

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PARENT GENDER AND CHILD GENDER AS FACTORS IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF EMOTION DISPLAYS AND EMOTION REGULATION IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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In recent years, there has been a surge in the examination of the socialization of children's emotions (see Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998 for relevant review). Few researchers have examined the socialization of both (1) discrete positive emotions (e.g., happiness) and (2) discrete negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger). Furthermore, few studies have examined both mothers' and fathers' role in children's emotional development. The present study had three major aims (1) examine parents' emotional reactions and reactive socialization strategies to children's discrete positive and negative

emotion-related behaviors; (2) examine the role of parent gender and child gender in the emotion socialization process; and (3) examine the role of context (public setting versus private setting) in the emotion socialization process. Eighty-six parents of preschool-aged children (26 mothers of daughters, 20 mothers of sons, 17 fathers of sons, and 23 fathers of daughters) participated in this study. Data were analyzed with respect to: (1) parents self-reported emotional reactions to their sons' or daughters' displays of happiness, anxiety, anger, or disappointment, in both the public and private contexts; and (2) the emotion socialization strategies parents utilized in response to their sons' or daughters' displays of happiness, anxiety, anger, or disappointment in public and private contexts. Results indicated (1) mothers and fathers report stronger emotional reactions in response to their same-sex child's display of emotions; (2) the cause for children's emotion may play a powerful role in the manner which parents respond to their children's emotions; and (3) parents respond differently to children's display of discrete positive and negative emotions.

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OF EMOTION DISPLAYS AND EMOTION REGULATION IN PRESCHOOL  
CHILDREN

By

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## CHAPTER I

### Theoretical Rationale

In recent years, the examination of the effects of socialization agents on children's development has received much attention (see Bugental & Goodnow, 1998; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Agents of socialization include family members, peers, teachers, and policy makers (Bugental & Goodnow, 1998). Early in life, primary caregivers are believed to play the central role in the socialization of children's social and emotional competencies.

Much of the work regarding the influence of socialization processes on children's social development has focused on, but is not limited to, the relations between parenting and the development of (a) moral reasoning (Kuczynski & Navara, 2006; Smetana, 2006); (b) adaptive social behaviors such as empathetic and prosocial behaviors (Eisenberg, 2006; Eisenberg et al., 1992; Fabes et al., 1994; Grusec, 1991); (c) maladaptive social behaviors such as social withdrawal and aggression (see Rubin & Burgess, 2002 for a relevant review); and (d) gender role development (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Ruble & Martin, 1998). Recently, there has been a rise in the examination of the role of parents' socialization of emotion and emotion-related behaviors (see Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinard, 1998 for a relevant review). This growth of research may be a function of the key role that emotion functioning plays in the development of self-regulation (Kopp, 1992), social competence (Denham et al., 2003; Garner & Estep, 2001) and the development of both psychological adjustment (Eisenberg et al., 2001) and psychopathology (Cicchetti, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995; Cummings & Davies, 1996).

### *The Process of Emotion Socialization*

Parents socialize emotion *displays* in a variety of ways. For example, parents *proactively* teach children to understand emotion display meanings (Gottman, Fainsilber-Katz, & Hooven, 1997). Proactive emotion socialization encompasses the discussion of emotion and emotion-related behaviors (e.g., discussing what it is like to feel sad; e.g., Denham, Zoller, & Couchoud, 1994). Additionally, parents socialize emotion display knowledge *reactively* or in response to their children's displays of emotion (e.g., soothing a child who is fearful; Jones, Eisenberg, Fabes, & MacKinnon, 2002).

Indeed, the literature has underscored the importance of understanding *how* parents socialize emotions reactively because there are clear links between parent socialization strategies of emotion and later adjustment in children (see Eisenberg et al., 1998 for a relevant review). Specifically, children whose parents respond to their negative emotion displays in a supportive and sensitive nature display less negative reactivity (e.g., anger) (Crockenberg, 1987). Conversely, children who have parents who respond to their emotion displays in a negative manner have been shown to be at risk for maladjustment. For example, parents who respond to their children's negative emotion displays in a punitive manner have (a) preschoolers with deficits in their ability to resolve conflicts with peers (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994), (b) elementary school-aged children who exhibit greater physiological dysregulation (e.g., increase of heart rate during the presentation of an evocative stimuli; Eisenberg, Fabes, Schaller, Carlo, & Miller, 1991), and (c) school-aged children who display externalizing behaviors at both home and school later in life (Eisenberg et al., 1999). Further, parents who minimize or discredit their children's emotional displays have school-aged children who (a) exhibit greater

teacher-reported externalizing difficulties (Eisenberg et al., 1999); (b) use ineffective, avoidant coping strategies (e.g., ignoring problems or walking away from problem situations; Eisenberg, Fabes, & Murphy, 1996); and (c) are reported to be less popular in the peer group (Eisenberg, Fabes, Carlo, & Karbon, 1992).

*Factors that may influence the socialization of emotion*

Gender of parent and child are thought to play pivotal roles in the ways that parents react to emotions displayed by their children (Brody, 2000; Eisenberg et al., 1998; Zahn-Waxler, 2000). Specifically, mothers and fathers reactions to their sons' versus daughters' emotion displays are thought to differ depending on the *type* of emotion being displayed (e.g., happiness versus anger). For example, mothers have been found to react in a rejecting manner to their daughters' displays of anger, but respond with more empathy when their sons display the same emotion (Malatesta & Haviland, 1982). Further, both mothers and fathers, when discussing a past event during which their child felt sad, use more emotion words with their daughters than their sons (Fivush, Brotman, Buckner, & Goodman, 2000). Indeed, many investigators have noted that there may be sex differences in the manners with which children are socialized to express, understand, and regulate emotions (Brody, 2000; Zahn-Waxler, 2000). However, very few studies have examined *both* mothers' and fathers' emotion socialization strategies towards their sons versus their daughters.

Child gender is not the only factor that may influence the socialization of emotion. Considering the imbedded nature of emotion and biology, it is also important to take into account dispositional attributes of emotionality when examining the socialization of emotion. Temperamental reactivity and the regulation of emotional

arousal affect emotion development in two major ways. First, children who are temperamentally primed to experience affect more intensely (reactivity) and have difficulty regulating their arousal are likely to express emotion differently than those children who are temperamentally less reactive and more regulated. Moreover, children who are emotionally dysregulated may not be responded to by parents in the same ways as children who are well-regulated. For example, if a child is experiencing an emotion intensely and has great difficulty calming him/herself, it is likely that he/she will have difficulty attending to the parents' attempts to teach the him/her how to cope effectively with strong emotions.

The second way temperament may influence the experience of emotion and the process of emotion socialization is relatively well-documented. That is, there has been an extensive amount of research documenting the effect(s) of child temperament on parenting. Specifically, children who are classified as temperamentally difficult (emotionally reactive and difficult to soothe) tend to elicit different parenting practices than those who are classified as temperamentally easy (Putnam, Sanson, & Rothbart, 2002 for a relevant review). Thus, it seems important to consider child emotion regulatory ability in the examination of parental emotion socialization.

### *Research Aims*

While many of the pathways between parent socialization of emotion and children's adjustment have been illuminated, many gaps still remain. The majority of literature has been focused on parental reactions to children's *negative* affect; little is known about specific parenting responses to displays of *discrete positive* (e.g., happiness) and *negative* (e.g., anxiety, anger) affective behaviors. Thus, the first specific aim of the

proposed study is to examine parents' emotional reactions and reactive socialization strategies associated with discrete positive and negative emotion-related behaviors in preschool children.

As aforementioned, the association between parent socialization of emotion and subsequent emotional development is affected by both the gender of the parent and the gender of the child. This is thought to be especially true when considering discrete emotion types that carry gender-role stereotypes, such as fear and anger. Consequently, the second specific aim of the proposed study is to examine how gender of both parent and child affects how parents choose to *respond* to their son's or daughter's emotion behaviors.

It also seems reasonable to believe that the *contexts* within which children display specific emotions (e.g., at home versus in public) may play an important role in parental expectations and responses to their children's displays of specific emotions. Thus, the third aim of the proposed study is to examine possible differences in parents' responses to children's displays of discrete emotions in private versus public settings.

Finally, it has been documented children's dispositional traits can influence parenting styles, practices, and beliefs. Thus, the final aim of the study is to examine if parents' perceptions of their children's emotion regulatory ability affects parental reports of: (1) the emotional reactions in response to their children's displays of emotions and (2) the emotion socialization strategies in response to children's displays of emotion.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

During the preschool years, children undergo change and growth in many arenas of development – cognitively (see Lee, 2000 for relevant readings); physically (see Edwards, 1999 for relevant review), socially (see Rubin, Parker, & Bukowski, 1998 for relevant review), and emotionally (Denham, 1998; Saarni, Mumme, & Campos, 1998). Indeed, during these years of early childhood, researchers have underscored the considerable strides children make in the realm of *emotion competence* (Denham, 1998). As noted by Denham (1998), “The upper limit of this age range – around the transition to kindergarten – is often a time when children experience growth in their understandings of the causes and consequences of emotions, and in the complexity of their emotions.” (Denham, 1998, p. 10). This being the case, it should not be surprising that many studies over the past twenty years have focused on the development of children’s emotion during the preschool years.

When considering affective development, it is important to acknowledge that the experience of emotion encompasses a plethora of processes. Many researchers have focused on three areas of emotional development in the preschool years -- children’s *understanding* of emotion, the *expression* of emotion, and the *regulation* of emotion (Eisenberg et al., 1998; Denham, 1998; Denham et al., 2003; Saarni, 1985; Saarni et al., 1998). Children’s *understanding of emotion* is thought to include both the comprehension of their own emotional experiences, as well as others’ emotional expressions and experiences (Denham et al., 2003; Eisenberg, et al., 1998). Children’s competence in the *expression of emotion* has been defined as the propensity to display

emotions in an effective and appropriate manner within given contexts and cultures (Denham et al., 2003; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Children's competence in their *regulation of emotion* has been defined as consisting of the extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, especially their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish their goals (Thompson, 1994).

Together, emotion understanding, emotion expression and emotion regulation are thought to encompass the larger construct of *emotional competence* (Denham et al., 2003; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Recently, Denham and colleagues have shown that there are links between emotion competence, as defined above, and the expression of socially competent behavior (Denham et al., 2003; Schmidt, DeMulder, & Denham, 2002). While, emotion understanding, expression, and regulation are collectively necessary for adaptive development, researchers have also demonstrated that each of these processes contributes separately to successful social development. For example, the ability to effectively *understand* emotions is paramount in the development of empathetic and sympathetic responding (Eisenberg, 2000; Zahn-Waxler, 2000). The *expression* of emotion is an essential part of social signaling and communication; this is particularly important in the early years of life when language skills have not fully developed (Tronick, Cohn, & Shea, 1986). Finally, the development of emotion *regulation* skills has been linked to a wide-range of indices of adjustment and maladjustment including social competence and likeability in the peer group (Denham et al., 2003; Eisenberg et al., 1996; Shields & Cicchetti, 2001); socially reticent behavior (Henderson, Marshall, Fox, & Rubin, 2004; Rubin, Cheah, & Fox, 2001; Rubin, Coplan, Fox, & Calkins, 1995); externalizing difficulties (Cole, Zahn-Waxler, Fox, Usher, & Welsh, 1996;

Eisenberg et al., 2001; Rubin et al., 1995; Rydell, Berlin, & Bohlin, 2003; internalizing difficulties (Cole et al., Eisenberg et al., 2001; 1996; Rubin et al., 1995; Rydell et al., 2003); and the development of psychopathology (Cicchetti, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995; Cummings & Davies, 1996; Southam-Gerow & Kendall, 2002).

The development of these emotional competencies is thought to develop primarily in the early years of life through interactions within the family (Eisenberg, et al., 1998; Halberstadt, Crisp, & Eaton, 1999). Parents socialize children's understanding, expression, and regulation of emotion through *direct* and *indirect* ways (Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg, Auerbach, & Blair, 1997; Eisenberg et al., 1998). *Indirect socialization* is thought to occur from the emotional climate within the family unit, or family expressiveness of emotion (Halberstadt, Crisp, & Eaton, 1999) and via parents own expressiveness of emotion during family interaction (Valiente, Fabes, Eisenberg, & Spinrad, 2004). *Direct socialization* is thought to occur via parental reactions to emotion displays or parental discussion of emotions with their children.

Although I acknowledge the power of indirect socialization practices on the development of emotion and emotion regulation in young children, the major thrust of this proposed study is to examine parents' *reactions* to children's emotion displays. Thus, the scope of the literature review will be limited to research regarding *direct* emotion socialization practices employed by parents.

#### *Buck's Theory of Emotional Development*

In the mid-1980s, Buck (1984) introduced a developmental-interactionist theory of emotional development. Buck (1984) contended that there are six primary affects – happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, and disgust – and that they are inborn. Buck

(1984) specified that these primary affects develop over time into more sophisticated emotion displays. Specifically, he believed that the ability to experience and express emotion is innate, however the “circumstances under which they are experienced, and the ways in which they are expressed, are learned” (Buck, 1991, p. 103). For children, learning about emotions and emotion display rules generally begins early in life through interactions with parents.

Buck (1984) further described that the manner in which children receive information about emotions from their parents will impact their emotional development. Specifically, Buck (1984) theorized that children who face scrutiny for the display of emotions (particularly negative emotions) eventually learn to mask emotion externally, but may be internally dysregulated. This internal dysregulation may put individuals at risk for later psychological maladjustment (Cicchetti et al., 1995; Gross & Levenson, 1997).

From Buck’s (1984) theory, many researchers have focused on the different types of parental non-supportive reactions to children’s emotional displays. These include: punitive reactions, minimization of child’s distress or emotion, and parental expression of distress (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Murphy, 1996). *Punitive reactions* are characterized by, “the degree to which parents respond with punitive reactions that decrease their exposure or need to deal with the negative emotions of their children (e.g., “tell my daughter that if she starts crying then she’ll have to go to her room right away.”; Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinard, 1998, p. 249). *Minimizing reactions* are defined as, “the degree to which parents minimize the seriousness of the situation or devalue the child’s problem or distressed reaction (e.g., “tell my son that he is overreacting.”; Eisenberg et al., 1998, p.

249). Finally, *parental expression of distress* is marked by, “the degree to which mothers (or fathers) experience distress when children express negative affect” (e.g., “feel upset and uncomfortable because of my son’s reaction.”; Eisenberg et al., 1998, p. 249).

Researchers have been successful in identifying differential links between supportive and non-supportive parental reactions and children’s adjustment in infancy, early childhood, and middle childhood.

### *Cultural Display Rules, Gender, and Emotion Socialization*

Emotion socialization is affected by a multitude of child characteristics including temperament, age, and gender. Gender differences in the socialization of emotion are linked to the norms within a particular culture regarding the masculinity or femininity of certain emotions (Brody, 2000; Underwood, Coie, & Herbsman, 1992). For instance, in American culture, there is evidence that the expression of sadness and other internalizing affects are perceived as non-masculine in college-aged individuals and men who display such emotion states are viewed more negatively than females who display the same affect (Siegel & Alloy, 1990). Further, emotions of an externalizing nature, such as anger and aggression, are considered more acceptable in males than females (Birnbaum & Croll, 1984) and, often, males who are aggressive are viewed as more likeable by their peers than non-aggressive boys (Serbin, Marchessault, McAffer, Peters, & Schwartzmann, 1993). On the other hand, girls who are aggressive are typically viewed more negatively than non-aggressive girls (Crick, 1997).

Indeed, the rules for the expression of certain emotions are different for boys and girls and it appears that children understand these rules early in life. Birnbaum, Nosanchuk, and Croll (1980) reported that preschool-aged children understand that anger

is more appropriate for boys, while sadness and fear are more appropriate for girls. These differences continue throughout childhood and, most likely, intensify with age. In a study of second graders, girls, when compared to boys, reported individuals should always express their sadness and pain, but not their anger (Zeman & Shipman, 1996). Interestingly, in the same study, girls were also more likely than boys to report that they felt better after expressing their sadness (Zeman & Shipman, 1996).

The differing rules for males and females may be rooted in the temperamental differences between infant boys and girls in emotional expressiveness (Feldman, Brody, & Miller, 1980; Weinberg, Tronick, Cohn & Olson, 1999) and these differences may “set the stage” for different trajectories in emotional development. However the power of parent socialization is undeniable. It has been documented in the empirical literature that mothers (and in the few studies that have examined fathers) differ in their reactions to their children’s emotion displays depending on the: (1) the sex of their child and (2) the emotion their child is displaying. Further understanding of parents’ socialization beliefs is still needed. A review of the empirical evidence for gender differences in the socialization of different emotions will be discussed further after a general discussion of direct emotion socialization strategies is reviewed in the infancy and early childhood periods. Thereafter, there will follow a discussion and review of the relevant literature pertaining to the role that context of emotional expression and children’s emotion regulatory ability may play in the relation between child sex, parent sex, and parental emotion socialization.

*Parental Reactions to Emotions During Infancy*

The literature has suggested that parent-child interaction during infancy plays a profound role in emotional development (Field, 1994; Tronick, Cohn, & Shea, 1986). Indeed, it has been widely documented that during infancy it is a caregiver's goal, during face-to-face interaction with their infants, to encourage and maintain positive emotion displays and discourage or decrease negative arousal (Kopp, 1989); commonly this is accomplished through the caregiver's own emotional expressions. As reported by Malatesta and colleagues (Malatesta, Grigoryev, Lamb, Albin, & Culver, 1989; Malatesta & Haviland, 1982), during face-to-face interactions, mothers tend to display positive emotions - such as interest, joy, and surprise - and rarely model or spontaneously express negative emotions – such as anger, sadness, and pain - with their infants.

However, it is not solely the affect caregivers' direct towards their children that is thought to affect children's emotional development. The manner in which parents respond to their children's emotional displays relates to the development of their children's emotional behaviors. In order to promote adaptive emotional development, caregivers must respond promptly, sensitively, and appropriately to their infant's emotion displays -- particularly negative affect or distress. It has been documented that mothers who are responsive and sensitive to their infants' distress signals have children who display less negative reactivity over time (Crockenberg & Smith, 1982). Further, mothers who respond appropriately to their infants, as opposed to responding with flat affect, are more likely to have infants who use increased emotion regulatory skills (e.g., gaze aversion) when distressed (Cohn & Tronick, 1983). Conversely, when infants face a parent who is unresponsive or who responds inappropriately (e.g., flat affect or still

face) they respond with increased negativity and self-oriented regulation strategies (Cohn & Tronick, 1983). It is these early interaction patterns with parents that are thought to facilitate the manner in which infants eventually learn to express and regulate their emotions in the absence of external reinforcement and regulation (Kopp, 1989).

Researchers have demonstrated the significance of responsive and sensitive caregiving in the development of emotion related behaviors. For instance, van den Boom and Hoeksma (1994) reported that infants who were classified as highly irritable at birth but had mothers who were trained to respond to their infants in a sensitive and responsive manner were more sociable, better able to self-regulate, and displayed less negative affect at nine months of age than their highly irritable counterparts whose mothers did not receive the same responsive caregiving training. Similarly, Fish, Stifter, and Belsky (1991) reported that infants who were low in negative arousal through the fifth month of life had mothers who were more sensitive in their caregiving practices than infants who displayed increased negative affect over the first five months of life. Thus, it appears that parental reactions to infants' emotion displays in infancy "sets the stage" for future emotional development.

#### *Factors that Influence Parental Reactions to Emotions During Infancy*

The patterns of parent reactions to infants' emotions are affected by such factors as the family environment (e.g., marital conflict; Cummings, Goeke-Morey, Papp, & Dukewich, 2002) and individual characteristics of the caregivers (e.g., mental health of the caregiver; Radke-Yarrow, Nottelmann, Belmont, & Welsh, 1993). There are two specific individual characteristics and factors of particular interest in this study -- child gender and parent gender.

*The Influence of the Sex of the Child and the Sex of the Parent on Emotion Socialization during Infancy*

The majority of the literature has focused on the roles of *mothers'* reactions to their infants' emotional expressions. Surprisingly, many investigators report null findings when examining sex differences in emotion socialization during infancy (e.g., Spinrad & Stifter, 2002). However, a handful of researchers have reported sex differences in maternal socialization of emotion with infants. Malatesta and Haviland (1982) reported that mothers tended to match male infant emotional expressions more than female infant emotional expressions during both a play episode and an episode involving a reunion after a brief separation. Further, Malatesta and Haviland (1982) reported that mothers' imitation of joy increases over time when interacting with males, but decreases when interacting with females from 3 to 6 months of age. The authors surmised that mothers responded more contingently to their sons' positive affect than to their daughters because of gender differences in irritability during the infancy period, with males reported as displaying more irritable and negative affect than females (Haviland & Malatesta, 1982). Thus, the authors deduced that mothers may feel a greater need to reinforce their sons' positive affect (via imitating emotional expressions) more than their daughters because of dispositional sex differences in affective displays.

Similar findings have been reported in studies by Tronick, Cohn, and colleagues (Tronick & Cohn, 1989; Weinberg, Tronick, Cohn, & Olson, 1999). In these studies, mothers were observed to match their son's behavioral state during freeplay face-to-face interactions (Tronick & Cohn, 1989; Weinberg et al., 1999). These findings were interpreted in their implication for future socio-emotional development. Tronick and

Cohn (1989) reasoned that the differences found in mother-son versus mother-daughter interactions might reveal that there are different qualities in emotional interactions depending on child sex; they further suggested that these early-documented differences might result in different developmental trajectories for boys and girls in the emotional development.

In a study by Carter and colleagues (1990), the authors set-out to understand the qualitative differences that can emerge from face-to-face interactions between mothers and infants. This study revealed that maternal positivity during a play period resulted in different emotional reactions from male and female infants during a subsequent “still face” paradigm with their mothers (Carter, Mayes, & Pajer, 1990). The “still face” paradigm comprises a situation wherein a parent is instructed to refrain from making any vocal or facial expressions to his/her infant for a 90-second period (Tronick, Als, Adamson, Wise, & Brazelton, 1978). In this study, for female infants, maternal positivity during freeplay was associated with neutral affect during the “still face” condition; however, for male infants, maternal positivity was associated with initial positive affect followed by an increase in negative affect (Carter et al., 1990). The authors suggested that the finding revealing a sex difference in the “still face” condition may be explained by boys and girls interpreting the sudden affect of their mothers in a unique way (Carter et al., 1990).

There have been some studies examining fathers’ role in emotional development during infancy. The majority of researchers examining father-infant interactions report similar findings to those reported in the literature focusing on mother-infant interaction. In one study, researchers compared the affective and behavioral patterns of infants during

the “still face” paradigm with their mothers versus their fathers (Braungart-Rieker, Garwood, Powers, & Notaro, 1998). Braungart-Rieker and colleagues (1998) reported that mothers and fathers were equally sensitive to their infants during parent-infant non-toy play interaction and that infants responded in a similar affective manner to both mothers and fathers during a “still face” episode. That is when both mothers *and* fathers were instructed to look at their infants in an unresponsive, neutral manner, infants displayed negative affect (Braungart-Rieker et al., 1998).

However, whilst there may be similarities in the manners in which mothers and fathers respond to their infants, there are also differences. When Braungart-Rieker and colleagues (1998) considered infants regulatory behaviors during the “still face”, differences emerged. Specifically, during the “still face” paradigm with fathers, infants displayed more parent orientation (e.g., looking at the parent’s face), while during the still face with mothers, infants displayed more object orientation (e.g., looking at an object in the room) (Braungart-Rieker et al., 1998). The difference in infants’ regulatory behaviors was thought to stem from differences in infants’ varying experiences with mothers and fathers (Braungart-Rieker et al., 1998). Specifically, Braungart-Rieker and colleagues (1998) postulated that if infants spend greater time with mothers, they may view their mothers’ unresponsiveness as distressing since it violates expectations about how their mothers should act during face-to-face interactions, thus resulting in the need to avert gaze from their mother. If infants are still developing expectations of their interactions with their father, they may not feel the need to avert gaze from their father (Braungart-Rieker et al., 1998). The implication for this finding underscores the possible

significant contribution that fathers make to their children's development of emotions as early as the first year of life.

In a recent observational investigation of infant-parent face-to-face interactions, Feldman (2003) reported differences in infant arousal. Specifically, Feldman reported that during mother-infant interaction, infants' arousal appeared to be manifested in an organized cycle of "low and medium states of arousal, with or without a single positive peak" (Feldman, 2003, p. 16). However, it was reported that during father-infant interaction, the pattern of arousal was different. During the father-infant interaction, positive arousal appeared to be sudden (rather than gradual) and these episodes of peak positive emotion became more frequent during a play episode (Feldman, 2003). Feldman (2003) offers that the differences between mother-infant interaction and father-infant interaction underscore the importance of considering parent gender because, from this study, it may be the case that mothers and fathers contribute to the development of "different modes of affective sharing and co-regulation" (Feldman, 2003, p. 17). Again, this finding further bolsters the unique role fathers play in their children's affective development.

#### *Parent Socialization of Emotion beyond Infancy*

The formative role that parents play in the development of children's emotional expression and regulation does not cease in infancy, and it changes shape over the course of development. During the toddler and preschool years, children's emotional displays become more differentiated and sophisticated. With the development of language skills, increased cognitive capacities, increased experience with one's own emotion expression, and exposure to others' emotional displays, children begin to develop the capacity to be

effective emotion communicators, interpreters, and regulators (Saarni, Mumme, & Campos, 1998). In turn, parents' expectations of their children's capabilities to express and regulate emotion evolve. These developments affect the manner in which parents react to their children's displays of affect.

Additionally, as a result of the developmental strides children make during the toddler and preschool years in the realm of emotion, parents have the opportunity to use a wider-range of direct emotion socialization strategies. Specifically, with children's development of language, parents are afforded the opportunity to discuss emotion with their children, as well as, react to their children's emotion displays by using language *and* affect.

#### *Parental Discussion of Emotion with their Children*

Parents discuss emotions and emotion states with their children in a variety of contexts. For instance, parents discuss emotions when they (a) play with their children; (b) soothe their children; and (c) discipline their children. Furthermore, parents engage their children in conversations about emotions for a variety of reasons. Researchers have recently underscored the importance of discerning parents' motives when they discuss emotion with their children (Dunn, Brown, & Beardsall, 1991; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Specifically, it is important to distinguish between family discussions of emotion that occur in an attempt to help children understand emotions versus discussions to change or modify children's behavior (Dunn et al., 1991; Eisenberg et al., 1998). Furthermore, some parents discuss a plethora of emotions with their children, while others are very limited in the emotions they discuss with their children. It is thought that through the process of emotional discussion, parents may attune their children to the causes and

consequences of specific emotions. Also, it has been argued that discussion of emotion serves as a way for children to think about and reflect upon emotion and emotional experiences (Bretherton, Fritz, Zahn-Waxler, & Ridgeway, 1986).

In general, researchers have found that mothers' emotion talk is not only linked to their children's use of emotion language, but to children's comprehension of emotion in both the toddler and preschool years (Brown & Dunn, 1996; Denham, Cook, & Zoller, 1992; Denham, Zoller, & Couchand, 1994; Dunn et al., 1991). It has also been documented that children who are able to discuss emotion states and are talked to about emotion may internalize strategies for regulating emotion and apply them to situations involving peers.

In a study of preschoolers, the relation between parental emotion discussion and subsequent adjustment in the classroom was examined. Children were interviewed by an experimenter who asked each child how his/her parent would react to the display of different emotions. The interview was conducted by using dolls to depict eight situations where a child doll displayed different emotions in front of his/her parent doll (Denham, 1997). Children were asked to act out how their parent would react to the doll's emotion display. Results from this study indicated that children who reported in the interview that their parents were comforting and discussed emotion displays were viewed by their teachers as more socially competent within the peer group (Denham, 1997).

While there are links between the discussion of emotion and adjustment, it appears that the *quality* of emotion discussion is important to consider. Several researchers have provided evidence that certain discussion techniques are related to social and emotional competence while others are related to less adaptive behaviors.

Specifically, it has been found that during a storybook task (where a mother discussed an emotion-laden story with her child) the manner in which a mother discussed emotions with her preschool child was an important factor in the prediction of emotion competence (Denham & Auerbach, 1995). Specifically, when mothers asked their children questions about emotions, children were better able to understand emotion (Denham & Auerbach, 1995); furthermore, in the same study, children who had mothers who either (1) simply repeated the emotions they discussed or (2) talked about emotion without explanation were observed to be less emotionally competent.

Additional evidence for the importance of noting the quality of affect discussion in social and emotional development comes from another study by Denham and colleagues (1997). However, this study provided counter-intuitive results. In this study, when asked to discuss past emotional events between parent and child, parents (both mothers and fathers) who used guiding and socializing language in their discussions had children who were rated as less competent – both socially and emotionally (Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg, Auerbach, & Blair, 1997). Denham and colleagues (1997) suggested that it may be the case parents use guiding and socializing language with preschoolers who may be affectively over-reactive and prone to behave in an emotionally dysregulated or immature fashion. The authors also underscored the importance for further understanding of the specific functions of different types of emotion discussion rather than just the presence or absence of it (Denham et al., 1997).

#### *The Influence of the Sex of the Child and the Sex of the Parent on Emotion Discussion*

In general, emotion discussion between mothers and daughters differs from emotion discussion in mothers and sons (Dunn et al., 1987; Fivush, 1989), with mothers

discussing emotion more frequently with their daughters than their sons. Further, when mothers talk about emotions or feelings with their children, differences have been found regarding the type of emotions discussed. In one study, when asked to discuss emotion-laden past events with toddlers, mothers were reported to discuss *both* positive and negative emotions with their sons, but *only* positive emotions with their daughters (i.e., mothers *never* discussed anger with their daughters) (Fivush, 1989). Further, in the same study, quality of the emotion discussions differed by child sex; specifically, mother-daughter conversations focused on the emotion experienced during the event discussed, while mother-son conversations focused on the reasons and consequences of the emotional display of the past event (Fivush, 1989).

Additional evidence for gender differences in emotion discussion has been found in a study including both fathers and mothers discussion of past events with their 3- to 5-year-old children. Adams, Kuebli, and Fivush (1995) examined the content of parent-child discussions of past emotional experiences; they found that mothers and fathers differed in use of emotion language only when the sex of the child was considered. Specifically, parents referenced emotions in their conversations with their preschool-aged daughters more often than in their discussions with their preschool-aged sons (Adams et al., 1995). Further, both fathers and mothers discussed sadness and dislike more often with their daughters than their sons (Adams et al., 1995). This latter finding was recently replicated in another study with preschool children and their parents; again it was found that mothers and fathers talked more about emotion when discussing sad events with their daughters than their sons (Fivush, Brotman, Buckner, & Goodman, 2000). Further, mothers and fathers discussed emotions (both positive and negative) in the context of

interpersonal relationships with their daughters more often than with their sons (Fivush, et al., 2000). Thus, it appears that both the frequency of parent-child emotion talk and the quality of these conversations varies depending on the sex of the child.

### *Parental Reactions to Children's Emotion Displays*

Parental *reactions* to children's emotional displays have been widely studied. Researchers have examined links between parental reactions to emotions from infancy through middle childhood. Typically, parents reinforce and encourage positive displays of affect while regulating and discouraging negative displays of affect in their children.

In general, mothers who react to their children's distress in a supportive and comforting way have children who are characterized as emotionally competent (Denham, 1997). Furthermore, preschoolers with strong emotion understanding have mothers who respond positively to their children's emotion displays (Denham, Zoller, & Couchoud, 1994). On the other hand, parents (the scope of the majority of the present literature extant focuses on mothers) who respond to their children's emotional displays in an unsupportive fashion are thought to undermine their children's emotional development.

In a series of studies, Eisenberg and colleagues have extensively examined the relations between parental reactions to children's various negative emotions and development in the preschool years (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994) and the elementary-aged school years (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Murphy, 1996; Eisenberg, Losoya, et al., 2001; Jones, Eisenberg, Fabes, & Mackinnon, 2002).

During the preschool years, Eisenberg and colleagues have found support for Buck's theory regarding the detrimental effects of non-supportive reactions to emotions on later development. Eisenberg and colleagues examined reactions to emotion displays

with *The Coping with Children's Negative Emotions Scale (CCNES)* (Fabes, Eisenberg, & Bernzweig, 1990). The *CCNES* asks parents to rate various reactions to their children's displays of negative emotions (an aggregate of reactions to children's displays of anger, sadness, fear, embarrassment, and disappointment). The reactions to negative affect are then categorized into six categories: *distress reactions* ("the degree to which parents experience distress when children express negative affect"); *punitive reactions* ("the degree to which parents respond with punitive reactions that decrease their exposure or need to deal with negative emotions of their children"); *expressive encouragement* ("the degree to which parents encourage children to express negative affect or the degree to which they validate child's negative emotional states"); *emotion-focused reactions* ("the degree to which parents respond with strategies that are designed to help the child feel better"); *problem-focused reactions* ("the degree to which parents help the child solve the problem that caused the child's distress"); and *minimization reactions* ("the degree to which parents minimize the seriousness the situation or devalue the child's problem or distressful reaction") (Fabes et al., 1990).

Eisenberg and Fabes (1994) examined mothers' reactions to their 4-to-6-year-old children's negative emotions via the *CCNES* (Fabes et al., 1990). They found that maternal reports of minimizing and punitive responses were associated with temperamental dysregulation (low attentional control and high negativity) as well as low levels of observed emotion displays at school (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994). Furthermore, children whose mothers reported reacting in a non-supportive manner to their negative emotions were observed to flee or escape when encountering angry conflict situations in the peer group (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994). Consistent with Buck's (1984) hypothesis,

Eisenberg and Fabes (1994) asserted that the tendency to escape may be an effective manner to deal with anger in the short term, but that it may be the result of an inability to effectively communicate their feelings to peers.

Further evidence from the Eisenberg group in support of Buck's (1984) theory has been documented. In a study of preschool children and their mothers, Fabes and colleagues (2001) reported that mothers who reacted "harshly" (an aggregate of *CCNES* minimization and punishment; Fabes et al., 1990) in response to their children's negative emotions had children whose teachers reported they were less socially competent, highly emotionally reactive, and displayed negative emotions intensely (Fabes, Leonard, Kupanoff, & Martin, 2001).

Additional support for these relations between maternal responses to children's negative emotions has been found in older children. In a sample of elementary school-aged children (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade), children whose had mothers who responded harshly (an aggregate of *CCNES* minimization and punishment; Fabes et al., 1990) to their negative emotions were rated as less socially competent by their teachers (Jones, Eisenberg, Fabes, & MacKinnon, 2002); further, the same group of researchers reported that teachers reported that these same children displayed less positive affect in the classroom, however this result did not reach significance (Jones et al., 2002).

In a longitudinal study, Eisenberg and colleagues documented that non-supportive responses by parents to their children's emotions were not only associated with maladjustment concurrently, but also in a predictive manner. Eisenberg, Fabes, Shepard, Guthrie, Murphy, and Reiser (1999) examined primary caregivers (predominantly mothers) emotion socialization and children's adjustment across five time points from

preschool to late childhood. They found the effects of parental socialization of emotion were concurrently and longitudinally associated with parental reports of emotion regulation and teacher-reported behavioral difficulties (both internalizing and externalizing; Eisenberg et al., 1999).

While the work of Eisenberg and colleagues has provided compelling evidence for Buck's (1984) theory, the construct of "internal dysregulation" may be better measured via physiological assessment (as opposed to the use of parent and teacher report of emotion dysregulation in the aforementioned studies). In a series of studies, Eisenberg and colleagues have found associations between physiological dysregulation and parental non-supportive reactions to children's negative emotions.

In one study, Eisenberg and colleagues (1991) examined the associations between parents' (both mothers' and fathers') emotion socialization strategies and their school-aged (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade) children's physiological reactions (heart rate and skin conductance), facial reactions, and self-reported emotions after viewing a sympathy-inducing film. Mothers' and fathers' socialization strategies were assessed via the *Parent Attitude toward Child Expressiveness Scale* (PACES) (Saarni, 1985) and, for part of the sample, a semi-structured interview.

The PACES is an assessment of parental responses to their children's emotional displays. There are seven subscales in this measure: anger, distress, fear, anxiety/nervousness, interest or curiosity, happiness, and disgust. In the original PACES, parents are presented with 20 hypothetical situations where children display an emotional expression and asked to choose from four options how they would likely respond to the

situation. This measure taps into the degree of permissiveness-control parents respond to their children's emotion displays.

Eisenberg and colleagues (1991) included in their analyses questions from the *PACES* that were (1) *hurtful* (questions pertaining to children's display of affect in contexts that may hurt or distress another person (e.g., "watches a mentally retarded person"; "shouts at me in anger")) and (2) *self* (questions pertaining to children's display of emotion in contexts where no one was hurt (e.g., "shy around adults who come to visit our home"). The interview consisted of asking parents (predominantly mothers) how they respond when their child displays (1) sadness and (2) anxiety.

It was reported that mothers who responded with restriction to their child's emotional displays that were not hurtful to others had elementary school aged sons, but not daughters, who demonstrated distress (accelerated heart rate; high skin conductance; facial distress) while viewing a sympathy-inducing film (Eisenberg, et al, 1991); however, when asked how they felt during the film, these boys reported they were less distressed than other boys. This finding further bolsters Buck's (1984) theory by indicating that, in some samples of children, there are relations between children's internal dysregulation and parental non-supportive reactions to negative emotion displays in their children.

Eisenberg and colleagues are not the only researchers who have examined the relation between parental emotion socialization and children's social and emotional development. Among other groups of researchers working to better understand the relations between parenting and children's emotional development are Denham and colleagues (e.g., Denham & Kochanoff, 2002; Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg,

Auerbach, & Blair, 1997). This group of researchers reported similar patterns between parent emotion socialization and the development of emotion competence to those reported by Eisenberg and colleagues. The work of Denham and colleagues (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002; Denham et al., 1997) builds on the research of Eisenberg and colleagues through their use of observational assessments of emotion socialization and direct discussion with children about their emotion understanding.

In these studies, Denham and colleagues observed parent socialization strategies with their preschool children in naturalistic settings. Experimenters visited participants' homes on two occasions. During these visits, parents were instructed to "act normally" while experimenters observed the affective displays between mother and child on one day and father and child on a second day. Data gathered during these visits were used to form composite scores of child and parent emotion behaviors, including the following: parental reactions to children's emotions; parental affective balance (percentage of happy emotion displays minus percentage of angry emotion displays); and parents' internalizing negative emotions (e.g., the display of sadness, fear/tension) (Denham et al., 1997). It is important to note that parenting data from mothers and fathers were *aggregated* to form the aforementioned parent emotion displays and socialization behaviors.

In addition to the naturalistic observations, children were interviewed about their knowledge of emotions and others' feeling states. These interviews were conducted using puppets with one of the following facial expressions: happy, sad, angry, or fearful. Interviewers first asked children to identify the emotion displayed on each puppet's face and were then asked to explain why the puppet may feel that way. During the second portion of interview, experimenters described a common situation that would elicit

specific emotions (e.g., getting an ice cream cone; Denham, 1986) and children were asked to place the correct emotion face on the puppet. Finally, children were presented with stories where there were two possible emotions that could be elicited in the situation (e.g., feeling happy or afraid to get into a swimming pool; Denham, 1986). The puppet was depicted as feeling differently than the mothers reported their children would feel in the same situation. The children were asked to identify how the puppet felt and asked why the puppet felt this way (Denham, 1986). The scores from both sessions of the puppet interview were used to form an emotion knowledge aggregate.

The studies by Denham and colleagues illuminated connections between parent emotion socialization and other aspects of emotion development in addition to those examined by Eisenberg and colleagues in the aforementioned studies. In one study, Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg, Auerbach, and Blair (1997) found that parents who negatively reinforced (e.g., verbal discouragement of emotional displays; punishment) their preschooler's emotion displays at home had children who displayed less emotion knowledge during the puppet interview task. These results indicated that parents who discredit or punish their children's emotion displays inhibit their children's ability to express emotions and, in turn, to understand discrete emotional states. In these regards, the data supported Buck's hypothesis (1984).

While associations between non-supportive reactions to children's emotion displays and maladjustment have been outlined above, it is important to note that there is evidence regarding the relation between supportive responses to children's emotion displays and children's development of social and emotional competence. Indeed, many of the aforementioned studies supported this notion. Specifically, parents who responded

sensitively to their children's emotion displays had children who were observed to be more affectively positive within the peer group (Denham et al., 1997), prosocial with peers (Denham & Grout, 1993), and rated by their teachers to be emotionally competent (Denham et al., 1997).

*The Influence of Sex of the Child and Sex of the Parent on Parental Reactions to Children's Emotion Displays*

As aforementioned, parents socialize emotions differently depending on the sex of the child (Brody, 2000; Underwood, Coie, & Herbsman, 1992). Again, these differences in socialization across gender are thought to stem from cultural display rules regarding emotion. Cultural display rules tend to reflect the gender stereotypes within a specific culture about the appropriateness (or inappropriateness) of emotion displays by boys and girls (e.g., boys should not cry and girls should not express anger) (Brody, 2000).

The body of literature pertaining to gender differences regarding emotion-laden behaviors, such as crying and aggression, has shown differences in the acceptability of these behaviors depending on sex of the child. For instance, during childhood, mothers emphasize sadness and fear in conversations with their daughters, but not their sons (Adams et al., 1995; Fivush, 1989; Fivush et al., 2000). Further, in a sample of 30 mother-toddler dyads, when asked to discuss past events with their children, mothers discussed being angry with their young sons, but not their young daughters (Fivush, 1989).

This being considered it seems plausible to hypothesize that parents may encourage and discourage different emotions in their sons versus their daughters. Surprisingly, the majority of the literature pertaining to emotion socialization has not

illuminated many differences in the manner in which parents report they react to sons' and daughters' displays of *negative* emotions (Eisenberg, et al., 1996; Eisenberg et al., 1998). It is also important to note that the majority of studies conducted have either: (1) not reported fathers' socialization strategies or (2) aggregated mothers' and fathers' reports of socialization strategies.

Differences in socialization strategies between the sexes may lie in parental expectations of sex-typed emotion displays. Specifically, mothers tend to discourage displays of anger in their daughters by either ignoring or inhibiting the emotion, while responding to their sons' displays of the same affect with concern (Radke-Yarrow & Kochanska, 1990). Further, it has been reported that anger reactions are more tolerated in males versus females (Condrey & Ross, 1985).

Anger is not the only emotion that appears to elicit sex-differentiated expectations and socialization practices. It should not be surprising that, generally speaking, fear and sadness are discouraged in males, but not in females. Casey and Fuller (1994) reported that mothers tended to instruct their elementary-aged sons to repress displays of fear but did not instruct their daughters to do the same. Additionally, Zahn-Waxler, Cole, and Barrett (1991) reported that parents socialize their daughters to be more sensitive to others' sadness than their sons. Thus, there is evidence for sex-typed emotion socialization, however, it is important to note that few researchers have examined sex differences in parental reactions (both mothers and fathers) to their children's positive *and* negative emotion displays.

In one of the few studies of both mothers' and fathers' emotion socialization strategies, Garner, Robertson, and Smith (1997) asked parents of preschool-aged boys

and girls to complete the *Parent Affect Test (PAT)* (Linehan, Paul, & Egan, 1983). The *Parent Affect Test* assesses parents' anger and pleasure in response to a variety of negative and positive situations involving children (e.g., "My child begins yelling."; "My child hugs me."). Parents are asked to rate their reaction on a scale six bipolar scales: feel angry – feel pleased; feel bad – feel good; feel tense – feel relaxed; want to hit/spank – want to hug/ kiss; want to yell – want to praise; want to sent child to room – want to be with child. Garner and colleagues (1997) examined the anger scale for mothers and fathers in their study. The results indicated that parents of boys, especially fathers, reported greater anger reactions on the *PAT* than parents of girls. Furthermore, fathers' who reported anger on the *PAT* had sons, but not daughters, who were observed to express less positive emotional expressiveness in the peer group (Garner et al., 1997).

In another study, Denham and Kochanoff (2002) examined parents' (both mothers and fathers) emotion socialization of their preschool children using a multi-method, longitudinal design. These researchers observed mothers' and fathers' emotion socialization in the home as well as using several questionnaire assessments of emotion socialization. The home observations consisted of two 2-hour sessions on different days focusing on each parent's interactions with his/her child. In the observation session, the focal parent's and child's emotions and reactions to each other's emotions during five minute intervals were coded. Specifically, these data were coded into the following variables: (1) maternal affective balance; (2) paternal affective balance; (3) maternal internalizing negative emotion; and (4) paternal internalizing negative emotion.

Additionally, during the observational session, the focal parent was asked to discuss with his/her child (1) four times when the parent displayed a specific emotion and

(2) four times when the child displayed a specific emotion. The emotional utterances were coded in two ways: (1) frequency during the episode & (2) function of the utterance. The functions of utterances were coded into the following categories: (1) commenting; (2) explaining; (3) clarifying; (4) questioning; and (5) socializing (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002).

Parents also completed questionnaires including the previously noted *PAT* (Linehan et al., 1983) and the *CCNES* (Fabes et al., 1990); as well as the *Parent Disciplinary Styles (PDS)* measure (Hart, De Wolf, Woznaik, & Burts, 1992). The *PDS* asks parents to report in an open-ended fashion to vignettes about disciplinary situations. These data are coded to assess parents' encouragement/scaffolding of children's development of sympathy. Additionally, the *Self-Expressiveness in the Family Questionnaire (SEFQ)*; Halberstadt, Cassidy, Stifter, Parke, & Fox, 1995) was administered. The *SEFQ* examines one's expressiveness of positive and negative emotions in the family setting.

The observational and self-report measures were aggregated to form composite variables for the regression analyses, which were conducted separately for mothers and fathers. The display of positive emotion and positive reactions to their 3-year-old children's emotions *by mothers* was predictive of children's emotion knowledge at (1) 3 years of age and (2) 4 years of age (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002). Furthermore, mothers' lack of negative emotions and reactions at 3 years of age and positive reinforcement at four years of age predicted their children's understanding of mixed emotions (the understanding of two different emotions described in a single vignette; e.g., feeling both

happy and sad as the result of a single event) at five years of age. However, for fathers, the same patterns did not emerge.

First, for the regression equations examining fathers' emotion socialization practices, there were non-significant findings in the prediction of 3-year emotion understanding. Second, for the predictions of 4-year emotion understanding, some rather complicated patterns emerged. Specifically, fathers' explanations of emotions during the discussion task were *negatively* predictive of their children's emotion understanding one year later. Denham and Kochanoff (2002) explained that this may be because the *explanation* of emotions is more a duty of the mothers than the fathers. Further, the authors suggested that fathers' role in emotion socialization may be in the *regulation* of affect rather than the *understanding* of emotion; thus, fathers may simply be bad at explaining emotions effectively to their preschoolers (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002).

Additional findings from this study provide further evidence for the differences in maternal and paternal emotion socialization practices. Specifically, when their children were four years of age, fathers' (1) positive emotions and reactions; (2) negative emotions and reactions; and (3) lack of emotion coaching predicted of their children's emotion understanding at four years of age (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002). Denham and Kochanoff (2002) reasoned that the positive relation between negative emotions and reactions (this finding was also found with mothers) and children's emotion understanding lies in the rationale that some *experience* with emotions may be needed in order to *understand* them. Specifically, Denham and Kochanoff (2002) surmised that those children who are exposed to anger are better able to describe and explain it because of their experience with the emotion. However, the authors cautioned that these relations

most likely only hold true when negativity is at low levels and coupled with exposure to positivity (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002). These findings again paint a complicated picture of the role of fathers in children's emotional development, however it is clear that fathers *do* contribute to emotional development and appear to contribute to emotional development in a different way than mothers.

### *The Influence of Context in the Socialization of Emotion*

Researchers have addressed the importance of considering environmental factors when studying a wide range of topics pertaining to child development. Researchers who study parenting have examined how contextual variables such as culture (see Harkness & Super, 2002 for relevant review) and socioeconomic status (see Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002 for relevant review) affect parents and parent-child relationships. However, researchers have yet to examine how specific contexts (e.g., public versus private settings) in which parent-child interactions take place may affect parenting beliefs and behaviors. This may be particularly important when examining parental reactions to children's emotions that may have negative social repercussions associated with them, such as anger.

The rationale for examining context and emotion socialization lies in the social psychological literature pertaining to *social emotionality*. In this literature, it is argued that individuals who violate social norms experience various emotional states after transgressions. It is after a transgression occurs that an individual may be aware that he/she is the focus of others' attention because of their behavior. Their failure to meet social expectations likely results in embarrassment (Modigliani, 1971), which could – in turn – lead to a decrease in self-esteem (Modiglaini, 1968, 1971). However, it is

important to note that social emotions, such as embarrassment, occur either exclusively or more intensely *in public* because in this setting one is now the target of others' evaluations and judgments (Semin & Manstead, 1981).

There are clearly social norms surrounding display rules for certain emotions. These social norms, or *cultural display rules*, are taught early in life and are an individual's guide to which type of emotional expressions are endorsed by a culture and which emotional expressions are "taboo". And, it has been noted that individuals do indeed alter their emotional expressions based on cultural display rules depending on the social situation (Ekman, 1972, Matsumoto, 1990). In a series of studies by Yarczower and colleagues, it was found that emotional expression was inhibited in the presence of another individual in children (Kilbride & Yarczower, 1980; Yarczower & Daruns, 1982; Yarczower, Kilbride, & Hill, 1979) and college students (Yarczower & Daruns, 1982; Yarczower et al., 1979). The inhibition of emotions could possibly be attributed to cultural display rules and thus feeling embarrassed about expressing an emotion in the presence of another individual.

From this, it seems reasonable to believe that the child's display of the *same emotion* in public and private settings may elicit different feelings and responses from parents. For example, a parent might feel less embarrassed and may react in a less disciplinarian fashion to a child's anger at home; however, if a child displayed anger in a public setting, it seems reasonable that a parent may feel embarrassed and may react in a more authoritarian manner as a result of his/her desire to halt his/her child's behavior (thus relieving the parent of his/her own embarrassment).

Further, it seems plausible that parental reactions to children's emotions in different contexts may differ depending on both child sex and parent sex. For example, fathers may respond with similar negative responses to their daughters' anger both at home and in public; however, fathers' may react negatively to their sons' anger only when it is displayed in public. These hypotheses are drawn from the emotion display literature in which anger and aggression is more acceptable for boys than for girls (Birnbaum, 1980; Fuchs & Thelen, 1988).

#### *The Relation between Child Temperament and Parenting*

When considering the contribution of child temperament to the socialization of emotion, it is first crucial to understand what is known about the relations between dispositional characteristics of children and parenting. Indeed, the influence of child temperament on parenting during the first few years of life is hardly unidirectional in nature. Most researchers assert that temperament-parenting relations are bi-directional (Putnam, Sanson, & Rothbart, 2002).

Researchers have found that temperamentally "easy" (e.g., easy-to-soothe & sociable) infants elicit warm and accepting parenting (Simonds & Simonds, 1981), while temperamentally "difficult" (e.g., highly irritable & reactive, difficult to soothe) infants have parents who respond to them with rejection and negativity (van den Boom & Hoeksma, 1994). Further, path analyses have revealed that behavioral inhibition in the toddler years leads parents to use more restrictive parenting strategies with their preschoolers (Rubin, Nelson, Hastings, & Asendorpf, 1999).

In addition, there is also a growing body of literature indicating that parenting may influence children's temperamental characteristics. Specifically, it appears as if

particular parenting patterns can ameliorate or exacerbate certain temperamental profiles in children. It has been documented that irritable infants whose mothers were more punitive and hostile displayed *greater* anger and noncompliance two years later than their irritable counterparts whose mothers engaged in less harsh parenting practices (Crockenberg, 1987). Similarly, Rubin, Burgess, Dwyer, and Hastings (2003) found that emotionally “difficult” temperament at two-years predicted externalizing behaviors at four-years; this was especially so for those toddlers whose mothers were highly negative and controlling. Thus, researchers have demonstrated that parental behavior may influence children’s dispositionally-based characteristics. Given the relation between child temperament and parenting, it seems important to assess children’s dispositional traits, particularly those that “tie in” to the expression of emotion, in the study of parental emotion socialization.

#### *The Influence of Child Temperament on Emotion Socialization*

Given that many researchers assert that emotion is, in part, biologically-based (Buck, 1976; Ekman, 1994), it seems that one must consider child temperament when examining emotion socialization. There is a great deal of literature regarding the association between *general* parenting practices (e.g., Baumrind’s classifications of parenting practices) and child temperament in older children. In general, as aforementioned, difficult temperament appears to be associated with harsh/negative parenting, while easy temperament is associated with supportive/positive parenting. However, there are few studies examining the relation of child temperament to *specific* parenting practices and beliefs, such as parental responses to children’s emotion displays.

There are a few studies where researchers have examined the relation between child temperamental characteristics and *specific* parental emotion socialization strategies. Recently, Jones and colleagues (2002) reported that teacher-rated negative emotionality was related to maternal punitive reactions to their elementary-aged *daughters'* negative emotions (as assessed by the *CCNES* (Fabes et al., 1990)). Further, Eisenberg and colleagues (1999) reported that maternal punitive reactions to preadolescents' negative emotions were related to teacher and maternal report of "externalizing" emotion (e.g., anger and frustration). While these findings provide indication that, indeed, emotion socialization strategies are affected by child temperament, the aforementioned studies have been conducted in *older* children.

#### *Overview of the Research Design*

The existing literature pertaining to parent sex, child sex, and emotion socialization (both parental emotion discussion and parental reactions to emotion displays) provides evidence of the importance of examining both mothers' and fathers' emotion socialization strategies in relation to child sex. Specifically, many researchers have noted that the quality or function of mothers' and fathers' socialization practices may be unique in children's emotional development especially in the early years of life (e.g., Feldman, 2003). Furthermore, it is well-documented that the manner in which parents socialize their children's display of emotion has implications for social and emotional adaptation (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002; Eisenberg et al., 1998).

However, the existing literature is limited in several ways. First there are virtually no data on fathers' socialization practices. Second few studies involve questions pertaining to both *positive* and *negative* emotion displays. And finally, researchers have

not typically examined the *contexts* within which emotions are displayed. Thus, the role of parent and child gender in the socialization of various emotion displays (happiness; anger; disappointment; and anxiety) and the socialization of emotion in varying contexts (public versus private) was examined in the preschool years. This particular age group was chosen because gender-typed socialization appears to peak at this age (Lytton & Romney, 1991). Considering the importance of better understanding how children contribute to the parent-child relationship, children's emotion dysregulation was also examined as a factor that may contribute to the role of gender, type of emotion display, and context in parent emotion socialization.

#### *The Significance of the Present Study*

Researchers have reported gender differentiation in the expression of certain emotions and the psychological implications for the repression of emotion (Brody, 2000; Fivush, & Buckner, 2000; Jansz, 2000; Zahn-Waxler, 1993; 2000). Specifically, the display of anger is viewed as acceptable for males, but not females (Birnbaum & Croll, 1984). The expression of sadness and fear is viewed as more acceptable for females, but males who express the same emotion face repercussions for their expressive behavior (Siegel & Alloy, 1990). The inhibition of certain emotion states is thought to put certain individuals at risk for the development of maladjustment because *emotion expression is different from emotion experience*. Better put, an individual may internally *experience* an emotion, but not *express* it because within his/her own culture it is inappropriate for certain genders to display that emotion regardless of context. Consequently, the inhibition of emotional expression, may lead to internal *dysregulation* for some

individuals (Buck, 1984). This internal dysregulation may set the stage for the development of maladjustment.

Zahn-Waxler (2000) has noted that in order to better understand gender differentiation in certain pathologies, such as anxiety and depression, there is a need for “increased knowledge of biological, intrapsychic, and *socialization processes* that lead to differences in the experience, expression, and regulation of both basic and higher-order emotions” (p. 248). Thus, in this study I will attempt to better understand gender-specific emotion socialization processes. This study will contribute to the understanding of how the restriction of certain emotional expressions in boys and girls may contribute to the development of pathology later in life.

### *Hypotheses*

PART I: Parents’ emotional reactions to their children’s emotion displays

#### *Parent Report of Emotion in Response to Their Children’s Display of Happiness*

It was hypothesized that mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters would not differ significantly from each other in parent report of emotional reactions in response to witnessing children’s displays of happiness. Specifically, it was expected that the four groups would not differ significantly from each other in the amount of anger, disgust, disappointment, embarrassment, surprise, anxiety, and sadness reported in response to preschoolers’ displays of happiness. This is predicted because the display of happiness does not carry a gender stereotype with it.

While it was expected that the mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters would not differ in their emotional reactions to their children’s display of happiness, it was expected that maternal and paternal perception of

children's emotion regulatory ability would be predictive of maternal and paternal emotional reactions (respectively) in response to children's display of happiness. Specifically, it was expected that parents' perception of high emotion dysregulation (both maternal and paternal) would predict parent report (both mothers and fathers) of more embarrassment in public. This was expected because parents who perceive their children to be emotionally dysregulated may anticipate that their children can not "turn off" emotion displays – regardless of the emotion type (positive or negative); thus, possibly resulting in their children drawing attention to themselves and, in turn, their parents.

*Parent Report of Emotion in Response to Their Children's Display of Anxiety*

Based on the literature on parental beliefs about social withdrawal (Mills & Rubin, 1990; Rubin & Mills, 1990), it was expected that both mothers of sons and fathers of sons would report feeling more anxious and surprised when their sons displayed anxiety, in both public and private, than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. However, considering that emotions such as fear and anxiety are considered non-masculine (Jansz, 2000) in Western culture, it was thought that mothers of sons and fathers of sons would also report feeling more embarrassed in response to their sons' displays of anxiety in *public*, but this was not expected for mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters.

It was predicted that mothers and fathers would *not* report feeling similar on all ratings of emotion about their sons' displays of anxiety in both public and private. Specifically, it is expected that fathers of sons would report feeling more anger and disgust towards their sons' displays of anxiety than mothers of sons, mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. This hypothesis was grounded in the empirical literature on

parental reactions towards socially withdrawn children. Specifically, researchers have found that fathers tend to be more rejecting of their sons' than daughters' social withdrawal. Specifically, Macdonald and Parke (1984) reported that boys, who were rated by their teachers to be socially reticent, had fathers who were observed to be less engaged and more directive towards their sons

In addition, it was expected that parents (both mothers and fathers) perceptions of emotion dysregulation would positively predict maternal and paternal reports of anxiety in response to their children's displays of anxiety across all contexts. Furthermore, it was predicted that fathers' perceptions of emotion dysregulation would predict paternal disgust and anger in response to their sons' display of anxiety in all contexts. Specifically, it was predicted that fathers would report more disgust and anger to their emotionally dysregulated sons' displays of anxiety. This was expected drawing from the literature pertaining to fathers' reactions to their sons' displays of social reticence (e.g., MacDonald & Park, 1984).

#### *Parent Report of Emotion in Response to Their Children's Display of Anger*

Researchers have indicated that parents tend to discourage the display of aggression in their daughters (Power & Parke, 1986). From this line of rationale, it was expected that mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters would report greater amounts of anger, disgust, and surprise in response to their daughters' display of anger than their sons' display of the same emotion. It was not expected, however, that mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters would differ in the amount of anger, disgust, surprise they reported in response to their daughters' displays of anger. In addition, it was expected that mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of

daughters would not differ in the amount of parent-reported embarrassment they reported feeling in response to their children's anger in public. Finally, it was expected that mothers' and fathers' perceptions of children's emotion dysregulation would predict their report of disgust and anger in response to their children's display of anger.

*Parent Reports of Emotion in Response to Their Children's Displays of Disappointment*

Similar to the rationale for the hypotheses pertaining to children's displays of anxiety, it was expected that both mothers of sons and fathers of sons would report more anxiety and surprise in response to their sons' displays of disappointment in public and private than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. Furthermore, because Western culture stresses emotional inexpressiveness in men (Jansz, 2000) and because men who express internalizing difficulties are evaluated negatively by others (Siegel & Alloy, 1990), it was expected that mothers of sons and fathers of sons would report feeling more embarrassment in response to their sons' display of disappointment in public than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. Finally, drawing from the aforementioned empirical work by Macdonald and Parke (1984), it was expected that only fathers of sons would report more anger and disgust towards their sons' disappointment both in public and private than mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, and fathers of daughters.

In addition, it was expected that parents' (both mothers and fathers) perceptions of children's emotion dysregulation would positively predict maternal and paternal report of anxiety in response to their children's display of disappointment across all contexts, in public, and in private.

PART II: Parents' socialization strategies in response to their children's emotion displays

In recent a recent review by Lewis and Lamb (2003), the authors called for the examination of fathering by using unique measures developed especially for studies of fathering. Much of the existing literature relies on measures developed for studies of "mothering." Thus, the analyses pertaining to fathers' and mothers' emotion socialization strategies in this study were exploratory in nature. It seems necessary to separately factor analyze fathers' and mothers' reports of their emotion socialization beliefs prior to examining the differences between socialization strategies with regard to both (1) gender of parent and (2) gender of child because of the paucity of literature examining fathers' emotion socialization strategies.

It was expected that the factor structures of socialization for mothers and fathers would differ based on previous work that has suggested that mothers and fathers play distinct roles in the development of children's emotion and emotion regulatory skills (Braungart-Rieker et al., 1998; Feldman, 2003).

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Participants

The participants in this study comprised 86 parents (26 mothers of daughters, 20 mothers of sons, 17 fathers of sons, and 23 fathers of daughters) of preschool-aged children (child age -  $M = 3.87$ ;  $SD = .79$ ; range 3 to 5 years). Participants were parents from the same household (e.g., mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters were reporting about the *same* child) and reported only about biological children. The sample was restricted to two-parent, heterosexual families and no siblings were included in this study. Participants were largely drawn from preschools and daycare centers in and around the greater Metropolitan Washington, DC area.

#### *Demographic Information - Mothers*

Fifty-nine percent of the participating mothers were Caucasian-American; 11 percent were Latino-American/Hispanic-American; 15 percent were African-American; 11 percent were Asian-American; 2 percent were Native American; and 2 percent were Bi-racial. The average age of the mothers was 36.49 years ( $SD = 5.87$ ; range 21 to 47). The majority of the mothers had received a college/university degree (57.4 % completed graduate degree; 8.5% some graduate school; 25.5% college/university degree; 6.4 % some college/university courses; 2.1% completed vocational school).

#### *Demographic Information - Fathers*

Sixty-four percent of the participating fathers were Caucasian-American; 6 percent were Latino-American/Hispanic-American; 19 percent were African-American;

and 11 percent were Asian-American. The average age of the fathers was 39.46 years (SD = 7.16; range 22 to 58). The majority of the fathers had received a college/university degree (48.9 % completed graduate degree; 14.9% some graduate school; 19.1% college/university degree; 8.5 % some college/university courses; 2.1% completed vocational school).

### *Procedure*

Participants were contacted by a distributing recruitment letters in preschools and daycare centers. The initial recruitment letter (Appendix A) explained the scope and significance of the project; additionally, a Participant Information Form (Appendix B) was attached to the recruitment letter for parents to return if they were interested in participation. Once parents agreed to participate, two packets (one for the mother and one for the father) were either mailed to the participants' homes or distributed within the preschool classroom or daycare center. Each packet included: (1) the Statement of Consent - Mothers (Appendix C); (2) the Statement of Consent – Fathers (Appendix D); (3) Demographics Questionnaire (Appendix E); Colorado Child Temperament Inventory (Appendix F) and The Emotion Stories Questionnaire (Appendix G). In a cover letter parents were instructed to complete the questionnaires in a private space where they will not be interrupted.

### *Demographic Questionnaire*

Mothers and fathers completed a demographics questionnaire which consisted of five sections pertaining to parent age, ethnicity, education level, occupation, other persons living within the home, and approximate number of hours spent with his/her child on a daily basis.

### *Colorado Child Temperament Inventory*

Both mothers and fathers completed the *Colorado Child Temperament Inventory* (Buss & Plomin, 1984). This measure comprises factors that assess parental perceptions of dispositional characteristics (e.g., emotionality, activity level, shyness, soothability). Of specific interest to this study were the factors assessing *emotionality* (5 items, e.g., “Child often fusses and cries.”) and *soothability* (5 items, e.g., “When upset by an unexpected situation, child quickly calms down”). From the *CCTI* factors *emotionality* and *soothability*, an aggregate variable was created by first standardizing and then summing the *CCTI* factors of emotionality and inverse soothability (reversed score). A high score on this variable characterized a child who was highly and negatively emotional as well as difficult to soothe. This procedure is consistent with past research examining children’s emotion dysregulation in preschool-aged (e.g., Rubin, Cheah, & Fox, 2001; Rubin, Coplan, Fox, & Calkins, 1995).

### *The Emotion Stories*

Mothers and fathers completed the Emotion Stories Questionnaire. The stories in this questionnaire were based on a series of vignettes used by Mills and Rubin in previous studies at the University of Waterloo. The eight vignettes have been used in past research (e.g., Henderson, 1996). Each story depicts a child experiencing one of four emotions (happiness; anxiety; anger; or disappointment) either at home or with his/her parent in public. The mothers and fathers were asked to imagine that the character in the story is his/her child. After reading each story, parents were asked to answer two questions. The first question asked, “How would you feel when you see your child act in this manner?” Parents were asked to rate the following emotions on a five-

point scale (1 = “Not at All” to 5 = “Extremely”): anger; disgust; embarrassment; anxiety; happiness, and sadness. The second question asks parents, “What, if anything, would you do in response to your child displaying happiness/ anxiety/ anger/ disappointment just in front of you/in front of others”

### *Emotion Story Coding*

Mothers’ and fathers’ responses to the second question -- “What would you do, if anything, in response to your child displaying happiness (anxiety/ anger/ disappointment) just in front of you (in front of others)?” -- were coded using a scheme developed by Mills and Rubin (1990) (Appendix G). This method has been used in previous studies of emotion socialization (e.g., Henderson, 1996).

This coding scheme classifies responses into a total of twenty-one specific categories. Within each story, each category was coded as either present in (1) or absent from (0) the rater’s (either mother or father) report of his/her behavior. The categories are *Does Nothing* (purposefully ignores child’s behavior or emotional expression); *Direct Command-Behavior* (With reference to child's behavior, parent makes a verbal command using imperative speech forms.); *Direct Command-Feelings* (With reference to child’s expression of emotion parent makes a verbal command using an imperative speech form); *Indirect Command-Behavior* (With reference to child's behavior, parent makes a verbal command using a polite speech form (deferential, interrogative, or passive forms)), *Indirect Command-Feelings* (With reference to child’s expression of emotion parent makes a verbal command using a polite speech form (deferential, interrogative, or passive forms)); *Question Situation* (Parent asks a question or initiates a conversation in order to better understand the child’s perception/understanding of the situation.), *Question*

*Feelings* (Parent asks a question or initiates a conversation in order to better understand child's feelings.), *Support-Acknowledge Behavior* (Parent encourages, supports, reassures or shows appreciation for child.), *Support-Acknowledge Feelings* (Parent encourages, supports, reassures or shows appreciation for child's expressed feelings, emotions, or state.); *Affection/Comfort* (Parent expresses affection either physically or verbally.); *Praise Child* (Parent positively evaluates child's behavior, including emotional expression.); *Praise Behavior* (Parent positively evaluates child's character or personality); *Punishment* (Parent imposes a negative consequence or threatens to do so on child's behavior or emotional expression.); *Criticize Behavior* (Parent negatively evaluates her child's behavior.); *Criticize Child* (Parent negatively evaluates child's character or personality.); *Modeling* (Parent demonstrates appropriate behavior to child, with the possibility of teaching or training child.); *Reasoning* (Parent explains why child should behave a certain way or points out the natural consequences of child's behavior.); *Other-Oriented Reasoning* (Parent explains why the child's behavior is right or wrong by pointing out the consequences of their behavior for another person or makes child aware of another's point of view, state of mind and/or emotions.); *Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions* (Parent suggests how the present situation could be solved or handled differently in order to prevent similar situation from occurring again.); *Indirect Intervention* (Parent joins child in trying to solve problem or work through the situation.); and *Direct Intervention* (Parent intervenes or resolves situation without involving child in the process).

The codes were summed and proportionalized due to variation across participants in the total number of strategies reported. For instance, a parent could respond with a

single strategy (e.g., “I would pick him up and leave the store.”) or multiple strategies (e.g., “I would ask him what happened and then give him a hug.”) for the same story. The codes were proportionalized as follows: (1) sum of codes across all stories by total number of strategies across all stories; (2) sum of codes across stories of a single emotion type (e.g., children’s display of happiness) by total number of strategies for stories of a single emotion type; and (3) sum of codes across stories of a single context (e.g., public) by total number of strategies for stories of a single context.

### *Reliability*

Mothers’ and fathers’ responses to the questions “What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying (happiness/anxiety/anger/disappointment) in (front of others/just in front of you) were coded by a single coder. Coders were blind to the gender of the parent reporter and, when possible, child gender. Coders were not always blind to child gender because parents often used pronouns, such as “he” and “she” in their responses. A second rater was trained to use the coding scheme. Following reliability training, the second rater coded a randomly selected group of 20 responses (22% of the sample) in order to calculate inter-rater reliability. Cohen’s Kappa was .83 over all codes.

### *Data Reduction – Maternal and Paternal Emotion Strategies*

*Direct Command Feelings, Indirect Command – Feelings, Modeling, Praise Child, and Criticize Child* were either never reported or reported at low frequencies (below 25%) by *both* mothers and fathers. For mothers, only 15% of mothers reported strategies classified as *Criticize Behavior*, while 30% of fathers reported strategies classified as *Criticize Behavior*. In addition, for fathers, only 21% reported strategies

classified as *Question Feelings*, while 37% of mothers reported strategies classified as *Question Feelings*. Thus, *Direct Command – Feelings*, *Indirect Command – Feelings*, *Modeling*, *Praise Child*, *Criticize Behavior*, and *Criticize Child* were excluded from further analyses for mothers; and *Direct Command – Feelings*, *Indirect Command – Feelings*, *Modeling*, *Praise Child*, *Question Feelings*, and *Criticize Child* were excluded from further analyses for fathers. In addition, there was no conceptual basis for the inclusion of *Does Nothing*, so it was excluded from subsequent analyses for both mothers and fathers.

After excluding the codes that never or rarely occurred, there was a total of fourteen codes for mothers and fourteen codes for fathers. Of the included fourteen codes, *Question Situation* occurred the least frequently for mothers, with 34% of the mothers reporting an emotion socialization strategy characterized as *Question Situation* at least once. For fathers, *Direct Command – Behavior* was the least frequently reported code with 27% of fathers reporting an emotion socialization strategy characterized as *Direct Command – Behavior* at least once.

Factor analyses were conducted using the proportionalized total scores (sum of codes across all stories by total number of strategies across all stories). The proportionalized total scores for each of the fourteen codes were first analyzed separately for mothers and fathers using an exploratory factor analysis (Kaiser Varimax Rotation). The factor structure for both mothers' emotion socialization strategies and fathers' emotion socialization strategies did not yield a coherent factor structure. As a result, the fourteen codes were combined conceptually based on past research using the same measure and coding system (Henderson, 1996).

The four factors created for mothers were *Directiveness* (*Direct Commands – Behavior* and *Punishment*), *Intervention* (*Indirect Interventions*, *Direct Interventions*, *Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions*), *Reasoning* (*Reasoning*, *Other Oriented Reasoning*, *Indirect Commands*, *Question-Situation*) and *Warmth* (*Support/Acknowledge Feelings*, *Question Feelings*, *Affection/Comfort*, *Praise Behavior*, *Support/Acknowledge Behavior*).

The four factors created for fathers were *Directiveness* (*Direct Commands – Behavior*, *Criticize Behavior*, and *Punishment*), *Intervention* (*Indirect Interventions*, *Direct Interventions*, *Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions*), *Reasoning* (*Reasoning*, *Other Oriented Reasoning*, *Indirect Commands*, *Question-Situation*) and *Warmth* (*Support/Acknowledge Feelings*, *Affection/Comfort*, *Praise Behavior*, *Support/Acknowledge Behavior*).

Eight separate confirmatory factor analyses were conducted – one set of the above-mentioned conceptual factors for mothers and one set of the above-mentioned conceptual factors for fathers – using EQS software. Kaiser varimax rotation was used for multiple factor solutions.

#### *Factor Analysis – Maternal Reports of Emotion Socialization Strategies*

The factor structure for the confirmatory factor analyses of the maternal emotion socialization strategies are presented in Table 1.

The codes comprising *Directiveness* loaded on one factor. *Punishment* loaded positively and *Direct Command – Behavior* loaded negatively, accounting for 56.3% of the variance.

The codes comprising *Intervention* loaded on one factor. *Direct Intervention* (positive loading), *Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions* (positive loading), and *Indirect Intervention* (negative loading), accounting for 38.6% of the variance.

The codes comprising *Reasoning* also loaded on one factor. The factor consisted of *Indirect Commands* (positive loading), *Question Situation* (positive loading), *Reasoning* (negative loading), and *Other Oriented Reasoning* (negative loading), accounting for 35.5% of the variance

The codes comprising Warmth loaded on two separate factors. The first factor consisted of *Support Acknowledge Feelings* (negative loading) and *Affection Comfort* (positive loading), accounting for 16.5% of the variance. The second factor consisted of *Support/Acknowledge Behavior* (negative loading) and *Praise Behavior* (positive loading), accounting for 14.2% of the variance.

#### *Factor Analysis – Paternal Reports of Emotion Socialization Strategies*

The factor structure for the confirmatory factor analyses of the paternal emotion socialization strategies are presented in Table 2.

A single factor solution was supported for the codes comprising the *Directiveness* factor, accounting for 54.5% of the variance. For the *Intervention* factor, one factor emerged with *Indirect Intervention* and *Guidance / Pragmatic Solutions* (*Direct Intervention* did not load on this factor) accounting for 45.6% of the variance.

The codes comprising *Reasoning* loaded on two separate factors. The first factor consisted of *Other Oriented Reasoning* (negative loading) and *Indirect Command – Behavior* (negative loading), accounting for 16.17% of the variance. The second factor

consisted of *Reasoning* (positive loading) and *Question Situation* (negative loading), accounting for 11.5% of the variance.

The codes comprising *Warmth* also loaded on two different factors. The first factor consisted of *Support/Acknowledge Feelings* (positive loading) and *Affection / Comfort* (negative loading), accounting for 12.25% of the variance. The second factor consisted of *Praise Behavior* (positive loading) accounting for 7.50% of the variance. *Support / Acknowledge Behavior* did not load on either of the factors.

As noted, the factor analyses did not yield meaningful factor structures for either the maternal emotion socialization strategies or the paternal emotion socialization strategies. As a result, subsequent analyses were run examining the individual emotion socialization codes. This procedure seemed justified considering the major aims of this study were, specifically, (1) to compare maternal and paternal emotion socialization strategies towards sons versus daughters, and (2) to examine *specific* emotion socialization strategies across different emotions and contexts. As aforementioned, only codes that were reported by 25% or more of mothers and fathers were included in the analyses. Thus, the following thirteen emotion socialization codes were included in subsequent analyses: *Direct Command – Behavior*, *Indirect Command – Behavior*, *Support / Acknowledge Behavior*, *Praise Behavior*, *Support / Acknowledge Feelings*, *Punishment*, *Affection / Comfort*, *Question Situation*, *Reasoning*, *Other Oriented Reasoning*, *Indirect Intervention*, *Guidance / Pragmatic Solutions*, and *Direct Intervention*.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The means and standard deviations of parents' emotional reactions for the four groups (mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters) are presented in Tables 3 - 6. The means and standard deviations of parents' emotion socialization strategies for the four groups (mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters) are presented in Tables 7 - 13. It is important to note that two outliers were identified for the regression analyses predicting parent emotional reactions; thus, these cases were excluded from the regression analyses predicting parent emotional reactions to children's displays of emotion.

Furthermore, three of the fathers of daughters did not complete the open-ended question, "What would you do, if anything, in response to your child displaying happiness (anxiety/ anger/ disappointment) just in front of you (in front of others)?" As a result, there is variation in the *n* of the four groups for the analyses comparing the emotional reactions and the emotion strategies.

The first set of analyses examined the data to test the Part I hypotheses. First, the means of parent emotional reactions to children's emotion displays were compared for the four groups (mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters) via a series of Analyses of Variance.

Next, separate regression analyses were run for mothers and fathers in order to assess if child sex, child emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation predicted parental emotional reactions to children's emotion displays of happiness.

The second set of analyses examined the data to test the Part II hypotheses. First, the means of parent emotion socialization strategies to children's emotion displays were compared for the four groups (mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters) via a series of Analyses of Variance.

Next, separate regression analyses were run for mothers and fathers in order to assess if child sex, child emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was predictive of parent emotion socialization strategies to children's emotion displays. Due to the volume of analyses, a summary of significant results is presented in Tables 14 - 19.

#### I: PARENTAL EMOTION REACTIONS TO CHILDREN'S EMOTION DISPLAYS

##### *Comparison of Emotional Reactions for Mothers of Sons, Mothers of Daughters, Fathers of Sons, and Fathers of Daughters*

A series of Analysis of Variance tests was conducted to compare four groups – mothers of daughters, mothers of sons, fathers of daughters, and fathers of sons - on parental reactions to emotion displays (1) across contexts, (2) in private and (3) in public.

*Parent emotional reactions to children's emotion displays of happiness.* No significant differences were expected between the four groups in the report of emotional reactions to children's display.

An Analysis of Variance revealed significant differences between the four groups in parental reports of happiness in response to children's displays of happiness across contexts ( $F(3,82) = 3.64, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .12$ ). Post hoc examinations, using a Least Significant Difference (LSD) test, revealed that mothers of daughters reported

significantly more happiness in response to their daughters' displays of happiness across contexts ( $M = 7.65$ ) than fathers of sons ( $M = 5.76$ ).

Analyses of Variance examining differences between the four groups in the report of parental emotional reactions to children's display of happiness across contexts, in public, and private did not yield significant results.

*Parent emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety.* It was expected that mothers and fathers would report more anxiety and surprise to their sons' display of anxiety than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. It was also expected that fathers would report more anger and disgust to their sons' display of anxiety than mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, and fathers of daughters.

An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in parental reports of surprise in response to children's displays of anxiety across contexts ( $F(3,82) = 5.46, p < .01; \eta_p^2 = .18$ ). Post hoc LSD examinations revealed that fathers of sons reported significantly more surprise in response to their sons' displays of anxiety across contexts ( $M = 5.35$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 3.69$ ), mothers of sons ( $M = 4.20$ ), and mothers of daughters ( $M = 3.53$ ).

In addition, an Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of surprise in response to children's displays of anxiety in public ( $F(3,82) = 3.75, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .12$ ). Post hoc LSD examinations revealed that fathers of sons reported significantly more surprise in response to their sons' displays of anxiety in public ( $M = 3.11$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 2.08$ ) and mothers of daughters ( $M = 2.00$ ).

An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of embarrassment in response to children's displays of anxiety in private ( $F(3,82) = 3.39, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .11$ ). Post hoc LSD tests revealed that fathers of sons reported significantly more embarrassment in response to their sons' displays of anxiety in private ( $M = 1.23$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 1.04$ ), mothers of sons ( $M = 1.05$ ), and mothers of daughters ( $M = 1.00$ ).

Additional Analyses of Variance examining parental emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety, across contexts, in private, and in public did not yield significant results.

*Parent emotional reactions to children's displays of anger.* It was expected that mothers and fathers would report more anger, disgust, and surprise to their daughters' display of anger than mothers of sons and fathers of sons.

An Analysis of Variance revealed significant differences between the four groups in the report of anger in response to children's display of anger across contexts ( $F(3,82) = 11.24, p < .001; \eta_p^2 = .29$ ). Post hoc LSD tests revealed that mothers of sons reported significantly more anger in response to their sons' display of anger across contexts ( $M = 5.45$ ) than fathers of sons ( $M = 3.94$ ) and fathers of daughters ( $M = 3.26$ ). Additionally, LSD tests revealed that mothers of daughters also reported significantly more anger in response to their daughters' display of anger across contexts ( $M = 5.80$ ) than fathers of sons ( $M = 3.94$ ), and fathers of daughters ( $M = 3.26$ ).

An Analysis of Variance revealed significant differences between the four groups in the report of disgust in response to children's displays of anger in private ( $F(3,82) = 2.86, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .09$ ). Post hoc LSDs revealed that mothers of daughters reported

significantly more disgust in response to their daughters' displays of anger in private ( $M = 2.23$ ) than mothers of sons ( $M = 1.55$ ) and fathers of daughters ( $M = 1.52$ ).

Additional Analysis of Variance examining parental emotional reactions to children's displays of anger across contexts, in private, and in public did not yield significant results.

*Parent emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment.* It was expected that mothers and fathers would report more surprise and anxiety to their sons' display of disappointment than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. It was also expected that fathers would report more anger and disgust to their sons' display of anger and disgust than mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, and fathers of daughters.

An Analysis of Variance indicated significant differences between the four groups in the report of disgust in response to children's display of disappointment across contexts ( $F(3,82) = 5.67, p < .001; \eta_p^2 = .17$ ). Post hoc LSDs revealed that fathers of sons reported significantly more disgust in response to their sons' displays of disappointment across contexts ( $M = 3.05$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 2.21$ ) and mothers of sons ( $M = 2.20$ ). Additionally, post hoc examinations revealed that mothers of daughters reported significantly more disgust in response to their daughters' display of disappointment across contexts ( $M = 2.92$ ) than mothers of sons ( $M = 2.20$ ) and fathers of daughters ( $M = 2.21$ ).

An Analysis of Variance also showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of disgust in response to children's displays of disappointment in public ( $F(3,82) = 8.72, p < .001; \eta_p^2 = .24$ ). Post hoc LSDs revealed that mothers of daughters reported significantly more disgust in response to their

daughters' displays of disappointment in public ( $M = 1.84$ ) than mothers of sons ( $M = 1.05$ ) and fathers of daughters ( $M = 1.21$ ). Additionally, fathers of sons reported significantly more disgust in response to their sons' displays of disappointment in public ( $M = 1.88$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 1.21$ ) and than mothers of sons ( $M = 1.05$ ).

An Analysis of Variance revealed significant differences between the four groups in the report of surprise in response to children's display of disappointment across contexts ( $F(3,82) = 2.76, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .09$ ). Post hoc LSDs indicated that fathers of sons reported significantly more surprise in response to their sons' displays of disappointment across contexts ( $M = 4.00$ ) than mothers of sons ( $M = 2.80$ ) and mothers of daughters ( $M = 3.19$ ).

In addition, an Analysis of Variance indicated significant differences between the four groups in the report of surprise in response to children's displays of disappointment in private ( $F(3,82) = 4.56, p < .01; \eta_p^2 = .14$ ). Post hoc LSDs revealed that fathers of sons reported significantly more surprise in response to their sons' displays of disappointment in private ( $M = 1.70$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = 1.13$ ), mothers of sons ( $M = 1.20$ ), and mothers of daughters ( $M = 1.15$ ).

Additional Analyses of Variance comparing the four groups on parental emotional reactions to children's display of disappointment in public or private did not yield significant results.

#### *Prediction of Maternal Emotional Reactions by Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if maternal emotional reactions in response to their children's emotional displays could be predicted

from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) maternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and maternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness.* It was expected that maternal perception of emotion dysregulation would predict maternal report of embarrassment to children's display of happiness in public.

No significant results were yielded for the analyses in the prediction of maternal emotional reactions to children's display of happiness across contexts, in private, or in public.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety.* It was expected that maternal perception of emotion dysregulation would predict maternal report of anxiety to children's display of anxiety across contexts, in private, and in public.

No significant results were yielded for the analyses in the prediction of maternal emotional reactions to children's display of anxiety across contexts, in private, or in public.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anger.* It was expected that maternal perception of emotion dysregulation would predict maternal report of anger to children's display of anger across contexts, in private, and in public.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anger:*  
*Anger.* A significant interaction effect was found in the prediction of maternal anger in response to children's displays of anger across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .11$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.41;  $p < .05$ ) and in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.48;  $p < .05$ ). These interactions were

further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls.

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal report of anger to children's display of anger across contexts was positive and significant only for girls (girls  $r = .50$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $n = 26$ ; boys  $r = -.22$ , ns;  $n = 19$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = 2.38$ ).

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal report of anger to children's display of anger in private was positive and significant only for girls (girls  $r = .49$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $n = 26$ ; boys  $r = -.29$ , ns;  $n = 19$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = 2.57$ ).

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anger: Disgust.*

A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of maternal disgust in response to children's display of anger in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.99;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight ( $\beta = .35$ ) indicated that mothers reported more disgust in response to their daughter's display of anger in private.

In addition, a significant interaction effect was found in the prediction of maternal disgust in response to children's displays of anger across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .14$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.99;  $p < .05$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .14$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.77;  $p < .05$ ). These interactions were further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls.

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal report of disgust to children's display of anger across contexts was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.49$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 19$ ; girls  $r = .34$ , ns;  $n = 26$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = -2.74$ ).

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal report of disgust to children's display of anger in public was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.50$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 19$ ; girls  $r = .27$ , ns;  $n = 26$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = -2.54$ ).

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment.*

It was expected that maternal perception of emotion dysregulation would predict maternal report of anxiety to children's display of disappointment across contexts, in private, and in public.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment:*

*Disgust.* A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of maternal disgust in response to children's display of disappointment across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .19$ ;  $F$  Change = 9.94;  $p < .01$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .27$ ;  $F$  Change = 15.23;  $p < .001$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight (across contexts  $\beta = .44$ , in public  $\beta = .52$ ) indicated that mothers reported more disgust in response to their daughter's display of disappointment across contexts and in public.

*Maternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment:*

*Sadness.* A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of maternal

sadness in response to children's display of disappointment across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .09$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.32;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight ( $\beta = .31$ ) indicated that mothers reported more sadness in response to their daughter's display of disappointment across contexts.

*Prediction of Paternal Emotional Reactions By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if paternal emotional reactions in response to their children's emotional displays could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) paternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and paternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's display of happiness.* It was expected that paternal perceptions of children's emotion dysregulation would predict paternal report of anxiety to children's display of happiness in public.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness: Anxiety.* A significant main effect was found for emotion dysregulation in the prediction of paternal anxiety in response to children's displays of happiness across all contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.11;  $p < .05$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .16$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.64;  $p < .01$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = .35$ , in public  $\beta = .40$ ) indicated that fathers reported more anxiety in response to their children's displays of happiness across all contexts and in public, when they perceived their children to be emotionally dysregulated.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness:*

*Surprise.* A significant main effect was also found for child sex in the prediction of paternal surprise in response to children's displays of happiness in across all contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .10$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.18;  $p < .05$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .11$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.72;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = -.32$ , in private  $\beta = -.34$ ) indicated that fathers reported more surprise in response to their son's display of happiness across all contexts and in public.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness:*

*Happiness.* A significant main effect was found for emotion dysregulation in the prediction of paternal happiness in response to children's displays of happiness across all contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .13$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.50;  $p < .05$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .14$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.25;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = -.36$ , in public  $\beta = -.38$ ) indicated that fathers reported more happiness in response to their children's display of happiness across all contexts and in public, when they perceived their children to be emotionally regulated.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety.* It was expected that paternal perception of children's emotion dysregulation would predict paternal report of anxiety to children's display of anxiety across all contexts, in private, and in public. In addition, it was expected that paternal perceptions of child emotion dysregulation would predict the report of anger and disgust in response to their sons' display of anxiety.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety:*

*Anger.* A significant interaction effect was found in the prediction of paternal anger in response to children's displays of anxiety across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .11$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.70;  $p < .05$ ) and in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .16$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.93;  $p < .05$ ). These interactions were further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls.

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and paternal report of anger to children's display of anxiety across contexts was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.58$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 15$ ; girls  $r = .04$ , ns;  $n = 23$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was non-significant ( $z = -1.95$ ).

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and paternal report of anger to children's display of anxiety in private was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.65$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $n = 15$ ; girls  $r = .08$ , ns;  $n = 23$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = -2.36$ ).

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety:*

*Disgust.* A significant interaction effect was found in the prediction of paternal disgust in response to children's displays of anxiety across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .17$ ;  $F$  Change = 7.24;  $p < .05$ ) and in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .17$ ;  $F$  Change = 7.29;  $p < .05$ ). These interactions were further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. The correlation between emotion dysregulation and paternal report of disgust to children's display of anxiety across contexts was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.60$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 15$ ; girls  $r = .19$ , ns;  $n = 23$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation

(Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = -2.43$ ).

The correlation between emotion dysregulation and paternal report of disgust to children's display of anxiety in private was negative and significant only for boys (boys  $r = -.61$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 15$ ; girls  $r = .19$ , ns;  $n = 23$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was significant ( $z = -2.47$ ).

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety:*

*Embarrassment.* A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of paternal embarrassment in response to children's display of anxiety across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .14$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.84;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight ( $\beta = -.37$ ) indicated that fathers reported more embarrassment in response to their son's display of anxiety across contexts.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety: Surprise.*

A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of paternal surprise in response to children's displays of anxiety across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .23$ ;  $F$  Change = 10.83;  $p < .05$ ), in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.69;  $p < .05$ ), and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .14$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.09;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = -.48$ ; in private  $\beta = -.33$ , in public  $\beta = -.38$ ) indicated that fathers reported more surprise in response to their son's display of anxiety across contexts, in private, and in public.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety: Sadness.*

A significant interaction was found in the prediction of paternal sadness in response to children's displays of anxiety across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.89;  $p < .05$ ) and

in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.93;  $p < .05$ ). These interactions were further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. Although the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was significant in the prediction of paternal report of sadness across contexts and in private, follow up analyses did not yield significant differences between the sexes.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anger.* It was expected that paternal perceptions of child emotion dysregulation would predict paternal report of anger and disgust to children's display of anger across all contexts, in private, and in public.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of anger: Surprise.* A significant main effect was found for emotion dysregulation in the prediction of paternal surprise in response to children's displays of anger across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .28$ ;  $F$  Change = 14.33;  $p < .001$ ), in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .30$ ;  $F$  Change = 16.08;  $p < .001$ ), and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F$  Change = 4.83;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = -.53$ , in private  $\beta = -.55$ , and in public  $\beta = -.37$ ) indicated that fathers reported less surprise in response to their children's display of anger across contexts, in private, and in public, when they perceived their children to be emotionally dysregulated.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment.* It was expected that paternal perception of child emotion dysregulation would predict paternal report of anxiety to children's display of disappointment across all contexts, in private, and in public. In addition, it was expected that paternal perception of emotion

dysregulation would predict paternal report of anger and disgust to their sons' display of disappointment across all contexts, in private, and in public

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment:*

*Disgust.* A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of paternal disgust in response to children's displays of disappointment across contexts ( $R^2 \Delta = .23$ ;  $F \text{ Change} = 11.05, p < .01$ ) and in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .20$   $F \text{ Change} = 9.08, p < .01$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (across all contexts  $\beta = -.48$ ; in public  $\beta = -.44$ ) indicated that fathers reported more disgust in response to their son's displays of disappointment across contexts and in public.

*Paternal report of emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment:*

*Surprise.* A significant main effect was found for child sex in the prediction of paternal report of surprise in response to children's displays of disappointment in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .12$ ;  $F \text{ Change} = 5.19; p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight (in private  $\beta = -.35$ ) indicated that fathers reported more surprise in response to their son's display of disappointment in private.

## **II: PARENTS' EMOTION SOCIALIZATION STRATEGIES TO THEIR CHILDREN'S EMOTION DISPLAYS**

*Comparison of Emotion Socialization Strategies for Mothers of Sons, Mothers of Daughters, Fathers of Sons, and Fathers of Daughters*

A series of Analyses of Variance tests was conducted to compare four groups – mothers of daughters, mothers of sons, fathers of daughters, and fathers of sons - on parental emotion socialization strategies in response to children's emotion displays.

*Parent strategies in response to children's emotion displays across all emotions*

*and contexts: Praise behavior.* An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of Praise Behavior in response to their children's displays of emotions ( $F(3, 79) = 3.39, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .11$ ). Post hoc examinations, using a Least Significant Difference test, revealed that mothers of sons ( $M = .07$ ) reported that they would praise their son's display of emotion more frequently than mothers of daughters ( $M = .04$ ), fathers of sons ( $M = .02$ ), and fathers of daughters ( $M = .04$ ).

*Parent strategies in response to children's emotion displays across all emotions and contexts: Reasoning.* An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of *Reasoning* in response to children's displays of emotions ( $F(3,79) = 4.54, p < .01; \eta_p^2 = .15$ ). Post hoc examinations, using a Least Significant Difference test, revealed that fathers of sons reported the use of reasoning in response to their sons' display of emotion ( $M = .22$ ) more frequently than mothers of sons ( $M = .09$ ), mothers of daughters ( $M = .09$ ), and fathers of daughters ( $M = .11$ ).

*Parent strategies in response to children's disappointment: Other Oriented Reasoning.* An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of *Other Oriented Reasoning* in response to children's displays of disappointment ( $F(3,78) = 2.76, p < .05; \eta_p^2 = .09$ ). Post hoc LSDs, revealed that fathers reported they would remind their sons' that their display of disappointment may affect others more often ( $M = .18$ ) than mothers of sons ( $M = .05$ ) and fathers of daughters ( $M = .05$ ).

*Parent strategies in response to children's display of emotion in private:*

*Reasoning.* An Analysis of Variance showed there were significant differences between the four groups in the report of *Reasoning* in response to children's displays of emotions in private ( $F(3,79) = 4.75, p < .01; \eta_p^2 = .15$ ). Post hoc LSDs, revealed that fathers of sons reported the use of reasoning significantly more often in response to their sons' displays of emotions in private ( $M = .26$ ) than fathers of daughters ( $M = .10$ ), mothers of sons ( $M = .08$ ), and mothers of daughters ( $M = .10$ ).

*Prediction of Maternal Emotion Socialization Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability Across All Emotions and Contexts*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if maternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's emotional displays across all emotions and contexts could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) maternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and maternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Maternal direct command behavior.* A significant main effect was found for child emotion dysregulation in the prediction of maternal report of *Direct Command Behavior* to children's displays of emotions ( $R^2 \Delta = .13; F \text{ Change} = 6.85; p < .05$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight ( $\beta = .38$ ) indicated that there was a positive relation between children's emotion dysregulation and maternal report of commands in response to their children's display of emotions.

Additional regression analyses did not yield significant results in the prediction of maternal emotion socialization strategies to children's emotions displays across emotions and contexts.

*Prediction of Maternal Emotion Socialization Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability To Specific Emotion Displays*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if maternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's specific emotion displays could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) maternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and maternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Maternal reasoning in response to children's displays of anger.* A significant main effect was found for child emotion dysregulation in the prediction of maternal report of *Reasoning* to children's displays of anger ( $R^2 \Delta = .10$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.47;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight ( $\beta = -.34$ ) indicated that those children who were perceived by their mothers to be more emotionally dysregulated had mothers who reported less reasoning in response to children's display of anger.

Additional regression analyses did not yield significant results in the prediction of maternal emotion socialization strategies to children's display of anger across contexts.

*Maternal other oriented reasoning in response to children's displays of disappointment.* A significant interaction was found in the prediction of maternal *Other Oriented Reasoning* in response to children's displays of disappointment ( $R^2 \Delta = .09$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.10;  $p < .05$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the

correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal report of *Other Oriented Reasoning* in response to children's display of disappointment was negative and significant only for girls (girls  $r = -.48$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 26$ ; boys  $r = .13$ , ns;  $n = 20$ ). An  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was non-significant ( $z = 1.12$ ).

Additional regression analyses did not yield significant results in the prediction of maternal emotion socialization strategies to children's display of disappointment across contexts.

*Prediction of Maternal Emotion Socialization Strategies by Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability to Emotion Displays in Public or Private*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if maternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's emotion displays in public or private could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) maternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and maternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Maternal reports of direct commands to children's emotion displays in public.* A significant main effect was found for child emotion dysregulation in the prediction of maternal reports of *Direct Commands* to children's displays of emotions in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .13$ ;  $F$  Change = 6.82;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a positive beta weight ( $\beta = .38$ ) indicated that those children who were perceived by their mothers to be emotionally

dysregulated had mothers who used commands in response to their children's emotion displays in public.

*Maternal reports of reasoning to children's emotion displays in private.* A significant interaction was found in the prediction of maternal report of *Reasoning* in response to children's displays of emotions in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .10$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.00;  $p < .05$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. The correlation between emotion dysregulation and maternal reports of reasoning in private was negative and significant for girls ( $r = -.44$ ,  $p < .05$ ;  $n = 26$ ) and positive and non-significant for boys (boys  $r = .22$ , ns,  $n = 20$ ). An  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was non-significant ( $z = .78$ ).

Additional regression analyses did not yield significant results in the prediction of maternal emotion socialization strategies to children's display of emotions in specific contexts.

*Prediction of Paternal Emotion Socialization Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability Across All Emotions and Contexts*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if paternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's emotional displays across all emotions and contexts could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) paternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and paternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Paternal reports of direct command behavior.* A significant interaction was found in the prediction of paternal *Direct Command Behavior* in response to children's displays of emotions ( $R^2 \Delta = .15$ ;  $F \text{ Change} = 6.69$ ;  $p < .05$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. Although the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was significant in the prediction of paternal report of *Direct Command Behavior*, follow up analyses did not result in significant differences between the sexes.

*Paternal report of praise behavior.* A significant main effect was found for child emotion dysregulation in the prediction of paternal report of *Praise Behavior* to children's display of emotions ( $R^2 \Delta = .11$ ;  $F \text{ Change} = 4.81$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight ( $\beta = -.34$ ) indicated that those children who were perceived by their fathers to be emotionally dysregulated had fathers who reported less praise to their children's display of emotion.

*Prediction of Paternal Emotion Socialization Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability To Specific Emotion Displays*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if paternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's specific emotion displays could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) paternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and paternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Paternal reports of direct command behavior in response to children's displays of happiness.* A significant interaction was found in the prediction of paternal report of

*Direct Command - Behavior* in response to their children's displays of happiness ( $R^2 \Delta = .19$ ;  $F$  Change = 9.74;  $p < .01$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. The correlation between emotion dysregulation and paternal use of commands in response to children's display of happiness was positive and significant only for boy (boys  $r = .60$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $n = 17$ ; girls  $r = -.27$ , ns;  $n = 20$ ). A series of  $r$  to  $z$  transformation (Ferguson, 1966) was computed and the difference in the magnitude of correlations for boys and girls was non-significant ( $z = 1.19$ ).

*Paternal reports of praise behavior in response to children's displays of happiness.* A significant main effect was found for child emotion dysregulation in the prediction of paternal report of *Praise Behavior* to children's displays of happiness ( $R^2 \Delta = .13$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.24;  $p < .05$ ). The presence of a negative beta weight ( $\beta = -.35$ ) indicated that those children who were perceived by their fathers to be emotionally dysregulated had fathers who reported less praise in response to their children's displays of happiness.

*Prediction of Paternal Emotion Socialization Strategies by Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability to Emotion Displays in Public or Private*

A series of linear regression analyses was computed to determine if paternal emotion socialization strategies in response to their children's emotion displays in public or private could be predicted from child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, variables were entered on the following steps: (1) child sex; (2) paternal report of emotion dysregulation; and (3) the interaction between child sex and paternal report of emotion dysregulation.

*Paternal reports of direct commands in response to children's emotion displays in public.*

A significant interaction was found in the prediction of paternal report of *Direct Commands* in response to their children's displays of emotions in public ( $R^2 \Delta = .15$ ;  $F$  Change = 7.08;  $p < .01$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. Although the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was significant in the prediction of paternal report of *Direct Command Behavior*, follow up analyses did not result in significant differences between the sexes.

*Paternal reports of punishment in response to children's emotion displays in private.* A significant interaction was found in the prediction of paternal reports of *Punishment* in response to their children's displays of emotions in private ( $R^2 \Delta = .15$ ;  $F$  Change = 5.99;  $p < .05$ ). This interaction was further examined by comparing the correlation coefficients independently for boys and girls. Although the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was significant in the prediction of paternal report of *Punishment*, follow up analyses did not result in significant differences between the sexes.

## CHAPTER V

## DISCUSSION

In the present study, the contributions of parent and child gender were examined in the socialization of discrete emotion displays in specific contexts. Data from a total of eighty-six parents of preschool-aged children (26 mothers of daughters, 20 mothers of sons, 17 fathers of sons, and 23 fathers of daughters) were analyzed with respect to: (1) their self-reported emotional reactions to their sons' or daughters' displays of happiness, anxiety, anger, or disappointment, in both the public and private contexts; and (2) the emotion socialization strategies they utilized in response to their sons' or daughters' displays of happiness, anxiety, anger, or disappointment in public and private contexts. In addition, parents' perceptions of their children's emotion regulatory ability were examined as a possible factor that may influence the manner in which parents' respond to their children's emotion displays.

The present investigation was focused on an area of research that is much understudied. First, few studies regarding the socialization of emotion have centered on *both* mothers' *and* fathers' emotional reactions to the behaviors of their preschool-aged children. Second, there is a paucity of research on the socialization, by mothers and fathers, of discrete emotion displays. Specifically, the majority of the literature extant has focused primarily on the socialization of *negative* emotions; moreover, most of the studies have failed to distinguish between different types of negative emotions (e.g., anger versus anxiety). In addition, there are few investigations of the socialization of positive emotions (e.g., happiness). Finally, no researchers, to date, have examined the

possible influence that context may play in how parents choose to respond emotionally and behaviorally to their children's emotion displays.

*Parent Report of Emotional Reactions to Children's Emotion Displays*

The first aim of the present study was to examine maternal and paternal reports of seven emotional reactions (anger, disgust, embarrassment, anxiety, surprise, happiness, sadness) to their sons' versus daughters' discrete emotion displays (happiness, anxiety, anger, disappointment) across contexts (aggregate of both public and private), as well as within specific contexts (public or private). Several hypotheses were generated with regard to the comparison of four groups – mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters. Hypotheses were offered in relation to the type of emotion a parent witnessed his or her child displaying.

*Hypotheses Regarding Parental Emotional Reactions to Children's Display of Happiness*

No significant differences between the four groups were expected with regard to parental emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness across and within contexts. However, it was found that mothers of daughters reported that they would react with significantly more happiness to their daughters' displays of happiness than fathers of sons across contexts. It may be that mothers view that a central role they play in their daughters' emotional lives is to reinforce the display of positive emotions, such as happiness, whenever they occur.

Results from the regression analyses did provide some evidence for fathers' emotional reactions to their sons' display of happiness. Specifically, child sex predicted paternal report of surprise to their sons' display of happiness across contexts and in public. Thus, as suggested by the report of surprise, fathers may not expect their sons' to

display peak positive emotions and, as a result, their initial reactions are not to reinforce the display of happiness via their own expressions of happiness. Further, considering that the Western ideal is for males to be emotionally inexpressive (e.g., Jansz, 2000), fathers may encourage their sons to control their displays of emotion, regardless of emotion type. The majority of the existing literature focuses on the sex-stereotyped socialization of negative emotions, such as anger and sadness (e.g., Brody, 2000; Jansz, 2000), so these findings are speculative and warrant further examination of the socialization of positive emotions, such as happiness.

It was, however, postulated that parents' perceptions of their children's emotion regulatory abilities would predict their emotional reactions to children's displays of happiness. Specifically, it was predicted that mothers' and fathers' perceptions of emotion dysregulation would predict mothers' and fathers' report of embarrassment (respectively) to children's display of happiness *in public*, but no other parent emotional reactions were expected. This hypothesis was not supported; however it was found that fathers' (not mothers') perceptions of their children's emotion regulation predicted paternal responses to their children's displays of happiness. Specifically, for fathers, child emotion dysregulation (1) positively predicted paternal reports of anxiety and (2) negatively predicted paternal reports of happiness in response to children's displays of happiness across all contexts. When examined closer, it was found that paternal perceptions of emotion dysregulation also predicted fathers' reports of anxiety and happiness to their children's display of happiness *in public*, but not in private. It may be the case that fathers, who perceive their children to be emotionally dysregulated, may worry that their children's displays of happiness may represent a first step in moving

toward less than acceptable, potentially out-of-control behavior. As such, fathers may feel ill-at-ease, especially in the face of others, when their dysregulated children display peak emotion.

*Hypotheses Regarding Parental Emotional Reactions to Children's Display of Anxiety*

With regard to parental emotional reactions to children's displays of anxiety, several hypotheses were offered. First, based on the literature indicating that internalizing emotions are discouraged and punished in boys (Jansz, 2000; Siegel & Alloy, 1990), it was hypothesized that *both* mothers sons and fathers of sons would (1) report feeling more anxiety and surprise in response to their sons' displays of anxiety, in both public and private, than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters and (2) report feeling more embarrassment in response to their sons' displays of anxiety in public than their daughters' display of the same emotion. Furthermore, consistent with previous findings regarding fathers' negative reactions to their socially reticent sons (MacDonald & Parke, 1984), it was expected that fathers of sons would report more anger and disgust to their sons' displays of anxiety than mothers of sons, fathers of daughters, and mothers of sons.

The only hypotheses supported by the data were those regarding fathers of sons. Specifically, as expected, fathers reported more surprise in response to their sons' displays of anxiety across contexts and in public. In addition, fathers of sons also reported significantly more embarrassment to sons' displays of anxiety; although, it was found that fathers reported significantly more embarrassment to their sons' display of anxiety *in private, not in public*. This finding seems curious considering embarrassment, by definition, involves the knowledge that one may be the target of another's judgment

(Semin & Manstead, 1991). It may be the case that the *cause* of sons' anxiety was more important to fathers than the *display* of anxiety. In the vignette wherein children were depicted to display anxiety in private, the cause of the anxiety was victimization by peers; alternately, the cause for children's anxiety in public was discomfort with unfamiliar peers. Fathers may have felt more embarrassed by their sons' reactions because they did not "toughen up" or stand up for themselves in the private vignette.

When child sex and emotion dysregulation were examined in the prediction of parent emotional reactions to the display of anxiety, there were no significant findings for *mothers*. However, the same was not true in the prediction of *paternal* emotional reactions. Specifically, the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation predicted paternal reports of anger and disgust in response to their children's displays of anxiety across contexts and in private. Upon a closer examination of the interaction, it appears that fathers responded with *less* anger and disgust to their emotionally dysregulated sons' display of anxiety. The existing body of literature supports a relation between emotion dysregulation and parents' emotional responding in the opposite direction. Specifically, parents of emotionally dysregulated children have been found to react to their children's emotion displays with greater rejection and negativity (e.g., Jones et al., 2002). Why is it that, in this sample, fathers are reporting more anger and disgust towards their emotionally regulated sons? Again, as may have been the case for paternal report of embarrassment, the *cause* of boys' expression of anxiety may be the best way to decipher this finding. It seems plausible that fathers who perceive their sons' to be emotionally regulated may hold different expectations for their sons' behavior. Thus, when they learn that their emotionally regulated sons have been victimized, they may

react with more disgust and anger because they expect their sons to behave in a socially competent manner and, quite possibly, be well-received by their peers.

*Hypotheses Regarding Parental Emotional Reactions to Children's Display of Anger*

First, it was hypothesized that the four groups – mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters – would not differ from each other in the amount of anger and disgust reported in response to children's displays of anger across contexts. This hypothesis was not supported. Mothers of sons and mothers of daughters reported significantly *more* anger to the display of anger across contexts than fathers of sons and fathers of daughters. Typically, the literature suggests that boys' displays of anger and aggression are viewed as more acceptable than girls' display of the same emotion and behavior (Radke-Yarrow & Kochanska, 1990). If this is the case, why did mothers react with more anger and disgust to *both* their sons' and daughters' display of anger? It may simply be that the mothers witness their children's display of anger more often than fathers. Specifically, mothers may have more opportunities to react to their children's anger and to teach their children about socially acceptable ways to express their anger. Thus, when asked to imagine their children displaying anger, they may have themselves felt more anger and disgust because they viewed their children as violating a pre-established "emotional rule" (e.g., "We do not throw a temper tantrum when we don't get our way.").

Alternately, fathers may respond with less anger and disgust because they may be more tolerant of anger displays than mothers. Indeed it has been reported that men do not feel uneasy about their expressions of anger (Fischer, 1991). Furthermore, men have been documented to display anger more frequently than women (Averill, 1983; Fischer,

1993). Thus, if men are more comfortable with the expression of anger, it would not be expected for them to react with anger or disgust. It would be interesting, however, to examine if fathers do react to different types of anger expression. Better put, in the vignettes, the anger stories depicted children throwing temper tantrums. It could be that fathers would react differently if children were depicted as expressing anger towards a sibling or peer. Once again, it may be that the *cause* for emotion is important in understanding how parents socialize their children.

When parental perceptions of their children's emotion dysregulation were taken into account, dysregulation was predictive of maternal report of anger to children's anger across contexts and in private *for mothers of girls*. Additionally, the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation predicted maternal reports of disgust to their children's displays of anger across contexts and in private. When the interaction was probed, the correlation between maternal disgust and child emotion dysregulation was *negative* and significant for boys. Thus, it appears that mothers reported *less disgust* to their sons' displays of anger when they were perceived to be emotionally dysregulated. This finding was surprising since the literature supports a relation between these two constructs in the opposite direction. Specifically, child emotion dysregulation has been documented to predict negative maternal behavior (e.g., Rubin, Burgess, Dwyer, & Hastings, 2003). It may be that mothers may sympathize with their emotionally dysregulated sons. Thus, mothers may react with more care and concern, rather than rejection, in response to their dysregulated sons' display of anger. There is some support for this speculation. For instance, Radke-Yarrow and Kochanska (1990) have reported that mothers tend to inhibit girls' displays of anger, while expressing concern for their

sons' displays of anger.

*Hypotheses Regarding Parental Emotional Reactions to Children's Display of Disappointment*

The expectations for parents' reactions to children's display of disappointment followed a similar rationale for the hypotheses offered regarding children's displays of anxiety. First, it was expected that both mothers of sons and fathers of sons would report more anxiety and surprise in response to their sons' displays of disappointment in public and private than mothers of daughters and fathers of daughters. Fathers of sons did report significantly more surprise to their sons' display of disappointment across contexts and in private, but not in public. However, the same was not true for mothers of sons. This may simply be an artifact that the mothers may spend more time with their children and have experienced similar situations with their children. However, for fathers, if they spend less time with their children, the situations described in the vignettes may be novel to them, resulting in the report of surprise.

When parents were asked to imagine their child displaying disappointment, as predicted, fathers of sons reported significantly more disgust than fathers of daughters and mothers of daughters across contexts. Interestingly, mothers of daughters also reported significantly more disgust in response their daughters' displays of disappointment than mothers of sons and fathers of daughters across contexts. Upon examining group differences within context, it was found that fathers of sons and mothers of daughters reported more disgust to their children's display of disappointment in public, but not in private. It may the case that the cause of the emotion display is the key to interpreting this finding. Recall, the vignette for disappointment in public portrayed a

child displaying disappointment after receiving a gift at a birthday party. It may be the case that parents are reporting more disgust as a result of the possible social consequence of their child's emotion display, rather than the sheer display of disappointment. Indeed, evidence from the open-ended question supports this rationale. Specifically, many mothers and fathers indicated in the open-ended question that they would inform their child that their display of disappointment may, "hurt another's feelings" or tell their child, "that is not the way a little gentleman behaves."

Curiously, mothers reported more disgust towards their daughters' display of disappointment, but not their sons' display; and fathers reported more disgust towards their sons' display of disappointment, but not their daughters' display. If parents reacted with disgust in order to socialize good behavior, why did they not react in the same manner towards their opposite sex child? Fabes and colleagues (1990) found that maternal sympathy was related to girls', but not boys', prosocial behaviors. Furthermore, additional studies have illustrated that the relation between maternal socialization and the development of prosocial behaviors appears to be stronger for girls than for boys (Eisenberg et al., 1992; Hastings, Rubin, & De Rose, 2005). Thus, researchers have suggested that the same-sexed parent may be the best socializer for the development of altruistic behavior. As a result, it may be the case that parents "pick up" on this early in life and, as a result, are more invested in socializing their same-sexed child's polite and prosocial behavior.

#### *Parent Emotion Socialization Strategies*

Initially, it was expected that different factor structures would emerge for maternal and paternal emotion socialization strategies. While this was the case, a

coherent factor structure failed to emerge. Consequently, the emotion socialization codes were considered separately. This process allowed for an examination of specific emotion socialization strategies. Two sets of analyses were conducted. First, the means of the emotion socialization strategies for the four groups – mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters – were compared via a series of Analysis of Variance. Second, separate regression analyses were run to examine if child sex, emotion dysregulation, and the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation were predictive of maternal and paternal emotion socialization strategies.

The mean difference tests yielded significant differences between the four groups for parent report of *Praise Behavior*, *Reasoning*, and *Other Oriented Reasoning*. Further, the regression analyses predicted differences in the report of *Direct Command Behavior*, *Praise Behavior*, *Reasoning*, and *Other Oriented Reasoning*.

#### *Direct Command Behavior*

Mothers of sons, mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters did not differ significantly in the report of *Direct Command Behavior*. It was found, however, that maternal perceptions of children's emotion regulatory abilities did predict the report of *Direct Command Behavior* in response to their children's displays of emotions across all emotions and contexts. Specifically, mothers reported more socialization strategies characterized as *Direct Command Behavior* when they perceived their children to be emotionally dysregulated. Upon closer examination, maternal report of child emotion dysregulation also predicted the report of *Direct Command Behavior* in public. Mothers may feel that, especially in public, the optimal reaction to their children's emotional expression is to give them a directive (e.g., "I would tell her to sit

down now.”) in an effort to quell their children’s emotional expression. This strategy would be effective in ceasing children’s behavior; however, is this an effective strategy to teach children about emotions? It seems that what mothers do *after* giving a directive is key to promoting adaptive emotional development. For instance, if children are told to “Sit down now” with no explanation as to *why* they should stop their emotional expression, they may not be afforded with important information about emotions and emotion displays. This line of rationale is consistent with Hoffman’s (2000) research regarding inductive disciplinary practices. Specifically, it has been suggested that optimal disciplinary practices should include age-appropriate explanations. And, indeed, it has been documented that preschoolers who have parents who engage in this type of practice are more likely to be prosocial (Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, & King, 1979).

For fathers, the report of *Direct Command Behavior* to children’s display of happiness was predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation. Specifically, it appears that fathers who perceive their sons to be emotionally dysregulated engage in *Direct Command Behavior* to their sons’ displays of happiness. As with mothers, it may be that this strategy is effective in curbing boys’ displays of emotion, however whether or not this strategy promotes optimal emotional development requires further inquiry.

#### *Praise Behavior*

Mothers of sons reported *Praise Behavior* across all emotion displays and contexts significantly more often than mothers of daughters, fathers of sons, and fathers of daughters. This finding is difficult to interpret without knowledge of the emotion mothers were socializing. However, this result may be an illustration of recent media

attention given to the pitfalls of the Western ideal of the “emotionally inexpressive male.” For instance, the National Institute of Mental Health recently launched a media campaign to bring attention to the growing number of men silently suffering from internalizing disorders (see Kersting, 2005). Furthermore, several popular psychology books have brought attention to addressing the problems associated with the proliferation of masculine stereotypes in Western Culture (e.g., Kindlon & Thomson, 1999; Pollock, 1998). This being noted, it may be that mothers are paying particular attention to their sons’ emotion displays and reinforcing those emotions (regardless of what emotion their son is expressing) with praise. In fact, one mother in this study noted in response to her son’s display of anxiety, “I would tell him I was happy that he shared his feelings and give him a hug.”

Fathers who perceived their children to be emotionally regulated reported significantly more *Praise Behavior* to their children’s display of happiness. From this, it can be deduced that fathers reinforce their children’s display of emotions not necessarily based on the gender of their child, but rather on the perception of their child’s disposition. This finding complements the aforementioned results yielded in the prediction of fathers’ emotional reactions to their children’s display of happiness.

### *Reasoning*

Fathers of sons reported significantly more *Reasoning* strategies than fathers of daughters, mothers of sons, and mothers of daughters across all types of emotions that children displayed across contexts. Again, these findings are difficult to interpret without knowing which emotion parents were socializing. However, this finding may illuminate the unique function that fathers’ play in their sons’ emotional development. Specifically,

fathers may feel they are responsible for socializing the consequences of emotion displays in their sons, while mothers may play the role in teaching emotion recognition and understanding. Recall, the emotion socialization code *Reasoning* is defined as, “explaining why a child should behave in a certain way, or points out the natural consequences of behavior.” Given the paucity of research examining paternal emotional socialization strategies, this line of rationale needs further empirical investigation.

For mothers, child emotion dysregulation negatively predicted maternal reports of *Reasoning* to children’s display of anger. It seems reasonable that mothers who perceive their children to be emotionally dysregulated would not attempt to engage their children in an explanation of the consequences of their behavior. Rather, mothers may feel it is most prudent to react to their dysregulated children’s display of anger via other methods (distraction, punishment) in order to quickly curb their child’s behavior. Unfortunately, this line of thinking is speculative, as child emotion dysregulation did not predict any other maternal emotion socialization strategies to children’s display of anger.

Finally, the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation was predictive for maternal report of *Reasoning* to children’s display of emotions in private. Specifically, mothers of emotionally dysregulated girls reported less *Reasoning* strategies to their daughters’ display of emotion in private. Without knowledge of which emotion mothers are responding, interpretation of this finding is difficult.

#### *Other Oriented Reasoning*

The only significant difference that emerged when comparing the four groups of parents on their reports of emotion socialization strategies to specific emotions was in response to children’s displays of disappointment. Specifically, fathers of sons reported

more *Other Oriented Reasoning* than mothers of sons and fathers of daughters. As was the case for parents' emotional reactions to children's displays of disappointment, it may be the case that this finding was "driven" by the content of the story. Specifically, in the public context, children's disappointment was in response to receiving a birthday gift in the presence of other individuals; thus, it seems reasonable that fathers would direct their sons' attention to the fact that this type of expression may hurt another's feelings. As previously noted, it may be the case that the same-sex parent takes on the predominant role of the socialization of prosocial behavior.

Why, then, did mothers of daughters not report more *Other Oriented Reasoning* than mothers of sons? While the mean differences were not significant, some evidence did emerge indicating that mothers may also engage their daughters, but not their sons, in *Other Oriented Reasoning* in response to the display of disappointment. First, it is important to note that the mean difference between fathers of sons and mothers of sons was not significant (see Table 11). Second, via a series of regression analyses, it was found that mothers of emotionally-regulated girls reported *Other Oriented Reasoning* in response to their daughters' display of disappointment. However, unlike fathers, their knowledge of their daughters' ability to self-regulate appears to influence their use of this strategy.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

While the present study examined a body of research that is understudied, there were several limitations. First, whereas significant differences were found between the four groups, the entire sample was considerably small, thereby negating what seemed to be rather acceptable correlation coefficients in the interpretation of the interaction effects

(non-significant by virtue of the small  $N$ ). Thus, the generalizability of the findings in the present study is limited.

Furthermore, the number of fathers in the study was considerably lower than that of mothers. In fact, the difficulty of recruiting fathers to participate in this study, particularly fathers of sons, leads the author to believe that there may be a self-selection bias in this sample of fathers. Costigan and Cox (2001) conducted an investigation examining possible self-selection biases concerning fathers participating in family research. They reported that the fathers in their sample underrepresented fathers on several traits, including lower socio-economic status and working class professions (Costigan & Cox). The present sample appears to mirror their sample in those two regards. Thus, it should be a priority of future studies to attempt to include fathers of underrepresented populations. For instance, it was recently documented that mothers in a low-SES group responded differently to their children's emotions than mothers in a middle-SES group (Martini, Root, & Jenkins, 2004). Thus, it seems important that researchers should devote attention to the examination of emotion socialization processes in similar samples of fathers.

Next, the use of single informants does not allow for generalizability beyond parents' *beliefs* about their emotional reactions and emotion socialization strategies. Future research should focus on examining questions pertaining to parents' (both mothers and fathers) emotional reactions and emotion socialization strategies via observational research. Further, it may be fruitful to obtain an independent assessment of children's emotion regulatory ability, such as observational measures or physiological assessment.

This may be important because parent ratings of child temperament are likely to be subjective and prone to bias (Rothbart & Bates, 1998).

On a related note, the measure of emotion dysregulation utilized herein was a *global* assessment of emotion regulation. It has been postulated that children may be better at regulating some emotions, while have more difficulty with the regulation of other emotions (Underwood, 1997). For example, if a parent knows that his/her child has difficulty regulating anger, this may have an impact on the parent's response to children's anger, but not necessarily on their response to anxiety. It seems important for future research to examine how children's abilities to regulate specific emotions relate to parents' emotion socialization practices.

In addition, while the analyses examining maternal and paternal emotional reactions to children's displays of emotion did yield significant results, it is important not to "over inflate" the magnitude of these findings. The mean levels of parents' emotional reactions were relatively low (see Tables 3 – 6). For instance, the mean for maternal report of anger in response to their daughters' display of anger in private was  $M = 2.61$ , which was scaled on the questionnaire to equate between "a bit" and "quite a bit".

Finally, this study examined specific emotion displays and context as possible influences in parent emotion socialization. The hypotheses were drawn largely from previous empirical work on parents' emotional reactions to their children's negative emotions (see Eisenberg, et al., 1998 for a review), as well as the social psychological literature regarding the appropriateness for males and females to display particular emotions (e.g., Jansz, 2000). It seems that future research should attempt to capture *parents' individual beliefs* about display rules for specific emotions. From a systems

approach, it is clear that the beliefs of a larger culture about the appropriateness for particular emotion displays largely shape and mold parenting beliefs (Harkness & Super, 2002). Thus, future research should attempt to capture parents' beliefs about display rules of emotions, as these beliefs would likely impact how they react to or socialize children's emotions.

Furthermore, no overwhelming evidence emerged regarding the influence of context (the display of emotion in public versus private). This may be due to the fact that parents were asked to imagine the situations, rather than being observed socializing their children's emotions. It seems that operationalizing context in the laboratory environment would prove difficult; however attempts should be made to capture this possible powerful influence in emotion socialization.

While the analyses did not provide compelling evidence for the role of context in the process of parent emotion socialization, the findings did indicate that parents may react differently depending on the *cause* of children's display of emotions, rather than the sheer display of a certain emotion. This line of research requires further examination. However, the findings herein underscore the importance of examining emotion socialization at the emotion-specific level. By understanding specific aspects about the emotions parents are socializing (e.g., type of emotion, cause of emotion), a more coherent picture of (1) the process of emotion socialization and (2) the impact on children's emotional development may be obtained. In a recent study of adolescents, O'Neal and Magai (2005) reported that the combination of both global and emotion-specific socialization strategies best predict outcomes, such as developmental psychopathology.

In conclusion, the present study provides evidence for sex-stereotyped socialization of children's emotion displays, as well as evidence for the importance of emotion socialization at the emotion-specific level. The impact of gender-specific and emotion-specific socialization on children's emotional development was not examined in the present study. However, it is likely that the manner which mothers and fathers react to their sons' versus daughters' displays of emotions may have different impacts on children's social and emotional development. The findings of this study do provide some support to the notion that mothers and fathers may play different, and quite possibly distinct, roles in the socialization of their children's emotions (e.g., Feldman, 2003). Further examination of these distinct roles it may provide a better understanding of how to best promote successful emotional development in young children.

Table 1

## Factor analysis for maternal emotion socialization strategies

Code	Factor 1	Factor 2
<i>Directiveness</i>		
Direct Command Behav.	-.75	
Punishment	.75	
Eigenvalues	1.12	
<i>Intervention</i>		
Direct Intervention	.66	
Indirect Intervention	-.56	
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.63	
Eigenvalues	1.15	
<i>Reasoning</i>		
Indirect Command Behav	.64	
Question Situation	.50	
Reasoning	-.72	
Other Oriented Reasoning	-.49	
Eigenvalues	1.42	
<i>Warmth</i>		
Supp/Acknow. Behavior	.17	-.51
Praise Behavior	-.02	.54
Supp/Acknow. Feelings	-.57	.09
Affection/Comfort	.55	-.09
Eigenvalues	.66	.57

Table 2

## Factor analysis for paternal emotion socialization strategies

Code	Factor 1	Factor 2
<i>Directiveness</i>		
Direct Command Behav.	.74	
Punishment	.74	
Eigenvalue	1.09	
<i>Intervention</i>		
Direct Intervention	.82	
Indirect Intervention	.82	
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.14	
Eigenvalue	1.37	
<i>Reasoning</i>		
Indirect Command Behav.	-.53	-.08
Question Situation	.13	-.48
Reasoning	.16	.47
Other Oriented Reasoning	-.56	.06
Eigenvalues	.65	.48
<i>Warmth</i>		
Supp/Acknow. Behavior	.02	-.22
Praise Behavior	.16	.43
Supp/Acknow. Feelings	.47	.26
Affection/Comfort	-.49	.05
Eigenvalues	.49	.30

Table 3  
Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Reactions to Happiness

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Anger	2.15 (.36)	2.19 (.49)	2.29 (.46)	2.17 (.49)
Disgust	2.05 (.22)	2.15 (.46)	2.29 (.58)	2.08 (.41)
Embarrassment	2.50 (.51)	2.46 (.76)	2.52 (.62)	2.60 (.65)
Anxiety	2.60 (.75)	2.42 (.70)	2.47 (.51)	2.52 (.73)
Surprise	3.00 (1.37)	3.00 (1.20)	3.47 (1.17)	2.82 (1.07)
Happy	6.90 (1.83)	7.65** (1.78)	5.76* (1.67)	6.60 (2.10)
Sad	2.00 (.00)	2.19 (.63)	2.29 (.98)	2.13 (.34)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 3 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Reactions to Happiness

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Private</i>				
Anger	1.00 (.00)	1.07 (.27)	1.05 (.24)	1.08 (.41)
Disgust	1.05 (.22)	1.07 (.27)	1.11 (.33)	1.04 (.36)
Embarrassment	1.00 (.00)	1.03 (.19)	1.05 (.24)	1.00 (.00)
Anxiety	1.05 (.22)	1.03 (.19)	1.00 (.00)	1.13 (.34)
Surprise	1.30 (.73)	1.23 (.42)	1.52 (.62)	1.39 (.89)
Happy	3.45 (1.23)	3.76 (1.30)	2.82 (1.18)	3.13 (1.39)
Sad	1.00 (.00)	1.07 (.27)	1.23 (.97)	1.13 (.34)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 3 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Reactions to Happiness

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Public</i>				
Anger	1.15 (.36)	1.11 (.43)	1.23 (.43)	1.08 (.28)
Disgust	1.00 (.00)	1.07 (.39)	1.17 (.39)	1.04 (.20)
Embarrassment	1.50 (.51)	1.42 (.70)	1.47 (.51)	1.60 (.65)
Anxiety	1.55 (.75)	1.38 (.63)	1.47 (.51)	1.39 (.58)
Surprise	1.70 (.80)	1.76 (1.10)	1.94 (1.02)	1.43 (.58)
Happy	3.45 (.88)	3.88 (1.17)	2.94 (1.08)	3.47 (1.23)
Sad	1.00 (.00)	1.11 (.58)	1.05 (.24)	1.00 (.00)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anxiety

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Anger	2.95 (1.43)	3.19 (1.38)	2.88 (1.11)	2.60 (.94)
Disgust	2.35 (.87)	2.50 (1.02)	2.41 (.87)	2.26 (.75)
Embarrassment	2.50 (.60)	2.38 (.49)	2.76 (.66)	2.30 (.47)
Anxiety	4.10 (1.58)	3.61 (1.52)	3.76 (1.30)	3.82 (1.19)
Surprise	4.20* (1.36)	3.53* (1.72)	5.35** (1.93)	3.69* (1.06)
Happy	2.30 (.97)	2.73 (1.31)	2.47 (.94)	2.78 (1.50)
Sad	5.00 (1.89)	4.34 (1.49)	4.35 ( 1.49)	4.26 (1.76)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 4 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anxiety

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Private</i>				
Anger	1.70 (1.21)	1.88 (1.36)	1.64 (1.05)	1.52 (.89)
Disgust	1.30 (.80)	1.46 (.98)	1.29 (.84)	1.26 (.75)
Embarrassment	1.05* (.22)	1.00* (.00)	1.23** (.43)	1.04* (.20)
Anxiety	2.00 (1.02)	1.65 (.84)	1.76 (.75)	2.08 (.79)
Surprise	1.50 (.60)	1.53 (1.02)	2.23 (1.20)	1.60 (.83)
Happy	1.30 (.97)	1.69 (1.31)	1.41 (.87)	1.65 (1.36)
Sad	2.75 (1.29)	2.46 (1.24)	2.47 (1.06)	2.65 (1.26)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 4 Continued

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anxiety

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Public</i>				
Anger	1.25 (.44)	1.30 (.67)	1.23 (.43)	1.08 (.28)
Disgust	1.05 (.22)	1.03 (.19)	1.11 (.33)	1.00 (.00)
Embarrassment	1.45 (.51)	1.38 (.49)	1.52 (.51)	1.26 (.44)
Anxiety	2.10 (.96)	1.96 (.95)	2.00 (.70)	1.73 (.81)
Surprise	2.70* (1.30)	2.00* (1.26)	3.11** (1.31)	2.08* (1.04)
Happy	1.00 (.00)	1.03 (.19)	1.05 (.24)	1.13 (.45)
Sad	2.25 (1.06)	1.88 (.95)	1.88 (.60)	1.60 (.65)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anger

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Anger	5.45** (2.08)	5.80** (2.22)	3.94* (.89)	3.26* (1.05)
Disgust	3.90 (1.86)	4.88 (2.42)	5.00 (2.17)	3.56 (1.70)
Embarrassment	3.80 (1.36)	3.69 (1.34)	3.82 (1.46)	3.86 (1.60)
Anxiety	4.20 (1.47)	3.61 (1.44)	3.82 (1.74)	3.60 (1.80)
Surprise	4.85 (2.39)	4.53 (2.58)	4.94 (2.01)	4.73 (2.30)
Happy	2.00 (.00)	2.11 (.58)	2.11 (.33)	2.17 (.65)
Sad	2.85 (1.08)	3.26 (1.42)	3.41 (1.32)	3.26 (2.00)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 5 Continued

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anger

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Private</i> Anger	2.35 (1.03)	2.61 (1.29)	2.88 (.92)	2.17 (.98)
Disgust	1.55* (.82)	2.23** (1.39)	2.17 (.95)	1.52* (.89)
Embarrassment	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)	1.11 (.33)	1.13 (.62)
Anxiety	1.65 (.58)	1.34 (.84)	1.70 (.98)	1.65 (.93)
Surprise	2.05 (1.35)	1.61 (1.20)	2.05 (1.24)	1.73 (1.21)
Happy	1.00 (.00)	1.11 (.58)	1.05 (.24)	1.13 (.45)
Sad	1.30 (.57)	1.38 (.49)	1.76 (.75)	1.52 (.94)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 5 Continued

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Anger

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Public</i>				
Anger	3.10 (1.20)	3.19 (1.35)	3.23 (1.14)	2.86 (1.17)
Disgust	2.35 (1.34)	2.65 (1.46)	2.82 (1.38)	2.04 (1.02)
Embarrassment	2.80 (1.36)	2.69 (1.34)	2.70 (1.26)	2.73 (1.25)
Anxiety	2.50 (1.14)	2.26 (1.07)	2.11 (.92)	1.95 (1.02)
Surprise	2.80 (1.47)	2.92 (1.69)	2.88 (1.21)	3.00 (1.47)
Happy	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)	1.05 (.24)	1.04 (.20)
Sad	1.55 (.75)	1.88 (1.21)	1.64 (.70)	1.73 (1.09)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Disappointment

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Anger	2.65 (1.03)	3.00 (1.13)	3.17 (.88)	2.91 (.79)
Disgust	2.20* (.83)	2.92** (1.01)	3.05** (1.08)	2.21* (.42)
Embarrassment	3.15 (.93)	3.65 (1.05)	3.70 (.77)	3.34 (.77)
Anxiety	3.20 (1.47)	2.96 (.72)	3.23 (.90)	3.13 (1.01)
Surprise	2.80* (1.00)	3.19* (1.13)	4.00** (1.80)	3.39 (1.23)
Happy	2.30 (1.17)	2.11 (.81)	2.11 (.33)	2.29 (.83)
Sad	3.45 (1.43)	4.53 (1.77)	3.88 (.99)	4.21 (1.62)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 6 Continued

Means and Standard Deviations for Each Group to Disappointment

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Private</i>				
Anger	1.20 (.52)	1.23 (.81)	1.05 (.24)	1.04 (.20)
Disgust	1.15 (.48)	1.07 (.39)	1.17 (.39)	1.00 (.00)
Embarrassment	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)
Anxiety	1.45 (.82)	1.19 (.40)	1.47 (.51)	1.47 (.59)
Surprise	1.20* (.41)	1.15* (.36)	1.70** (.98)	1.13* (.34)
Happy	1.25 (.91)	1.00 (.00)	1.11 (.33)	1.34 (.71)
Sad	2.10 (1.11)	2.69 (1.54)	2.29 (.84)	2.39 (1.03)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 6 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Reactions to Disappointment

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 23
<i>In Public</i>				
Anger	1.45 (.68)	1.76 (.86)	2.11 (.85)	1.86 (.75)
Disgust	1.05* (.39)	1.84** (.83)	1.88** (.85)	1.21* (.42)
Embarrassment	2.15 (.93)	2.65 (1.05)	2.64 (.70)	2.34 (.77)
Anxiety	1.75 (.85)	1.76 (.65)	1.76 (.56)	1.65 (.57)
Surprise	1.60 (.82)	2.03 (1.14)	2.29 (1.04)	2.26 (1.21)
Happy	1.05 (.39)	1.15 (.78)	1.00 (.00)	1.04 (.20)
Sad	1.35 (.58)	1.84 (.88)	1.58 (.61)	1.82 (.93)

Scaling: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A bit; 3 = Quite a bit; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to All Emotions

Groups

Emotional Reactions	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 18	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Direct Command Behavior	.05 (.06)	.05 (.07)	.05 (.08)	.02 (.06)
Indirect Command Behavior	.06 (.07)	.06 (.07)	.02 (.04)	.03 (.05)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.05 (.07)	.06 (.06)	.03 (.05)	.07 (.08)
Praise Behavior	.07** (.07)	.04* (.05)	.02* (.04)	.04* (.06)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.07 (.09)	.10 (.09)	.09 (.10)	.05 (.07)
Punishment	.07 (.09)	.05 (.07)	.06 (.07)	.03 (.06)
Affection/Comfort	.18 (.11)	.12 (.08)	.11 (.13)	.15 (.12)

Table 7 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to All Emotions

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 18	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Question Situation	.05 (.08)	.04 (.06)	.03 (.05)	.07 (.06)
Reasoning	.09* (.12)	.09* (.08)	.22** (.18)	.11* (.12)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.03 (.05)	.04 (.04)	.04 (.06)	.01 (.03)
Indirect Intervention	.09 (.06)	.10 (.07)	.08 (.08)	.07 (.07)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.07 (.09)	.06 (.07)	.06 (.09)	.07 (.08)
Direct Intervention	.03 (.05)	.05 (.06)	.05 (.06)	.07 (.06)

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Happiness

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Direct Command Behavior	.05 (.15)	.02 (.09)	.09 (.21)	.02 (.11)
Indirect Command Behavior	.16 (.25)	.16 (.17)	.06 (.15)	.11 (.18)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.20 (.25)	.23 (.25)	.16 (.21)	.22 (.29)
Praise Behavior	.28 (.25)	.17 (.26)	.07 (.18)	.16 (.24)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.07 (.15)	.14 (.23)	.08 (.16)	.04 (.12)
Punishment	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Affection/Comfort	.05 (.11)	.01 (.07)	.05 (.14)	.00 (.00)

Table 8 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Happiness

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Question Situation	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.08)
Reasoning	.10 (.25)	.09 (.16)	.22 (.29)	.08 (.15)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.01 (.05)	.02 (.07)	.02 (.08)	.00 (.00)
Indirect Intervention	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.02 (.11)	.02 (.08)	.03 (.09)	.01 (.05)
Direct Intervention	.02 (.07)	.007 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)

Table 9

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Anxiety

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Direct Command Behavior	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Indirect Command Behavior	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.00 (.00)	.01 (.07)	.00 (.00)	.05 (.16)
Praise Behavior	.00 (.00)	.007 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.03 (.09)	.11 (.16)	.15 (.19)	.08 (.17)
Punishment	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Affection/Comfort	.39 (.29)	.20 (.20)	.23 (.34)	.32 (.26)

Table 9 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Anxiety

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Question Situation	.12 (.20)	.09 (.16)	.12 (.17)	.20 (.23)
Reasoning	.07 (.17)	.04 (.12)	.17 (.28)	.07 (.14)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.02 (.08)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Indirect Intervention	.23 (.24)	.26 (.25)	.20 (.16)	.14 (.17)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.02 (.11)	.06 (.14)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.05)
Direct Intervention	.02 (.07)	.01 (.04)	.01 (.06)	.01 (.05)

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Anger

Groups

Emotional Reactions	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Direct Command Behavior	.11 (.23)	.11 (.21)	.05 (.09)	.01 (.05)
Indirect Command Behavior	.05 (.11)	.03 (.10)	.00 (.00)	.03 (.11)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.008 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Praise Behavior	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.05 (.14)	.06 (.14)	.04 (.13)	.02 (.06)
Punishment	.35 (.44)	.18 (.29)	.26 (.34)	.12 (.20)
Affection/Comfort	.05 (.16)	.04 (.12)	.00 (.00)	.03 (.15)

Table 10 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Anger

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Question Situation	.01 (.07)	.02 (.09)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Reasoning	.07 (.18)	.17 (.30)	.25 (.29)	.18 (.23)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.008 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Indirect Intervention	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.04)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.02 (.11)	.06 (.14)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.05)
Direct Intervention	.08 (.15)	.05 (.11)	.13 (.27)	.11 (.18)

Table 11

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Disappointment  
Groups

Emotional Reactions	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Direct Command Behavior	.05 (.13)	.05 (.12)	.00 (.00)	.03 (.12)
Indirect Command Behavior	.03 (.10)	.05 (.11)	.01 (.04)	.008 (.04)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.00 (.00)	.01 (.06)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.11)
Praise Behavior	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.12 (.18)	.10 (.15)	.09 (.15)	.07 (.14)
Punishment	.00 (.00)	.01 (.05)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Affection/Comfort	.22 (.20)	.20 (.19)	.18 (.22)	.23 (.22)

Table 11 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies to Disappointment

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
<i>Across Contexts</i>				
Question Situation	.02 (.11)	.02 (.06)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Reasoning	.18 (.22)	.08 (.15)	.25 (.35)	.14 (.19)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.05* (.14)	.13 (.18)	.18** (.20)	.05* (.11)
Indirect Intervention	.11 (.17)	.14 (.16)	.06 (.10)	.10 (.15)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.14 (.25)	.09 (.17)	.07 (.15)	.15 (.18)
Direct Intervention	.00 (.00)	.03 (.09)	.00 (.00)	.05 (.11)

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies in Private  
Groups

Emotional Reactions	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
Direct Command Behavior	.05 (.10)	.03 (.06)	.03 (.12)	.01 (.05)
Indirect Command Behavior	.02 (.05)	.01 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.07)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.06 (.10)	.05 (.09)	.02 (.04)	.06 (.11)
Praise Behavior	.08 (.10)	.04 (.07)	.02 (.05)	.05 (.08)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.10 (.13)	.17 (.16)	.15 (.17)	.07 (.13)
Punishment	.08 (.10)	.04 (.08)	.05 (.09)	.03 (.07)
Affection/Comfort	.27 (.16)	.19 (.12)	.17 (.20)	.26 (.20)

Table 12 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies in Private

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
Question Situation	.06 (.11)	.05 (.08)	.03 (.06)	.06 (.08)
Reasoning	.08* (.14)	.10* (.11)	.26** (.24)	.10* (.13)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.01 (.04)	.005 (.03)	.01 (.04)	.00 (.00)
Indirect Intervention	.06 (.08)	.10 (.11)	.07 (.10)	.07 (.09)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.05 (.09)	.05 (.09)	.07 (.12)	.05 (.10)
Direct Intervention	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.04)	.01 (.04)

Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies in Public

Groups

Emotional Reactions	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
Direct Command Behavior	.05 (.10)	.07 (.12)	.08 (.10)	.03 (.06)
Indirect Command Behavior	.10 (.11)	.09 (.10)	.05 (.10)	.05 (.09)
Support/Acknowledge Behavior	.05 (.09)	.06 (.09)	.04 (.08)	.08 (.10)
Praise Behavior	.06 (.09)	.04 (.08)	.01 (.04)	.02 (.06)
Support/Acknowledge Feelings	.04 (.09)	.03 (.06)	.03 (.07)	.03 (.06)
Punishment	.08 (.11)	.04 (.08)	.07 (.10)	.04 (.07)
Affection/Comfort	.08 (.10)	.04 (.08)	.03 (.08)	.05 (.11)

Table 13 Continued

## Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Socialization Strategies in Public

Emotional Reactions	Groups			
	Mothers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20	Mothers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 26	Fathers of Sons Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 17	Fathers of Daughters Mean (SD) <i>n</i> = 20
Question Situation	.03 (.07)	.02 (.06)	.04 (.08)	.08 (.10)
Reasoning	.09 (.13)	.08 (.11)	.20 (.24)	.11 (.15)
Other Oriented Reasoning	.05 (.09)	.07 (.09)	.09 (.11)	.02 (.06)
Indirect Intervention	.09 (.10)	.10 (.09)	.07 (.08)	.07 (.09)
Guidance/Pragmatic Solutions	.08 (.14)	.06 (.10)	.03 (.07)	.08 (.11)
Direct Intervention	.07 (.10)	.11 (.14)	.07 (.09)	.13 (.10)

Table 14

Summary of Significant Findings – Comparison of Four Groups on Parent Emotional Reactions

---

**Children's Display of Happiness**

*Parental report of happiness to children's display of happiness across contexts*

Mothers of Daughters > Fathers of Sons

**Children's Display of Anxiety**

*Parental report of surprise to children's display of anxiety across contexts*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters, Mothers of Sons, & Mothers of Daughters

*Parental report of surprise to children's display of anxiety in public*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters & Mothers of Daughters

*Parental report of embarrassment to children's display of anxiety in private*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters, Mothers of Sons, & Mothers of Daughters

**Children's Display of Anger**

*Parental report of anger to children's display of anger across contexts*

Mothers of Sons & Mothers of Daughters > Fathers of Sons & Fathers of Daughters

*Parental report of disgust to children's display of anger in private*

Mothers of Daughters > Mothers of Sons & Fathers of Daughters

## Table 14 Continued

Summary of Significant Findings – Comparison of Four Groups on Parent Emotional Reactions

---

**Children's Display of Disappointment***Parental report of disgust to children's display of disappointment across contexts*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters & Mothers of Sons

Mothers of Daughters > Mothers of Sons & Fathers of Daughters

*Parental report of disgust to children's display of disappointment in public*

Mothers of Daughters > Mothers of Sons & Fathers of Daughters

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters & Mothers of Sons

*Parental report of surprise to children's display of disappointment across contexts*

Fathers of Sons > Mothers of Sons & Mothers of Daughters

*Parental report of surprise to children's display of disappointment in private*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters, Mothers of Sons, & Mothers of Daughters

Table 15

Summary of Significant Findings – Prediction of Maternal Emotional Reactions By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability

---

**Children’s Display of Happiness**

No significant results were yielded.

**Children’s Display of Anxiety**

No significant results were yielded.

**Children’s Display of Anger**

*Maternal report of anger to children’s display of anger across contexts and in private*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

*Maternal report of disgust to children’s display of anger in private*

Predicted by child sex

*Maternal report of disgust to children’s display of anger across contexts and in public*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

**Children’s Display of Disappointment**

*Maternal report of disgust to children’s display of disappointment across contexts and in public*

Predicted by child sex

*Maternal report of sadness to children’s display of disappointment across contexts*

Predicted by child sex

Table 16

Summary of Significant Findings – Prediction of Paternal Emotional Reactions By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability

---

**Children’s Display of Happiness**

*Paternal report of anxiety to children’s display of happiness across contexts and in public*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

*Paternal report of surprise to children’s display of happiness across contexts and in public*

Predicted by child sex

*Paternal report of happiness to children’s display of happiness across contexts and in public*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

**Children’s Display of Anxiety**

*Paternal report of anger to children’s display of anxiety across contexts and in private*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

*Paternal report of disgust to children’s display of anxiety across contexts and in private*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

*Paternal report of embarrassment to children’s display of anxiety across contexts*

Predicted by child sex

*Paternal report of surprise to children’s display of anxiety across contexts, in private, and in public*

Predicted by child sex

## Table 16 Continued

Summary of Significant Findings – Prediction of Paternal Emotional Reactions By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability

---

**Children's Display of Anger**

*Paternal report of surprise to children's display of anger across contexts, in private, and in public*

Predicted by emotion dysregulation

**Children's Display of Disappointment**

*Paternal report of disgust to children's display of disappointment across contexts and in public*

Predicted by child sex

*Paternal report of surprise to children's display of disappointment in private*

Predicted by child sex

Table 17

Summary of Significant Findings – Comparison of Four Groups on Parent Emotion  
Socialization Strategies

---

**Praise Behavior**

*Parental report of praise behavior to children's emotion displays across all emotions and contexts*

Mothers of Sons > Mothers of Daughters, Fathers of Sons, & Fathers of Daughters

**Reasoning**

*Parental report of reasoning to children's emotion displays across all emotions and contexts*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters, Mothers of Sons, & Mothers of Daughters

*Parental report of reasoning to children's emotion displays across all emotions in private*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters, Mothers of Sons, & Mothers of Daughters

**Other Oriented Reasoning**

*Parental report of other oriented reasoning to children's display of disappointment*

Fathers of Sons > Fathers of Daughters & Mothers of Sons

Table 18

Summary of Significant Findings – Prediction of Maternal Emotion Socialization  
Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability

---

**Maternal Direct Command Behavior**

*Maternal report of direct command behavior across all emotions and contexts*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

*Maternal report of direct command behavior to children's emotion displays in public*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

**Maternal Reasoning**

*Maternal report of reasoning to children's display of anger*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

*Maternal report of reasoning to children's display of emotion in private*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

**Maternal Other-Oriented Reasoning**

*Maternal report of reasoning to children's display of disappointment*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

Table 19

Summary of Significant Findings – Prediction of Paternal Emotion Socialization  
Strategies By Child Sex and Child Emotion Regulatory Ability

---

**Paternal Direct Command Behavior**

*Paternal report of direct command behavior to children's display of happiness*

Predicted by the interaction between child sex and emotion dysregulation

**Paternal Praise Behavior**

*Paternal report of praise behavior across all emotions and contexts*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

*Paternal report of praise behavior to children's display of happiness*

Predicted by child emotion dysregulation

## Appendix A

## Parent Letter

Dear Parent,

We are writing to request participation in an important project regarding the *socialization of emotion*. The study is for a dissertation project. The procedures have been approved by the Institutional Review Board (ethics committee) at the University of Maryland and the project is being overseen by Dr. Kenneth H. Rubin.

The purpose of this project is to better understand how *both mothers and fathers* socialize certain emotion displays in their preschool children. It is important to better understanding how parents contribute to their children's emotion development because children's emotion play a part in many aspects of their lives including the ability to be successful in the peer group. Consequently, your participation in this project would be helpful and much appreciated.

Participation in the project is completely voluntary and all information will be kept strictly confidential. If you and your family choose to participate, you will be sent two questionnaire packets – one for the child's mother and one for the child's father. The questionnaire packet should take no longer than 45 minutes to complete.

If you choose to participate, please sign and return the attached information form to your child's preschool by \_\_\_\_\_.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact Amy Kennedy at [akenned@umd.edu](mailto:akenned@umd.edu) or (301) 405-5194.

Sincerely,

Amy E. Kennedy  
Graduate Student &  
Faculty Research Assistant

Kenneth H. Rubin  
Professor

## Appendix B

## Participant Information Form

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Birthdate:** Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Gender:** Boy                  Girl

**Mother's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mother's Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mother's Home Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mother's Work Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Father's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Father's Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Father's Home Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Father's Work Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Consent Form - Mothers

Title of Project: Parent and Child Gender as Factors in the Socialization of Emotion Displays and Emotion Regulation in Preschool Children.

Statement of Consent: I give my consent for the completion of several questionnaires.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of parent and child gender in the socialization of emotion displays and emotion regulation of specific emotion behaviors by preschool children.

Procedures: A questionnaire packet will be sent home to parents of preschool children. The questionnaire packet will contain two questionnaires. The first questionnaire will contain information about demographic information. The second questionnaire will consist of eight stories about your child displaying an emotion display either in public or private. After each story, there will be five questions asking you to report: (1) how you feel after seeing your child display a certain emotion; (2) what you would do in response to witnessing your child display a certain emotion behavior; (3) how regularly you enforce a rule about controlling a certain emotion display; (4) how often your child needs to be reminded to control his/her emotion displays; (5) how well your child does control his/her emotion display.

Confidentiality: I understand that all information collected will remain confidential. Participants will be identified by number only.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with the procedures described above.

Benefits: Although this study is not designed to help you or your child individually, through your participation researchers hope to gain insight into how gender of both parents and children affects emotion socialization.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Consent Form - Fathers

Title of Project: Parent and Child Gender as Factors in the Socialization of Emotion Displays and Emotion Regulation in Preschool Children.

Statement of Consent: I give my consent for the completion of several questionnaires.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of parent and child gender in the socialization of emotion displays and emotion regulation of specific emotion behaviors by preschool children.

Procedures: A questionnaire packet will be sent home to parents of preschool children. The questionnaire packet will contain two questionnaires. The first questionnaire will contain information about demographic information. The second questionnaire will consist of eight stories about your child displaying an emotion display either in public or private. After each story, there will be five questions asking you to report: (1) how you feel after seeing your child display a certain emotion; (2) what you would do in response to witnessing your child display a certain emotion behavior; (3) how regularly you enforce a rule about controlling a certain emotion display; (4) how often your child needs to be reminded to control his/her emotion displays; (5) how well your child does control his/her emotion display.

Confidentiality: I understand that all information collected will remain confidential. Participants will be identified by number only.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with the procedures described above.

Benefits: Although this study is not designed to help you or your child individually, through your participation researchers hope to gain insight into how gender of both parents and children affects emotion socialization.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Mother's Marital Status with  
child's *biological father*:

Married \_\_\_\_\_  
 Separated \_\_\_\_\_  
 Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
 Common law \_\_\_\_\_  
 Single \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's current relationship status (check one):

Married \_\_\_\_\_  
 Separated \_\_\_\_\_  
 Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
 Common law \_\_\_\_\_  
 Single \_\_\_\_\_  
 Living with partner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART B:**

**Child's father's name** (biological) \_\_\_\_\_  
 First Last

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Father's education completed:

Elementary School \_\_\_\_\_  
 High School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vocational School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some College \_\_\_\_\_  
 University Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some Graduate School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Father's country of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Father's ethnic background:

White \_\_\_\_\_  
 Latino/Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_  
 Black \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Native American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_





Stepfather's education completed: Elementary School \_\_\_\_\_  
High School \_\_\_\_\_  
Vocational School \_\_\_\_\_  
Some College \_\_\_\_\_  
University Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Some Graduate School \_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Stepfather's country of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Stepfather's ethnic background: White \_\_\_\_\_  
Latino/Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_  
Black \_\_\_\_\_  
Asian \_\_\_\_\_  
Native American \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Stepfather's Current

Marital Status (check one): Married \_\_\_\_\_  
Separated \_\_\_\_\_  
Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
Common law \_\_\_\_\_  
Single \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART E:** Please indicate the time spent with your child and activities you engage in with your child on a weekly basis in the schedule below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							

## Appendix F

## Colorado Child Temperament Inventory

With the next set of questions, please think about how your son or daughter is MOST OF THE TIME / ON A REGULAR BASIS. Please only select one answer for each question. Thank you!

1. Child persists at a task until successful.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

2. Child gives up easily when difficulties are encountered.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

3. Child tends to be shy.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

4. Child cries easily.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

5. When upset by an unexpected situation, child quickly calms down.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

6. Child goes from toy to toy quickly.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

7. Child likes to be with people.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

8. Child is always on the go.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

9. Whenever child starts crying he can easily be distracted.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

10. Child prefers playing with others rather than alone.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

11. Child tends to be somewhat emotional.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

12. When child moves about, he usually moves slowly.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

13. If talked to, child stops crying.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

14. Child makes friends easily.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

15. Child is off and running as soon as he wakes up in the morning.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

16. Child finds people more stimulating than anything else.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

17. Child often fusses and cries.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

18. With difficult toy, child gives up quite easily.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

19. Child is very sociable.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

20. Child is very energetic.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

21. Child takes a long time to warm up to strangers.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

22. Child plays with a single toy for long periods of time.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

23. Child gets upset easily.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

24. Child is something of a loner.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

25. Child prefers quiet, inactive games to more active ones.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

26. When alone, child feels isolated.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

27. Child tolerates frustration well.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

28. Child reacts intensely when upset.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

29. Child stopped fussing whenever someone talked to him/her or picked up.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

30. Child is very friendly with strangers.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				A lot

## Appendix F

CHILDREN'S EMOTIONS STORIES

In this section, there are eight brief stories. Each story depicts a parent and a child, sometimes by themselves and sometimes with other adults or children. As you read each story, please imagine that you and your child, the one you have given permission to take part in this study, are the characters described in the situation.

Following each story, there are five questions. Please read each question carefully. First, you are asked how you would feel seeing your child behaving in a certain manner. Second, you are asked what, if anything, you would do to handle the situation depicted in the story, and whether or not you would be trying to teach your child some rule by dealing with things that way. Then, a specific rule is described, and you are asked to make three ratings of that rule on five point scales. Please rate how regularly you enforce that rule, how often you need to remind your child of that rule, and how well your child follows that rule when you do remind him or her.

Some of the stories may depict situations that you have never experienced with your child. However, we are still interested in how you think you would deal with these situations, if they did come up. Therefore, please read all eight of the stories and answer each of the questions that follows.

## STORIES

Story 1:

It is your sister's birthday and she has invited the whole family to celebrate by going out for dinner. The restaurant she has chosen is rather elegant and formal. During the dinner your child exuberantly jumps out of his/her chair and shouts, "Happy birthday, Auntie!"

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their happiness *in front of others*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying happiness *in front of others*?

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## Story 2

One afternoon, your child comes in after playing with friends. He/She was teased and called names by another youngster, and she/he arrives home trembling and tearful.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their anxiety *just in front of you*?

How angry ?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying anxiety *just in front of you*?

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## Story 3

It is 15 minutes until dinner is ready. Your child asks for a cookie because she/he is "starving". You explain that dinner will be ready in 15 minutes and that she/he will have to wait until then. Your child yells and stomps his or her feet continuously.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their anger *just in front of you*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying anger *just in front of you*?

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## Story 4

On a visit to the fair, your child enters a contest and wins a stuffed dog. This is the first contest your child has ever won, so the toy becomes a prized possession. Before too long, however, your child loses the dog while out playing and comes running to you in tears.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their disappointment *just in front of you*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying disappointment *just in front of you*?

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## Story 5

You're having a birthday party for your child, and you have everyone gather around while your child opens her/his gifts. Your child is obviously very disappointed about one of the gifts, and it shows all over her/his face and in her/his voice.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their disappointment *in front of others*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying disappointment *in front of others*?

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## Story 6

You and your child are in a toy store. Your child asks you to buy him/her a new toy. You tell your child no, that she/he just received several new toys at her/his birthday party, and then you go to leave the store. Your child throws her/himself onto the floor kicking and screaming, yelling that she/he wants the toy. Your child will not leave the store.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their anger *in front of others*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying anger *in front of others*?

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## Story 7

You've moved into a new neighborhood, and your child is invited to a birthday party being held for the child next door. You take your child to the party and stay awhile. You notice that your child looks very nervous and uncomfortable, and is keeping to her/himself.

(1) How would you feel when you see your child display their anxiety *in front of others*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying anxiety *in front of others*?

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## Story 8

Your child has a race with friends in the neighborhood, comes in first, and is very excited. When you get home, for a long time, your child continues to jump around gleefully and exclaim to you about her/his victory.

1) How would you feel when you see your child display their happiness *just in front of you*?

How angry?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How disgusted?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How embarrassed?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How anxious?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How surprised?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How happy?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely
How sad?	1 Not at all	2 a bit	3 quite a bit	4 a lot	5 extremely

(2) (a) What, if anything, might you do in response to your child displaying happiness *just in front of you*?

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## Appendix H

**Emotion Story Coding**

**Does Nothing (DN):** Parent ignores or does nothing in response to child's behavior or emotional expression.

**Direct Command- Behavior (DC-B):** With reference to child's behavior, parent makes a verbal command intended to obtain child's compliance with rules, norms, or expectations. The command is given using imperative speech forms (e.g., "In this building you have to talk quietly").

**Direct Command- Feelings (DC-F):** With reference to child's expression of emotion, parent makes a verbal command intended to obtain child's compliance with rules, norms, or expectations. The command is given using imperative speech forms (e.g., "Stop crying now").

**Indirect Command- Behavior (IC-B):** With reference to child's behavior, parent makes a verbal command related to child's compliance with rules, norms, or expectations, *however*, the command is given using a polite speech form (deferential, interrogative, or passive forms) (e.g., "ask her to return to her seat").

**Indirect Command- Feelings (IC-F):** With reference to child's expression of emotion, parent makes a verbal command related to child's compliance with rules, norms, or expectations, *however*, the command is given using a polite speech form (deferential, interrogative, or passive forms) (e.g., "Try to stop your crying now, okay?").

**Punishment (PUN):** Parent imposes a negative consequence (or threatens to do so) on child's behavior (e.g., "If you need to yell and stomp go to your room").

**Criticize Behavior (C-B):** Parent negatively evaluates her child's behavior (including child's expression of emotion) (e.g., "That's not a nice way to act when someone gives you a gift").

**Criticize Child (C-C):** Parent negatively evaluates child's character or personality (e.g., "You are a bad girl").

**Guidance/ Pragmatic Solutions (GP):** Parent attempts to re-focus or divert child's attention; suggests alternate activities (e.g., "comment positively on wrapping, bow, card"; "offer something nutritious to eat"; "try to focus on something positive about the gift").

**Support/ Acknowledge- Behaviors (SA-B):** Parent encourages, supports, reassures or shows appreciation for child. Includes acknowledging child's expressed thoughts or actions and initiating discussion with child about child's behaviors.

**Support/ Acknowledge Feelings (SA-F):** Parent encourages, supports, reassures or shows appreciation for child's expressed feelings or emotions. Includes initiating discussion with child about child's feelings (e.g., "I know you are very excited"; "talk to him about how it feels to be teased"; "It is sad to lose something special").

**Affection/ Comfort (AC):** Parent expresses affection either physically (e.g., hug, kiss) or verbally (e.g., "comfort her and tell her I love her). Contact may be spontaneous or in response to child's distress or happiness.

**Question- Situation (Q-S):** Parent asks a question in order to better understand the situation (e.g., "Tell me what happened"; "How did you lose the toy?").

**Question- Feelings (Q-F):** Parent asks a question in order to better understand child's feelings (e.g., "Tell me why you are so upset"; "How does it make you feel to win").

**Praise Behavior (P-B):** Parent positively evaluates child's behavior (including emotional expression) (e.g., "It was nice of you to say Happy Birthday to your aunt"; "praise her for running fast").

**Praise Child (P-C):** Parent positively evaluates child's character or personality (e.g., "tell her she is a good person").

**Model (MOD):** Parent demonstrates appropriate behavior to child, with the possibility of teaching or training child (e.g., "make an excited facial expression when I realize my son isn't happy over the gift").

**Reasoning (REA):** Parent explains why child should behave a certain way, or points out the natural consequences of child's behavior. Includes moral reasoning. (e.g., "It's the thought that counts"; "remind him that it was his responsibility to keep track of it").

**Other-Oriented Reasoning (OOR):** Parent explains why the child's behavior is right or wrong by pointing out the consequences of their behavior for another person or makes child aware of another's point of view, state of mind and/or emotions (e.g., "Noisy voices in this restaurant make people feel angry"; "remind him that the other children tried their best as well").

**Indirect Intervention (II):** Parent joins child in trying to solve problem or work through the situation (e.g., "attempt to make him more comfortable by playing with him and the other kids"). Child has option to participate with parent (e.g., ask her after a while if she would like to leave or go home").

**Direct Intervention (DI):** Parent intervenes without involving child in process (e.g., "contact other parent and discuss incident"); or without giving child option to take part (e.g., "pick her up and carry her out").

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