

FAMILY AND SCHOOL INFLUENCES ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH: THE ROLE OF YOUTH HOPEFULNESS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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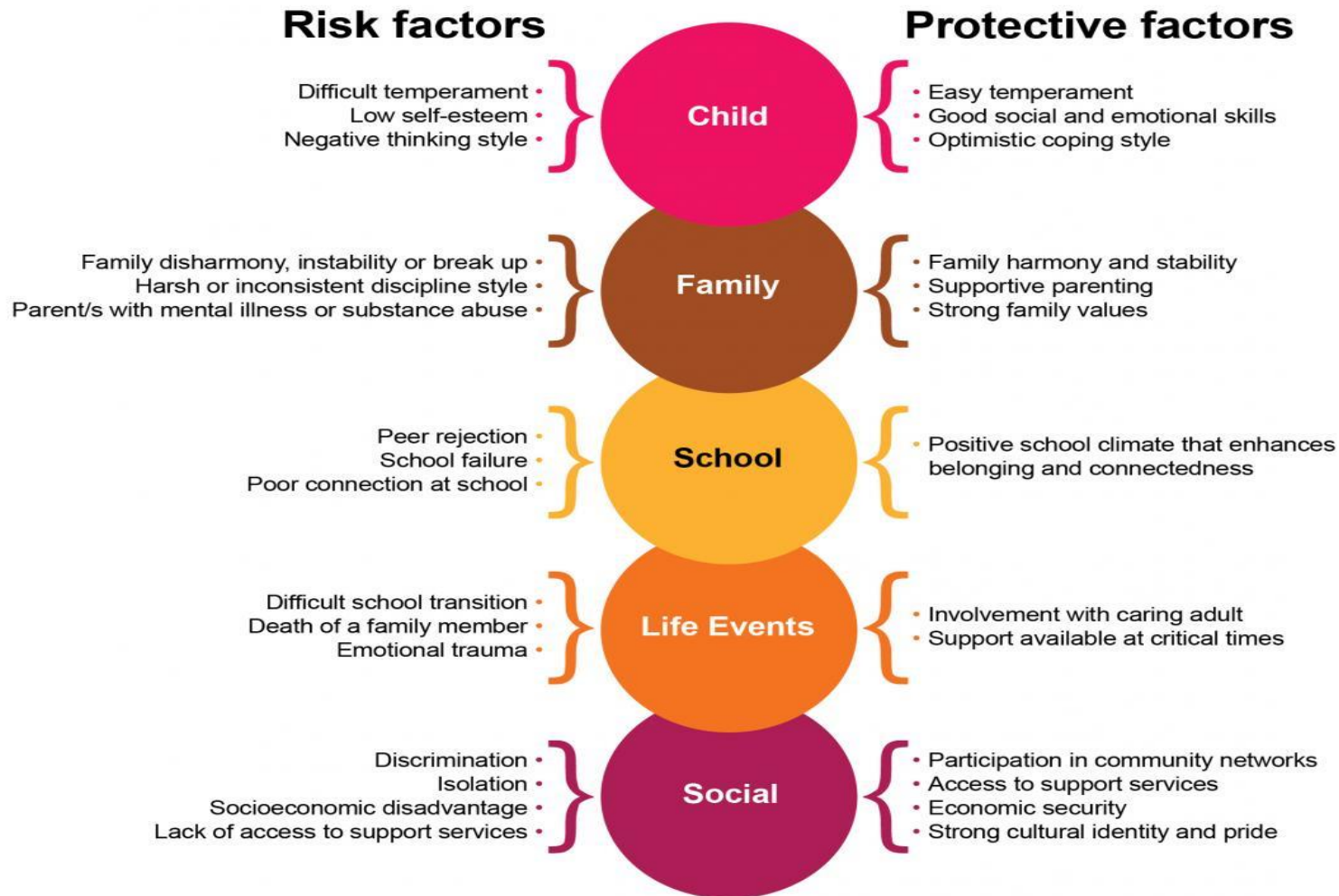
Educational Foundations, Leadership & Policy



Risk and Resilience Framework



- » Risk factors
 - » Individual or environmental factors within the youth's socialization context that potentially increases the likelihood of unfavorable developmental outcomes
- » Protective factors
 - » individual or environmental safeguards that shield youth from risk agents by fostering positive outcomes or reducing the likelihood of negative outcomes
 - » Three general classes of protective factors have been identified in literature: individual attributes, family support, and external support



Risk and Protective Factors for this Study

Risk

- » Students' perceptions of the family & school environment:
 - » Low parental academic support
 - » Low parental educational aspirations for child
 - » Negative perceptions of school climate
 - » Low school connectedness

Protection

- » Students' beliefs and aspirations
 - » High hopefulness
 - » High educational aspirations



Hopefulness

“The perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals, and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways” (Snyder, 2002, p. 249)

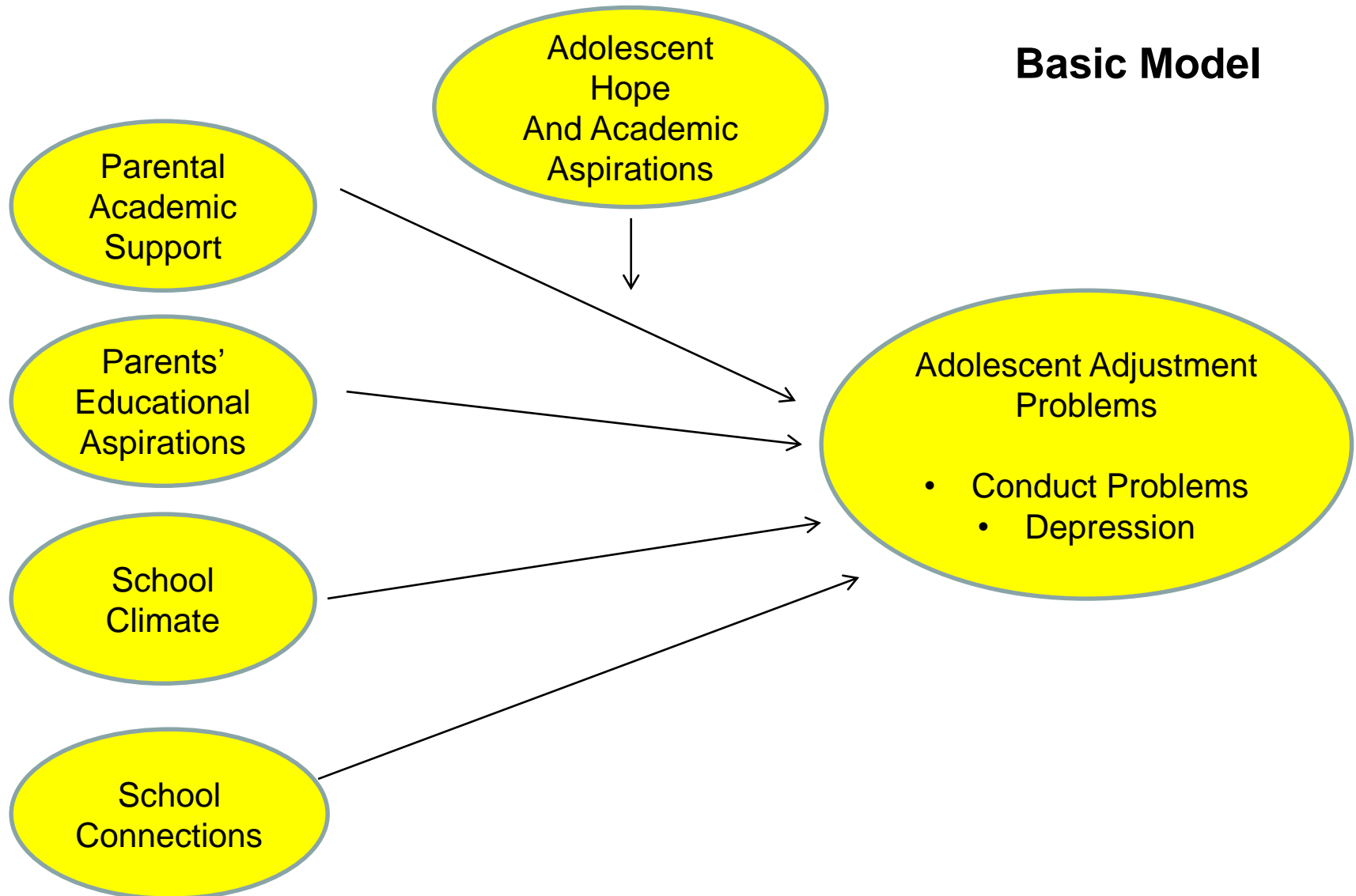
Hopefulness and Academic Aspirations

- » Hopefulness is related to a variety of outcomes in adults and children
 - » Perceived competence
 - » High self-esteem
 - » Academic achievement
 - » Depression
 - » Social competence
 - » Lower drop-out rates among hopefuls
 - » Athletic performance
- » Youth academic aspirations
 - » *Nothing to lose* hypothesis

Research Objectives

- » Examine the influence of family and school context variables conduct problems and depression
 - » Parental academic support
 - » Parents' educational aspirations for their child
 - » School climate
 - » School connectedness
- » Determine whether adolescents' hopefulness and academic aspirations reduce the risk for conduct problems and depression when youth perceive the family and school context as unsupportive

Basic Model



Research Objective 1

- » Examine the influence of the family and school context on conduct problems and depression.
 - » Parental academic support
 - » Parents' educational aspirations for their child
 - » School climate
 - » School connectedness

Risk Factors	Total Sample	Boys	Girls	Minority Youth	Whites
Conduct Problems					
Low Parental Academic Support					
Low Parental Aspirations					
Negative Views of School Climate	X	X			X
Low School Connectedness	X	X			
Depression					
Low Parental Academic Support		*			
Low Parental Aspirations	X			X	
Negative Views of School Climate					
Low School Connectedness	X	X	X	X	X

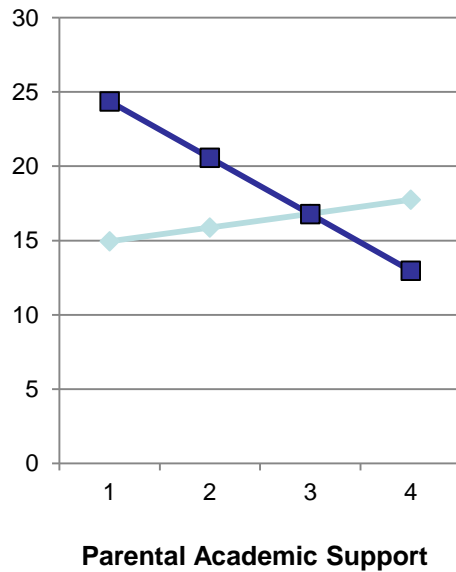
* High academic support was a risk factor for depression among boys.

Research Objective 2

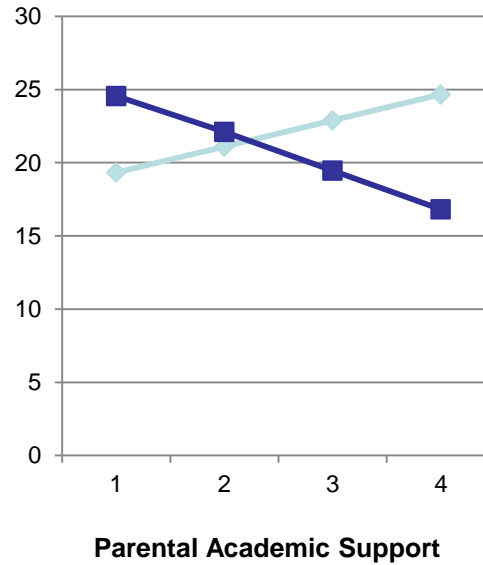
- » Determine whether adolescents' hopefulness and academic aspirations serve as protective factors in the development of conduct problems and depression when youth perceive the family and school context as unsupportive

Students' Academic Aspirations

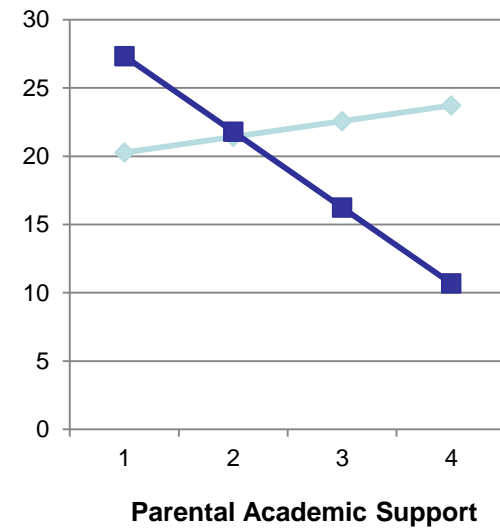
1a: Total Sample – Conduct Problems



1b: Males – Conduct Problems



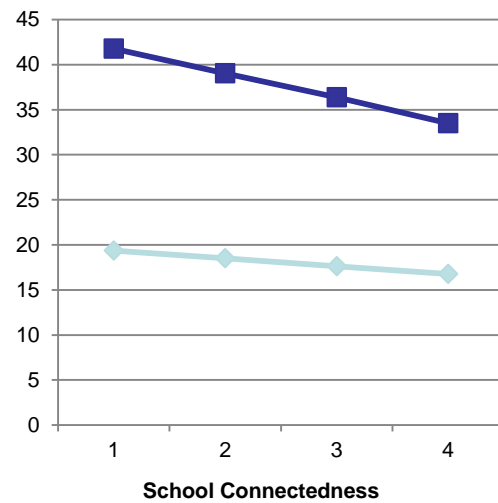
1c: Caucasian – Conduct Problems



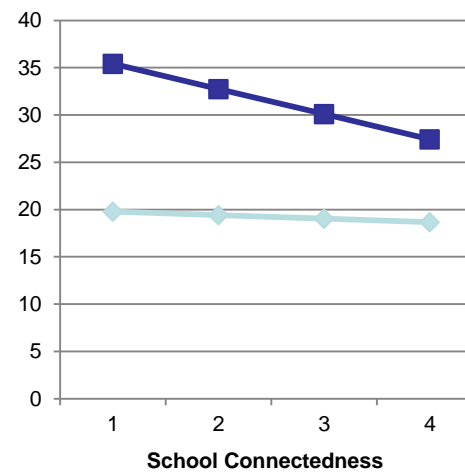
■ = low personal academic aspirations
◆ = high personal academic aspirations

Hopefulness

2b: Females – Depression



2c: All other Races - Depression



■ = low hope
◆ = high hope

Conclusions

- » Supportive educational environments have far-reaching impact on youth that extend beyond scholastic performance to their behavioral and emotional well-being.
- » Parental academic support is particularly beneficial to student with low academic aspirations, particularly as a deterrent to conduct problems.
- » School connectedness is a particularly significant influence in the lives of teenagers, with impacts across gender and racial groups and two indicators of mental health.
- » Youth hopefulness and academic aspirations play a significant role in associations between youths' perceptions of the family/school context and their psychological well-being.
- » Adolescents perceptions of the family/school context and their beliefs about the future have different meanings for female and male students and for students of different racial backgrounds.

School-Based Hope-Enhancing Techniques

Hopefulness in teenagers can be enhanced through the efforts of teachers and school counselors

- » Helping students set goals in whatever form they take (e.g., feeling happier, making new friends, deciding whether or not to go to college)
- » Helping students identify goals that are important to them (vs. important to others)
- » Teaching students how to set clear markers for identified goals
- » Helping students identify various routes to a desired goal
- » Helping students to break down broad goals into more manageable subgoals.