

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: ADOLESCENT SECURE-BASE USE AND PARENTAL  
SECURE-BASE SUPPORT: RELATIONS WITH  
ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT SECURITY

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Degree and year: Master of Arts, 2003

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The goal of this investigation was to examine whether adolescent (AAI) attachment security could be linked to adolescents' secure-base use and parents' secure-base support while discussing the adolescent's developmentally salient task of leaving home after finishing high school. Results indicated that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use their mothers and their fathers as secure bases. Results also indicated that fathers of secure adolescents were more likely than fathers of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior. There was no evidence, however, that mothers of insecure adolescents differed from mothers of secure adolescents in their amounts of secure-base support. Results also indicated that dyadic open communication was greatest in secure adolescent-mother and secure adolescent-father discussions. Secure adolescents were also more likely than insecure

adolescents to use at least one parent as a secure-base and to have open dyadic communication with at least one parent.

ADOLESCENT SECURE-BASE USE AND PARENTAL SECURE-BASE  
SUPPORT: RELATIONS WITH ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT SECURITY

by

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Arts  
2003

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Adolescent Secure-Base Use and Parental Secure-Base Support:  
Relations with Adolescent Attachment Security

A central tenet of attachment theory is that security of attachment is reflected in secure-base behavior (Bowlby, 1982, 1973; Bretherton, 1985; Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). Through repeated daily experience, secure individuals learn that their attachment figures are accessible, available, and responsive when needed. They develop mental representations (i.e., representational models) of their attachment figures as providers of secure-base support and, as a result, the capacity to use their attachment figures as secure bases from which to explore and, when necessary, as havens of safety to which to return. Insecure individuals, on the other hand, have experienced their attachment figures as inaccessible, unavailable, and unresponsive when needed. These individuals develop negative representational models of their attachment figures as infrequent or inconsistent providers of secure base support and, as a result, have more difficulty than secure individuals in using their attachment figures either as secure bases or as safe havens when needed.

Despite the importance of Bowlby's (1982) claim that secure-base behavior characterizes security of attachment throughout the course of development, relatively little is known about the normative developmental course of secure-base use and parental secure-base support beyond childhood (Waters & Cummings, 2000). The nature of secure-base use and parental secure-base support, for example, has not yet been studied in adolescent-parent relationships. This lack of study is surprising considering that adolescence presents an interesting set of challenges for the secure-base phenomenon (Marvin & Britner, 1999). Adolescence is considered a major

transitional period in attachment development. During adolescence, individuals begin to desire a tremendous amount of autonomy from their principal attachment figures (i.e., their parents; Allen & Land, 1999). Attachment theorists also claim that during this period, the representational structure of attachment begins to change through a process in which different secure-base representations with each parent are consolidated into a single overarching attachment organization (Allen & Land, 1999). Although this new attachment organization, often referred to as one's "state of mind with regard to attachment" (Main & Goldwyn, in press), is hypothesized to influence all current and future secure-base behavior with current and future attachment figures (Waters & Cummings, 2000), there is little empirical evidence demonstrating a link between adolescents' attachment organizations and their abilities to use their parents as secure bases. There is also little empirical evidence demonstrating a link between adolescents' attachment organizations and their parents' abilities to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior. As a result, the principal goal of this investigation is to examine whether adolescent attachment organization (i.e., adolescent attachment security) can be linked to adolescents' abilities to use their parents as secure bases and their parents' abilities to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior.

Adolescent research and attachment theory both lend support to the idea that the nature of adolescent secure-base use should be revealed through behavior demonstrating a healthy balance between establishing autonomy and maintaining emotional connectedness (i.e., relatedness) to one's parent (Allen & Land, 1999; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986; Hill & Holmbeck, 1986). For example, Cooper and Cooper's model of healthy adolescent-parent relationships has at its core "the proposition that central to all



relationships is the transactive interplay of individuality and relational development” (1992, p. 141). This concept is remarkably similar to a concept in attachment theory that security is associated with the capacity for autonomous exploration while maintaining relatedness to an attachment figure who serves as a secure-base for such exploration (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1988). Parents serve as a secure-base when they respect their children’s desires for autonomous exploration, and when they are sensitive and responsive to their children’s requests for relatedness on a consistent basis (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Much of what is known about the behavioral manifestations of adolescent autonomy-relatedness and parental support of these manifestations has been obtained through study of adolescents and their parents engaging in a revealed differences family interaction task (Strodtbeck, 1951). Preliminary evidence suggests that associations exist among adolescent attachment organization, adolescent autonomy-relatedness behavior, and parental support of adolescent autonomy-relatedness behavior in this type of context (Allen & Land, 1999). In their retrospective study, Allen and Hauser (1996) reported that individuals who demonstrated preoccupation with attachment relationships at age 25 had inhibited their own autonomy at age 14. As adolescents, these individuals had displayed high levels of enmeshing behaviors (e.g., overpersonalizing arguments) and low levels of distancing behaviors (e.g., recanting positions). Allen and Hauser also found that the mothers of individuals who demonstrated coherence/security with attachment relationships at age 25 had been more likely than other mothers to support their children’s autonomy and relatedness eleven years earlier. In a similar study, Kobak, Cole, Ferenz-Gillies, Fleming, and Gamble (1993) reported that adolescent

attachment organization was related to the quality of adolescent autonomy-relatedness behavior and maternal support of this behavior. For example, they reported that adolescent attachment security was associated with less dysfunctional anger and less avoidance, and that adolescent deactivation of attachment (a feature of insecurity) was related to more dysfunctional anger during a revealed differences task. Mothers of adolescents with deactivating strategies also displayed high levels of dominance during these tasks.

Considered together, Allen and Hauser (1996) and Kobak et al.'s (1993) studies provide evidence that adolescent attachment organization is linked to the ability to autonomously explore a topic of disagreement with one's parent while maintaining a sense of relatedness to a mother who is able to flexibly support her child's autonomy-relatedness behavior. This evidence lends support to attachment theorists' claims that the secure-base phenomenon exists in adolescent-mother relationships and that individual differences in the quality of adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support are related to individual differences in adolescent attachment security. To further examine the secure-base phenomenon in adolescent-parent relationships, and its relation to adolescent attachment security, it seems appropriate to study adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support across different contexts that warrant such behavior. These contexts might, for example, require adolescents to consider the confidence they hold in their parents' availability, responsiveness, and sensitivity (Goldberg, Grusec, & Jenkins, 1999; Waters & Cummings, 2000). These contexts might also require parents to consider their abilities to instill such confidence in their children. By requiring adolescents and parents to consider these attachment-related

thoughts, these contexts allow further study of adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support.

Infant and child researchers have typically used the context of separation to assess secure-base use and secure-base support. Infant secure-base use, for example, is almost always assessed through the “Strange Situation” procedure (Ainsworth et al., 1978). In the Strange Situation, infants and their parents undergo a series of brief separations and reunions. On the basis principally of response to the parent during the reunion episodes, infants are classified as secure or insecure. Secure infants will immediately seek proximity to their mother, will be soothed by this proximity, and will successfully reengage in exploration. Insecure infants, in contrast, will either avoid their mothers by continuing to explore during the reunion episodes (as in the case of insecure-avoidant infants), or will seek proximity to their mothers, but will not be soothed by this proximity and will not be able to reengage in exploration (as in the case of insecure-resistant infants). Although the Strange Situation does not assess maternal secure-base support, Ainsworth et al. (1978) and Vaughn and Waters (1990) demonstrated that infant security and insecurity are highly related to the quality of secure-base support that infants receive in everyday home environments. For example, Ainsworth et al. (1978) found that mothers of secure infants were more likely than those of insecure infants to respect and not interfere with their infants’ exploratory behavior, and to be sensitive and responsive to their infants when their infants’ attachment systems were activated.

In childhood, secure-base use has also been assessed by having children undergo a relatively brief separation from their parents. Cassidy and Main (1985) found that six-

year-olds who had been classified as insecure at 12-months were more likely than those who had been classified as secure to plead with their parents not to leave them alone prior to separation. When their parents eventually left, insecure children displayed relatively high levels of anxiety and had more difficulty than secure children focusing on assigned laboratory tasks. In a related study, Main and Cassidy (1988) reported additional attachment-related differences in children's reunion behavior. When reunited, secure children initiated conversation and pleasant interaction with their parents, usually by discussing the laboratory tasks they engaged in during the separation. In contrast, insecure children either minimized and restricted opportunities for interaction with their parents and continued playing (as in the case of insecure-avoidant children), or displayed exaggerated contact/proximity seeking with signs of resistance and/or hostility (as in the case of insecure-resistant children). Although parental secure-base support was not assessed in this study, Crowell and Feldman (1991) noted an association between the ways in which mothers prepared their preschoolers for separation and the quality of behavior these preschoolers displayed during reunion. For example, they found that the children of mothers who were very anxious and had difficulty leaving their child alone prior to separation tended to make little eye contact with their mothers and failed to interact with them during reunion. Although Crowell and Feldman did not assess these children's attachment security, their findings do suggest that an association exists between the quality of child secure-base use and the quality of secure-base support provided by parents.

To obtain more understanding of the secure-base phenomenon in adolescent-parent relationships, it would be useful to adopt methods that are similar to those used

in infant and child research. Infant and child research demonstrates that individual differences in child secure-base use and parental secure-base support are revealed most clearly during situations that require children to be separated from their parents. By early childhood, separation is a relatively benign situation for most secure children that can be coped with effectively by balancing autonomous-exploration and relatedness (i.e., attachment behavior) at appropriate times. For insecure children, however, separation seems to present a more serious threat to the availability of their attachment figures, which impairs these children's ability to effectively balance autonomy and relatedness. These patterns of response to separation are thought to reflect children's earlier attachment experiences with their parents, which have become internalized in the representational models they have formed of their attachment figures and of themselves. By placing adolescents in a similar situation of separation from their parents, it is likely that individual differences in autonomy and relatedness will manifest themselves, and will be associated with adolescent attachment organization. Furthermore, individual differences in the ways in which parents support their adolescent's desires for autonomy and relatedness during situations of separation should reflect the quality of secure-base support adolescents receive in everyday, home situations. Thus, parental secure-base support should also be related to an adolescent's attachment organization, and to the quality of an adolescent's secure-base use.

There are several issues, however, that complicate study of adolescent autonomy-relatedness and parental support of autonomy-relatedness during situations of adolescent-parent separation. One issue is that separation is not nearly as threatening in adolescence as it is in infancy and childhood. To induce behavior that is linked to

secure-base use and secure-base support, adolescents would have to be either selected from or placed in a situation that is likely to make them mindful of the possibility that there is or can be a threat to the availability and responsiveness of their parents.

Recently, Hazan and Johnston-Hutt (2001) selected first-year college students who lived away from home to participate in a study assessing behavior related to parental secure-base support during the transition to college. They found that parents of insecure-avoidant students were significantly less likely than other parents to telephone their children at school, suggesting that insecure-avoidant students were the least likely to receive this form of secure-base support. Hazan and Johnston-Hutt also reported that mothers of insecure-ambivalent students were four-times more likely than their children to initiate and end telephone calls with their partners. This finding suggests that the insecure-ambivalent students' desires for autonomy-relatedness may have been interfered with, as their mothers seemed to be the ones deciding how much contact their children had with them. Comparatively, mothers of secure students telephoned their children roughly as often as their children telephoned them, and were much less likely than their children to end a telephone call. Insecure students were also less likely than secure students to report that at least one parent provided interest, support, and responsiveness during these telephone calls. Finally, clear evidence of attachment-related differences in secure-base support was found in that parents of secure students were more likely than other parents to visit their children at school.

Hazan and Johnston-Hutt's (2001) study provides some evidence that attachment-related differences do exist in the amount of secure-base support adolescents receive from their parents during a major separation. As a result, further investigation

of how parents and their adolescents behave during similar contexts involving separation is warranted. It appears that adolescents who reside at college would have to be comfortable enough with major separation to actually leave home and attend college. Bowlby (1973) suggested, however, that some individuals, who lack confidence in the availability of their caregivers, adopt a strategy of remaining in close proximity to their caregivers to ensure that they are available when needed. Some adolescents who lack confidence in their parents' availability may, for example, perceive college as a lonely place (Cassidy & Berlin, 1999). It has been demonstrated in several studies (e.g., Hazan & Johnston-Hutt, 2001; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Larose & Bernier, 1999) that insecure students are more likely than secure students to experience loneliness at college, and it is quite possible that insecure adolescents foresee loneliness at college even before they attend. Thus, to further advance understanding of the secure-base phenomenon in adolescence through examination of separation, it seems practical to study how those adolescents who are comfortable with major separation, as well as those who are not comfortable with major separation, react to the possibility of major separation. One way of examining how comfortable adolescents are with major separation is to place them in a situation in which they must envision and plan for an impending major separation, such as a departure for college.

Bowlby (1973) clearly stated that from childhood onwards, individuals do not have to be physically separated from their parents to imagine threats to their parents' availability: "Of the many fear arousing situations that a child, or older person, can foresee, none is likely more frightening than the possibility that an attachment figure will be absent or... unavailable when wanted" (p. 201). It is expected that adolescents,

when placed in a situation that is likely to make them mindful of the possibility that there can be a threat to the availability and responsiveness of their parents, will be compelled to balance their desires for autonomous exploration with their desires for maintaining relatedness to an attachment figure who serves as a secure-base for such exploration. The quality of this balance should be associated with an adolescent's attachment organization, which has been forged through earlier secure-base experiences with one's parents. The quality of this balance should also be related to the quality of support parents currently provide for their children's desires for autonomy-relatedness.

#### The Present Study: Research Questions and Hypotheses

In this investigation, links between adolescent attachment, adolescents' abilities to use their parents as secure bases, and parents' abilities to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior will be examined. Quality of adolescent attachment will be assessed using the Adult Attachment Interview (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984). Adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support will be assessed by observing adolescent-parent discussions of the adolescent's developmentally-salient task of leaving home after finishing high school. Data collected from this investigation will be used to answer the following four research questions.

The first research question that will be answered is, "Are secure adolescents more likely than insecure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases?" This question will be answered by examining the ways in which secure adolescents differ from insecure adolescents in balancing their plans for activities away from their parents (i.e., autonomous-exploration) with relationship-enhancing/maintaining goals (i.e., enhancing relatedness to their secure-base). According to attachment theory, secure



adolescents should be more capable than insecure adolescents of discussing their plans for autonomous-exploration. Thus, it is hypothesized that compared to insecure adolescents, secure adolescents will be more likely to openly discuss their goals and plans for the future (see Table 1 for this hypothesis and all others). Secure adolescents should also be more capable than insecure adolescents of balancing these plans with relationship-enhancing/maintaining goals. Thus, it is also hypothesized that secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to value and to want to continue their relationship with their parents in the future. For example, secure adolescents should be more capable than insecure adolescents in stating “(a) [that] lines of communication with the attachment figure are open, (b) that physical accessibility exists, and (c) that the attachment figure will respond if called upon for help” (Ainsworth, 1990, p. 474). Although an adolescent’s willingness to disclose his or her plans for autonomous-exploration with relationship enhancing/maintaining goals is an important indicator of how that adolescent may use his or her parent as a secure-base in the future, it is also important to observe how that adolescent is able to convey these goals and plans in the present discussion. For example, it is hypothesized that secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to demonstrate security in the presence of their parents. Following Ainsworth et al.’s (1978) notions of security in infancy, a secure adolescent should be one who is relaxed and untroubled in the presence of an attachment figure. Based on previous findings (Kobak et al., 1993), it is also hypothesized that secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to demonstrate higher levels of positive affect and lower levels of negative affect while discussing their goals and plans for the future.

Table 1

Principal Research Questions and Hypotheses Guiding the Present Study

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Research Question #1

Are secure adolescents more likely than insecure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases?

Hypotheses

- A) Secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to openly discuss their future goals and plans with their parents.
  - B) Secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to value and to want to continue the relationship with their parents in the future.
  - C) Secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to demonstrate global security during the discussions with their parents.
  - D) Secure adolescents will be more likely than insecure adolescents to demonstrate positive affect in the discussions with their parents.
  - E) Secure adolescents will be less likely than insecure adolescents to demonstrate negative in the discussions with their parents.
- 

Research Question #2

Are parents of secure adolescents more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior?"

Hypotheses

- A) Parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to support their children's goals and plans for the future.
  - B) Parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to value and to want to continue the relationships with their adolescents in the future.
  - C) Parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to demonstrate sensitive caregiving during the discussions with their adolescents.
  - D) Parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to demonstrate positive affect in the discussions with their adolescents.
  - E) Parents of secure adolescents will be less likely than parents of insecure adolescents to demonstrate negative affect in the discussions with their adolescents.
- 

Research Question #3

Are secure adolescent-parent dyads more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate?

Hypothesis

- A) Secure adolescent-parent dyads will be more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate.
-

The second research question that will be answered is, “Are parents of secure adolescents more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents’ secure-base behavior?” This question will be answered by examining the ways in which parents of secure adolescents differ from parents of insecure adolescents in providing secure-base support in the form of accepting and fostering their adolescents’ desires for autonomy-relatedness. From a caregiving perspective, parents of secure adolescents should be more capable than parents of insecure adolescents of providing secure-base support by encouraging and contributing to their adolescents’ autonomous-exploration. Thus, it is hypothesized that compared to parents of insecure adolescents, parents of secure adolescents will be more likely to support their adolescents’ goals and plans for the future. Parents of secure adolescents should also be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to provide secure-base support by demonstrating value for the relationship with their adolescent. For example, parents of secure adolescents should affirm that lines of communication with their adolescent are open and that they will be available and responsive to their adolescent when needed to be. Thus, it is also hypothesized that compared to parents of insecure adolescents, parents of secure adolescents will be more likely to value and to want to continue the relationship with their adolescents in the future. Just as it is important to observe how adolescents are able to convey their goals and plans for future autonomy-relatedness in the present discussions with their parents, it is also important to observe how parents are able to convey their future support for adolescent autonomy-relatedness in the present discussions. For example, it is hypothesized that parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to provide sensitive caregiving in the

leaving home discussions. A sensitive caregiver would be a parent who listens to and is responsive to his or her adolescent's feelings regarding autonomy and relatedness (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Based on previous research (Allen & Hauser, 1996; Kobak et al., 1993), it is also hypothesized that parents of secure adolescents will be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to demonstrate high levels of positive affect and low levels of negative affect toward their adolescents.

The third research question that will be answered is, “Are secure adolescent-parent dyads more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate?” This question will be answered by observing adolescents' and parents' abilities to convey their thoughts and feelings about autonomy-relatedness in the present discussion. Secure adolescents and their parents should openly communicate by appearing to feel comfortable in disclosing their own thoughts and feelings in fluid, comfortable, flexible, and balanced conversation. Insecure adolescents and their parents should be deficient in these areas. Based on these expectations, it is hypothesized that secure adolescents and their parents will be more likely than insecure adolescents and their parents to openly communicate about autonomy-relatedness issues.

The hypotheses just outlined were based on the assumptions that a) secure adolescents would be more likely than insecure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases and b) parents of secure adolescents would be more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to serve as secure bases. Although these expectations and hypotheses are consonant with attachment theorists' claims that attachment security is linked to favorable secure-base relationships with one's attachment figures (Bowlby,

1982), it is not clear whether attachment security or insecurity is necessarily linked to favorable or unfavorable secure-base relationships with both parents. According to attachment theory, an individual's attachment security can be maintained through a single positive secure-base relationship in which that individual is able to use one other person as a secure-base from which to explore and a safe-haven to which to return (Berlin & Cassidy, 1999). If this claim is accurate, secure adolescents could, theoretically, have only one positive secure-base relationship in their lives. In contrast, insecure adolescents would have none. In order to examine this theoretical claim, the final research question that will be answered in this study is, "Are secure adolescents more likely than insecure adolescents to use at least one parent as a secure-base, to receive secure-base support from at least one parent, and to have at least one interaction with a parent in which they and their parent openly communicate?" This question will be answered by exploring the possibilities that a) adolescent attachment security can be linked to favorable secure-base behavior with at least one parent, and adolescent attachment insecurity can be linked to unfavorable secure-base behavior with both parents, b) adolescent attachment security can be linked to favorable secure-base support by at least one parent, and adolescent attachment in security can be linked to unfavorable secure-base support by both parents, and c) adolescent attachment security can be linked to open dyadic communication between an adolescent and at least one parent, adolescent attachment insecurity can be linked to non-open dyadic communication between an adolescent and both parents.

Although attachment theory and empirical research generally lend support to the notion that gender-differences do not exist in secure-base behavior (see Belsky &

Cassidy, 1994, for a review), it is possible that the defining feature of adolescent secure-base behavior (i.e., the ability to express autonomy-relatedness) will be related to gender or the interaction between gender and adolescent attachment security. Because this possibility has never been tested empirically in adolescents, this study will explore the ways in which adolescent gender and its interaction with adolescent attachment security explain differences in the quality of adolescent secure-base behavior. Furthermore, this study will also explore the possibility that differences in the quality of parental secure-base support are related to gender and its interaction with adolescent attachment security. Because these examinations are entirely exploratory in nature, no specific hypotheses are considered.

This investigation will provide important insight into the secure-base phenomenon in adolescent-parent relationships. This investigation will be the first to examine the ways in which adolescent attachment security is linked to adolescents' abilities to use their parents as secure bases while discussing attachment-related issues of separation. This investigation will also be the first to examine the ways in which adolescent attachment security is linked to mothers' and fathers' abilities to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior during this type of context. By relating the general quality of adolescent attachment security (i.e., secure versus insecure) to adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support, it will be possible to examine a core proposition held by attachment theorists (e.g., Bowlby, 1973) that insecure attachment, compared to secure attachment, is systematically associated with deficient secure-base relationships.

## Method

### Participants

Participants were 189 eleventh-grade students (118 females and 71 males) and their parents who were part of a larger study of family and peer relationships in adolescence. The majority of adolescents ( $n = 179$ ) were recruited from seven public high schools in a large metropolitan area to participate in a classroom data-collection session during the spring semester. Parents of adolescents who participated in this classroom session, and whose family met the study criteria (i.e., two-parent, English speaking families), were then invited to participate in a follow-up laboratory session with their adolescent. The remaining adolescents ( $n = 10$ ) were recruited through letters sent directly to the home. These adolescents resided in the same metropolitan area as the adolescents who were recruited from the seven public high schools. Parents of adolescents who met the same criteria listed above were invited to visit the laboratory with their adolescent. Roughly 20% of invited families agreed to participate in the laboratory sessions. Over two-thirds of the families were White/Caucasian (73%), with Black/African American (14%) and Asian (10%) representing the next largest groups, followed by Hispanic (3%). At least 93% of mothers and fathers reported having some college education. Annual household income for most participants (84%) was greater than \$61,000. Families were paid \$125 for their participation in the larger study. Permission to recruit human subjects for this study was obtained from the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A).

## Procedure

Data reported in this investigation were gathered during two sessions spanning approximately one month. In the first session, adolescents visited the laboratory with their parents and engaged, separately with their mother and father, in a 10-minute videotaped discussion-task about leaving home (Kobak, Ferenz-Gillies, Everhart, & Seabrook, 1994). The instructions for this task were as follows: “Imagine that (adolescent’s name) is ready to leave home after finishing high school – for example, for a job or to start college. Discuss (adolescent’s name)’s goals and plans for the future and how your relationship with each other is going to change.” These discussions were designed to elicit discourse about both autonomy and relatedness within the context of an impending adolescent-parent separation. The order in which adolescents participated with their mothers and fathers in the discussion-task was highly balanced (55% of adolescents discussed leaving home with their mothers first). Fathers also provided demographic information during this session. In the second session, adolescents visited the lab once more and completed the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George et al., 1984).

Due to different circumstances (e.g., technical difficulties, adolescents and/or parents speaking a language other than English during the laboratory tasks), both the adolescent-mother and adolescent-father discussion tasks from five families were dropped from all analyses. Additionally, in 14 families either the adolescent-mother or the adolescent-father discussion task was missing (i.e., data were missing for six adolescent-mother and eight adolescent-father discussion tasks, but were present for the adolescents’ discussions with the other parent). In these cases, similar circumstances



arose that made their interactions unusable, or the adolescent and their parent did not follow task instructions. Furthermore, due to scheduling difficulties, an Adult Attachment Interview was not available for one adolescent. Thus, 177 adolescent-mother discussions and 175 adolescent-father discussions were examined.

### Measures

Leaving home discussion-task rating system (Appendix B). A new rating system (Ziv, Feeney, & Cassidy, 2001) was developed in order to measure adolescent and parent behavior during the leaving home discussion-task. This rating system, based in part on an earlier system developed by Kobak et al. (1994), is comprised of 11 7-point scales that are used to rate the behavior of the adolescent, parent, and dyad.

The first scale that was used to assess adolescent behavior was open discussion of the future. This scale tapped adolescents' autonomous-exploration by measuring the degree to which the adolescent openly and thoroughly discussed his or her goals and plans for the future. This scale considered the extent to which the adolescent initiated discussion, shared thoughts and feelings, elaborated on issues raised by the parent, and was willing to explore goals and plans for the future with the parent. Scores ranged from extremely closed to fully open in discussion of future plans and goals. The second scale that was used to assess adolescent behavior was valuing of the relationship. This scale was used to measure the degree to which the adolescent valued the relationship with the parent, acknowledged and accepted the importance of the relationship, and expressed a desire to continue the relationship in the future. This scale also considered the extent to which the adolescent desired the parent's availability and felt that the relationship with the parent enhanced his or her growth towards adulthood. Scores

ranged from highly devaluing to highly valuing of the relationship. The third scale that was used to assess adolescent behavior was global security. This scale was used to tap adolescents' overall level of security while in the presence of their parents. Whereas most of the previous scales tap adolescent behavior that is related to future experiences with the parent (e.g., while the adolescent is away from home), this scale taps the adolescent's current ability to remain relaxed and untroubled in the immediate presence of his or her parent (Ainsworth et al., 1978). This scale was defined as the degree to which the adolescent shared thoughts, feelings, and concerns with the parent and confidently explored his or her future while feeling fully supported, encouraged, and understood by the parent. This scale also considered the extent to which the adolescent engaged in a calm, natural, and connected interaction with the parent. Scores ranged from low global security to high global security.

The first scale that was used to assess parental behavior was support for teen's autonomy. This scale was used to measure the degree to which the parent supported the adolescent's developing autonomy and believed in the adolescent's ability to handle the transition to adulthood. This scale also considered the extent to which the parent conveyed confidence and interest in the adolescent's goals and plans for the future, and offered support for the adolescent's upcoming autonomy by balancing acceptance of the upcoming change in the parent-adolescent roles with a continued availability to the adolescent whenever needed. Scores ranged from extremely unsupportive to fully supportive of the adolescent's autonomy. The second scale that was used to assess parental behavior was valuing of the relationship. This scale was defined as the extent to which the parent supported emotional relatedness by openly conveying the value of

the relationship to the adolescent, acknowledging and accepting the importance of the relationship, encouraging discussion of relationship issues, and expressing a desire to continue the relationship in the future. This scale also considered the extent to which the parent believed and acknowledged that the relationship enhanced the parent's life and would continue to be valued as the adolescent grew towards adulthood. Scores ranged from highly devaluing to highly valuing of the relationship. The third scale that was used to assess parental behavior was sensitive caregiving. This scale was defined as the degree to which the parent was sensitive and responsive to the adolescent throughout the discussion. This scale considered the extent to which the parent actively accepted and showed concern for the adolescent's worries, concerns, thoughts, and feelings. It also took into account the extent to which the parent gathered information from the adolescent and made an effort to help the adolescent work through the discussion by being attentive, communicating understanding, and providing emotional and/or instrumental forms of support. Scores ranged from extremely insensitive to fully sensitive.

In addition to these scales rating adolescent and parent behavior, two scales (i.e., positive affect and negative affect) were used to assess the affective quality of each individual's behavior. The positive affect scale was used to measure the individual's overall positive verbal and nonverbal emotionality and enjoyment during the discussion, such as happy facial expressions and statements made in a positive tone. The negative affect scale was used to measure the individual's overall negative verbal and nonverbal emotionality during the discussion, such as angry facial expressions and statements made in a negative tone. Scores for each scale range from low affect to high affect.

Finally, one dyadic scale – open communication – was used to measure the degree to which the adolescent-parent dyad freely and comfortably acknowledged the importance of their relationship, showed comfort with discussing the adolescent’s future autonomy, and openly and fluidly discussed both the relationship and the adolescent’s goals and plans for the future. Scores ranged from highly open to non-open communication.

Four coders (trained by Yair Ziv and Brooke Feeney) independently rated videotaped discussion tasks. Each coder followed the same three-step procedure. Coders first viewed the entire 10-minute discussion task in order to obtain a general overview of the interaction. They then viewed the discussion task a second time, took detailed notes on the adolescent’s behavior, and at the end of the viewing, rated the adolescent’s behavior. Coders then viewed the discussion task a third time, took notes on the parent’s behavior, and at the end of the viewing, rated the parent’s behaviors and dyadic open communication. All coders were blind to additional information about the participants, including the discussions adolescents had with the other parent (i.e., coders who rated an adolescent-mother interaction did not rate the adolescent-father interaction in the same family) and adolescents’ attachment classifications.

Forty-percent of each coder’s assignments was shared with at least one other coder. Because there were four coders, assignments could be shared by six possible pairs of coders. The mean number of adolescent-mother discussions shared by the six pairs of coders was 14 (range = 6 – 22), and the mean number of adolescent-father discussions shared by the six pairs of coders was 11 (range = 5 – 20). Interrater agreement for each pair of coders was assessed continuously throughout the coding

period. Coders were in agreement if their ratings for a behavioral scale were within one point of each other (Clark & Ladd, 2000; Lester, Hoffman, & Brazelton, 1985). As can be seen in Table 2, interrater agreement across the six pairs of coders ranged from 55% to 100%. The mean percent agreement values for each behavioral scale are also presented in Table 2. Each mean percent agreement value was identified by calculating the mean of the percent agreements for the six pairs of coders (after these percent agreements were weighted by the number of discussions rated by the pair of coders). As can be seen, mean percent agreement ranged from 73% (on adolescent global security in the adolescent-father discussions) to 96% (on both adolescent and father positive affect in the adolescent-father discussions). This level of agreement is consistent with that typically reported in developmental research (e.g., Clark & Ladd, 2000). Disagreements were conferenced and consensus scores were used in all analyses.

Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George et al., 1984; Appendix C). This semistructured interview is designed to assess an adult's "current state of mind with respect to attachment" through a series of questions focused principally on memories of attachment-related experiences during childhood. Throughout the interview, individuals are required to give general descriptions ("semantic memories") of their childhood relationship with their parents and to provide specific supporting memories ("episodic memories"). For example, participants are asked to choose five adjectives that describe their childhood relationship with each parent and then to provide specific memories that supported their choices. Other questions focus on participants' memories of being upset, ill, or threatened, their reactions to major separations and losses, and any

Table 2

Ranges and Means for Percent Agreement for the Six Pairs of Coders that Rated the Leaving Home Discussion Tasks

Scale	Adolescent-Mother Discussions	Adolescent-Father Discussions
<u>Adolescent Scales</u>		
Open discussion of the future	67% - 100% (82%)	70% - 100% (85%)
Valuing of the relationship	75% - 100% (88%)	71% - 90% (81%)
Global Security	67% - 100% (85%)	63% - 100% (73%)
Affective quality: Positive	64% - 92% (83%)	88% - 100% (96%)
Affective quality: Negative	55% - 95% (77%)	86% - 100% (94%)
<u>Parent Scales</u>		
Support for teen's autonomy	73% - 91% (82%)	67% - 86% (76%)
Valuing of the relationship	67% - 100% (89%)	60% - 90% (79%)
Sensitive caregiving	58% - 91% (79%)	56% - 100% (78%)
Affective quality: Positive	73% - 91% (82%)	80% - 100% (96%)
Affective quality: Negative	77% - 100% (84%)	80% - 100% (93%)
<u>Dyadic Scale</u>		
Open communication	75% - 100% (85%)	66% - 100% (84%)

Note. Mean percent agreements are presented in parentheses below the ranges of percent agreement for each behavioral scale.

feelings of rejection. The interviewer also asks participants to offer explanations for their parents' behavior and to describe their current relationship with them. Interviews lasted roughly one hour and were audiotaped for later verbatim transcription. Minor modifications to the adult version were made to make some of the questions more appropriate for an adolescent population (e.g., the word "recently" replaced the phrase "in adulthood;" Allen, Moore, Kuperminc, & Bell, 1998; Ward & Carlson, 1995). The reliability, predictive validity, and discriminant validity (in regard to intelligence, memory, discourse characteristics, and psychopathology) of the AAI have been well established (Bakermans-Kranenburg & van IJzendoorn, 1993; Hesse, 1999; van IJzendoorn, 1995).

Four coders who were trained and certified as reliable by Mary Main and Erik Hesse rated AAI transcripts using Main and Goldwyn's (in press) classification system. All four coders were blind to any information regarding the discussions adolescents had with their parents. Coders rated each transcript on a series of 9-point scales that reflected adolescents' probable attachment experiences (e.g., of being parented in a loving way) and "current state of mind with respect to attachment" (e.g., coherence of mind). Based on an integrated consideration of both the adolescent's probable experiences and state of mind, coders assigned one of three principal classifications to the transcript: secure/autonomous, insecure/dismissing, and insecure/preoccupied. Adolescents were classified as secure/autonomous if they coherently described various childhood experiences, valued attachment relationships, and considered attachment-related experiences as influential to personal development. Adolescents were classified as insecure/dismissing or insecure/preoccupied if they demonstrated an inability to

coherently describe their childhood attachment experiences. These adolescents lacked the ability to reflect on their past attachment experiences in ways that would corroborate the genuine meaning and impact of those experiences. Specifically, adolescents were classified as insecure/dismissing if they described a history of rejection by principal attachment figures and denied and/or dismissed the impact this rejection had on personal development and its influence on both past and current attachment relationships. On the other hand, adolescents were classified as insecure/preoccupied if they demonstrated an excessive, confused/passive, and unobjective (e.g., angry) preoccupation with attachment relationships and/or experiences.

In addition to these three principal classifications, coders could identify adolescents as either unresolved or cannot classify. Adolescents were identified as unresolved if they experienced an attachment-related trauma (loss or abuse) that they have been unsuccessful in resolving. This lack of resolution is typified by adolescents' use of disorganized or disoriented language to describe the trauma. Adolescents were identified as cannot classify if their transcripts contained content that was characteristic of both insecure/dismissing and insecure/preoccupied transcripts (e.g., highly dismissive of attachment experiences involving one parent and highly preoccupied with attachment experiences involving the other parent). If an adolescent was identified as unresolved or cannot classify, that adolescent was also assigned one of the three principal classifications (e.g., "unresolved; insecure/dismissing"). (See Appendix D for more detailed description of the scales and classifications.)

The research questions and hypotheses of this investigation concern differences between secure and insecure adolescent attachment organizations. Because the Main



and Goldwyn's (in press) classification system yields up to five distinct AAI classifications, it was necessary to consolidate these classifications into secure and insecure adolescent attachment organization groups. Thus, adolescents who were identified as unresolved or cannot classify were assigned to either the secure/autonomous, insecure/dismissing, or insecure/preoccupied group based on their underlying basic classification (e.g., adolescents who were classified as "unresolved; insecure/ dismissing" were assigned to the insecure/dismissing group). The insecure/dismissing and insecure/preoccupied classification groups were then combined to form the insecure adolescent attachment organization group (i.e., insecure adolescents).

One of the four AAI coders served as a principal coder and coded 71% of the cases ( $n = 134$ ). The other three coders coded the remaining cases ( $n = 54$ ). Interrater agreement among the four AAI coders was assessed continuously throughout the coding period as a randomly selected 26% of cases ( $n = 49$ ) were coded by at least two coders. Coders were in agreement if each of their classifications could be assigned to the same adolescent attachment security group (i.e., the secure adolescent attachment organization group versus the insecure adolescent attachment organization group). Agreement for the randomly selected 26% of cases was 77% ( $\kappa = .50$ ). Disagreements were resolved by a fifth independent coder (June Sroufe) who coded no additional data.

## Results

The order of presentation of analyses is as follows: The distribution of adolescent AAI classifications is presented first. Then, data reduction and descriptive data regarding the Leaving Home Discussion-Task Rating System behavioral scales are discussed. Finally, the four research questions regarding links between adolescent attachment security and adolescent secure-base use, parental secure-base support, and adolescent-parent dyadic open communication are answered. For all analyses, alpha was set at .05.

### Distribution of Adolescent AAI Classifications

The distribution of adolescent AAI classifications is presented in Table 3. This distribution differs somewhat from the one distribution that has been observed in a low-risk adolescent sample (Furman, Simon, Shaffer, & Bouchey, 2002). Compared to the distribution reported by Furman et al., there was an overrepresentation of secure/autonomous (67% vs. 35%) and an underrepresentation of insecure/dismissing adolescents (23% vs. 54%) in this study's distribution. Both distributions, however, had the same amount of insecure/preoccupied (both 4%), unresolved (both 4%), and cannot classify (1% vs. 2%) adolescents. There was no evidence that AAI classifications were associated with adolescent gender,  $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 6.10$ . Using the procedure described above, the five attachment classifications were consolidated into the secure and insecure attachment security groups. Seventy-percent of adolescents ( $n = 132$ ) were assigned to the secure group and 30% of adolescents ( $n = 56$ ) were assigned to the insecure group. Again, there was no evidence that attachment security (secure vs. insecure) was associated with adolescent gender,  $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = .88$ .

Table 3  
Distribution of Adolescent AAI Classifications

<u>Classification</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Secure/Autonomous	126	67
Insecure/Dismissing	44	23
Insecure/Preoccupied	8	4
Unresolved	8	4
Cannot Classify	2	1

### Adolescent, Parent, and Dyadic Behavior: Data Reduction and Descriptive Data

The five scales assessing adolescent behavior were highly correlated across both the adolescent-mother ( $r$ 's ranging from .35 to .83) and the adolescent-father ( $r$ 's ranging from -.18 to .87) leaving home discussions (Table 4). The five scales assessing adolescent behavior in the adolescent-mother discussions were subjected to a principal component analysis and the scree plot was inspected. All five adolescent behavioral scales loaded onto a single factor accounting for 65% of the variance (Table 5). The five scales assessing adolescent behavior in the discussion with father were also subjected to a principal component analysis and the scree plot was inspected. Again, all five adolescent behavioral scales loaded onto a single factor accounting for 61% of the variance. As a result of these analyses, the adolescents scores on the five behavioral scales were summed (separately across the mother and father discussions) to create two scores: a "secure-base use: mother" score and a "secure-base use: father" score. (Adolescents' scores on negative affect were reverse scored before summations occurred.) Higher scores on these variables indicated a greater ability to use one's parent as a secure-base.

The five scales assessing parental behavior were also highly correlated for both mothers ( $r$ 's ranging from -.32 to .87) and fathers ( $r$ 's ranging from -.13 to .84; Table 6). The five scales assessing mother and father behavior were subjected to two separate principal component analyses and the scree plots were inspected. As seen in Table 7, the five scales assessing mother behavior and the five scales assessing father behavior each loaded onto one factor, accounting for 67% and 62% of the variance, respectively. As a result of these analyses, mothers' and fathers' scores on the five behavioral scales

Table 4  
Intercorrelations Among Adolescent Behavioral Scales

Adolescent Behavioral Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Adolescent-Mother Discussion ( $N = 177$ )					
1. Open discussion of the future	-	.68**	.71**	.35**	-.46**
2. Valuing of the relationship		-	.82**	.50**	-.62**
3. Global Security			-	.50**	-.55**
4. Affective quality: Positive				-	-.38**
5. Affective quality: Negative					-
Adolescent-Father Discussion ( $N = 175$ )					
1. Open discussion of the future	-	.67**	.75**	.26**	-.24**
2. Valuing of the relationship		-	.87**	.46**	-.51**
3. Global Security			-	.45**	-.51**
4. Affective quality: Positive				-	-.18*
5. Affective quality: Negative					-

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 5  
Principal-Components Analysis of Adolescent Behavioral Scales

Scale	Adolescent-Mother	Adolescent-Father
	Discussion	Discussion
	Loadings for Factor 1	Loadings for Factor 1
Open discussion of the future	.81	.79
Valuing of the relationship	.91	.93
Global Security	.91	.95
Affective quality: Positive	.65	.57
Affective quality: Negative	-.74	-.61
Factor statistics		
Eigenvalue	3.27	3.07
Variance explained (%)	65	61

Note. The one-factor solutions were selected on the basis of a cutoff criterion of eigenvalues greater than or equal to 1.

Table 6  
Intercorrelations Among Parent Behavioral Scales

Parent Behavioral Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Mothers ( $N = 177$ )					
1. Support for teen's autonomy	-	.60**	.87**	.50**	-.54**
2. Valuing of the relationship		-	.74**	.53**	-.50**
3. Sensitive caregiving			-	.55**	-.59**
4. Affective quality: Positive				-	-.32**
5. Affective quality: Negative					-
Fathers ( $N = 175$ )					
1. Support for teen's autonomy	-	.75**	.84**	.38**	-.42**
2. Valuing of the relationship		-	.80**	.44**	-.40**
3. Sensitive caregiving			-	.37**	-.42**
4. Affective quality: Positive				-	-.13*
5. Affective quality: Negative					-

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 7  
Principal-Components Analysis of Parent Behavioral Scales

Scale	Mother	Father
	Loadings for Factor 1	Loadings for Factor 1
Support for teen's autonomy	.88	.90
Valuing of the relationship	.83	.90
Sensitive caregiving	.94	.92
Affective quality: Positive	.69	.55
Affective quality: Negative	-.71	-.57
Factor statistics		
Eigenvalue	3.34	3.08
Variance explained (%)	67	62

Note. The one-factor solutions were selected on the basis of a cutoff criterion of eigenvalues greater than or equal to 1.



were summed (separately) to create two scores: a “mother secure-base support” score and a “father secure-base support” score. (Parents’ scores on negative affect were reverse scored before these summations occurred.) Higher scores on these variables indicated a greater ability to serve as a secure-base for one’s adolescent.

The means and standard deviations for the adolescent secure-base use scores, the parental secure-base support scores, and the dyadic open communication scores across adolescent gender and adolescent attachment security are presented in Table 8. The intercorrelations among these variables are presented in Table 9.

Links between Adolescent Attachment Security and Adolescent Secure-Base Use, Parental Secure-Base Support, and Adolescent-Parent Dyadic Open Communication

It was originally stated that the first two research questions would be answered by determining whether adolescent attachment security could be linked to five different adolescent (or parental) behaviors. However, after inspecting the correlation matrices and the subsequent principal components analyses for the adolescent (and parental) behavioral scales, it was decided that the first two research questions would be answered by analyzing the composite variables created from those behavioral scales. It was hypothesized that (a) secure adolescents would show higher secure-base use with both mothers and fathers than insecure adolescents, and (b) parents of secure adolescents would have higher secure-base support scores than parents of insecure adolescents.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for Adolescent and Parent Variables  
According to Adolescent Attachment Security

Score/Scale	Secure			Insecure		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Adolescent Secure-Base Use: Mother	127	22.19	5.64	50	19.97	5.60
Adolescent Secure-Base Use: Father	124	22.65	4.82	51	19.90	5.08
Mother Secure-Base Support:	127	23.34	5.40	50	22.79	4.80
Father Secure-Base Support	124	23.41	4.59	51	21.30	3.49
Adolescent-Mother Communication	127	4.40	1.24	50	3.86	1.25
Adolescent-Father Communication	124	4.48	1.20	51	3.84	1.23

Table 9  
Intercorrelations Among Adolescent Secure-Base Use, Parental Secure-Base Support, and Adolescent-Parent Dyadic Open Communication

Score/Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Adolescent Secure-Base Use: Mother	-	.56*	.74*	.37*	.86*	.50*
2. Adolescent Secure-Base Use: Father		-	.41*	.73*	.49*	.86*
3. Secure-Base Support: Mother			-	.41*	.73*	.40*
4. Secure-Base Support: Father				-	.30*	.70*
5. Adolescent-Mother Open Communication					-	.44*
6. Adolescent-Father Open Communication						-

\*  $p < .01$

Are secure adolescents more likely than insecure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases?

In order to determine if secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use their mothers and their fathers as secure bases, adolescents' "secure-base use: mother" scores and "secure-base use: father" scores were entered into two separate 2 (adolescent gender: male vs. female) x 2 (adolescent attachment security: secure vs. insecure) analyses of variance (Table 10). The hypothesis that secure adolescents would show higher secure-base use with both mothers and fathers was confirmed: secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use both their mothers,  $F(1, 173) = 5.11, p < .05$ , and their fathers,  $F(1, 171) = 9.52, p < .005$ , as secure bases. Three-percent of the variation in the "adolescent secure-base use: mother" scores and 5% of the variation in the "adolescent-secure-base use: father" scores could be accounted for by adolescent attachment security. There were no significant main effects for adolescent gender or significant interactions between adolescent gender and attachment security.

Are parents of secure adolescents more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior?

In order to determine if parents of secure adolescents were more likely than parents of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior, the "mother secure-base support" scores and father "secure-base support" scores were entered into two separate 2 (adolescent gender: male vs. female) x 2 (adolescent attachment security: secure vs. insecure) analyses of variance (Table 10). The hypothesis that parents of secure adolescents would have higher secure-base support

Table 10  
Analysis of Variance for Adolescent Secure-Base Use  
 and Parental Secure-Base Support

Source	df	F	p	$\eta^2$
Adolescent Secure Base Use: Discussion with Mother				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.29	n.s.	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	5.11	< .05	0.03
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	< 0.01	n.s.	
Error	173	(32.00)		
Adolescent Secure Base Use: Discussion with Father				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.46	n.s.	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	9.52	< .005	0.05
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.84	n.s.	
Error	171	(24.10)		
Secure-Base Support: Mother				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.75	n.s.	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	0.12	n.s.	
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.88	n.s.	
Error	173	(27.32)		
Secure-Base Support: Father				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.23	n.s.	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	7.12	< .01	0.04
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.30	n.s.	
Error	171	(18.60)		

Note. The values enclosed in parentheses represent the mean square errors. Effect sizes ( $\eta^2$ ) are only provided for significant results.

scores than parents of insecure adolescents was confirmed for fathers only: whereas mothers of secure adolescents did not differ from mothers of insecure adolescents in their tendencies to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior,  $F(1, 173) = 0.12$ ,  $p > .05$ , fathers of secure adolescents were more likely than fathers of insecure adolescents to be supportive of their adolescents' secure-base behavior,  $F(1, 171) = 7.12$ ,  $p < .05$ . Four-percent of the variation in the "father secure-base support" scores could be accounted for by adolescent attachment security. There were no main effects for adolescent gender or significant interactions between adolescent gender and attachment security.

Are secure adolescent-parent dyads more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate?

In order to determine if secure adolescent-parent dyads were more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate, the dyadic open communication scores for the adolescent-mother and adolescent father discussions were entered into two separate 2 (adolescent gender: male vs. female) x 2 (adolescent attachment security: secure vs. insecure) analyses of variance (Table 11). The hypothesis that secure adolescent-parent dyads would be more likely than insecure adolescent-parent dyads to openly communicate was confirmed: secure adolescent-mothers dyads were more likely than insecure adolescent-mother dyads to openly communicate,  $F(1, 173) = 6.58$ ,  $p < .05$ , and secure adolescent-father dyads were more likely than insecure adolescent-father dyads to openly communicate,  $F(1, 171) = 9.92$ ,  $p < .005$ . Adolescent attachment security accounted for 4% and 5% of the variation in dyadic open communication in the adolescent-mother and adolescent-father discussions,

Table 11  
Analysis of Variance for Adolescent-Parent Dyadic Open Communication

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>	<u><math>\eta^2</math></u>
Dyadic Open Communication: Adolescent-Mother Discussion				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.04	n.s	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	6.58	< .05	0.04
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	< 0.01	n.s	
Error	173	(1.56)		
Dyadic Open Communication: Adolescent-Father Discussion				
Adolescent Gender	1	0.02	n.s.	
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	9.92	< .005	0.05
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.16	n.s.	
Error	171	(1.48)		

Note. The values enclosed in parentheses represent the mean square errors. Effect sizes ( $\eta^2$ ) are only provided for significant results.

respectively. There were no main effects for adolescent gender or significant interactions between adolescent gender and attachment security.

Are secure adolescents more likely than insecure adolescents to use at least one parent as a secure-base, to receive secure-base support from at least one parent, and to have at least one interaction with a parent in which they and their parent openly communicated?

To explore the possibility that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use at least one parent as a secure-base, a logistic regression analysis was conducted. In order to conduct this analysis, a dichotomous dependent variable was created to identify whether an adolescent was or was not able to use at least one parent as a secure-base. The following procedure was used to create this variable. First, adolescents' scores on "secure-base use: mother" were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Second, adolescents' scores on "secure-base use: father" were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Finally, adolescents who were placed into either the high "secure-base use: mother" or high "secure-base use: father" groups were assigned to group 1 (i.e., that adolescent was able to use at least one parent as a secure-base). All other adolescents were assigned to group 0 (i.e., that adolescent was not able to use at least one parent as a secure-base). Assignment to groups 1 and 0 served as the dichotomous dependent variable that was regressed on adolescent gender (male vs. female) and adolescent attachment security (secure vs. insecure). Results indicated that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use at least one parent as a secure base, Wald  $\chi^2 = 6.77$ ,  $p < .01$  (Table 12). Neither adolescent



Table 12  
Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Adolescent Secure-Base Use,  
 Parental Secure-Base Support, and Dyadic Open Communication  
 from Adolescent Attachment Security

Source	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p
Secure-Base Use With At Least One Parent			
Adolescent Gender	1	< 0.01	n.s.
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	6.77	< .01
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	1.37	n.s.
Secure-Base Support By At Least One Parent			
Adolescent Gender	1	2.17	n.s.
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	3.45	n.s.
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.93	n.s.
Open Communication With At Least One Parent			
Adolescent Gender	1	0.51	n.s.
Adolescent Attachment Security	1	8.33	< .005
Adolescent Gender X Attachment Security	1	0.01	n.s.

gender nor the interaction between adolescent gender and attachment security predicted whether adolescents would use at least one parent as a secure-base.

To explore the possibility that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to have at least one parent in their family who provided secure-base support, a second logistic regression analysis was conducted. In order to conduct this analysis, a dichotomous dependent variable was created to identify whether at least one parent in a family provided secure-base support for the adolescent. The following procedure was used to create this variable. First, the “mother secure-base support” scores were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Second, the “father secure-base support” scores were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Finally, if a family had either its “mother secure-base support” score or “father secure-base support” score placed into the high group, that family was assigned to group 1 (i.e., there was at least one parent in the family who provided secure-base support for the adolescent). All other families were assigned to group 0 (i.e., neither parent in the family provided secure-base support for the adolescent). Assignments to groups 1 and 0 served as the dichotomous dummy variable that was regressed on adolescent gender (male vs. female) and adolescent attachment security (secure vs. insecure). Results indicated that secure-adolescents were not more likely than insecure adolescents to have at least one parent in their family who provided secure-base support. Again, neither adolescent gender nor the interaction between adolescent gender and attachment security predicted whether at least one parent would provide secure-base support.

A final logistic regression analysis was conducted to explore the possibility that secure adolescents would be more likely than insecure adolescents to have at least one

interaction with a parent in which they and their parent openly communicated. In order to conduct this analysis, a dichotomous dependent variable was created to identify whether an adolescent had at least one interaction with a parent in which they and their parent openly communicated. The following procedure was used to create this variable. First, the “dyadic open-communication” scores for the adolescent-mother discussions were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Second, the “dyadic open-communication” scores for the adolescent-father discussions were placed into low and high groups using a median split. Finally, if the adolescent had a high “dyadic open-communication” score for either the adolescent-mother or the adolescent-father discussion, that adolescent was assigned to group 1 (i.e., the adolescent had at least one interaction with a parent in which they openly communicated). All other adolescents were assigned to group 0 (i.e., the adolescent did not have at least one interaction with a parent in which they openly communicated). Assignment to groups 1 and 0 served as the dichotomous dependent variable that was regressed on adolescent gender (male vs. female) and adolescent attachment security (secure vs. insecure). Results indicated that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to have at least one interaction with their parents in which they and their parent openly communicated,  $Wald \chi^2 = 8.33, p < .005$ . Neither adolescent gender nor the interaction between adolescent gender and attachment security predicted whether adolescents would have at least one interaction with their parents in which they and their parent openly communicated.

## Discussion

The principal goal of this investigation was to examine whether adolescent attachment security could be linked to adolescents' abilities to use their parents as secure bases and to their parents' abilities to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior. Results revealed that secure adolescents were more likely than insecure adolescents to use their mothers and their fathers as secure bases while discussing the developmentally-salient task of leaving home after finishing high school. This finding is consistent with a causal model held by attachment theorists that internal working models of attachment guide behavior in situations that make individuals aware of the possibility that the availability and responsiveness of their attachment figures may be threatened (Bowlby, 1973). According to this model, the secure adolescents in this investigation may have been more likely than the insecure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases because they possessed positive working models of their attachment relationships with their parents. These positive working models were revealed in the AAI when secure adolescents provided coherent and convincing narratives of their positive secure-base experiences with their parents. For example, they could remember and elaborate on specific times in childhood when their parents demonstrated love and affection for them, as well as times when their parents were responsive and sensitive to their emotional and/or physical needs. This secure "state of mind with respect to attachment" could have allowed secure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases in the leaving home discussions because they expected that their parents would be helpful, available, responsive, and sensitive to them while discussing their own goals and plans for the future.

In contrast, insecure adolescents had more difficulties than secure adolescents did in using their parents as secure bases. In the AAI, insecure adolescents demonstrated insecurity with their reflections on their childhood attachment relationships in one of two ways. The majority of insecure adolescents dismissed (i.e., minimized) the importance of these relationships and related experiences. Although they often claimed that their childhood attachment relationships and experiences were generally positive, these claims were highly superficial and could not be supported by any corroborating evidence (i.e., they had difficulty providing specific examples of why their attachment relationships were positive). The remaining insecure adolescents were preoccupied with their attachment relationships and experiences. These adolescents displayed an excessive, confused, unobjective, and often angry preoccupation with these relationships and experiences.

Although adolescent attachment insecurity could be manifested in the AAI in two distinct ways, the results of this study are consistent with the belief that adolescent attachment insecurity is associated with inability to use one's parents as secure bases. Based on their earlier secure-base experiences, insecure-dismissing and insecure-preoccupied adolescents may have been frustrated, angry, or worried about the idea of discussing leaving home with their parents because such a discussion would deal with issues of separation, autonomy, and emotional connectedness. If insecure adolescents believed that their feelings would not be heard or understood by their parents (Allen & Land, 1999), these beliefs explain why insecure adolescents were not as willing as secure adolescents to use their parents as secure bases. Furthermore, insecure adolescents' unwillingness to use their parents as secure bases appeared to transcend

across relationships with both parents. Compared to secure adolescents who could use at least one parent as a secure-base, insecure adolescents were less likely to use either of their parents as secure bases during the leaving home discussions. Insecure adolescents were also less likely than secure adolescents to have a discussion with either parent in which they and their parent openly communicated about the adolescents' goals and plans for the future. These findings indicate that adolescent attachment insecurity might be linked to negative secure-base experiences with both parents, whereas attachment security is linked to positive secure-base experiences with at least one parent (Bowlby, 1973). This finding also suggests that the ability to use at least one parent as a secure-base protects adolescents from developing an insecure attachment organization.

Although attachment theorists propose that individuals' working models of attachment are linked to the quality of their parents' attachment-related caregiving behavior (Bowlby, 1973; Ainsworth et al., 1978; DeWolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997), this proposal was only partly corroborated by the results of this investigation: fathers of secure adolescents were more likely than the fathers of insecure adolescents to support their adolescents' secure-base behavior and to have open discussions with their adolescents about leaving home. According to these findings, it is possible that adolescents come to possess secure attachment organizations because their fathers serve as secure bases by being available, responsive, and sensitive to them in times of need. These findings regarding attachment-related group differences fathers' abilities to serve as secure bases for their adolescents are of particular importance because no investigation has examined the ways in which fathers serve as secure bases for their adolescents, or the ways in which adolescents use their fathers as secure bases.

Furthermore, these findings indicate that fathers have salient secure-base relationships with their adolescents and the quality of these relationships can be linked to their adolescents' attachment organizations.

The observations of maternal behavior did not corroborate attachment theorists' proposal that individuals' working models of attachment are linked to the quality of their parents' attachment-related caregiving behavior. Contrary to expectations, mothers of secure and insecure adolescents supported their adolescents' secure-base behavior equally well; as a result, secure adolescents were just as likely as insecure adolescents to have at least one parent who served as a secure-base. There are several possible explanations for why mothers of secure adolescents did not differ from mothers of insecure adolescents in their abilities to serve as secure bases. One possible explanation is that the mothers of insecure adolescents were astutely aware of the demands of the leaving home discussion-task and modified (e.g., masked) their caregiving behavior accordingly so that they would appear more supportive of their adolescents' secure-base behavior than they might be generally. Prior research (e.g., Allen & Hauser, 1996; Kobak et al., 1993; Kobak et al., 1994), however, provides little support that mothers can modify their behavior to the extent that attachment group differences do not emerge. Another possible explanation is that adolescent attachment security was not linked to the five maternal behaviors observed in this study. If all mothers perform these behaviors equally well (i.e., uniformly with little variation), then these behaviors may not influence the way in which adolescents organize their attachment experiences. It may be that maternal behaviors other than those observed in this investigation are the behaviors linked to adolescent attachment security. Although

this explanation may be a plausible one, there were strong conceptual reasons to believe that the maternal behaviors observed in this investigation would be related to adolescent attachment security. It is also important to keep in mind that mothers of insecure adolescents were less likely than mothers of secure adolescents to have discussions in which they and their adolescents openly communicated. This finding indicates that although the mothers of insecure adolescents may have been supportive of their adolescents' secure-base behavior, this support occurred in relatively non-fluid, uncomfortable, and disjointed leaving home discussions. Thus, despite the fact that it appeared that mothers of insecure adolescents served as secure bases, it is possible that these mothers were somehow contributing to these relatively non-open leaving home discussions. A replication of the present study is needed to determine whether the maternal behaviors observed in this study are not related to adolescent attachment security. Another possible explanation for the failure to find attachment group differences in maternal secure-base support is that the leaving home context was not suitable for examining these differences. It is possible that a ten-minute laboratory discussion about the adolescent's leaving home is not a context in which group differences in maternal secure-base support can be best observed. Group differences might emerge in different laboratory tasks with different topic discussions or in non-laboratory environments (e.g., naturalistic settings).

In this investigation, it was consistently found that adolescent gender (and its interaction with adolescent attachment security) was not linked to adolescents' abilities to use their parents as secure bases, parents' abilities to serve as secure bases, or adolescent-parent dyads' abilities to openly communicate. This finding corroborates a



robust finding in attachment research that attachment behavior is not systematically associated with gender differences (Belsky & Cassidy, 1994). Because few studies have observed parental secure-base support (especially in fathers), it is not clear whether the lack of gender differences in parental secure-base support is consistent or inconsistent with normative trends. Similarly, it is not clear whether the lack of gender differences in adolescent-parent dyadic open communication is normative. Although replications are needed, these findings do provide preliminary evidence that attachment processes in adolescence-parent relationships do not differ as a function of the gender of the adolescent.

Throughout this discussion, a mediational model has been used to explain the observed links between adolescent attachment security, adolescent behavior, and parental behavior. According to this model, adolescents' childhood secure-base experiences with their parents determine whether these adolescents will form either a secure or insecure attachment organization. This attachment organization will then influence the ways in which adolescents use their parent as a secure base when considering attachment-relevant issues of long-term separation from their parent. It is important to mention, however, that alternative theoretical models could be used to explain the data gathered in this investigation. In one alternative model, parental behavior could mediate the connection between adolescent behavior and adolescent attachment security. In this model, an adolescent's ability to use his or her parent as a secure-base would determine whether the parent would want to serve as a secure-base. The parent's willingness to serve as a secure-base would then influence the quality of the adolescents' attachment organization. An important feature of this alternative

model is that adolescent attachment security does not guide adolescent behavior, which suggests that another factor (such as the adolescent's temperament) could influence adolescent behavior. Behaviorally inhibited adolescents, for example, might be less likely than non-inhibited adolescents to use their parents as secure bases because they desire less autonomy. As a result of this inhibition, parents might be less willing to serve as a secure-base for their adolescent. This lack of a secure-base could then lead adolescents to form negative representational models of their parents and, as a result, an insecure attachment organization. Although alternative models, such as the one suggested here, were not tested in the present investigation, future investigations of the secure-base phenomenon in adolescence might want to examine alternative models to determine whether the mediational model proposed in this investigation is indeed the best fitting theoretical model.

Evidence from this investigation contributes to an emerging body of literature on the secure-base phenomenon in adolescent-parent relationships. There are several limitations to the present investigation, however, that restrict the generalizability of the findings. Although the participating families in this investigation represented a diversity of ethnic and racial backgrounds, all of these families had maritally-intact parents and were from either the upper-middle or upper social class. As a result, the results of this investigation should be cautiously generalized to families with divorced/single parents and to families from the lower and middle social classes. There are several reasons why such caution is advised. One reason concerns the context in which the secure-base phenomenon was examined. In this investigation, each family was required to discuss the adolescent's leaving home after finishing high school to

attend college or start a new job. Although this task is arguably one of the most common developmental tasks in adolescence, it would be erroneous to assume that all adolescents have either the opportunity or the resources to leave home and perform such tasks. For example, it is possible that divorced, single-parent, or lower-income families may have more difficulty discussing leaving home if the adolescent's future family responsibilities (e.g., caring for younger siblings) or monetary constraints prevent him or her from leaving home. Another reason why the results of this investigation should be cautiously generalized is that there may be a cultural biases in the way in which adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support were conceptualized in this investigation. For example, adolescent researchers have found evidence that adolescent autonomy seeking is influenced by different economic, family, and/or cultural conditions (Fuligni, 1998). This evidence suggests that the ways in which adolescents use their parents as secure bases and the ways in which parents serve as secure bases could be influenced by these different ecological factors, rather than to attachment-related process in adolescent-parent relationships. Future studies that examine the secure-base phenomenon in adolescent-parent relationships might want to examine these ecological factors so that the ecological validity of the phenomenon (as conceptualized here) can be assessed.

### Conclusion

This investigation provides important insight into the secure-base phenomenon beyond the childhood years. The system of coding developed for this study to assess adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support provides a good foundation from which attachment researchers can more thoroughly investigate adolescent-parent

secure-base relationships. The findings regarding links between adolescent attachment security and adolescent secure-base use and parental secure-base support also provide important empirical data for attachment theorists whose aim is to explain the developmental course of attachment beyond the childhood years.

## Appendix A

**Institutional Review Board  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742**

**Approval Document for Expedited Review of Non-Exempt Projects**

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: Institutional Review Board approval of this project expires on **April 30, 2003**.\*\*\*

	<u>Initial Application</u>	<u>X</u> <u>Renewal Application</u>
<b>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</b>	Dr. Jude Cassidy	
<b>CO-INVESTIGATOR:</b>	Not applicable	
<b>STUDENT INVESTIGATOR:</b>	Susan Woodhouse/ Matthew J. Dykas	
<b>DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM:</b>	Department of Psychology	
<b>PROJECT TITLE AND IRB NUMBER:</b>	"Attachment and Relationships in Adolescence" (IRB Number 00532)	


The University IRB reviewed the above-mentioned project on **April 18, 2002**, in accordance with Public Health Service grant policy as defined in "The Institutional Guide to DHHS Policy on Protection of Human Subjects," 12-1-71, and in Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46. The University IRB is:

**Joan A. Lieber, Professor, Special Education, CO-CHAIRPERSON**  
**Marc A. Rogers, Associate Professor, Kinesiology, CO-CHAIRPERSON**  
 Denise A. Andrews, University Counsel, Office of Legal Affairs  
 Ethelyn Bishop, Non-University Member  
 Johnny E. Blair, Associate Director, Survey Research Center  
 Sacred A. Bodison, M.D., Physician, Health Services, Health Center  
 Margaret W. Bridwell, M.D., Director, Student Health, Health Center  
 Ms. Judith Carrithers, J.D., Non-University Member  
 Jude A. Cassidy, Professor, Psychology  
 Jane Doussard-Roosevelt, Research Associate Professor, Human Development  
 Ellen S. Fabian, Associate Professor, Counseling and Personnel Services  
 Gary LaFree, Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice  
 Kenneth Jennings, Jr., Non-University Member  
 Margaret McLaughlin, Associate Director, Special Education  
 George Perkins, Non-University Member  
 Samuel M. Turner, Professor, Psychology  
 Cynthia Tuttle, Assistant Professor, Nutrition and Food Science

The IRB effected an independent determination of: (1) the rights and welfare of the individual or individuals involved, (2) the appropriateness of the methods used to secure informed consent, and (3) the risks and potential benefits of the investigation. The IRB has concluded that proper safeguards have been taken by the principal investigator, as stated in the research proposal. The IRB approves this project as conforming to University and Public Health Service Policy in protecting the rights of the subjects.

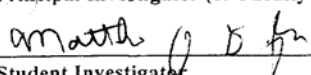
\_\_\_\_\_  
 Marc A. Rogers, IRB Co-Chair

OR

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Joan A. Lieber, IRB Co-Chair

The Principal Investigator (and Co-Investigator and Student Investigator, where appropriate), in signing this report, agree to follow the recommendations of the IRB, to notify the Office of the Vice President of Research of any additions to or changes in procedure subsequent to this review, to provide information on the progress of the research on an annual basis, and to report any instances of injuries to subjects and unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others. Any consent forms used in connection with this project must be retained by the Principal Investigator for three years after completion of the research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Principal Investigator (or Faculty Advisor)

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Co-Investigator

PLEASE RETURN ONE SIGNED COPY TO:  
**IRB OFFICE, ROOM 2100, BLAIR LEE**  
**BUILDING, CAMPUS--- 5121.** Thank you.

## Appendix B

### Leaving Home Discussion-Task Rating System Scales (Ziv, Feeney, & Cassidy, 2001)

#### General description

The Leaving Home Task Scales include 12 (7-point) scales on which various behaviors of the teen and his/her parent are coded. There are 6 teen scales, 6 parent scales, and one dyadic scale. For each scale, the parent or teen receives a score ranging from 1 to 7. The scales are identified below, then defined in detail on the pages that follow.

The teen scales are:

1. Valuing of the relationship
2. \*Confidence in an autonomous future
3. Open discussion of future
4. Affective quality: Positive affect/enjoyment
5. Affective quality: Hostile affect
6. \*Care-seeking/Care acceptance
7. Global security

The parent scales are:

1. Valuing of the relationship
2. Support for teen's autonomy
3. \*Comfort with teen's autonomy
4. Affective quality: Positive affect/enjoyment
5. Affective quality: Hostile affect
6. Sensitive caregiving

The dyadic scale is:

Open communication.

Note: Scales marked with an asterisk (\*) were not used in this study.

### General procedure

1. Watch each interaction 3 times – first to get a general sense of the interaction, then again focusing mainly on the teen, and then another time focusing mainly on the parent. You may need to watch each interaction more than that if you feel like you missed something, but three times is the minimum amount of time that you'll need to watch each interaction.
2. Take notes while you're watching the tape focusing on the teen and while you're watching the tape focusing on the parent. Each time you watch the tape focusing on each person, stop the tape every 3 min 20 sec to give yourself a chance to take more detailed notes about what you just saw. There is a place for you to take notes right on your code sheet, but feel free to use additional paper if needed. [If you do take notes on an additional sheet of paper, please attach this note sheet to the coding sheet.] Taking notes will help you to remember things that happened during the interaction when you are making your ratings later.
3. Please remember to write your initials and the participant ID number at the top of each rating sheet.
4. If the dyad has clearly indicates that they have finished with the leaving home task discussion (e.g., by saying that they are ending it or by ending it in another way) before the 10-min period is over, please consider the discussion as being over, and indicate on your coding sheet the number of minutes of tape you watched before you stopped coding. However, be careful not to stop watching too early. Many dyads may go off-task for a minute or two, then return to the task. In order to stop watching the tape, the dyad must clearly end the discussion, and you must be completely certain that the dyad is not going to return to the task. You will need to watch the entire interaction once in order to determine whether or not the dyad returns to the task.

## TEEN SCALES

### 1. Valuing of the Relationship

#### Description

The valuing of the relationship scale assesses the degree to which the teen values his/her relationship with the parent, acknowledges and accepts the importance of the relationship, and expresses a desire for the parent's availability, as well as a desire to continue the relationship with the parent in the future. This scale also assesses the extent to which the teen feels that the relationship with the parent enhances the teen's life and promotes his/her growth toward adulthood. This is a rating of the teen's level of connection with the parent, and the degree to which the teen openly conveys that the relationship with the parent is important in his/her life when discussing relationship issues. Teens are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (highly valuing) to 1 (highly devaluing).

- 7 Highly valuing of the relationship. The teen clearly values his/her relationship with the parent. His/her acknowledgment and acceptance of the importance of the relationship are very strong. He/she expresses a desire for the parent's availability, and he/she expresses a desire to continue the relationship with the parent in the future. The teen acknowledges that the relationship enhances the teen's life and promotes his/her growth toward adulthood. The teen appears to exhibit a deep level of connection with the parent and openly and spontaneously conveys that the relationship with the parent is important in his/her life when discussing relationship issues. If a teen shows most of the above behaviors but not all, or, if a teen clearly values the relationship but in a less special, remarkable, or distinguished manner, he/she should receive a "5" or a "6". A teen would also receive a "5" or a "6" if the dyad does not explicitly discuss the issue of the relationship (perhaps because they ran out of time and didn't get to that topic), but the rater can clearly sense (by the way the dyad discusses the teen's goals and plans for the future) that the teen does very much value his/her relationship with the parent. That is, teens may show that they value their relationship in other ways besides explicitly talking about the relationship (e.g., showing a deep respect for, and valuing of, the parent's opinions).
- 4 Moderately valuing the relationship. Typically, a teen will receive this score when he/she seems to value his/her relationship with the parent, but either this evaluation is mixed with some minor negative feelings (devaluing) or the teen's reaction to the relationship issue is very modest. This teen may acknowledge and accept the importance of the relationship, but he/she does not initiate conversation about these issues and/or does not elaborate on them. He/she may express some desire for the parent's availability and some desire to continue the relationship with the parent in the future, but at the same time might express



some doubt about it. The teen may (in some modest ways) acknowledge that the relationship enhances his/her life and promotes his/her growth toward adulthood, and the teen may appear to exhibit some degree of connection with the parent when discussing relationship issues. He/she may not openly or spontaneously convey that the relationship with the parent is important in his/her life when discussing relationship issues, but will acknowledge some valuing of the relationship if encouraged to do so. The teen shows moderate levels of openness with regard to the discussion of relationship issues. In some parts of the conversation the teen might display avoidance or minor indications of hostility toward the parent (boredom, light sarcasm, discomfort with parent's ideas), but these instances are sporadic and very modest. In general, a teen will receive a moderate rating when the teen exhibits either (a) clear valuing of the relationship combined with some negativity or devaluing of the relationship (although the valuing must clearly outweigh the negativity/devaluing), or (b) just modest levels of valuing the relationship (e.g., acknowledging importance of the relationship without elaborating on relationship issues). Please note that if the dyad does not explicitly discuss the issue of the relationship (perhaps because they ran out of time and didn't get to that topic), but the rater can clearly sense (by the way the dyad discusses the teen's goals and plans for the future) that the teen does very much value his/her relationship with the parent, then the teen should receive a rating of "5" or "6" for this scale (depending on the perceived strength of the teen's valuing of the relationship). Bringing up the relationship issue in a non-serious manner without the intention of initiating a discussion about it (e.g., sarcastically mentioning the topic or making a joke about it) does not count as valuing the relationship.

- 1 Highly devaluing the relationship. Devaluation of the relationship is typically displayed in one of two general ways, one being an avoiding style and the other being an overt devaluation of the relationship. [Devaluation of the relationship may be manifested either overtly or covertly.] Both styles suggest a tendency to devalue the importance of the relationship with the parent.

The avoiding teen does not appear to value his/her relationship with the parent because he/she was avoiding the issue. The teen may attempt to ignore discussing how the relationship will change altogether, and/or the teen may show an extreme discomfort in discussing relationship issues (e.g., by providing very brief answers to questions, by attempting to change the topic). This type of teen may show evidence of covertly devaluing the relationship by minimizing the importance of discussing relationship issues or by minimizing/dismissing the existence of relationship problems when it is clear that there is a problem (e.g., curtly stating, "It's fine" or "There's no problem" or "We don't need to talk about this" or "I don't really have anything to say about this").

The overtly devaluing teen does not appear to value his/her relationship with the parent because he/she overtly minimizes the importance of the relationship and/or the importance of the parent. The teen may openly express that he/she finds the relationship and/or the parent unsatisfactory/unpleasant and is looking forward to getting away from the parent (e.g., "I can't wait to move

away from you so that I don't have to deal with you anymore"). A teen may also show overt devaluation of the relationship in other ways (e.g., by completely discounting, disrespecting, or reacting negatively to advice/suggestions/opinions offered by the parent).

To receive this score a teen should be either extremely hostile and negative toward the parent, or should be actively avoiding of any kind of discussion of the parent-teen relationship (for example, the parent may try to discuss relationship issues, but the teen persistently ignores these attempts, specifically indicating that the teen does not wish to discuss relationship issues with the parent). If a teen shows either avoidance or devaluing behaviors, but also presents some very sporadic instances of positive behaviors toward the parent, he/she should receive a score of "2". (Avoidance or devaluing behaviors must clearly outweigh the positive behaviors in order to assign a rating of "2".) If a teen is generally devaluing of the relationship or avoiding of relationship issues, but also exhibits some behaviors that indicate that he/she clearly values some aspects of his/her relationship with the parent, then he/she should receive a score of "3" (For example, a teen may avoid discussing the specific relationship but will discuss openly other issues with the parent. Or, a teen may overtly dismiss his/her parent's thoughts or/and feelings about the relationship, but at the same time will show some indications of willingness to maintain the relationship.). A rating of "3" would also be given whenever positive/valuing behaviors and avoidance or devaluing behaviors appear to be balanced throughout the discussion. In order to receive the lowest rating ("1"), no relationship valuing behaviors must be present.

## 2. Confidence in an Autonomous Future

### Description

This is a rating of the extent to which the teen conveys a sense of confidence in his/her goals and plans for the future and a sense of confidence and comfort with his/her upcoming autonomy. Please note that a teen's rating on this scale should be independent of the quality of the teen's relationship or discussion with the parent. That is, a teen may exhibit confidence in his/her autonomous future in a positive manner (as part of an enjoyable, friendly discussion with the parent) or in an angry/hostile manner (as part of an argumentative, frustrating discussion with the parent). Teens are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (fully confident vision of autonomous future) to 1 (extremely lacking in confident vision of autonomous future).

- 7 Fully Confident. The teen is fully confident and comfortable envisioning his/her autonomous future. The teen elaborates on future plans, expresses goals and plans clearly and confidently, and conveys a sense of positivity and self-assurance in discussing his/her goals and plans. The teen's opinions are clear and defined, and he/she answers questions regarding his/her future directly and confidently. If the teen's goals and plans conflict with views of the parent, the teen is not easily swayed into changing or aligning his/her views in accordance with those of the parent. The teen may maintain his/her confident vision of an

autonomous future in the face of opposition from the parent by using methods of negotiating, compromising, and explaining, or even by using methods of hostile fighting or arguing with the parent. The teen appears to be comfortable with his/her future autonomy and demonstrates that he/she has thought about his/her goals and plans in a realistic way. It is evident that the teen has explored options for the future, has weighed the pros and cons of each, and can speak confidently about what he/she is planning. Please note that the teen does not have to explicitly say the words “I know I’ll be fine” or “I’m confident about my plans for the future” in order to receive the highest rating as long as he/she demonstrates confidence in other ways described above. For example, a teen may exude a sense of confidence and comfort regarding his/her future autonomy through his/her demeanor and the ways in which he/she discusses his/her goals and plans.

- 4 Moderately Confident. The teen is moderately confident and comfortable envisioning his/her autonomous future. This teen differs from those who receive higher ratings in that there is a less confident, less comfortable quality to the teen’s behavior during the interaction. The teen talks about future goals and plans with some degree of confidence, but the teen seems to be quite tentative. That is, the teen does not convey the sense of certainty and self-assurance seen in teens with higher ratings, but at the same time the teen does not demonstrate the complete lack of confidence seen in teens with the lowest ratings. The quality of the teen’s thinking is just OK: The teen clearly has some goals and plans, but he/she does not convincingly communicate a strong sense of comfort and confidence in an autonomous future. Although the teen may demonstrate that he/she has made concrete plans and thought about his/her goals and plans, the teen’s opinions are not completely clear or well-defined and/or he/she does not provide supporting evidence for his/her claims. This teen is also less likely than teens with higher ratings to be swayed by a parent (i.e., persuaded by the parent to change his/her goals and plans) if the teen’s goals and plans conflict with the views of the parent.

Typically, moderate displays of confidence in goals and plans for the future include the following types of behaviors: (a) the teen does not speak as confidently and directly as he/she could have about what he/she is planning, (b) the teen did not elaborate as much (or provide as much proof that his/her goals and plans have been carefully considered and identified) as he/she could have, (c) the teen conveys some confidence in plans and goals but generally appears to be somewhat inhibited in his/her vision, yielding and deferent to the wishes of the parent, and/or somewhat dependent on the parent to establish goals and plans for the teen. An example of a teen who would receive a moderate rating would be a teen who shows some evidence that he/she has considered his/her future and identified/weighed some options; however, the evidence of confidence that would be required for a higher rating is lacking. For example, the teen may show some evidence that he/she has considered the transition to adulthood and some confidence in his/her ability to handle it, but this somewhat overshadowed

by the teen's refusal/inability to elaborate on future plans and to express his/her goals and plans clearly and directly.

A teen who is angry with his/her parent for being overly-protective and overly-controlling and who refuses to speak to the parent and answer questions about his/her plans for the future would receive an intermediate rating such as a "3" or "4" if he/she (even angrily) expresses confidence in his/her autonomy and shows some indication that he/she has goals and plans for the future. However, the observer must have a clear indication that the teen is somewhat confident about his/her goals and plans for the future and is withholding information from the parent because the teen does not expect the parent to be open and responsive to his/her goals and plans. Some teens who feel that they are not supported by their parents may appear to defensively or angrily withhold information from them (e.g., by providing very brief answers to questions, by directly telling the parent that they don't want to discuss their plans with them because of the way they expect the parent to respond). The rater senses that the teen does have some confidence in his/her goals and plans and future autonomy, but this is not clearly and directly expressed because the teen does not want to discuss this information with the parent. However, this type of teen would not receive a rating above "4" because although the teen has claimed confidence, he/she has provided no evidence to support his/her claims.

Teen confidence that is just slightly under the special, distinguished quality described for a "7" should receive a "6" or a "5". Ratings hovering around "2" or "3" should be given whenever there are serious concerns about the teen's confidence in his/her goals and plans for the future and/or comfort with autonomy. Teen confidence that is just slightly above the highly lacking quality described below for a "1" should receive a "2".

- 1 Extremely Lacking in Confidence. The teen seems to be totally lacking in confidence and comfort regarding his/her goals and plans for the future and his/her future autonomy. The teen expresses doubts about his/her own capacity to handle the future, does not elaborate on future plans, does not express goals and plans clearly and confidently, and/or conveys no sense of certainty or self-assurance in discussing his/her goals and plans. The teen's opinions (if expressed at all) are unclear and ill-defined, and he/she answers questions briefly, indirectly, or not at all. If the teen's stated goals and plans conflict with views of the parent, he/she does not follow-up by negotiating, explaining, arguing, etc. in an attempt to defend his/her position; the teen is so lacking in confidence regarding his/her goals, plans, and future autonomy that he/she is easily swayed or "thrown off" by a challenging parent. The teen appears to be very uncomfortable with his/her future autonomy and does not demonstrate at all that he/she has thought about his/her goals and plans in a realistic way. It is not at all evident that he/she has explored some options and weighed the pros and cons of each.

The teen may manifest his/her lack of confidence by attempting to avoid discussing his/her goals and plans for the future, by attempting to change the topic, by demonstrating a great deal of vagueness and uncertainty in his/her

responses to questions, and/or by overtly expressing a great deal of concern and discomfort imagining an autonomous future. For example, the teen may consistently reply to his/her parent's inquiries about his/her goals and plans for the future by saying "I don't know" (with no elaboration) and/or the teen may act as if he/she doesn't care about identifying future goals/plans. The teen may appear to be extremely dependent on the parent to continue to make decisions for him/her by completely yielding to the wishes of the parent and/or by just passively agreeing to everything the parent says without actively contributing to the conversation. A teen who receives a "1" rating may depend on his/her parent to completely carry the conversation by identifying plans and goals for the teen and elaborating on these issues for the teen. Overall, this teen shows no evidence of possessing confidence in his/her future goals, plans, or autonomy.

### 3. Open Discussion of Future

#### Description

This is a rating of the extent to which the teen openly and thoroughly discusses in his/her goals and plans for the future. Teens are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (fully open in discussion of future plans and goals) to 1 (extremely closed in discussion of future plans and goals).

- 7 Fully Open. The teen is fully open and self-disclosing when discussing his/her goals and plans for the future. Even if the teen hasn't made a lot of concrete decisions yet and even if the teen isn't confident about his/her future goals and plans, he/she initiates discussion of various aspects of the topic, shares his/her thoughts and feelings with the parent, elaborates on issues raised by the parent, and expands the conversation in ways that would not be possible if the parent were given full responsibility for maintaining the discussion. The teen thoughtfully considers and elaborates on relevant aspects of this topic (e.g., possible career goals; the difficulties of adulthood, independence, and his/her abilities to handle the transition). The teen is thoughtful and eager in his/her discussion of this topic, and even if his/her opinions are not clear and defined, he/she seems very willing to explore this issue with his/her parent. The teen appears to honestly and directly respond to issues/questions raised by the parent. The teen openly, fully, and richly communicates his/her thoughts, feelings, goals, and plans – even when these conflict with those of the parent. Even if the teen is uncertain about his/her goals and plans for the future (and even if the teen is uncertain about how to go about identifying his/her goals and plans for the future), the teen may (during the course of the conversation) actively discuss various options with the parent, weigh the pros and cons of each, and speak openly and comfortably about his/her opinions. If the teen does have a very clear idea of his/her goals and plans for the future, he/she discusses these plans openly, eagerly, and comfortably.

Again, it is important to note that a fully "open" teen either may or may not be confident in his/her future goals, plans, and autonomy. A teen may show a great deal of confidence in his/her future autonomy while also actively and

thoughtfully participating in an open, full, and rich conversation with the parent. On the other hand, a teen may totally lack confidence in his/her autonomous future while still actively and thoughtfully participating in an open, full, and rich conversation with the parent. For example, the teen may openly share his/her fears, anxieties, and worries about being dependent on his/her parent and about establishing an autonomous future. Overall, a teen who receives a “7” rating (irrespective of his/her confidence in his/her future autonomy) participates in a full, rich conversation in which he/she initiates discussion, expresses emotion, and comfortably shares thoughts and feelings regarding his/her future plans and goals. Please note that in order to receive the highest scores, feelings about goals, plans and future autonomy must be conveyed along with the identification and discussion of possible goals and plans. It is also important to note that the content and openness of the discussion (as opposed to the particular way in which the teen openly discloses information) is most important in determining this rating. That is, a teen who is temperamentally shy may engage in all the types of behaviors described above for this highest rating (e.g., initiating discussion, expanding ideas, openly responding to questions), yet do so in a more calm, laid-back manner than a teen who is more temperamentally outgoing.

- 4 Moderately Open. The teen is moderately open and self-disclosing when discussing his/her goals and plans for the future. This teen differs from those who receive higher ratings in that there is a less open, less engaged quality to the teen’s behavior during the interaction. To some degree, the teen engages in some active and involved discussion of his/her future plans, and/or the teen considers the difficulties of adulthood/independence and his/her abilities to handle the transition, but the teen seems to be somewhat inhibited in sharing his/her thoughts and feelings about future goals and plans with the parent. That is, the teen does not engage in as much emotional self-disclosure (i.e., sharing worries, concerns, etc.) or descriptive disclosure (i.e., giving details of one’s goals and plans) as teens with higher ratings, but at the same time the teen does not demonstrate the complete lack of openness and disclosure observed in teen’s with lower ratings. This teen does not avoid answering questions posed by the parents, but it is obvious that he/she is much less thoughtful and elaborate in his/her responses than he/she could be. Compared to teens who receive higher ratings, this teen is less comfortable and less effective when communicating his/her needs and concerns to the parent, and less open and effective in expressing the importance of his/her stated goals and plans, particularly when they conflict with the views of the parent.

Typically, moderate displays of openness when discussing one’s future include the following types of behaviors: (a) the teen is somewhat incomplete in his/her disclosure of information (e.g., the teen hesitantly conveys information to the parent or appears to selectively share information with the parent), (b) the teen does not openly express his/her thoughts and feelings to the extent that he/she could have, (c) the teen demonstrates some openness when discussing his/her future, but focuses on describing details of his/her plans to the relative

exclusion of sharing his/her personal feelings about the transition (i.e., the teen is somewhat inhibited when it comes to divulging feelings and personal vulnerabilities), (d) the teen is somewhat dependent on the parent to carry the conversation and elaborate on issues for the teen, (e) the teen's posture when discussing this topic is not completely relaxed and oriented toward the parent. An example of a teen who would receive a moderate rating would be a teen who does display some degree of openness and willingness to discuss his/her future and weigh options with the parent, but it feels to the observer as if the parent has to work really hard to get the teen to open up, disclose information, and elaborate on his/her future plans. Teens should also receive a moderate rating if they do not discuss their goals and plans very much (perhaps because the parent and teen have discussed the topic before), but it appears to the coder that there is an openness between the dyad around the topic.

A teen who describes or discusses his/her goals, plans, and autonomy in a very angry or hostile manner should receive a moderate rating. It is possible that a teen may be very forthright and may provide quite a bit of detail regarding his/her goals and plans, yet express these goals and plans (and feelings about these goals and plans) in a very angry/hostile manner. However, because angry/hostile teens are likely to defensively and selectively share information with their parents (perhaps because they do not expect their parents to be fully responsive), it is unlikely that they could engage in the sort of thorough and fully open discussion described above for a "7" teen – the type of discussion that is very thoughtful and requires elaboration of important issues, a willingness to explore issues raised by the parent, and an honest and comfortable sharing of other types of emotions they feel besides anger/hostility (e.g., fears, anxieties, worries, sadness, vulnerabilities).

Teen openness that is just slightly under the special, distinguished quality described for a "7" should receive a "6" or a "5". Ratings hovering around "2" or "3" should be given whenever there are serious concerns about the teen's thoughtful and thorough sharing of information. An almost complete lack of disclosure and openness (just slightly above the highly lacking quality described below for a "1") should receive a "2".

- 1 Extremely Closed. The teen seems to be totally closed and reluctant to discuss his/her future with the parent. The teen does not share his/her thoughts and feelings with the parent and does not use the opportunity to discuss and weigh the pros and cons of various options with the parent. During the interaction, the teen does not thoughtfully consider the difficulties of adulthood/independence and his/her abilities to handle the transition. The teen does not elaborate on issues that have been raised by the parent, he/she only very reluctantly answers the parent's questions, and he/she does not voluntarily express or disclose any information. The teen is not at all thoughtful, eager, or open in the discussion of his/her future, and he/she rarely (if at all) makes his/her opinions known to the parent. The teen may demonstrate his/her lack of openness by refusing to answer the parent's questions or by answering the questions very briefly and indirectly. This teen makes no attempt to convey his thoughts, feelings, desires, or needs to the parent. The teen does not attempt to explain his/her views to the

parent (particularly when they conflict with the views of the parent). Other ways in which the teen may manifest his/her extreme lack of openness include (a) attempting to completely avoid discussing his/her future with the parent, (b) consistently attempting to change the topic whenever the parent tries to engage him/her in conversation, and (c) overtly expressing that he/she wishes to withhold information from the parent (e.g., because the parent would not understand or support him/her). A teen who receives a low rating on this scale would never overtly express any worries and concerns or share any personal vulnerabilities with the parent.

It is important to note that a “closed” teen either may or may not be confident in his/her future goals, plans, and autonomy. A teen may show some degree of confidence in his/her future autonomy while still appearing to be very uncomfortable discussing his/her future with the parent: The teen may be confident in his/her goals and plans, but just not willing or able to openly discuss and explore his/her future with the parent. On the other hand, a teen may totally lack confidence in his/her autonomous future while also exhibiting a discomfort and unwillingness to discuss his/her future with the parent. A teen who lacks both confidence and openness may consistently reply to his/her parent’s inquiries about his/her goals and plans for the future by saying “I don’t know” (with no elaboration), the teen may act as if he/she doesn’t care about identifying future goals/plans, and/or the teen may just passively agree to everything the parent says without actively contributing to the conversation. A teen who receives a “1” rating appears to be involved in a one-sided conversation in which the parent takes full responsibility for carrying and maintaining the conversation by identifying issues and elaborating on these issues for the teen. Overall, this teen shows no evidence of attempting to participate in a full, rich conversation in which he/she initiates discussion, expresses emotion, and comfortably shares thoughts and feelings.

#### 4/5. Affective Quality

##### Description

Two separate scales are used to measure the teen’s affective quality in the interaction. The positive affect/enjoyment scale assesses the teen’s overall positive emotionality and enjoyment during the discussion with his/her parent. The hostile affect scale is a rating of the teen’s overall hostile/angry emotionality during the discussion with his/her parent. Although these are separate scales, they are, by definition, highly correlated; it is impossible to receive high scores on both scales, but it is possible to receive moderate or low scores on both. For each scale, teens receive a rating ranging from 1 (low) to 7 (high).

#### 4. POSITIVE AFFECT/ENJOYMENT

- 7 High positive affect/enjoyment. The teen displays a great deal of positive emotional affect and enjoyment throughout the discussion (as much as is likely to occur in this type of situation). Behaviors that indicate positive emotional



affect and enjoyment include smiles, laughter, positive voice tone (with positive and enthusiastic inflections), enthusiasm in the process of the task, positive facial expressions, verbal expressions of happiness or enjoyment, etc. The teen's body posture must be relaxed and oriented toward the parent while he/she is exhibiting positive affect/enjoyment in order to receive this highest score, but a relaxed body posture and orientation toward the parent should not be considered positive affect/enjoyment in and of itself.

If the teen expresses clear positive affect/enjoyment but in a less special, remarkable, or distinguished manner, he/she should receive a "5" or a "6". Please note that sarcastic smiles, teasing, fake positive tones and so forth are not signs of positive affect/enjoyment (but instead may be indices of hostile affect). Also, please note that embarrassed, awkward, placating, uncomfortable smiles in response to criticism or attack from the parent should not be considered positive affect/enjoyment. In addition, neutral conversation without the presence of one or more of the indices of positive affect/enjoyment described above should not be rated as positive affect/enjoyment.

- 4 Moderate positive affect/enjoyment. The teen displays some moderate signs of positive affect/enjoyment in parts of the discussion. He/she may occasionally smile at the parent, speak in a positive voice tone (with positive and enthusiastic inflections), show positive facial expressions, etc., but this behavior occurs at only moderate levels and with less frequency than that observed in teens who receive higher ratings. A teen might also receive a moderate score if he/she shows some signs of positive affect/enjoyment, but is not completely relaxed and oriented toward the parent.
- 1 No positive affect/enjoyment. None of the indices of positive affect/enjoyment described above are displayed by the teen. If the teen shows very low amounts of positive affect/enjoyment, he/she should receive a slightly higher score (but less than a "4"). For example, if the only sign of positive affect/enjoyment displayed by a teen during the course of the entire interaction is one brief instance of smiling or laughter in response to something funny the parent said, he/she would receive a score of "2".

## 5. Hostile Affect

- 7 High hostile affect. To receive this extreme score, a teen would typically display hostile, angry, or frustrated emotional affect throughout the discussion (e.g., lack of eye contact paired with frowns, irritated or hostile voice tone, lack of enthusiasm in the process of the task, no interest in making an emotional connection with the parent). The teen's body posture is tense and oriented away from the parent, and the teen exhibits negative (i.e., hostile, angry, frustrated, sarcastic) facial expressions. The teen frequently criticizes the parent and/or demonstrates frustration with the parent (e.g., negative sighs, tunes parent out, interrupts parent frequently, refuses to listen to parent's perspective, rolls eyes). The teen may exhibit hostile affect by making sarcastic statements, displaying

sarcastic/hostile smiles, blaming the parent, being generally uncooperative, and/or showing annoyance with the parent and his/her suggestions. Overall, negative vocal, face, and body expressions which indicate disinterest, tension, anger, impatience, frustration, and/or rigidity are displayed. If a teen displays the above behaviors in considerable parts of (but not throughout) the interaction, he/she should receive a slightly lower score (but more than a “4”).

- 4 Some hostile affect. The teen displays some forms of the hostile emotional affect (described above) in some parts of the discussion but not most of it. The teen may criticize the parent and/or demonstrate frustration with the parent, but it is not the most marked feature of his/her behavior; his/her body posture may be generally tense and he/she may be generally not oriented toward the parent. The teen may also exhibit some negative facial expressions, but much less frequently than a “7” teen. Overall, the teen’s hostile/angry affect is less intense than that of teens who receive higher ratings. His/her hostility toward the parent is evident but much more moderate and much less frequent and intense than that of a “7” teen.
- 1 No hostile affect. This teen does not show any signs of hostile/angry affect described above. If a teen displays some very minimal instances of hostile affect, he/she should receive a slightly higher score (but less than a “4”). If a teen is only neutrally uncooperative (e.g., the teen provides very brief answers to questions and is otherwise silent and not contributing to the process of the task), he/she should not receive a score greater than “3”. Other forms of hostility/negativity (e.g., irritation, frustration, annoyance) must also be present in order for the teen to receive a higher score.

## 6. Care-Seeking/Care-Acceptance

### Description

This scale assesses the degree to which the teen seeks care or support from his/her parent during the course of the discussion. This scale assesses the degree to which the teen solicits any form of support and caregiving from the parent (emotional support, instrumental/problem-solving support, physical proximity). This scale also assesses the degree to which the teen is accepting of and receptive to the support attempts of his/her parent. Teens are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (highly seeking and accepting of care/support) to 1 (no seeking or accepting of care/support).

- 7 Highly Seeking and Accepting of Care/Support. The teen overtly and directly asks for emotional or instrumental support from the parent during the course of the discussion. The teen may seek emotional support by seeking physical proximity to the parent (when it’s clear that this reaching out is in response to the teen’s emotional needs and not the parents; in the latter case, this should not count as care-seeking); asking for comfort and/or reassurance that everything will be okay (e.g., “Do you think everything will work out okay in the end?”), making requests for understanding or agreement (e.g., “don’t you think?”);

“know what I mean?”; “Do you ever feel this way?”; “Did you ever worry about things like this too?”). The teen may seek instrumental forms of support from the parent by asking for help in solving a particular problem (e.g., “Will you go see my guidance counselor with me?”; “Will you read my college essay for me and give me some advice about how to improve it?”; “When do you think I should start applying for college?”; “Where do you think I should apply?”; “Do you have any advice about the best way to manage my time when I’m in college...How did you do it?”; “How did you study and get good grades?”; “What would you do if you were in this situation...What do you think I should do?”). The teen asks directly for help, asks questions of the parent, asks how the parent has handled a similar situation, requests advice/suggestions about how to solve a problem, and/or asks for advice about how to escape a particular unpleasant situation.

The teen is also receptive to and accepting of the parent’s care, support, and assistance. Teens may show their acceptance of and receptiveness to their parent’s support attempts by following up and elaborating on the parent’s comments (which were made in an effort to reassure the teen or to help the teen solve a problem). For example, a teen may follow up on the parent’s suggestions by providing more information about a situation, by actively working through a solution scenario (based on the parent’s suggestions) with the parent, by appearing less anxious about a problem or more confident about how to solve a problem, by thanking the parent for his/her help/support, etc. A receptive teen does not appear to be resistant to the support-attempts of the parent. The teen conveys either verbally or non-verbally that the parent’s input is welcomed and appreciated. In order to receive this highest rating, adolescents must be highly accepting of his/her parent’s care/support attempts in the active ways described above (e.g., by following up and elaborating on suggestions offered by the parent) AND the adolescent must have directly solicited care/support from the parent at least once during the course of the interaction.

Scores of “5” and “6” should be given if the adolescent is actively accepting of his/her parent’s support/care attempts in the ways described above and openly discloses concerns about a problem (in a way that is likely to elicit care/support from a parent), but does not directly ask for emotional or instrumental support in the ways described above. Examples of statements that involve open disclosure of worries/concerns are as follows: “I’m really worried that I won’t be able to get into a good college” or “I feel bad that I’m almost 18 years old and I don’t know what I want to do with my life” or “Lately I’ve been very depressed and upset about my scores on the SATs.” Please note that in order to receive scores of “5” or “6,” this less direct form of support-seeking must involve an openness and honesty in disclosing problems and concerns. More indirect forms of care-seeking in which the adolescent seems to be “holding back” in disclosing concerns/worries and “beating around the bush” in his/her attempts to get care/support from the parent, should receive lower scores because they involve a much greater degree of “mind-reading” on the parent’s part. A teen may also receive scores of 5-6 if he/she does directly ask for

emotional or instrumental support but occasionally appears to be less accepting of the parent's caregiving efforts.

- 4 Moderately Seeking and Accepting of Care/Support. A teen may receive a moderate score if he/she (a) is highly accepting of support/care in a way that encourages the parent to continue giving it without directly asking for or seeking support/care, or (b) asks for or seeks support/care, but does not seem to be receptive to or accepting of the support/care that is provided by the parent. Lower scores may be given depending on what happens in the specific dyadic interaction, but a "4" is the highest score that may be given in these situations. A moderate score may also be given when adolescents indirectly seek care/support by openly disclosing emotions in the manner described above for a 5 or 6 rating, yet show only mild (and not highly accepting) forms of acceptance of the parent's care/support. [A teen may show mild acceptance by passively nodding in agreement to advice provided by the parent without ever following-up or elaborating in the ways described above.]

Scores of "2" and "3" may be given in the following situations: (a) when there is no form of open or direct care-seeking displayed by the adolescent (the types of care-seeking described above for ratings of 5 – 7) and only mild forms of accepting (e.g., as described above, the teen may show mild acceptance by nodding in agreement to advice provided by the parent without ever following-up or elaborating in the ways described above), (b) when the adolescent indirectly hints for care/support in a "holding back" or "beating around the bush" manner that does not involve open disclosure of concerns/worries (e.g., "Well, some kids get financial assistance from their parents while they're in college") and displays only mild forms of care-acceptance.

- 1 No Seeking or Acceptance of Care/Support. The teen does not seek or solicit any form of care or support from the parent, and the teen shows no acceptance of or receptivity to any of the parent's support attempts, during the course of the leaving home discussion. Please note that a teen may receive this low score either because (a) he/she never sought care/support from the parent and was totally unaccepting of any caregiving attempts made by the parent, or (b) he/she never sought care/support from the parent and had no opportunity to be accepting or rejecting of the parent's caregiving attempts because the parent provided no care/support throughout the entire discussion.

## 7. Global Security

### Description

This scale is designed to assess the security a teen seems to manifest in relation to a particular parent. This is a rating of the extent to which the teen shows evidence of being able to share thoughts, feelings, worries, and concerns with the parent (in an affectively positive manner), is able to derive comfort from the parent when needed, and is able to confidently explore his/her future while feeling fully supported,

encouraged, and understood by the parent. This is also a rating of the extent to which the teen engages in an open, easy, calm, natural, and connected interaction with the parent.

- 7 Fully Secure. A teen who is fully secure is able to share thoughts, feelings, worries, and concerns with the parent (in an affectively positive manner), is able to derive comfort from the parent when needed, and is able to confidently explore his/her future while feeling fully supported, encouraged, and understood by the parent. The teen engages in an open, easy, calm, natural, and connected interaction with the parent. The teen initiates real and personal discussion of the interaction topics, and the teen often makes direct, full-faced eye-contact with the parent during the interaction. The fully secure teen is actively initiating of positive interaction, and is relaxed, confident, and calm. The teen is pleased with the parent's contribution to the discussion, is clearly at ease with the parent, and is responsive to parental initiations. Secure responsiveness may be shown by ready, eager expansion of the parent's own remarks. That is, the teen's responses to the parent may serve to continue, prolong, or expand the conversation. The teen makes it clear (both verbally and nonverbally) that conversation and dialogue are welcomed. Secure responsiveness may also be shown by the teen breaking in eagerly to add his/her own thoughts, observations, comments or (not unpleasant) contradictions while the parent is speaking. The speech quality between the parent and teen is comfortable. Overall, the teen shows some genuine pleasure in the parent and seems essentially relaxed (calm) throughout the interaction. Secure teens either may initiate interaction, proximity, or contact with the parent, or may simply be genuinely responsive to the parent's own initiations. Although this does not need to be stated explicitly by the teen, the coder senses that the teen is confident of his/her parent's availability (i.e., emotional availability during the discussion and future availability as the teen moves into adulthood).
- 4 Moderately Secure. The teen should be given a moderate rating if (a) he/she shows no marked signs of either security or insecurity, but seems sufficiently at ease and without anxiety in the presence of the parent to be given this rating, or if (b) he/she shows some signs of security sufficient for a higher rating, but some difficulty (insecurity) is exhibited which lowers the ratings. For example, a moderately secure teen may, although being responsive to the parent, appear somewhat neutral, reserved, and/or disconnected during the discussion. The teen may be largely responsive and interactive but exhibit some brief periods of ignoring or delaying in replying to the parent, failing to look at the parent as much as would be expected, etc. Although a moderately secure teen may show signs of security, the observer senses that the teen does not as fully and comfortably as teens with higher ratings share thoughts and feelings with the parent or derive comfort from the parent when needed. The observer may also sense that the teen does not feel fully supported, encouraged, and understood by the parent. The teen's interaction with the parent appears to be somewhat less easy, open, and natural than the interactions of teens who receive higher ratings.

- 1 Very Insecure. A teen who is very insecure shows no evidence of being able to (a) comfortably share thoughts, feelings, worries, and concerns with the parent (in an affectively positive manner), (b) derive comfort from the parent when needed, and (c) confidently explore his/her future while feeling fully supported, encouraged, and understood by the parent. The teen's interaction with the parent appears to be uneasy and disconnected. The teen is extremely avoidant, extremely ambivalent, or shows several combined signs of insecurity. No signs of real security are present.

A highly avoidant teen seems affectless with regard to the parent during interaction and stays oriented away from the parent. The teen may even move to a greater physical distance from the parent (e.g., by pushing his/her chair further away from the parent during the interaction). The teen may speak whenever spoken to, but the teen's discussion seems neutral and impersonal. The teen does not seem to warm up to the parent during the entire interaction. Neutral ignoring of the parent, as well as subtle and non-confrontational signs of anger and annoyance, may be present. Other behaviors that are indicative of avoidance include keeping the body or head angled away from the parent, showing an aversion to orienting oneself toward the parent, speaking to the parent as little as possible by providing only minimal responses to questions. The teen may use dismissing, flat tones (neutral and business-like) and not encourage any more conversation than absolutely necessary.

A highly ambivalent teen may show moderate avoidance mixed with direct looks and direct responses to the parent. For example, the teen may (a) talk to the parent while oriented away from the parent, (b) move away from the parent, then smile and interact in a manner that is simultaneously pleasant and avoidant. The behavior of the insecure-ambivalent teen may be confusing, since there are likely to be elements of avoidance, sadness, subtle fear, and hostility. These mixed indices of insecurity may be combined with immature behavior, such as "cute" whininess, "cute" affectionateness, or "cute" proximity-seeking in which ambivalence about proximity to the parent is noticeable. This type of immature behavior is incompatible with a sense of security with the parent. The hostile behavior of ambivalent teens is either simple and direct, or it is indirect and bizarre. The teen may display ambivalent movements when near the parent, looks of sadness, or indices of disorganization (i.e., the parent appears to have a disorganizing, disrupting, or confusing effect on the teen's behavior). Disorganization may appear in a facial expression, slight stumbling in speech, or fumbling in movement.

A very insecure teen may also (a) exhibit fake, pseudo-bright smiles, (b) appear to be acting when looking at, or interacting with, the parent, (c) look at the parent with apprehension or subtle resentment, (d) exhibit nervousness, discomfort, and/or frustration when interacting with the parent, (e) exhibit behaviors that indicate that the teen is the one who is in control of the parent, (f) reject the parent through "punitive silence" or ignoring (e.g., by waiting a few seconds too long to respond to parental queries or by failing to respond at all), and (g) act to humiliate, embarrass, reject, or punish the parent during the interaction.

## PARENTAL SCALES

### 1. Valuing of the Relationship

#### Description

The valuing of the relationship scale assesses the degree to which the parent values his/her relationship with the teen, acknowledges and accepts the importance of the relationship, and expresses a desire to continue the relationship with the teen in the future. This scale assesses the extent to which the parent believes and acknowledges that the relationship with the teen enhances the parent's life and will continue to be valued as the teen grows toward adulthood. This is a rating of the parent's level of connection with the teen, and the degree to which the teen openly conveys that the relationship with the teen is important in his/her life when discussing relationship issues. Finally, this scale also assesses the degree to which the parent encourages discussion of relationship issues. Parents are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (highly valuing) to 1 (highly devaluing).

- 7 Highly valuing the relationship. The parent clearly values his/her relationship with the teen. His/her acknowledgment and acceptance of the importance of the relationship are very strong. He/she expresses a strong desire for a future relationship with the teen and, if the teen appears to be seeking reassurance, the parent assures the teen of his/her availability to the teen in the future. The parent acknowledges that the relationship with the teen enhances the parent's life and believes that the relationship promotes the teen's growth toward adulthood. The parent appears to exhibit a deep level of connection with the teen and openly and spontaneously conveys that the relationship with the teen is important in his/her life when discussing relationship issues. If the parent describes his/her own past experiences (regarding how his/her relationship changed with his/her own parent upon graduating from high school), this is done in a way that conveys the parent's valuing of the parent's future relationship with his/her own teen. If a parent shows most of the above behaviors but not all, or if a parent clearly values the relationship but in a less special, remarkable, or distinguished manner, he/she should receive a "5" or a "6". A parent would also receive a "5" or a "6" if the dyad does not explicitly discuss the issue of the relationship (perhaps because they ran out of time and didn't get to that topic), but the rater can clearly sense (by the way the dyad discusses the teen's goals and plans for the future) that the parent does very much value his/her relationship with the parent. That is, parents may show that they value their relationship in other ways besides explicitly talking about the relationship (e.g., showing a deep respect for, interest in, and valuing of the teen's thoughts, feelings, goals, and plans).

Please note that a parent might indicate a desire to develop a closer relationship with the teen as he/she matures. If it is obvious that the parent still highly values the relationship as it is (and does not express dissatisfaction with the teen or the relationship), then the parent would receive a high rating (a rating of 5, 6, or 7 depending on the level of valuing demonstrated throughout the

interaction). However, if the parent expresses some dissatisfaction with the teen or relationship while communicating this desire for a closer relationship, then the parent would receive a more moderate rating (such as a “4”).

- 4 Moderately valuing the relationship. Typically, a parent will receive this score when he/she seems to value his/her relationship with the teen, but either this evaluation is mixed with some minor negative feelings (devaluing), or the parent’s responses to the relationship issue are very modest. This parent may acknowledge and accept the importance of the relationship, but he/she initiates only limited conversation about these issues, does not elaborate on them, and/or sometimes ceases the conversation leaving discussion of relationship topics unfinished or incomplete. The parent may express some desire to continue the relationship with the teen in the future, but at the same time might express some doubt about it. The parent may (in some modest ways) acknowledge that the relationship with the teen enhances his/her life, and the parent may appear to exhibit some degree of connection with the parent when discussing relationship issues. When discussing relationship issues, the discussion may appear to be more informative than intimate. The parent may seem hesitant to share his/her thoughts and feelings about the relationship. In some parts of the conversation the parent might seem to devalue the relationship by displaying avoidance or mild hostility toward the teen (boredom, light sarcasm, discomfort with teen’s ideas), but these instances are sporadic and very modest. In general, a parent will receive a moderate rating when the parent exhibits either (a) clear valuing of the relationship combined with some negativity or devaluing of the relationship (although the valuing must clearly outweigh the negativity/devaluing), or (b) just modest levels of valuing the relationship (e.g., acknowledging the importance of the relationship without elaborating on relationship issues).

Please note that if the dyad does not explicitly discuss the issue of the relationship (perhaps because they ran out of time and didn’t get to that topic), but the rater can clearly sense (by the way the dyad discusses the teen’s goals and plans for the future) that the parent does very much value his/her relationship with the teen, then the parent should receive a rating of “5” or “6” for this scale (depending on the perceived strength of the parent’s valuing of the relationship). A parent who repeatedly tries to initiate discussion about the relationship but with little or no success should receive a rating of “3” or “4” depending on the amount of success. It is also important to note that bringing up the relationship issue in a non-serious manner without the intention of initiating a discussion about it (e.g., sarcastically mentioning the topic or making a joke about it) does not count as valuing the relationship.

- 1 Highly devaluing the relationship. Devaluation of the relationship is typically displayed in one of two general ways, one being an avoiding style and the other being an overt devaluation of the relationship. [Devaluation of the relationship may be manifested either overtly or covertly.] Both styles suggest a tendency to devalue the importance of the relationship with the teen.



The avoiding parent does not appear to value his/her relationship with the teen because he/she is actively avoiding relationship issues. The parent may clearly state his/her unwillingness to discuss relationship issues (e.g., by stating that it's an odd topic to discuss), may attempt to ignore the teen's suggestions to discuss these issues (e.g. by attempting to change the topic), and/or may show an extreme discomfort in discussing relationship issues. This type of parent may show evidence of covertly devaluing the relationship by minimizing the importance of discussing relationship issues or by minimizing/dismissing the existence of relationship problems when it is clear that there is a problem (e.g., curtly stating, "It's fine" or "There's no problem" or "We don't need to talk about this" or "I don't really have anything to say about this").

The overtly devaluing parent does not appear to value his/her relationship with the teen because he/she overtly minimizes the importance of the relationship (and perhaps also emphasizes the burdens that the teen presents in his/her life). The parent may openly express that he/she finds the relationship unsatisfactory/unpleasant or that he/she finds the teen to be very difficult to understand and/or get along with. The parent may discuss the relationship as if it is much more of a burden than a valuable and pleasurable experience (e.g., "Once you're out of my house, my job is over"). A parent may also show overt devaluation of the relationship in other ways (e.g., by showing a general annoyance toward the teen, by reacting negatively to, and disrespectful of, the teen's thoughts and feelings).

To receive this score a parent should be either extremely hostile and negative toward the teen, or should be extremely avoiding of any conversation about the relationship with the teen. If a parent generally shows either active avoidance or devaluing behaviors, but also presents some very sporadic instances of positive behaviors toward the teen, he/she should receive a score of "2". (Avoidance or devaluing behaviors must clearly outweigh the positive behaviors in order to assign a rating of "2".) If a parent is generally devaluing of the relationship or avoiding of relationship issues, but also conveys some behaviors that indicate that he/she clearly values some aspects of his/her relationship with the teen, then he/she should receive a score of "3". A rating of "3" would also be given whenever positive/valuing behaviors and avoidance or devaluing behaviors appear to be balanced throughout the discussion. In order to receive the lowest rating ("1"), no relationship valuing behaviors must be present.

## 2. Support for Teen's Autonomy

### Description

This is a rating of the extent to which the parent supports the teen's developing autonomy, and believes in the teen's ability to handle the transition to adulthood. This is also a rating of the extent to which the parent conveys a sense of confidence and interest in the teen's goals and plans for the future and a sense of support for the teen's upcoming autonomy by balancing an acceptance of the upcoming change in the parent-child roles with a continued availability to the teen whenever needed.. Parents are rated

on a scale ranging from 7 (fully supportive of teen's autonomy) to 1 (extremely unsupportive of autonomy).

- 7 Fully Supportive of Autonomy. The parent is fully supportive of the teen's developing autonomy and is fully confident discussing the teen's goals and plans for the future and envisioning the teen's future autonomy. The parent conveys a strong sense of confidence and interest in the teen's goals and plans for the future. Even if the parent voices some concerns about the difficulty of the transition facing the teen, the parent seems confident of the teen's abilities and fully supports the teen's developing autonomy by positively acknowledging and encouraging the teen's need and desire to grow more autonomous, and by conveying a belief in the teen's ability to handle the transition to adulthood. The parent is accepting and encouraging of the teen's future plans and goals, and clearly and confidently conveys a sense of positivity and assurance regarding the teen's autonomous future. The parent conveys an acceptance of the upcoming change in the parent-child roles, an acceptance of the teen's need/desire to "grow up" and leave home (i.e., less parental control and a move toward greater mutuality) while also conveying a continued availability to the teen whenever needed. The parent conveys a positive attitude and sense of optimism about the teen's future.

The parent may demonstrate this confidence and support of autonomy by giving examples of the teen's competence (e.g., "You've always had great interpersonal skills and really good common sense, so I know you'll do just fine on your own."), complimenting the teen for good judgment or maturity, expressing confidence in the teen's ability to handle college tasks (e.g., "You'll manage your time well, so I know you'll have no trouble getting good grades in college."), reassuring the teen in response to doubts the teen may have regarding establishing an autonomous future, facilitating dialogue by asking questions about the teen's thoughts and feelings regarding his/her future plans and goals (e.g., "Do you think you would want to try to find a way to combine both of your interests in art and business?"), encouraging the exploration and development of the teen's thoughts and feelings about his/her goals and plans for the future, expressing understanding of the teen and confidence in the teen's autonomous future (e.g., "I know you can be shy and it's hard for you to make new friends, but I think you'll be fine."). The parent may support the teen's autonomy by sharing his/her own experience in a way that supports the teen. The parent does not create or highlight obstacles to the teen's becoming autonomous, and the parent does not undermine the teen's confidence about establishing autonomy (e.g., by teasing the teen about past failures, criticizing or dismissing the teen's goals, focusing excessively on difficulties the teen will face, making negative comparisons between teen and siblings or peers). The parent also does not express doubt or worry about the effects of relationship change on the self (i.e., worry or doubt about the parent's ability to function without the teen).

- 4 Moderately Supportive of Autonomy. The parent is moderately supportive of the teen's developing autonomy and is moderately confident discussing his/her teen's goals and plans for the future and envisioning his/her teen's autonomy. Compared to parents who receive higher ratings, there is a less confident, less supportive, less open, and less engaged quality to the parent's behavior during the interaction.

The parent conveys some sense of confidence and interest in the teen's abilities and goals and plans for the future, and the parent provides some encouragement and support for the teen's developing autonomy, but the parent seems to be somewhat neutral and reserved in his/her communication of this support to the teen. The parent does not convey the strong sense of positivity, assurance, and support (regarding the teen's autonomous future) seen in parents with higher ratings, but at the same time the parent does not demonstrate the complete lack of support for autonomy seen in parents with lower ratings. The quality of the parent's support for the teen's autonomy is just OK: Although the parent demonstrates some degree of confidence and support of the teen's autonomy by behaving in some of the ways described above for a "7" parent (e.g., facilitating dialogue by asking questions about the teen's thoughts and feelings regarding his/her future plans and goals), the parent does this much less effectively in that the observer is left feeling like the parent did not provide the level of support that would've been hoped for by the teen. For example, the parent does not follow up on important issues raised by the teen and does not appear to be as invested as parents with higher ratings in thoroughly exploring the teen's goals, thoughts, and feelings regarding his/her upcoming autonomy. Also, parents who are moderately supportive of their teen's autonomy are less likely than parents with higher ratings to achieve the optimal balance of conveying both an acceptance of the teen's need/desire to "grow up" and leave home (i.e., less parental control and a move toward greater mutuality) and also a continued availability to the teen whenever needed. For example, parents with moderate ratings are likely to demonstrate an imbalance either by (a) focusing on the importance of the teen's independence to the relative exclusion any assurances of the parent's continuing availability when needed, or by (b) focusing heavily on assuring the teen of the parent's continuing availability to the relative exclusion of a complete acknowledgement of the teen's ability to function independently.

Typically, moderate displays of support for the teen's autonomy include the following types of behaviors: (a) although the parent conveys some confidence in and support of the teen's future autonomy, he/she does not fully explore and encourage disclosure of the teen's thoughts and feelings as much as he/she could have; (b) the parent's posture when discussing the teen's goals, plans, and future autonomy is not completely relaxed and oriented toward the teen (giving the teen and the observer the sense that the parent is lacking some degree of openness regarding the issue of the teen's autonomy); (c) the parent may be so overzealous in his/her attempts to support the teen's future autonomy and goals/plans that the parent's support attempts may be perceived as controlling or intrusive by the teen [e.g., the parent shares so many of his/her

own experiences with the teen (in an effort to be helpful) that he/she dominates/controls the conversation more than he/she should have (such that the teen doesn't have much opportunity to disclose his/her own thoughts and feelings or direct the conversation in a way that's most beneficial to the teen); in the parent's efforts to help the teen reach his/her goals, the parent becomes too directive and forceful when instructing the teen about how to achieve his/her goals, etc.] Parents who receive moderate ratings may also show some signs of the role-reversal, devaluing/negativity, or avoidance behaviors described below for lower ratings of support for autonomy; however, in order to receive a moderate rating, these behaviors must be infrequent and generally overshadowed by the presence of supportive behaviors. For example, there may be an instance or two in which a parent demonstrates a reluctance to "let the teen go" (without balancing this reluctance with encouragement of the teen's autonomy) because he/she has grown somewhat reliant on the teen's presence in his/her life. However, the parent does not let this become a major focus of the conversation, and in other parts of the discussion, the parent makes some active, genuine attempts to support and encourage the teen's autonomy.

Parent support for autonomy that is just slightly under the special, distinguished quality described for a "7" should receive a "6" or a "5". Ratings hovering around "2" or "3" should be given whenever there are serious concerns about the parent's confidence in his/her teen's goals and plans for the future and/or serious concerns about the parent's support of the teen's autonomy. Parental support for autonomy that is just slightly above the highly lacking quality described below for a "1" should receive a "2".

- 1 Extremely Unsupportive of Autonomy. The parent seems to totally lack confidence in the teen's goals and plans for the future and support for the teen's upcoming autonomy. The parent may demonstrate a complete lack of support of the teen's developing autonomy in three ways. First, the parent simply may not engage in any positive behaviors that demonstrate a confidence and support of the teen's autonomy. For example, this type of parent does not give examples of the teen's competence, compliment the teen for good judgment or maturity, express confidence in the teen's ability to handle college tasks, reassure the teen in response to doubts the teen may have regarding establishing an autonomous future, facilitate dialogue by asking questions about the teen's thoughts and feelings regarding his/her future plans and goals, or encourage the exploration and development of the teen's thoughts and feelings about his/her goals and plans for the future. This parent is not encouraging of the teen's future plans and goals, and never conveys a sense of positivity, optimism, interest, or assurance regarding the teen's autonomous future. Also, the parent never conveys an acceptance of the upcoming change in the parent-child roles, nor an acceptance of the teen's need/desire to "grow up" and leave home (i.e., less parental control and a move toward greater mutuality) while also conveying a continued availability to the teen whenever needed. The parent is not thoughtful, eager, or open in his/her discussion of this topic. The parent may manifest his/her lack of confidence and support by attempting to avoid discussing the teen's autonomous

future, by attempting to change the topic, and/or by demonstrating a great deal of vagueness and uncertainty in his/her responses to the teen's questions.

Second, the parent may exhibit a great deal of dependency on the teen and show strong signs of role-reversal. This parent does not convey a sense of confidence in the teen's goals and plans for the future or support the teen's autonomy because the parent appears to be extremely dependent on the teen for his/her own well-being. For example, the parent may focus the discussion on the difficulties he/she (the parent) will face when the teen is no longer living at home (e.g., loneliness, inability to function without the teen). The parent may also express doubt or worry about the effects of the teen's leaving home and becoming autonomous on the self. This parent may create or highlight obstacles to the teen's becoming autonomous (e.g., "How is your sister going to make it through high school if you're not right here to help her?"), and frequently expresses doubt or worry about the effects of relationship change on the self (i.e., worry or doubt about the parent's ability to function without the teen). This parent overtly expresses concern about the teen's autonomous future.

Third, the parent may demonstrate his/her lack of confidence in the teen's goals and plans for the future and lack of support for the teen's autonomy by devaluing the teen's ability to establish an autonomous future. For example, the parent may express uncertainty about the teen's ability to cope with the change, to manage his/her time responsibly, etc. The parent may also undermine the teen's confidence in his/her goals and plans for the future by criticizing the teen's career choices, ability to make sound decisions, etc. This parent may also undermine the teen's confidence about establishing autonomy (e.g., by teasing the teen about past failures, criticizing or dismissing the teen's goals, focusing excessively on difficulties the teen will face, making negative comparisons between teen and siblings or peers). This parent does not believe in the teen's ability to successfully handle the transition to adulthood and focuses mainly on the negative aspects of the teen's autonomous future. If the teen's stated goals and plans conflict with views of the parent, this parent may attempt to force his/her own views/agenda on the teen.

Overall, a parent who receives a "1" rating shows no evidence of possessing confidence in the teen's future goals and plans or of being comfortable with discussing or envisioning the teen's future autonomy.

### 3. Comfort with Teen's Autonomy

#### Description

This is a rating of the extent to which the parent generally feels comfortable with the teen's upcoming autonomy. Regardless of whether or not the parent is supportive of the teen's autonomy (in the ways described above in the Support for Autonomy scale), this is a rating of the extent to which the parent is comfortable with the fact that the parent will not be seeing (or interacting with) the teen as frequently in the near future, and of the extent to which the parent feels completely comfortable and at ease with letting the teen go. Parents are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (fully comfortable with teen's autonomy) to 1 (extremely uncomfortable with teen's autonomy).

- 7 Fully Comfortable with Autonomy. The parent appears to feel very comfortable with the teen's upcoming autonomy and separation from him/her. Regardless of whether or not the parent is supportive of the teen's autonomy (in the ways described above in the Support for Autonomy scale), the parent is completely comfortable with the fact that he/she will not be seeing (or interacting with) the teen as frequently in the near future, and completely comfortable and at ease with letting the teen go. The parent is fully comfortable discussing the teen's autonomous future and envisioning the teen's future autonomy. The parent fully welcomes and accepts the teen's independence.

Please note that comfort with autonomy may be conveyed in either a positive or a negative manner. That is, the parent may show comfort with and acceptance of the teen's upcoming independence either by making positive statements such as "I've prepared myself for this time, and I know that you're a very intelligent, responsible, caring young man, so it's really exciting to think about the great future that lies ahead for you," or by making negative statements such as "As soon as you graduate from high school, my job is done. It's scary to think about what you're going to make of your life, but once you're out, that's it; you'll be on your own, and my responsibility ends." Parents do not need to be supportive of their teen's autonomy (e.g., by conveying a sense of positivity, optimism and assurance regarding the teen's autonomous future) in order to receive a high score on this scale, yet they may be both supportive of and comfortable with the teen's autonomy. As long as the parent is comfortable with the teen's autonomy and with the upcoming change in the parent-child roles, he/she should receive a high score.

- 4 Moderately Comfortable with Autonomy. The parent appears to feel moderately comfortable with the teen's upcoming autonomy and separation from him/her. The parent is moderately comfortable with the fact that he/she will not be seeing (or interacting with) the teen as frequently in the near future, and moderately comfortable and at ease with letting the teen go. This parent may exhibit some comfort envisioning the teen's future autonomy (away from the parent), but may also express some sadness, worry, or concern regarding the upcoming separation, or some hesitation or reluctance about not seeing or interacting with the teen on a daily basis. Compared to parents who receive higher ratings, there is a less comfortable quality to the parent's behavior regarding the issue of the teen's autonomy. The parent may seem to be somewhat neutral and reserved in his/her discussion of this issue. The parent does not convey the strong sense of comfort with the teen's autonomous future seen in parents with higher ratings, but at the same time the parent does not demonstrate the complete lack of comfort with the teen's autonomy seen in parents with lower ratings. For example, there may be an instance or two in which a parent demonstrates a reluctance to "let the teen go" (without balancing this reluctance with encouragement of the teen's autonomy) because he/she has grown somewhat reliant on the teen's presence in his/her life. However, the parent does not let

this become a major focus of the conversation, and in other parts of the discussion, the parent shows some comfort with the teen's autonomy.

Parent comfort with autonomy that is just slightly under the distinguished quality described for a "7" should receive a "6" or a "5". Ratings hovering around "2" or "3" should be given whenever there are serious concerns about the parent's comfort with the teen's autonomy. Parental comfort with autonomy that is just slightly above the highly lacking quality described below for a "1" should receive a "2".

- 1 Extremely Uncomfortable with Autonomy. The parent seems to totally lack comfort with the teen's upcoming autonomy. The parent is completely uncomfortable with the fact that he/she will not be seeing (or interacting with) the teen as frequently in the near future, and completely uncomfortable and not at ease about letting the teen go. For example, the parent may exhibit a great deal of dependency on the teen and show strong signs of role-reversal. This parent may not convey a sense of comfort with the teen's autonomy because the parent appears to be extremely dependent on the teen for his/her own well-being. For example, the parent may focus the discussion on the difficulties he/she (the parent) will face when the teen is no longer living at home (e.g., loneliness, inability to function without the teen). The parent may also express doubt or worry about the effects of the teen's leaving home and becoming autonomous on the self. This parent may create or highlight obstacles to the teen's becoming autonomous (e.g., "How is your sister going to make it through high school if you're not right here to help her?"), and frequently expresses doubt or worry about the effects of relationship change on the self (i.e., worry or doubt about the parent's ability to function without the teen). The parent may also show discomfort with the teen's autonomy by expressing a great deal of worry/concern about the teen's ability or readiness to handle the autonomy. In general, this parent overtly expresses concern about his/her discomfort imagining the teen's autonomous future. Overall, a parent who receives a "1" rating shows no evidence of being comfortable with the teen's future autonomy.

#### 4/5. AFFECTIVE QUALITY

##### Description

Two separate scales are used to measure the parent's affective quality in the interaction. The positive affect/enjoyment scale assesses the parent's overall positive emotionality and enjoyment during the discussion with his/her teen. The hostile affect scale is a rating of the parent's overall hostile/angry emotionality during the discussion with his/her teen. Although these are separate scales, they are, by definition, highly correlated; it is impossible to receive high scores on both scales, but it is possible to receive moderate or low scores on both. For each scale, parents receive a rating ranging from 1 (low) to 7 (high).

#### 4. Positive Affect/Enjoyment

- 7 High positive affect/enjoyment. The parent displays a great deal of positive emotional affect and enjoyment throughout the discussion (as much as is likely to occur in this type of situation). Behaviors that indicate positive emotional affect and enjoyment include smiles, laughter, positive voice tone (with positive and enthusiastic inflections), enthusiasm in the process of the task, positive facial expressions, verbal expressions of happiness or enjoyment, etc. The parent's body posture must be relaxed and oriented toward the teen while he/she is exhibiting positive affect/enjoyment in order to receive this highest score, but a relaxed body posture and orientation toward the teen should not be considered positive affect/enjoyment in and of itself.

If the parent expresses clear positive affect/enjoyment but in a less special, remarkable, or distinguished manner, he/she should receive a "5" or a "6". Please note that sarcastic smiles, teasing, fake positive tones and so forth are not signs of positive affect/enjoyment (but instead may be indices of hostile affect). Also, please note that embarrassed, awkward, placating, uncomfortable smiles in response to criticism or attack from the teen should not be considered positive affect/enjoyment. In addition, neutral conversation without the presence of one or more of the indices of positive affect/enjoyment described above should not be rated as positive affect/enjoyment.

- 4 Moderate positive affect/enjoyment. The parent displays some moderate signs of positive affect/enjoyment in parts of the discussion. He/she may occasionally smile at the teen, speak in a positive voice tone (with positive and enthusiastic inflections), show positive facial expressions, etc., but this behavior occurs at only moderate levels and with less frequency than that observed in parents who receive higher ratings. A parent might also receive a moderate score if he/she shows some signs of positive affect/enjoyment, but is not completely relaxed and oriented toward the teen.
- 1 No positive affect/enjoyment. None of the indices of positive affect/enjoyment described above are displayed by the parent. If the parent shows very low amounts of positive affect/enjoyment, he/she should receive a slightly higher score (but less than a "4"). For example, if the only sign of positive affect/enjoyment displayed by a parent during the course of the entire interaction is one brief instance of smiling or laughter in response to something funny the teen said, he/she would receive a score of "2".

#### 5. HOSTILE AFFECT

- 7 High hostile affect. To receive this extreme score, a parent would typically display hostile, angry, or frustrated emotional affect throughout the discussion (e.g., lack of eye contact paired with frowns, irritated or hostile voice tone, lack of enthusiasm in the process of the task, no interest in making an emotional connection with the teen). His/her body posture is tense and oriented away from



the teen, and he/she exhibits negative (i.e., hostile, angry, frustrated, sarcastic) facial expressions. The parent frequently criticizes the teen and/or demonstrates frustration with him/her (e.g., negative sighs, tunes teen out, interrupts teen frequently, refuses to listen to teen's perspective, rolls eyes). The parent may exhibit hostile affect by making sarcastic statements, displaying sarcastic/hostile smiles, blaming the teen, being generally uncooperative, and/or showing annoyance with the teen and his/her suggestions. Overall, negative vocal, face, and body expressions which indicate disinterest, tension, anger, frustration, impatience, and/or rigidity are displayed. If a parent displays the above behaviors in considerable parts of (but not throughout) the interaction, he should receive a slightly lower score (but more than a "4").

- 4 Some hostile affect. The parent displays some forms of the hostile emotional affect (described above) in some parts of the discussion but not most of it. He/she may criticize the teen and/or demonstrate frustration with the teen, but it is not the most marked feature of his/her behavior; his/her body posture may be generally tense and he/she may be generally not oriented toward the teen. The parent may also exhibit some negative facial expressions, but much less frequently than a "7" parent. Overall, the parent's hostile/angry affect is less intense than that of parents who receive higher ratings. His/her hostility toward the teen is evident but much more moderate and much less frequent and intense than that of a "7" parent.
- 1 No hostile affect. This parent does not show any signs of the hostile/angry affect described above. If a parent displays some minimal instances of hostile affect, he/she should receive a slightly higher score (but less than a "4").

## 6. Sensitive Caregiving

### Description

This is a rating of the extent to which the parent appears to be sensitive and responsive to the teen throughout the discussion. Parents are rated on a scale ranging from 7 (fully sensitive and caring) to 1 (extremely insensitive).

- 7 Fully Sensitive. A fully sensitive parent demonstrates a very active effort to be sensitive and responsive to the teen throughout the discussion. The parent actively and persistently accepts (and shows concern for) the teen's worries, concerns, thoughts, and feelings. The parent is actively engaged in interaction with the teen during the discussion and makes a persistent effort to help the teen work through the discussion topics by being attentive, communicating understanding, and providing emotional (e.g., complimenting the teen's abilities) and/or instrumental (e.g., helping the teen devise a plan of action for the future, promising to do something to help the teen such as pay for his/her college education) forms of support. The parent makes active and persistent attempts to engage the teen in discussion by gathering information from the teen, by asking the teen questions, by clarifying issues for the teen, by providing

insight into problems, by offering suggestions/advice/assistance. The parent also conveys affection or empathy, reassures the teen, encourages disclosure of feelings and emotional displays, and/or assures the teen of the parent's continuing availability and accessibility. Throughout the course of the discussion of this topic, the parent exhibits a tender or concerned vocal quality, uses empathic statements acknowledging the difficulty of the situation, makes use of statements or reflections that promote further exploration or acceptance of the teen's feelings, and/or demonstrates supportive touching or reassurance. Overall, the parent makes an active effort to help, nurture, and care for the teen by being attentive (listening), by actually trying to help solve problems raised by the teen (if solvable), and/or by attempting to uplift the teen emotionally. The parent demonstrates a general willingness and ability to function as both a safe haven for the teen to turn to in times of distress and a secure base from which the teen may explore the world and make goals and plans for the future. A sensitive, nurturing, responsive caregiver is not overly-controlling, self-focused, or hostile, does not force his/her own agenda on the teen, and does not avoid exploration of the teen's thoughts and feelings.

- 4 Moderately Sensitive. The parent is moderately sensitive and responsive to the teen throughout the discussion. Compared to parents who receive higher ratings, the parent (a) shows less acceptance of and concern for the teen's worries, concerns, thoughts, and feelings and (b) makes a less persistent effort to help the teen work through the discussion topics by being attentive, communicating understanding, and providing emotional (e.g., complimenting the teen's abilities) and/or instrumental (e.g., helping the teen devise a plan of action for the future, promising to do something to help the teen) forms of support. The parent makes some attempts to responsively and sensitively engage the teen in discussion (e.g., by gathering information from the teen, asking the teen questions, clarifying issues for the teen, providing insight into problems, offering suggestions and assistance, encouraging disclosure of feelings and emotional displays), and the parent conveys some empathy, reassurance, and tenderness, but (a) the parent is not actively and persistently sensitive throughout the discussion (e.g., the parent does not maintain discussion of important issues raised by the teen to the extent that the teen may have hoped), (b) the parent seems to miss some important (and maybe subtle) cues regarding the teens needs, hopes, desires, and/or (c) although mainly sensitive and responsive, the parent sporadically shows some insensitivity and unresponsiveness (e.g., taking too much control over the direction of the conversation, being too directive with the teen in an attempt to help him/her solve problems and plan his/her future). The parent does not exhibit the high levels of sensitivity, tenderness, and responsiveness seen in parents with higher ratings, but at the same time the parent does not demonstrate the complete lack of sensitivity and responsiveness seen in parents with lower ratings. The quality of the parent's caregiving is just OK: Although the parent demonstrates some sensitivity by behaving in some of the ways described above for a "7" parent, the parent does this much less effectively in that the observer is left feeling like

the parent was not as sensitive or responsive as would've been hoped for (or needed) by the teen.

Caregiving that is just slightly under the special, distinguished quality described for a "7" should receive a "6" or a "5". Ratings hovering around "2" or "3" should be given whenever there are serious concerns about the parent's sensitivity and responsiveness. Parental sensitivity that is just slightly above the highly lacking quality described below for a "1" should receive a "2".

- 1 Extremely Insensitive. An extremely insensitive parent makes no active effort to be sensitive and responsive to the teen throughout the discussion. The parent does not appear to accept or show concern for the teen's worries, concerns, thoughts, and feelings. The parent is not actively engaged in interaction with the teen and makes no persistent effort to help the teen work through the discussion topics by being attentive, communicating, understanding, and providing emotional (e.g., complimenting the teen's abilities) and/or instrumental (e.g., helping the teen devise a plan of action for the future, promising to do something to help the teen) forms of support. The extremely insensitive parent does not convey affection or empathy, does not reassure the teen, does not encourage disclosure of feelings and emotional displays, and does not assure the teen of the parent's continuing availability and accessibility. The insensitive parent also does not exhibit a tender or concerned vocal quality, does not use empathic statements acknowledging the difficulty of the situation, does not make use of statements or reflections that promote further exploration or acceptance of the teen's feelings, and does not demonstrate supportive touching or reassurance. An insensitive parent consistently follows his/her own agenda, ignoring the teen's requests and needs (e.g., the parent consistently repeats a question that was already answered by the teen or that the teen didn't want to discuss; the parent interrupts or speaks over the teen frequently). Overall, the parent makes no active effort to help, nurture, and care for the teen by being attentive (listening), by actually trying to help solve problems raised by the teen (if solvable and if help is desired by the teen), and/or by attempting to uplift the teen emotionally. The parent appears to be unwilling and/or unable to function as a safe haven for the teen to turn to in times of distress or a secure base from which the teen may explore the world and make goals and plans for the future. An insensitive, unresponsive caregiver is unsupportive, not understanding, overly-controlling, overly-demanding, self-focused, hostile, and/or avoids exploration of the teen's true thoughts and feelings. An insensitive caregiver does not notice or attend to the needs of the teen (however overtly or indirectly expressed by the teen) and does not respond appropriately to the needs of the teen.

## DYADIC SCALE

Open communicationDescription

This is a rating of the extent to which both discussion partners (parent and teen) freely and comfortably acknowledge the importance of their relationship, show comfort with discussing the teen's future autonomy, and openly and fluidly discuss both issues (change in relationship and goals/plans for future). This is a rating of the extent to which both the parent and the teen appear to be secure in their relationship in that they both show an acceptance of the other's thoughts and feelings, and they appear to feel comfortable disclosing their own thoughts and feelings. Open communication is a rating of the extent to which the dyad's conversation is fluid, accepting, comfortable, and balanced. This is also a rating of the extent to which the rater is able to sense a "special quality" in the interaction of the observed dyad. This special quality may be indicated by the appearance of private shared meaning between the members of the dyad – the sense that the members of the dyad understand one another [in that they don't have to explicitly state everything, or they can sometimes finish one another's sentences (although not in an intrusive manner)]. Overall, the dyad seems to be experienced in having mature, open, fluid conversations. The dyad is rated on a scale ranging from 7 (highly open) to 1 (non-open).

- 7 Highly open communication. This dyad is fully open in its communication. Both discussion partners (parent and teen) freely and comfortably acknowledge the importance of their relationship, show comfort with discussing the teen's autonomy, fluidly discuss both issues (change in relationship and goals/plans for future), and show comfort with focusing on both issues. Overall, both parent and teen appear to be secure in their relationship in that they both show an acceptance of the other's thoughts and feelings and they appear to feel comfortable disclosing their own thoughts and feelings. Their conversation is fluid, warm, comfortable, and balanced. When watching this dyad, the viewer senses a "special dyadic quality". This dyad shows evidence of possessing privately shared meaning that may not be clearly understood by the observer, but it is clear that it is completely understood by both members of the dyad. The observer senses that this dyad has a "silent understanding" of one another (e.g., the teen and the parent can understand each other without explicitly stating everything, they are able to sometimes finish each other's sentences). It is clear that this dyad has experienced many such open and fluid conversations in the past. Overall, a dyad who receives a "7" rating participates in a full, rich conversation in which both partners freely express emotion and comfortably share thoughts and feelings. Please note that dyads who are highly open may also have occasional silent periods (perhaps when they are thinking about something, etc.); however, both members of the dyad must be completely comfortable, natural, and at ease in the silent periods, and they must appear willing to openly re-engage in conversation.

- 4 Moderately/inconsistently open communication. This dyad is in some ways open in its communication, but there is also some clear indication of a non-open communication style. This moderately/inconsistently open score is typically given in one of the following conditions: (1) when both partners are moderately open in their communication, (2) when one partner seems more open than the other, e.g., encouraging the other to participate in the discussion openly, but having only moderate success in this task, (3) when the dyad openly and freely discusses one of the given issues (for instance, goals and plans for the future) but clearly avoids discussing the other issue (for example, the change in the relationship), and (4) when the discussion is inconsistently open (e.g. the dyad starts by being open and highly communicative but gradually become less and less open, perhaps because the dyad might want to look their best for the camera but are unaccustomed to maintaining open communication; the dyad's non-open communication gradually "leaks" out, leaving the observer with a sense of inconsistency). All of these conditions result in a discussion that is open in some ways, but limited in others. After watching this dyad, the observer might feel that this dyad is secure in their relationship in some ways, but insecure in others. The "special dyadic quality" is generally missing. A dyad may receive this score when the observer senses some positive and open elements in their discussion, but cannot give this dyad a "clean bill of health".

It is possible that a dyad may appear to be quite open, honest, and forthright with one another during the discussion, yet express their views, thoughts, and feelings in a very angry/hostile manner. However, because angry/hostile dyads are likely to defensively and selectively share information with one another (perhaps because they do not expect the other person to be fully responsive and understanding), it is unlikely that they could engage in the sort of fully open communication described above for a "7" teen – the type of discussion that involves a special dyadic quality and shared meaning/understanding, and the type of fluid discussion that involves elaboration of important issues, a willingness to explore issues raised by the other person, and an honest and comfortable acknowledgment of the importance of the relationship and sharing of other types of emotions besides anger/hostility (e.g., fears, anxieties, worries, sadness, vulnerabilities).

- 1 Non-open communication. This dyad is clearly not open in its communication. The partners seem to be remote from one another. There are almost no indications that the members of this dyad are related and share a personal history. The discussion may sound very formal, and the observer might get the feeling that he/she is watching two complete strangers. The partners are obviously unaccustomed to discussing the topics they've been asked to discuss. The conversation is choppy, stunted, and incoherent. There is a clear lack of communication between the dyad, not allowing any kind of meaningful dialogue between the parent and the teen on any of the discussion issues. Both parent and teen are clearly insecure in their relationship in that they both do not accept the other's thoughts and feelings and would not disclose their own thoughts and

feelings. Both partners seem to be cold and rigid and are evidently uncomfortable in this dyadic setting. Non-open dyads may consistently interrupt one another in a closed, cutting-off manner that is not an eager expansion of what the other is saying, or they may consistently talk at the same time so that neither member of the dyad is really listening to the other.

## Appendix C

Adult Attachment Interview (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984; Adolescent Version)

I'm going to be interviewing you about your childhood experiences, and how those experiences may have affected your current personality. So, I'd like to ask you about your early relationship with your family, and what you think about the way it might have affected you. We'll focus mainly on your childhood, but later we'll get on to your adolescence and what's going on right now. This interview often takes about an hour, but it could be anywhere between 45 minutes and an hour and a half.

1. First I need to ask you some basic information about your early family situation. If you could tell me where you were born, where you lived, whether you moved around much, and what your family did at various times for a living? I just need to get a feel for your family background before I ask you more about your childhood experiences.
  - a. Did you see much of your grandparents when you were little? {if needed All 4 of them?}
    1. {if some grandparents were never met} Did these grandparents die before you were born?
    2. {If yes} Your [mother's father] died before you were born? How old was [she] at the time, do you know?
  - b. Did you have brothers and sisters living in the house, or anybody besides your parents?
    1. {Optional, use only if need more warm up questions. Usually omit... Are they living nearby now or do they live elsewhere?}
  - c. (Optional. Only if not talking) Are your parents still together?
2. I'd like you to try to describe your relationship with your parents as a young child – if you could start from as far back as you can remember?
3. Now I'd like to ask you to choose five adjectives or words that reflect your childhood relationship with your mother starting from as far back as you can remember in early childhood – as early as you can go, but say, age 5 to 12 is fine. I know this may take a bit of time, so go ahead and think for a minute – then I'd like to ask you why you chose them. I'll write each one down as you give them to me.

Okay, now let me go through some more questions about your description of your childhood relationship with your mother. You say your relationship with her was (you used the phrase) \_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me a memory or an incident from early childhood that comes to mind from age 5-12 with respect to (word) \_\_\_\_\_?

OR

You described your childhood relationship with your mother as (or “your second adjective was,” or “the second word you used was”) \_\_\_\_\_. Can you think of a memory or an incident from early childhood that would illustrate why you chose \_\_\_\_\_ to describe the relationship?

(For the first adjective that the subject cannot give a specific memory ask 2 probes: can you give me a specific time? For every time after that OR if subject can give a specific memory after the first probe, then only ask one probe: can you give me a specific time?)

4. {Repeat for Father} Now I'd like to ask you to choose five adjectives or words that reflect your childhood relationship with your father starting from as far back as you can remember in early childhood – as early as you can go, but say, age 5 to 12 is fine. I know this may take a bit of time, so go ahead and think for a minute – then I'd like to ask you why you chose them. I'll write each one down as you give them to me.

Okay, now let me go through some more questions about your description of your childhood relationship with your father. You say your relationship with him was (you used the phrase) \_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me a memory or an incident from early childhood that comes to mind with respect to (word) \_\_\_\_\_?

OR

You described your childhood relationship with your father as (or “your second adjective was,” or “the second word you used was”) \_\_\_\_\_. Can you think of a memory or an incident from early childhood that would illustrate why you chose \_\_\_\_\_ to describe the relationship?

5. Now I wonder if you could tell me, to which parent did you feel the closest, and why?
- a. Why wasn't there this feeling with the other parent?
6. When you were upset as a child, what would you do?
- a. When you were upset emotionally when you were little, what would you do?
1. Can you think of a specific time that happened?
- b. Can you remember what would happen when you were hurt, physically?
1. Again, do any specific incidents (or, do any other incidents) come to mind?
- c. Were you ever ill when you were little?
- 1a. Do you remember what would happen?
- 1b. Do you remember a specific time?
- d. {if needed} I was wondering do you remember being held by either of your parents on any of those times – I mean, when you were upset, or hurt, or ill?
- e. {if only one parent mentioned} I was just wondering if your Dad/Mom was involved when you were upset, hurt, or ill?



7. What is the first time you remember being separated from your parents?  
{Whatever you think of as your first separation. Whatever comes to mind.}
  - a. How did you respond?
  - b. Do you remember how your parents responded?
  - c. Are there any other separations that stand out in your mind?
  
8. Did you ever feel rejected (by your parents) as a young child? Of course, looking back on it now, you may realize it wasn't really rejection, but what I'm trying to ask about here is whether you remember ever having felt rejected in childhood.
  - a. How old were you when you first felt this way, and what did you do?
  - b. Why do you think your parent did those things – do you think he/she realized he/she was rejecting you? (if ignored – leave off last part)
  - c. {if needed} Did you ever feel pushed away or ignored?
  
- 8a. Were you ever frightened or worried as a child?
  1. Can you think of a specific time? (Get age)
  2. How did your parents respond?
  
9. Were your parents ever threatening with you in any way – maybe for discipline, or even jokingly?
  - a. Some people have told us for example that their parents would threaten to leave them or send them away from home.
  - b. Some people have memories of threats or some kind of behavior that was abusive. Did anything like this ever happen to you, or in your family?
    1. How old were you at the time?
    2. Did it happen frequently?
    3. Do you feel this experience affects you now?
  - c. Did you have any such experiences involving threats or abuse involving people outside your family?
  
10. In general, how do you think your overall experiences with your parents have affected your current personality?
  - a. Are there any aspects to your early experiences that you feel were a set-back in your development?  
  
 {If yes} Are there any other aspects of your early experiences that you think may have held your development back, or had a negative effect on the way you turned out?  
  
 {If no} Is there anything about your early experiences that you think might have held your development back, or had a negative effect on the way you turned out?
  
11. Why do you think your parents behaved as they did during your childhood?

12. Were there any other adults with whom you were close, like parents, as a child?
  - a. Or any other adults who were especially important to you, even though not parental?
  
13. Did you experience the loss of a (parent or) other close loved one while you were a young child – for example, a sibling, or close family member? (Find out all people first for 13, 13a, & 13b. Ask regarding closeness and interviewee's age at time of other's deaths. For each death select deaths you will probe after getting full list. Ask all questions in order even if already mentioned answer).
  - a. Could you tell me about the circumstances, (and how old were you at the time)?
  - b. How did you respond at the time?
  - c. Was this death sudden or was it expected?
  - d. Can you recall your feelings at that time?
  - e. Have your feelings regarding this death changed much over time?
  - f. Did you attend the funeral?
  - g. {If attended funeral} What was this like for you?
  - h. {If loss of parent or sibling or child} What would you say was the effect on your (other parent) and on your household, and how did this change over the years? (only if loss in childhood)
  - i. Would you say this loss has had an effect on your current personality?
  
- 13a. Did you lose any other important persons during your childhood? (to death) {If yes, repeat probes}
  
- 13b. Have you lost any other close persons more recently? (to death) {If yes, repeat probes}
  
14. Now I'd like to ask you a few more questions about your relationship with your parents. Were there many changes in your relationship with your parents (or remaining parent) after childhood? We'll get to the present in a moment, but right now I mean changes occurring roughly between your childhood and now?
  
15. Now I'd like to ask you, what is your relationship with your parents (or remaining parent) like for you now? Here I am asking about your current relationship.
  - a. Do you have much contact with your parents at present?
  - b. {If needed} What would you say the relationship with your parents is like currently?
  - c. Could you tell me about any (or any other) sources of dissatisfaction in your current relationship with your parents?
  - d. Could you tell me about any (or any other) sources of special satisfaction?
  
16. Is there any particular thing which you feel you learned above all from your own childhood experiences?

## Appendix D

### Descriptions of Adult Attachment Interview Rating Scales and Classifications

#### I. AAI Rating Scales

##### A. Probable Attachment Experiences with a Principal Attachment Figure

- i. Experience of being cared for in a loving way.
- ii. Experience of being rejected.
- iii. Experience of a role-reversing relationship.
- iv. Experience of being neglected.
- v. Experience of being pressured to achieve.

##### B. “Current State of Mind with Regard to Attachment”

- i. Involved anger expressed toward the principal attachment figure(s).
- ii. Idealization of the principal attachment figure(s).
- iii. Passivity of vagueness in discourse.
- iv. Insistence on lack of memory for childhood.
- v. Active/derogating dismissal of attachment-related experiences/relationships.
- vi. Unresolved loss/trauma.
- vii. Metacognitive monitoring.
- viii. Coherence of transcript.

#### II. AAI Classifications

A. Secure/autonomous. Coherent, collaborative discourse. Valuing of attachment, but seems objective regarding any particular event/relationship. Description and evaluation of attachment-related experiences is consistent, whether experiences are favorable or unfavorable.

B. Insecure/Dismissing. Not coherent. Dismissing of attachment-related experience and relationships. Normalizing (“excellent, very normal mother”), with generalized representations of history unsupported or actively contradicted by episodes recounted... Transcripts also tend to be excessively brief...

C. Insecure/Preoccupied. Not coherent. Preoccupied with or by past attachment relationships/experiences, speaker appears angry, passive or fearful. Sentences often long, grammatically entangled, or filled with vague usages (“dadadada,” “and that”)... Transcripts often excessively long...

D. Unresolved. During discussions of loss or abuse, individual shows striking lapse in the monitoring of reasoning or discourse. For example, individual may briefly indicate a belief that a dead person is still alive in the physical sense, or that the person was killed by a childhood thought. Individual may lapse into prolonged silence or eulogistic speech. The speaker will ordinarily otherwise fit secure/autonomous, insecure/dismissing, or insecure/preoccupied categories.

Note: These descriptions are taken from Hesse (1999).

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