of maternal warmth, and the interaction of child gender and maternal warmth as predictors. Even though paternal warmth was found to be unrelated to mothers' reports of children's social skills, I added it to the previously listed model in order to examine the combined effects of maternal warmth and paternal warmth on mothers' reports of children's social skills as well as possible interactions between the two. In order to test the hypothesis that paternal and maternal warmth would be associated with increased social skills, mothers' BASC-PRS social skills t-score was regressed on scores of warmth as reported by mothers and fathers. Child gender, self-reports of maternal warmth and paternal warmth, and the interaction of maternal warmth and child gender combined explained 45% of the variance in children's social skills (Table 9). Child gender and mothers' report of warmth significantly predicted mother's reports of children's social skills ($\beta = 3.32$, $SE\ B = 1.61$, $p < .05$; $\beta = 7.81$, $SE = .45$, $p < .01$). Paternal self-reports of warmth were unrelated to mothers' reports of children's social skills ($\beta = .50$, $SE = 2.21$, $p = .481$). The interaction of maternal warmth and child gender was associated at a trend level to mother's reports of children's social skills ($\beta = 5.97$, $SE\ B = 3.47$, $p < .10$). No significant interactions of maternal warmth and paternal warmth were found.

Fathers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

The best-fitting models in predicting fathers' reports of children's social skills are presented in Tables 6 and 7. These models was combined in order examine the combined effects of self-reports of maternal and paternal warmth on fathers' reports of children's

social skills. In order to test this hypothesis, fathers' reports of the BASC-PRS social skills t-score was regressed on child gender, child age, maternal warmth, paternal warmth and the interaction of child gender and child age. Referencing Table 10, we notice that child gender, child age, maternal warmth, paternal warmth, and the interaction of child gender and child age explain almost 29% of the variance in fathers' reports of children's social skills. Child gender ($\beta = -169.84$, $SE\ B = 50.15$, $p < .01$), paternal warmth ($\beta = 4.86$, $SE\ B = .24$, $p < .01$) and the interaction of child gender and child age ($\beta = 24.92$, $SE\ B = 7.28$, $p < .01$) were significant predictors of father's reports of children's social skills. Maternal warmth was associated at a trend level ($\beta = 3.56$, $SE\ B = .20$, $p < .10$). Child age alone was not found to be a significant predictor of children's social skills. No significant interactions of maternal warmth and paternal warmth were found.

Teachers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

In regards to teachers' reports of children's social skills, we notice from Table 8 that parental warmth is not significantly related to teachers' reports of children's social skills. Even though this finding emerged, the combined effects of maternal warmth and paternal warmth were examined and neither was found to significantly predict teachers' reports of children's social skills. Referring back to Table 8, we notice that child gender, child age, and the interaction of child gender and child age explained almost 23% of the variance in children's social skills as rated by teachers. It is important to note here that while I originally hypothesized that maternal and paternal warmth would be associated with teacher's reports of children's social skills, it did not. No significant interactions between maternal and paternal warmth were found.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The primary goal of the current study was to examine how warm parenting is related to children's social skills. A number of interesting results emerged that highlighted the importance of multiple reporters, child gender, and child age. First, it was evident in the current study that the individual assessing children's social skills (mothers, fathers, or teachers) played a major role in how maternal and paternal warmth were related to these reports of children's social skills. Previous research has measured children's social skills via mother- and/or teacher-report while rarely considering fathers (Chen, Liu, & Li, 2000; McDowell & Parke, 2005; Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1998; Zhou et al., 2002; Zhou et al., 2004). While including mothers' and teachers' assessment of children's social skills, the current study also included fathers' perspectives of their children's social skills. A second theme that emerged is that gender of the child influenced how mothers', fathers', and teachers' assessed the children's social skills. A final unexpected set of results emerged indicating that the child's chronological age was significantly related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills.

It was hypothesized that maternal and paternal warmth, assessed via self-report and observational methods, would be positively related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Mixed support was found for these hypotheses. Analyses revealed that maternal warmth, as reported by mothers, was found to be significantly correlated with mothers' reports of children's social skills but not with fathers' or teachers' reports of children's social skills. These results are consistent with research conducted by Zhou and colleagues (2004). Zhou and colleagues have found that

maternal warmth as rated by mothers was related to mother-ratings, but not teacher-ratings, of first and second grade children's social functioning. No previous research to date has examined maternal warmth and its relation to fathers' reports of children's social skills. Findings from the current study revealed no significant relationship between maternal warmth and fathers' assessment of their children's social skills.

In reference to observational measures, maternal warmth was not related to mother-, father-, or teacher-reports of children's social skills. These findings are counter to our hypotheses and are not consistent with previous research. Zhou and colleagues (2002) found that maternal warmth, measured via observational methods when the child was nine, was positively correlated with social competencies at age 11 as rated by mothers and teachers. Concurrently, maternal warmth, measured via observational measures at age 11, was also positively correlated with mothers', but not teachers', reports of children's social competencies. In addition, McDowell and Parke (2005) found that observational measures of maternal positive affect were correlated with increases in social skills as rated by teachers. Thus, the lack of findings with observational measures used in the current study is perplexing. Since data collection has not been completed, the small sample size is likely to be limiting analytical power. In addition the age of the children in the study may also contribute to the lack of findings. Specifically, prior research has focused on older children and perhaps the range in social skills is more restricted with a younger sample of six to seven year old children

While a handful of studies have investigated how maternal warmth is related to children's social functioning (Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1998; Zhou et al., 2002; Zhou et al., 2004), no studies to date have investigated how fathers' reports of their

warmth are related to mothers', fathers', and teachers', reports of children's social skills. Findings from the current study revealed that fathers' reports of warmth were related to children's social skills as reported by fathers' but not as reported by mothers' and teachers'. It is important to note that the results of paternal warmth relating to fathers' reports of children's social skills parallels research conducted with maternal warmth and its relation to mothers' reports only of children's social skills. This pattern of results indicates that when a parent is independently reporting on their warm parenting style and their child's social skills, significant results are more likely than when one parent is reporting their warm parenting style and the other parent is reporting on the child's social skills level. It is also of interest to note that teachers' reports of social skills were not related to how parents perceive their parenting influences how parents report on the child's social skills. As stated earlier, these findings are exploratory in nature but may allow researchers to begin to question the use and significance of multiple reporters in research studies.

Turning to observational measures of paternal warmth, only one study to date has investigated how observational measures of paternal warmth are concurrently related to children's social skills (McDowell & Parke, 2005). McDowell and Parke (2005) found observational measures of paternal warmth to be related to teacher-ratings of children's social skills. Results from the current study revealed that observational measures of paternal warmth were related to teachers' reports of children's social skills at the level of a trend, but not related to mothers' or fathers' reports of children's social skills. Given the small sample and marginal significance this is a tenuous result but one that deserves further scrutiny with larger samples. Although self-report measures of parental warmth

may not be related to teachers' reports of children's social skills, having an independent coder rate parents' warmth and a teacher rate the child's social skills may be an important addition to research studies. The use of independent reporters who have no familial ties with the participants, allows for a different perspective on the behavior of both the parents and the children.

Now turning to gender of the child, it was hypothesized that maternal and paternal warmth would be more strongly related to mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of girls' social skills than boys' social skills. Research by Russell and Russell (1996) found qualitatively different types of interactions were occurring between parent (mother and father combined)-son and parent (mother and father combined)-daughter dyads. More specifically they found that the emotional aspects of warmth were related to daughters' while the playful aspects of warmth were related to sons'. As stated previously in the methods section, the current study assesses the more emotional aspects of warmth therefore I predicted that this relationship would be stronger for girls than boys. No support was found in the current study to support this hypothesis. Mother's warmth was significantly and positively related to both her sons' and daughters' social skills. Moreover, for fathers, correlations conducted by gender of the child served to wash out the relationship between fathers' warmth and children's social skills. Thus parental warmth does not appear to be differentially related to sons' or daughters' social skills.

The final aim of the current study was to investigate the combined effects of self-report and observational measures of maternal and paternal warmth on mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills. Before investigating the combined effects of parental warmth on children's social skills, it was instructive to first examine

how maternal warmth and paternal warmth independently predicted children's social skills along with controls of child gender and child age. Given the bivariate results pointing to child age and child gender as significant correlates of children's social skills, regression analyses were further conducted to examine how child gender, child age, maternal warmth and paternal warmth (first independently, then combined), and all relevant interactions among these variables predicted mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of children's social skills.

Mothers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

It was hypothesized that self-report and observational measures of maternal and paternal warmth (both independently and combined) would be predictive of mothers' reports of children's social skills. Partial support was found for the current hypothesis. In reference to the independent influence of self-report measures of maternal and paternal warmth, findings revealed that maternal warmth but not paternal warmth along with child gender and the interaction of maternal warmth and child gender were significant predictors of mothers' reports of children's social skills. When investigating the combined effects of parental warmth on mothers' reports of children's social skills, maternal warmth and not paternal warmth was predictive of mothers' reports of children's social skills. No research to date has investigated the unique contribution of maternal and paternal warmth (and not a combined parenting measure) on mothers' reports of children's social skills. Findings from the current study indicate that only maternal warmth mattered when predicting mothers' reports children's social skills. Adding fathers in the regression model did not contribute to the model predicting mothers' reports of children's social skills. In regards to observational measures of both

maternal and paternal warmth, neither was found to be significantly predictive of mothers' reports of children's social skills. Since no previous research has investigated the unique contributions of observational measures of maternal warmth and paternal warmth, it is unclear why results from the current study did not mirror those found with self-report measures of parental warmth. It is possible that use of independent coders has influenced how parental warmth is related to children's social skills.

Fathers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

In reference to fathers' reports of children's social skills, it was hypothesized that self-report and observational measures of maternal warmth and paternal warmth (both independently and combined) would be predictive of increases in fathers' reports of children's social skills. Partial support was found for the current hypothesis.

Referencing Table 6, we notice that maternal warmth (independently of paternal) significantly predicted fathers' reports of children's social skills along with child gender and the interaction of child gender and child age. Furthermore, paternal warmth (independently of maternal warmth) combined with child gender, child age, and the interaction of child gender and child age was also found to be significantly predictive of fathers' reports of children's social skills. Findings in the current study revealed that combined, paternal warmth was significantly predictive of fathers' reports of children's social skills while maternal warmth was predictive at the level of trend. One would expect that adding another parent would increase the variance explained in fathers' reports of children's social skills however this did not occur. Similar to mothers, since no combined effects of parental warmth were found, the perspective the parent has on their level of warmth and their child's social skills appears to have more predictive power.

The lack of findings when using observational measures of parental warmth needs to be investigated further with a larger sample. It is still unclear why observational measures of parental warmth are not influencing fathers' reports of children's social skills.

Another intriguing finding emerged when examining fathers' reports of children's social skills. Unlike mothers', child gender, child age, and the interaction of child gender and child age contributed to the variance explained in fathers' reports of children's social skills. Figure 3 shows that fathers' are reporting that their daughters' social skills increase when they get older and that their sons' social skills decrease or stay the same as they get older. These findings suggest that fathers are assessing their children based on the gender and the developmental level of the child. The measure used to assess social skills in the current study also may have influenced how fathers rated their children. Some of the items may be too difficult for six to seven year old children to complete and fathers have rated children accordingly. For example, some items include "Tries to bring out the best in people" and "Makes suggestions without offending others". These social skills reflect fairly significant abilities that may be beyond the repertoire of a six to seven year old child.

Teachers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

Finally, for teachers' reports of children's social skills, it was hypothesized that self-reports and observational measures of maternal and paternal warmth would be predictive of teachers' reports of children's social skills. This hypothesis was not supported by the current study. Previous research has found that maternal and paternal warmth as rated by children themselves and independent observers has predicted children's social skills as rated by teachers when children were between nine and 14

years old (Chen et al., 2000b, McDowell & Parke, 2005). While these findings were not replicated in the current study, child gender, and the interaction of child gender and child age did significantly predict teachers' reports of children's social skills.

Child gender, child age, and the interaction of child gender and child age emerged again as a significant predictor of teachers' reports of children's social skills. This finding should lead researchers to begin to investigate the importance of the age and gender of the child when assessing children's social skills development. The regression model presented in Table 8 presents that teachers may be rating children on a developmental continuum in comparison to their peers. Similar to items listed on the BASC-PRS, the BASC-TRS uses items that may be more easily completed by children of older ages. They may also be more easily completed by girls than boys. It appears that teachers, similar to fathers, are picking up on the differences in their assessments of children's social skills.

The significance of child age and child gender when assessing children's social skills has emerged as a recurrent theme in the current study. As stated previously, research conducted by Zhou and colleagues (2002, 2004) and McDowell and Parke (2005) have all made a contribution to piecing apart the effects of both self-reports and observational methods of maternal warmth on children's social skills. On the other hand, none of these researchers investigated how child gender and child age may contribute to maternal warmth and its effects on children's social skills. The children in the current study ranged in ages from six to seven and a half years old while previous research has used older children. The current study has found that investigating both child gender and child age is vitally important when examining how parental warmth is related to

mothers', fathers', and teachers' reports of their social skills. While the age range in the current sample only spanned one and a half years, results revealed in the current study may suggest that the developmental stage of life a child is experiencing may influence how these children interact with peers and family. For example, it is likely that the capacity of a seven year old to behave in a socially appropriate manner may be different than the capacity of an eleven year old to behave in a socially appropriate manner. Parents and teachers expectations for how a six year old should be acting socially may again be different than their expectations for an eleven year old.

The current study had a number of limitations. First, since data collection has not been completed, only 65 children were included in the analyses. The use of the full sample of 153 children would increase the statistical power of the results. The use of a bigger sample size would also allow us to better piece apart how warm parenting affects boys and girls social skills separately. A second limitation is the limited variability in self-reports of maternal and paternal warmth. In the current sample, parents were more likely to rate themselves on the high end of the scale while not using the lower end of the scale. This led to the decreased variability in the measure which could have influenced the results presented in the current paper. Finally other aspects of parenting such as laxness, overreactivity, and involvement were not examined in the current study. Future analyses should include an examination of various aspects of parenting and how they relate independently and combined to the development of children's social skills.

Overall, findings from the current study were mixed. In reference to mothers' reports of children's social skills, it was found that maternal warmth as rated by mothers is related to and predictive of mothers' reports of children's social skills. In reference to

fathers' reports of children's social skills, findings revealed that maternal and paternal warmth were related to and predictive of fathers' reports of children's social skills. Finally, in reference to teachers' reports of children's social skills, neither maternal nor paternal warmth was a significant predictor of children's social skills, rather child gender and the interaction of child gender and child age were significantly related to and predictive of teachers' reports of children's social skills. All of these findings lead us to one major question that has not been extensively investigated in previous research; the use of multiple reporters. Future directions should lead researchers to further investigate how and why different people are evaluating the same children in different ways. Previous research has used a variety of methods when measuring both parental warmth and children's social skills and they have found a variety of results. More consistent methods for measuring these constructs in order to more comprehensively understand the relationship between warm parenting and children's social skills may also be warranted.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Main Study Variables (N=65)

Variables	M	SD	Min	Max
Maternal Warmth				
Observational	3.40	.53	2.25	4.38
Self-Report	4.37	.46	3.00	5.00
Paternal Warmth				
Observational	2.84	.75	1.63	4.75
Self-Report	4.33	.39	3.17	4.83
Children's Social Skills				
Maternal Report	53.26	8.02	27	73
Paternal Report	50.86	7.92	31	71
Teacher Report	54.80	9.56	33	77

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Main Study Variables Grouped by Gender

Variables	Boys (n = 29)		Girls (n = 36)		T	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Maternal Warmth						
Observational	3.34	.56	3.45	.51	-.79	.43
Self-Report	4.43	.48	4.32	.45	.88	.38
Paternal Warmth						
Observational	2.74	.66	2.92	.80	-.96	.34
Self-Report	4.36	.39	4.30	.40	.63	.34
Children's Social Skills						
Maternal Report	51.93	7.12	54.42	8.67	-1.23	.23
Paternal Report	50.00	8.21	51.54	7.73	-.77	.45
Teacher Report	52.20	8.27	56.71	10.10	-1.83	.07

Table 3

Correlations Among the Main Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Maternal Warmth SR	--						
2. Maternal Warmth OB	-.06	--					
3. Paternal Warmth SR	.12	.00	--				
4. Paternal Warmth OB	.05	-.08	.22 ⁺	--			
5. Social Skills – MR	.61**	-.06	.12	.15	--		
6. Social Skills – FR	.20	-.11	.26*	.17	.37**	--	
7. Social Skills – TR	.06	.05	.10	.23 ⁺	.13	.37**	
8. Child Age	-.05	.08	-.01	-.10	-.05	.17	.26*

⁺ p< .10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 4

Correlations Among Main Study Variables Grouped by Child Gender

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Boys (n = 29)							
1. Maternal Warmth SR	--						
2. Maternal Warmth OB	-.16	--					
3. Paternal Warmth SR	-.12	.05	--				
4. Paternal Warmth OB	-.00	-.00	.21	--			
5. Social Skills – MR	.52**	-.08	-.05	.27	--		
6. Social Skills – PR	.24	-.21	.26	.31	.61**	--	
7. Social Skills – TR	.37 ⁺	-.13	.16	.14	.37 ⁺	.43*	
8. Child Age	-.03	-.18	.02	-.29	-.25	-.20	-.10
Girls (n=36)							
1. Maternal Warmth SR	--						
2. Maternal Warmth OB	.04	--					
3. Paternal Warmth SR	.32 ⁺	-.02	--				
4. Paternal Warmth OB	.11	-.15	.25	--			
5. Social Skills – MR	.72**	-.07	.28	.05	--		
6. Social Skills – FR	.21	-.05	.28 ⁺	.06	.18	--	
7. Social Skills – TR	-.08	.09	.10	.22	-.05	.30 ⁺	--
8. Child Age	-.04	-.07	-.02	-.02	.05	.53**	.51**

⁺ p< .10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 5

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mother's Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 62)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	3.13 ⁺	1.59	.19 ⁺
Maternal Warmth	10.88***	1.72	.63***
Step 2			
Child Gender	3.12*	1.56	.20*
Maternal Warmth	7.83**	2.39	.45**
Child Gender x Maternal Warmth	6.10 ⁺	3.34	.25 ⁺

Note. $R^2 = .42^{***}$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .03^+$ for Step 2.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 6

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Father's Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 63)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	1.52	2.02	.10
Child Age	5.12	4.03	.16
Maternal Warmth	4.24 ⁺	2.23	.24
Step 2			
Child Gender	-168.23***	51.65	-10.64**
Child Age	-5.87	5.01	-.19
Maternal Warmth	4.30*	2.06	.24*
Child Gender x Child Age	24.66**	7.49	10.82**

Note. $R^2 = .09$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .14^{**}$ for Step 2.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 7

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Father's Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 63)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	1.40	2.00	.09
Child Age	4.83	3.99	.15
Paternal Warmth	5.40*	2.48	.27
Step 2			
Child Gender	-169.66**	51.03	-10.73**
Child Age	-6.25	4.95	-.20
Paternal Warmth	5.54*	2.29	.28*
Child Gender x Child Age	24.84**	7.40	10.90**

Note. $R^2 = .10^+$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .15^*$ for Step 2.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 8

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Teachers' Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 59)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	4.12 ⁺	2.42	.22 ⁺
Child Age	10.47 ⁺	5.49	.24 ⁺
Step 2			
Child Gender	-197**	71.53	-10.32**
Child Age	-3.48	7.16	-.08
Child Gender x Child Age	29.26**	10.36	10.57**

Note. $R^2 = .11^*$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .11^{**}$ for Step 2.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 9

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 62)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	2.49	2.03	.17
Step 2			
Child Gender	3.17 ⁺	1.60	.20 ⁺
Maternal Warmth	10.76***	1.75	.62***
Paternal Warmth	1.07	2.21	.05
Step 3			
Child Gender	3.13 ⁺	1.57	.20 ⁺
Maternal Warmth	7.84**	2.41	.45***
Paternal Warmth	.53	2.20	.02
Child Gender x Maternal Warmth	5.99 ⁺	3.45	.24 ⁺

Note. $R^2 = .02$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .40***$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .03^+$ for Step 3.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 10

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Fathers' Reports of Children's Social Skills (N = 63)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Child Gender	1.05	2.05	.07
Child Age	4.86	4.11	.15
Step 2			
Child Gender	1.74	1.98	.11
Child Age	5.05	3.94	.16
Maternal Warmth	3.52	2.21	.20
Paternal Warmth	4.73 ⁺	2.49	.24 ⁺
Step 3			
Child Gender	-169.84**	50.15	-10.74**
Child Age	-6.06	4.86	-.19
Maternal Warmth	3.56 ⁺	2.03	.20 ⁺
Paternal Warmth	4.86**	2.28	.24**
Child Gender x Child Age	24.92**	7.28	10.94**

Note. $R^2 = .03$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .11^*$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .15^{**}$ for Step 3.

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1.

Proposed Relationship between Maternal Warmth, Paternal Warmth and Boys' and Girls' Social Skills

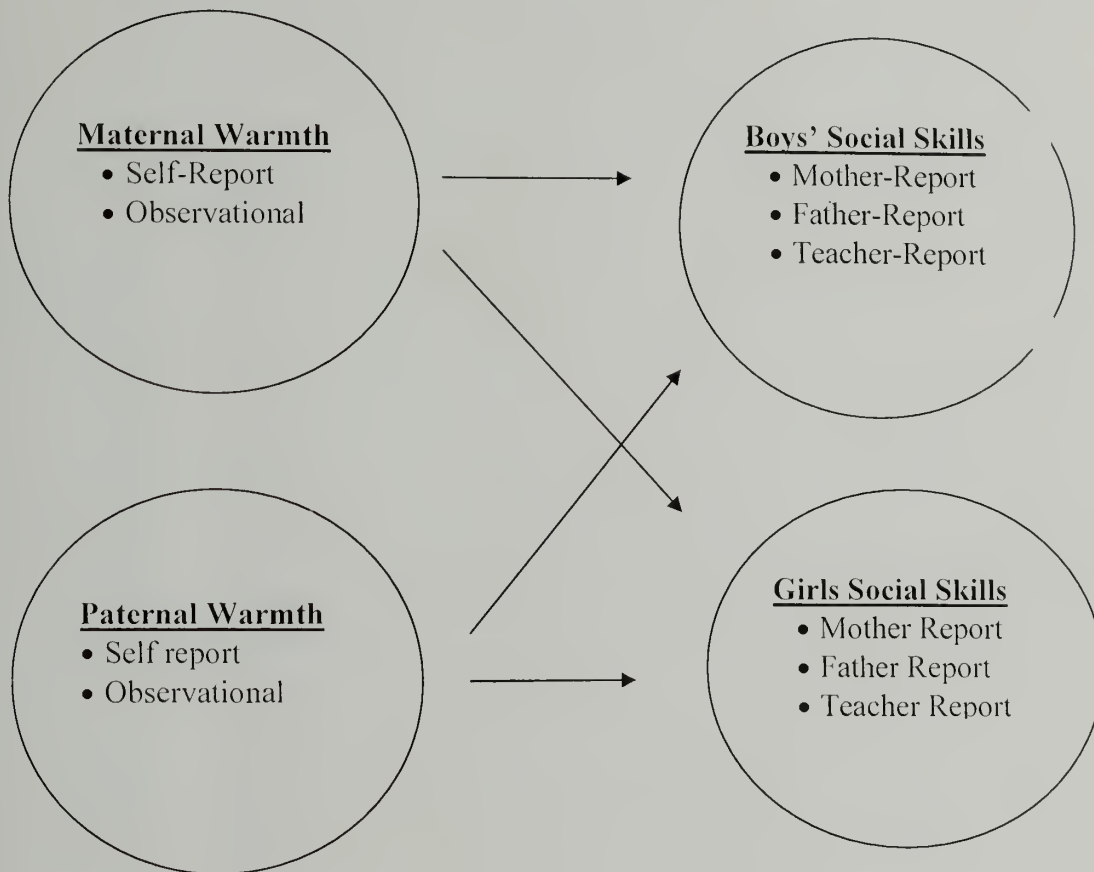


Figure 2

Interaction of Child Gender and Maternal Warmth in Mothers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

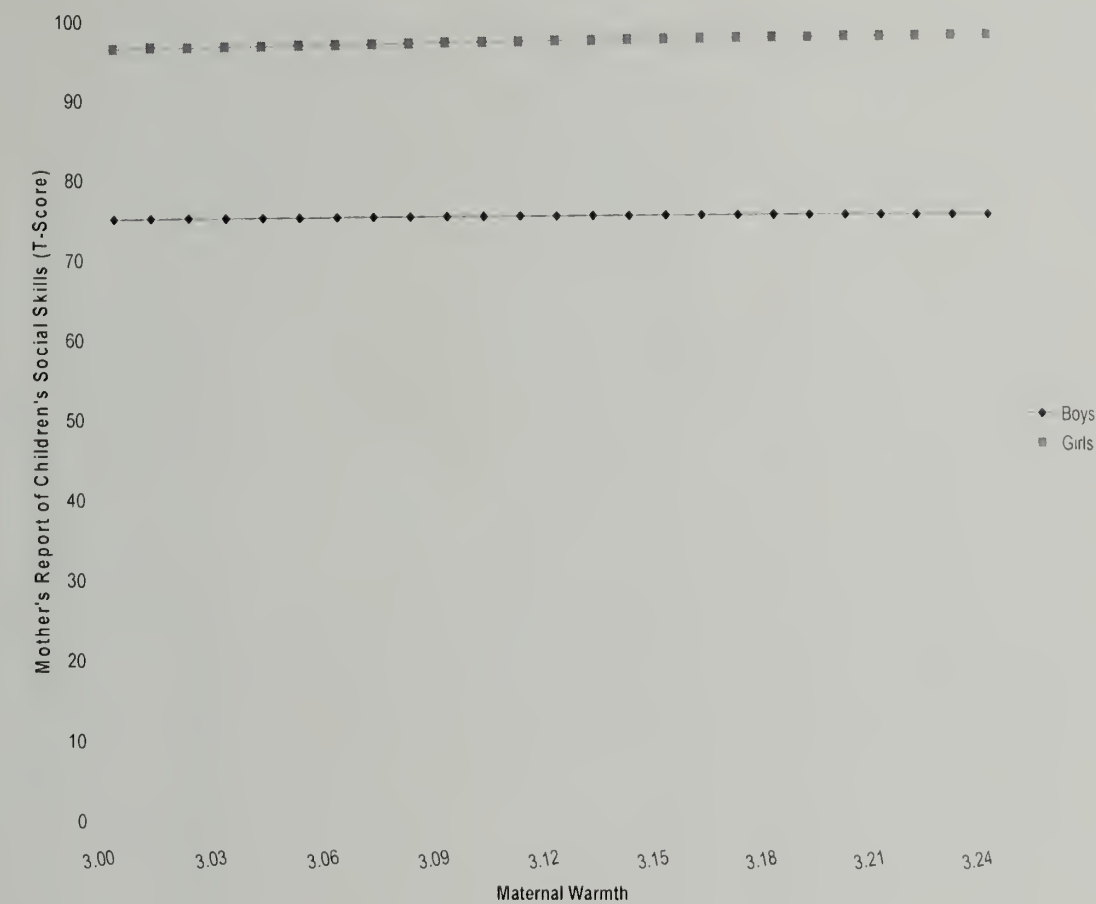


Figure 3
Interaction of Child Gender and Child Age in Fathers' Reports of Children's Social Skills

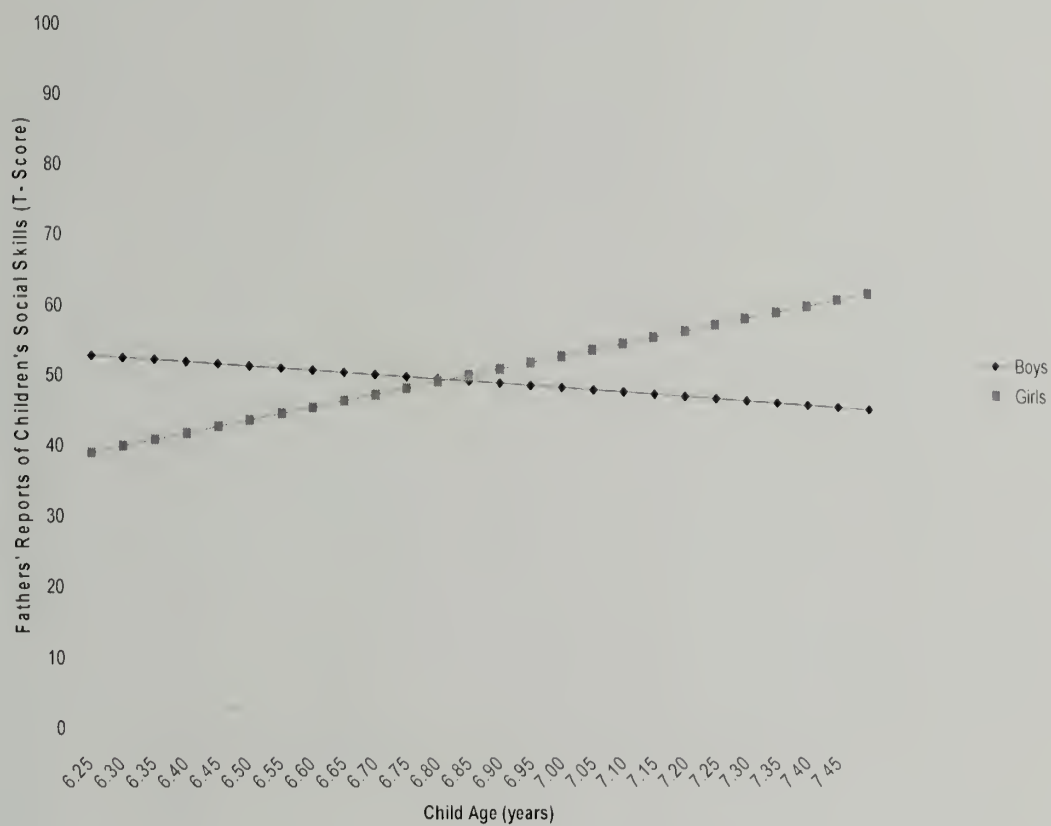
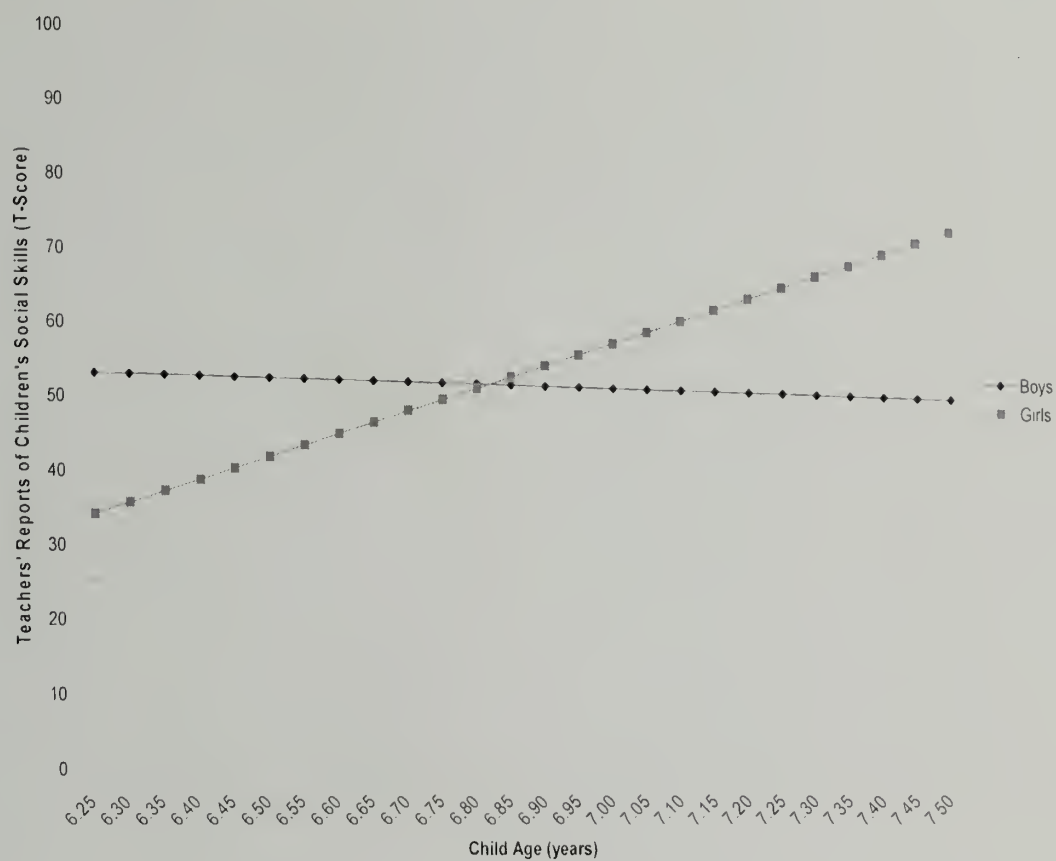


Figure 4.

Interaction of Child Gender and Child Age in Teachers' Reports of Children's Social Skills



APPENDIX A

ALABAMA PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE--PARENT FORM

Instructions: The following are a number of statements about your family. Using the following scale, please rate each item as to how often it TYPICALLY occurs in your home.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Always

1. You have a friendly talk with your child	1	2	3	4	5
2. You let your child know when he/she is doing a good job with something	1	2	3	4	5
3. You volunteer to help with special activities that your child is involved in (such as sports, boy/girl scouts, church youth groups)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Your reward or give something extra to your child for obeying you or behaving well.	1	2	3	4	5
5. You play games or do other fun things with your child.	1	2	3	4	5
6. You ask your child about his/her day in school.	1	2	3	4	5
7. You help your child with his/her homework.	1	2	3	4	5
8. You compliment your child when he/she does something well.	1	2	3	4	5
9. You ask your child what his/her plans are for the coming day.	1	2	3	4	5
10. You drive your child to a special activity.	1	2	3	4	5
11. You praise your child if he/she behaves well.	1	2	3	4	5
12. You hug or kiss your child when he/she has done something well.	1	2	3	4	5
13. You talk to your child about his/her friends.	1	2	3	4	5

14. Your child helps plan family activities.	1	2	3	4	5
15. You attend PTA meetings, parent/teacher conferences, or other meetings at your child's school.	1	2	3	4	5
16. You tell your child that you like it when he/she helps out around the house.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL GLOBAL RATINGS

II. Global Code: Etch-A-Sketch, Shape, and River Crossing Tasks

***Only code parent's behavior directed towards the target child

A. Warmth

Warmth is the extent to which the parent is positively attentive to the child, displays enthusiasm toward and approval of the child uses praise, body language, encouragement, and terms of endearment, conveys affection, is supportive, available, open and positive, and is cheerful in mood and tone of voice. It is when the parent is conveying interest, joy, enthusiasm, warmth, acceptance, and cheerfulness in interactions with the child.

A parent scoring high on this scale expresses positive regard and emotional support to the child. S/he should show general involvement in the interaction and affirm the child as a person. A parent scoring low on this scale fails to provide supportive cues; s/he might be passive, uninvolved, aloof, or otherwise unavailable to the child. Such a parent also might give observers the impression that s/he is more concerned about her/his own adequacy and task performance rather than concerned about the child's emotional needs. Be sure that verbal content (You are doing a great job) is not contradicted by nonverbal content (saying you are doing a great job in a condescending manner). High warmth includes:

- pay attention to the child when the child talks (eye contact, body posture)
- be engaged in the interaction; appear to enjoy interacting with the child
- affirm the child as a person (validating choice or plan to execute etch-a-sketch or game; "That's a good idea!")
- have a positive tone of voice
- give criticism in a constructive not destructive way
- enhance child's self-esteem

Low warmth scores

- show some scolding of the child
- show disapproval of the child
- appear distant and removed from the child
- not return child's positive affect or initiation of pro social behavior
- have a mismatch between positive affect and tone of voice (i.e. cynical remarks)

|-----|-----|-----|-----|
1 2 3 4 5

***When coding warmth consider both the frequency (how often it occurs) as well as the intensity of the behavior. For example, "You are doing an excellent job" is a higher intensity statement than "Good job."**

1. Complete absence of warmth. The parent expressed no signs of warmth and was not supportive towards the child. The parent was unavailable, neutral, or negative.
2. Parent shows some signs of warmth but they are sporadic and poorly timed to the child's needs. Consistency of warmth is uneven and therefore may send the child mix messages.
3. Moderate warmth. The parent demonstrated several instance of warmth throughout the interaction. The parent's warmth may be expressed through attending to the child's needs, participating in the interaction, and positive tone of voice/praise (Such as "good job"). A parent who is moderately warm seems genuinely interested in interacting with the child throughout the interaction; helping the child with the task, making suggestions; praising the child. As long as the parent shows genuine interest, he or she does not have to show overt displays of affection in order to be coded moderately warm. A parent who shows genuine interest and displays of affection would score higher on the warmth scale. There is inconsistency in how the parent shows warmth to the child. This parent may be unavailable periodically during the interaction with the child.
4. Parent establishes her/himself as supportive and affirming toward the child and continues to show signs of warmth and supportiveness throughout the interaction when the child needs it. When the child seems somewhat insecure or withdrawn the parent's warmth increases to accommodate. The parent may try to use more words of encouragement at this time. The parent shows sporadic periods of inconsistency during the interaction.
5. High level of warmth. The parent skillfully provides support through the interaction. S/he sets up the situation from the beginning as one in which s/he is confident of the child as a person and the child's ideas and opinions. The parent expressed a high level of warmth throughout the entire interaction. The parent's warmth may be expressed through both verbal expressions ("You are doing an excellent job, I am very proud of you"), positive tone of voice, and physical affection. The parent clearly shows interest, affection, positively attends to child, laughs, or uses an excited tone, etc., throughout most of the interaction. The parent also clearly seems to enjoy the interaction with the child and clearly affirms the child's ideas and the child as a person.

APPENDIX C

BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT SCALE FOR CHILDREN - PARENT

On both sides of this form are phrases that describe how children may act. Please read each phrase and mark the response that describes how this child has acted over the last **six months**. If the child's behavior has changed a great deal during this period, describe the child's recent behavior.

Circle **N** if the behavior **never** occurs.

Circle **S** if the behavior **sometimes** occurs.

Circle **O** if the behavior **often** occurs.

Circle **A** if the behavior **almost always** occurs.

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Adjusts well to new teacher. | N S O A |
| 2. Threatens to hurt others. | N S O A |
| 3. Worries. | N S O A |
| 4. Listens to directions. | N S O A |
| 5. Rocks back and forth for long periods of time. | N S O A |
| 6. Runs away from home. | N S O A |
| 7. Says, "I don't have any friends." | N S O A |
| 8. Cannot wait to take turn. | N S O A |
| 9. Attends after-school activities. | N S O A |
| 10. Says, "please" and "thank you". | N S O A |
| 11. Complains of shortness of breath. | N S O A |
| 12. Readily starts up conversations with new people. | N S O A |
| 13. Plays with fire. | N S O A |
| 14. "Shows off". | N S O A |
| 15. Is too serious. | N S O A |
| 16. Wets bed. | N S O A |
| 17. Tries to hurt self. | N S O A |
| 18. Has friends who are in trouble. | N S O A |
| 19. Says, "I want to kill myself." | N S O A |
| 20. Leaves seat during meals. | N S O A |
| 21. Joins clubs or social groups. | N S O A |
| 22. Encourages other to do their best. | N S O A |
| 23. Complains of dizziness. | N S O A |
| 24. Will change direction to avoid having to greet someone. | N S O A |
| 25. Dares other children to do things. | N S O A |
| 26. Stutters. | N S O A |
| 27. Says, "I'm afraid I'll hurt someone." | N S O A |
| 28. Is in trouble with the police. | N S O A |
| 29. Cries easily. | N S O A |
| 30. Throws tantrums. | N S O A |

31. Uses medication.	N S O A
32. Congratulates others when good things happen to them.	N S O A
33. Complains of being cold.	N S O A
34. Hits other children.	N S O A
35. Has eye trouble.	N S O A
36. Is easily soothed when angry.	N S O A
37. Teases others.	N S O A
38. Worries about what parents think.	N S O A
39. Forgets things.	N S O A
40. Repeats one activity over and over.	N S O A
41. Uses foul language.	N S O A
42. Says, "Nobody understands me."	N S O A
43. Needs too much supervision.	N S O A
44. Is a "self-starter"	N S O A
45. Has a sense of humor.	N S O A
46. Complains of pain.	N S O A
47. Avoids competing with other children	N S O A
48. Gets upset when plans are changed.	N S O A
49. Argues with parents.	N S O A
50. Says, "I get nervous during tests" or "Tests make me nervous."	N S O A
51. Is easily distracted.	N S O A
52. Picks at things like own hair, nails or clothing.	N S O A
53. Shows a lack of concern for others' feelings	N S O A
54. Is easily frustrated.	N S O A
55. Is restless during movies.	N S O A
56. Has lots of ideas.	N S O A
57. Volunteers to help with things.	N S O A
58. Vomits.	N S O A
59. Is shy with other children.	N S O A
60. Is a "sore loser".	N S O A
61. Tries too hard to please others.	N S O A
62. Daydreams.	N S O A
63. Has to stay after school for punishment.	N S O A
64. Is easily upset.	N S O A
65. Fiddles with things while at meals.	N S O A
66. Is good at getting people to work together.	N S O A
67. Uses appropriate table manners.	N S O A
68. Has ear infections.	N S O A
69. Has toileting accidents.	N S O A
70. Makes frequent visits to the doctor.	N S O A
71. Adjusts well to changes in routine.	N S O A
72. Is critical of others.	N S O A
73. Is afraid of dying.	N S O A

74. Gives up easily when learning something new.	N S O A
75. Seems out of touch with reality.	N S O A
76. Lies to get out of trouble.	N S O A
77. Complains about not having friends.	N S O A
78. Interrupts others when they are speaking.	N S O A
79. Is creative.	N S O A
80. Makes suggestions without offending others.	N S O A
81. Has headaches.	N S O A
82. Refuses to join group activities.	N S O A
83. Shares toys or possessions with other children.	N S O A
84. Complains about rules.	N S O A
85. Worries about things that cannot be changed.	N S O A
86. Completes homework from start to finish without taking a break	N S O A
87. Eats things that are not food	N S O A
88. Gets into trouble in the neighborhood.	N S O A
89. Changes mood quickly.	N S O A
90. Is overly active.	N S O A
91. Gives good suggestions for solving problems.	N S O A
92. Politely asks for help.	N S O A
93. Has allergic reactions.	N S O A
94. Shows fear of strangers.	N S O A
95. Breaks other children's things.	N S O A
96. Worries about what teachers think.	N S O A
97. Complains about being unable to block out unwanted thoughts.	N S O A
98. Gets in trouble.	N S O A
99. Says, "I want to die" or "I wish I was dead."	N S O A
100. Has seizures.	N S O A
101. Is usually chosen as a leader.	N S O A
102. Complements others.	N S O A
103. Gets sick.	N S O A
104. Begins conversations appropriately.	N S O A
105. Is a "good sport".	N S O A
106. Calls other children names.	N S O A
107. Says, "I am afraid I will make a mistake."	N S O A
108. Completes work on time.	N S O A
109. Plays in toilet.	N S O A
110. Has been suspended from school.	N S O A
111. Says "Nobody likes me."	N S O A
112. Makes loud noises when playing.	N S O A
113. Will speak up if situation calls for it.	N S O A
114. Responds when spoken to.	N S O A
115. Has difficulty breathing.	N S O A
116. Avoids other children.	N S O A
117. Adjusts well to changes in family plans.	N S O A

118. Argues when denied own way.	N	S	O	A
119. Says, "I'm not very good at this."	N	S	O	A
120. Listens attentively.	N	S	O	A
121. Hears sounds that are not there.	N	S	O	A
122. Lies.	N	S	O	A
123. Is sad.	N	S	O	A
124. Climbs on things.	N	S	O	A
125. Makes decisions easily.	N	S	O	A
126. Tries to bring out the best in people.	N	S	O	A
127. Complains of heart beating too fast.	N	S	O	A
128. Clings to parent in strange surroundings	N	S	O	A
129. Is cruel to animals.	N	S	O	A
130. Worries about schoolwork.	N	S	O	A
131. Sees things that are not there.	N	S	O	A
132. Sleeps with parents.	N	S	O	A
133. Says, "I'm so ugly."	N	S	O	A
134. Has hearing problem.	N	S	O	A
135. Is energetic.	N	S	O	A
136. Shows interest in others' ideas.	N	S	O	A
137. Has stomach problems.	N	S	O	A
138. Offers help to other children.	N	S	O	A

APPENDIX D

BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT SCALE FOR CHILDREN – TEACHER

On both sides of this form are phrases that describe how children may act. Please read each phrase and mark the response that describes how this child has acted over the last **six months**. If the child's behavior has changed a great deal during this period, describe the child's recent behavior.

Circle **N** if the behavior **never** occurs.

Circle **S** if the behavior **sometimes** occurs.

Circle **O** if the behavior **often** occurs.

Circle **A** if the behavior **almost always** occurs.

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Adjusts well to new teachers | N S O A |
| 2. Argues when denied own way | N S O A |
| 3. Bites nails | N S O A |
| 4. Gives up easily when learning something new | N S O A |
| 5. Stares blankly | N S O A |
| 6. Shows a lack of concern for others' feelings | N S O A |
| 7. Stays disappointed a long time if favorite activity is cancelled | N S O A |
| 8. Rushes through assigned work | N S O A |
| 9. Attends after-school activities | N S O A |
| 10. Does not complete tests | N S O A |
| 11. Volunteers to help with things | N S O A |
| 12. Complains of being cold | N S O A |
| 13. Reads assigned chapters | N S O A |
| 14. Refuses to talk | N S O A |
| 15. Has toileting accidents | N S O A |
| 16. Threatens to hurt others | N S O A |
| 17. Worries about things that cannot be changed | N S O A |
| 18. Is easily distracted from classwork | N S O A |
| 19. Tries to hurt self | N S O A |
| 20. Skips classes at school | N S O A |
| 21. Says, "I don't have any friends." | N S O A |
| 22. Bothers other children when they are working. | N S O A |
| 23. Is creative. | N S O A |
| 24. Makes careless errors | N S O A |
| 25. Says, "please" and "thank you" | N S O A |
| 26. Complains of shortness of breath | N S O A |
| 27. Studies with other students | N S O A |
| 28. Avoids competing with other children | N S O A |
| 29. Blames others | N S O A |

30. Sees things that are not there	N S O A
31. Cheats in school	N S O A
32. Complains about being teased	N S O A
33. Talks too loud	N S O A
34. Bullies others	N S O A
35. Seeks attention while doing schoolwork	N S O A
36. Encourages others to do their best	N S O A
37. Analyzes the nature of a problem before trying to solve it	N S O A
38. Is stubborn	N S O A
39. Breaks other children's things	N S O A
40. Is nervous	N S O A
41. Does not pay attention to lectures	N S O A
42. Eats things that are not food	N S O A
43. Has to stay after school for punishment	N S O A
44. Changes moods quickly	N S O A
45. Taps foot or pencil	N S O A
46. Has lots of ideas	N S O A
47. Says that textbooks are hard to understand	N S O A
48. Has a sense of humor.	N S O A
49. Complains about health.	N S O A
50. Does extra credit.	N S O A
51. Plays alone.	N S O A
52. Stutters.	N S O A
53. Talks back to teachers.	N S O A
54. Says, "I'm afraid I will make a mistake.	N S O A
55. Has a short attention span.	N S O A
56. Seems out of touch with reality.	N S O A
57. Steals at school.	N S O A
58. Says, "Nobody likes me."	N S O A
59. Acts without thinking.	N S O A
60. Makes decisions easily.	N S O A
61. Gets failing school grades.	N S O A
62. Compliments others.	N S O A
63. Complains of being hot.	N S O A
64. Works hard, even in courses he or she does not like	N S O A
65. Avoids other children.	N S O A
66. Orders others around.	N S O A
67. Plays in toilet.	N S O A
68. Complains about police or other law enforcement officers.	N S O A
69. Says, "Nobody understands me."	N S O A
70. Calls out in class.	N S O A
71. Is critical of others.	N S O A
72. Uses medication.	N S O A

73. Tries to bring out the best in other people.	N S O A
74. Appears confident before tests.	N S O A
75. Adjusts well to changes in routine.	N S O A
76. Calls other children names.	N S O A
77. Is fearful.	N S O A
78. Has trouble concentrating.	N S O A
79. Complains about being unable to block out unwanted thoughts.	N S O A
80. Is truant.	N S O A
81. Cries easily.	N S O A
82. Interrupts others when they are speaking.	N S O A
83. Gives good suggestions for solving problems.	N S O A
84. Has spelling problems.	N S O A
85. Politely asks for help.	N S O A
86. Complains of pain.	N S O A
87. Reads.	N S O A
88. Is chosen last by other children for games.	N S O A
89. Seems to take setbacks in stride.	N S O A
90. Shows off.	N S O A
91. Expresses self-doubt before tests.	N S O A
92. Listens attentively.	N S O A
93. Chews clothing or blankets.	N S O A
94. Uses foul language.	N S O A
95. Is easily upset.	N S O A
96. Makes loud noises when playing.	N S O A
97. Is good at getting people to work together.	N S O A
98. Has problems with mathematics.	N S O A
99. Congratulates others when good things happen to them.	N S O A
100. Gets sick.	N S O A
101. Completes homework.	N S O A
102. Has trouble making new friends.	N S O A
103. Teases others.	N S O A
104. Repeats one thought over and over.	N S O A
105. Has reading problems.	N S O A
106. Has seizures.	N S O A
107. Hurries through assignments.	N S O A
108. Throws tantrums.	N S O A
109. Sings or hums to self.	N S O A
110. Makes suggestions without offending others	N S O A
111. Asks to make up missed assignments.	N S O A
112. Is a "good sport".	N S O A
113. Complains about rules.	N S O A
114. Gets ill before a major school test.	N S O A
115. Forgets things.	N S O A

116. Hears sounds that are not there.	N S O A
117. Has been suspended from school.	N S O A
118. Is sad	N S O A
119. Acts silly	N S O A
120. Works well under pressure	N S O A
121. Has poor handwriting or printing	N S O A
122. Admits mistakes	N S O A
123. Has headaches	N S O A
124. Has good study habits	N S O A
125. Is shy with adults	N S O A
126. Has trouble shifting gears from one task to another	N S O A
127. Hits other children	N S O A
128. Says, "I'm not very good at this."	N S O A
129. Listens to directions	N S O A
130. Babbles to self	N S O A
131. Has friends who are in trouble	N S O A
132. Says, "I want to die." or "I wish I were dead."	N S O A
133. Is overly active	N S O A
134. Joins clubs or social organizations	N S O A
135. Completes assignments incorrectly because of not following directions.	N S O A
136. Offers to help other children	N S O A
137. Has fevers	N S O A
138. Uses the school library	N S O A
139. Refuses to join group activities	N S O A
140. Is a "sore loser"	N S O A
141. Has strange ideas	N S O A
142. Has eye problems	N S O A
143. Has a hearing problem	N S O A
144. Cannot wait to take turn	N S O A
145. Is usually chosen as a leader	N S O A
146. Rocks back and forth for long periods of time	N S O A
147. Shows interest in others' ideas	N S O A
148. Is well organized	N S O A

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