Children's and Fathers' Perceptions of Fathers' Use of Structure, Negative Control, and Autonomy Support

by

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Abstract

The current study investigated fathers' and children's perspectives of fathers' use of structure, negative control, and autonomy support parenting behaviours in relation to children's internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours, and father-child attachment. Researchers interviewed 55 children (34 boys; 75% Canadian/Caucasian) between the ages of 5 and 12 years old and their fathers using hypothetical scenarios about their daily interactions (e.g., completing chores, doing homework). Children completed verbal questionnaires about their attachment security with their father (i.e., *Security Scale*, Kerns et al., 1996), and fathers completed a questionnaire on the daily functioning of their child (i.e., the *Behavior Assessment System for Children*, Second Edition, BASC-2; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). Transcripts of the interviews were coded on a scale from 1 (absent / never / very low) to 4 (several / frequent / high) for the quality and presence of three parenting behaviours (i.e., structure, negative control, and autonomy support). Results from the current study suggest that fathers' perceptions of their use of autonomy support predicted a decrease in externalizing behaviours in children, $F(1, 53) = 4.7$, $p = .035$, $R^2 = .08$, and an increase in children's adaptive behaviours, $F(1,53) = 4.19$, $p = .046$, $R^2 = .07$. Father-child attachment was not found to have a moderating effect on children's functioning through parenting behaviours. Results are discussed in the context of the emerging literature on fathers' parenting in relation to children's functioning.

Preface

This dissertation is an original work by Allyson Funamoto. The research study received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board 1, Project Name: "Children's and fathers' perceptions of fathers' use of structure, psychological control, and autonomy," Study ID: Pro00051301, November 25, 2014. No part of this dissertation has previously been published.

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Introduction

The parent-child relationship is one of the first and most important contexts for fostering infants' future social interactions (Bowlby, 1969). Parents engage in parenting behaviours that create both positive and negative environments in which development occurs (Bradley, 2007). For example, children first learn how to engage socially with others or regulate their emotions within the family setting (Grusec & Davidov, 2010). Over the years, abundant parenting research has emerged to explain what these relationships look like, how they develop, and how they encourage various aspects of a child's development throughout their lifespan (e.g., Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Barber, 2002; Baumrind, 1966). The expansive research on parenting and children's outcomes provides crucial details into the quality of these interactions and how they best foster healthy children's development.

Why Parenting?

Being a parent is multifaceted and complex. This complexity is reflected in the literature, however there is also some common ground. Parents are tasked with protecting children while simultaneously providing opportunities to promote healthy social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development (Bradley, 2007; Bradley & Corwyn, 2006). Based on current research and theories, parenting is broken down into six main fundamental tasks of parenting (Bradley & Corwyn, 2006). According to a summary by Bradley (2007) these focal areas are: (a) safety and sustenance (i.e., protection from harm), (b) socioemotional support (i.e., warmth and nurturance), (c) stimulation (i.e., to build competencies in different areas), (d) surveillance (i.e., monitoring), (e) structure (i.e., for predictability to decrease stress), and (f) social connectedness (i.e., promoting relationships). With parents' support and guidance, children begin to create supportive social networks with peers, neighbourhoods, and/or community programs to foster a

safety net in case of adversity (Bradley, 2007; Bradley & Corwyn, 2006). These six parenting tasks help foster children's healthy social and emotional development as necessary parts of the socialization process.

Socialization is a key part of children's development, and parents are essential to its progress. Socialization is the process by which children learn to self-regulate, adopt cultural norms, understand emotions, and develop prosocial behaviours (Grusec & Davidov, 2010; Maccoby, 2007; Russell, 2011). These abilities are related to a host of other outcomes in children's lives, such as positive peer relations and academic success (Hastings, Utendale, & Sullivan, 2007; Rhoades, Warren, Domitrovich, & Greenberg, 2011). Furthermore, when the parent-child relationship is an intensely close, protective, and bidirectional relationship, it is an ideal context in which to foster children's social competence so they are better able to adapt to changing environments (Grusec & Davidov, 2007; Maccoby, 2007). What follows is a brief review of the literature on particular areas of parenting that are important for children's social and emotional development.

Literature Review

Specifically, parenting as a means of socializing children is explored, with particular emphasis on the use of structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours. I provide a brief review of attachment theory and social cognitive theory to familiarize the reader with the underlying framework of current parenting research as well as the topics of the current study. In addition, I review the literature relating to children's perceptions of their parents' behaviours and parenting during middle childhood.

Historical and Theoretical Frameworks

Parenting research is a vast topic of interest to a diverse set of disciplines (e.g., psychology, education, nursing, family medicine). Various theoretical and historical frameworks related to parenting research and children's development exist. Two prominent theories that continue to drive parenting research today are attachment theory and social cognitive theory. Attachment theory posits that the strength and quality of caregiver-child relationships shape children's future relationships. Social cognitive theory proposes a relationship between individuals' interactions and behaviours, others' interpretations of these interactions, and others' subsequent actions. These two theories, along with the most prominent conceptualizations of parenting, both dimensional and categorical perspectives informed my dissertation research.

Caregiver-child attachment. Attachment promotes closeness to a particular figure (e.g., caregiver) regardless of their ability to address physiological or emotional needs (Cassidy, 2008). These primary relationships are crucial in the early years of life and establish the roots for later social development (Laible & Thompson, 2007). Early relationships are critical to the development of socialization, since they prepare children for future relationships by setting up expectations based on their experiences with their primary caregivers (Laible & Thompson,

2007). For instance, if children are consistently and repeatedly exposed to responsive, sensitive, and warm caregivers, they are more likely to expect their other relationships to be similar. This is due to the construction of particular relationship themes, a concept John Bowlby called "internal working models" (Bowlby, 1969). While Bowlby originally stated that an attachment bond was critical for child development, he was also convinced that interruptions in the development of said attachments could lead to psychopathologies in a child (Cassidy, 2008).

Although attachment theory assumes that all children attach to an individual in their environment, the pattern of this attachment may vary depending on their early experiences with this individual (i.e., caregiver) (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Mary Ainsworth and colleagues' (1978) *Strange Situation* procedure demonstrated three distinct attachment patterns between mothers and their children: (a) secure attachment, (b) avoidant attachment, and, (c) anxious attachment. These results have since been extended to primary caregivers in general. A securely attached infant tends to experience less fear and apprehension during unfamiliar circumstances, provided the caregiver is close by. Caregivers of securely-attached infants are typically emotionally available and react appropriately to infants' emotions. Furthermore, securely attached infants use the caregiver as a secure base from which to explore the environment, and the caregiver is a figure that the infant knows is available should a distressing event occur (Ainsworth et al., 1978). An avoidantly-attached infant may ignore the caregiver if she or he is present. An avoidant caregiver is typically rejecting and less affectionate toward the infant (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Finally, an anxiously-attached infant is easily frustrated and difficult to console. The infant is uncertain about the caregiver's availability, so the infant is fearful that she or he will not receive what is needed from the caregiver (Ainsworth et al., 1978). In a consistent environment, these patterns are relatively stable throughout the lifespan of the child (Thompson & Raikes, 2003;

Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell, & Albersheim, 2000). As such, a caregiver's early availability and responsiveness are crucial to a child's social and emotional development.

Abundant research has been conducted in the area of caregiver-child attachment and children's developmental outcomes. Secure attachment to a caregiver early in infancy has been related to several positive characteristics of social and emotional development, such as sharing with others; being sociable, friendly, and cooperative; and engaging in fewer aggressive behaviours (for a review see Ranson & Urichuk, 2008). Similarly, a meta-analysis indicated that children with secure attachments had more successful peer relationships (Schneider, Atkinson, & Tardif, 2001). Furthermore, secure attachment was related to closer monitoring of their child's behaviours and greater cooperation by children (Kerns, Aspelmeier, Gentzler, & Grabill, 2001). In a review of the attachment literature, it was also shown that, in terms of cognitive development, securely attached children tended to have better problem-solving skills, higher intelligence scores, and better grades in school (Ranson & Urichuk, 2008). Finally, adults with secure attachments tended to choose healthier and positive lifestyle choices compared to those with insecure attachments (Ranson & Urichuk, 2008). Overall, secure attachment is associated with healthy development in several areas.

In contrast, an insecure attachment (i.e., anxious or avoidant attachment) was related to more internalizing behaviours (e.g., Brumariu & Kerns, 2010). For instance, in a self- and parent-report study with children aged 8-12 years old, researchers found that children with learning disabilities tended to have more internalizing behaviours (e.g., withdrawal, somatic complaints, anxiety, and depression) if they had an insecure attachment with their parent compared to those without a learning disability (Al-Yagon, 2014). This also suggests that other individual factors (e.g., a learning disability) may play a role in the relationship between

attachment and children's outcomes. It is clear that a secure parent-child attachment provides the foundations for a strong relationship to promote healthy development. One such way children can develop skills in engaging with others is through observing others, as described in social cognitive theory.

Social cognitive theory. An early precursor to social cognitive theory was Albert Bandura's social learning theory. Social learning theory suggests that children learn social skills and behaviours by observing and interacting with others (Bandura, 1971). Based on the components of behaviourism, social learning theory puts the development of new behaviours in a social context; specifically, Bandura (1971) suggests that individuals are reinforced or discouraged to act in particular ways based on the reactions of others. This process takes into account the perceptions and cognitions of individuals, adding a complexity to traditional operant behaviourism (Zembar & Blume, 2009). Central to social learning theory are the aspects of imitation and observation. For instance, an individual may learn particular behaviours by copying them or by observing another's behaviour and adapting their actions appropriately; for example, a child acts prosocially after witnessing a friend being punished for negative behaviours (Olsen & Hergenhahn, 2009). Several adaptations of the theory have broadened its use in the literature. Bandura's (1986) theory was revised and renamed "social cognitive theory" to emphasize the influence of people's thoughts on their own behaviours, creating a more explicit link between the individual's thoughts, behaviours, and environment (Zembar & Blume, 2009). This name change has broadened the theory to include other aspects beyond learning including, self-regulation or motivation (Olsen & Hergenhahn, 2009). The addition of the cognitive component is particularly relevant when examining parent-child relationships because of the importance of recognizing children as agentic (i.e., intentional) and capable of influencing

their environments as well as others' behaviours (Bandura, 2012). Specifically, it makes children an active element of the parent-child relationship as they perceive and interpret their parents' actions and words in order to react to their environment, influencing their social development (Olsen & Hergenhahn, 2009).

Social cognitive theory has implications for many areas of social development in children. For instance, the theory helps explain children's ability to self-regulate. Bandura previously found that individuals become self-regulated because of their motivation to achieve a set of standards for themselves; therefore, they may be influenced by incentives to interact in particular ways in a social environment (Bandura, 2012). Social cognitive theory also aligns with research in parent-child relationships. For instance, children may observe and interpret their parents' behaviours, processing the new information to determine how children should act in similar contexts in the future (Thompson & Goodman, 2011). Hence, many behavioural interventions may do well to take a family perspective and examine how parents may be inadvertently reinforcing certain behaviours from their children or teaching them inappropriate behaviours because of their own actions (Thompson & Goodman, 2011). Furthermore, parents who are externally controlling (e.g., shouting, hitting) may have children who engage in aggressive behaviours or hostility, whereas parents who are internally controlling (e.g., subtly expressing disappointment) may have children who engage in more indirect forms of pressuring activities, such as gossiping or other ways of being relationally aggressive (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2010). Therefore, various parenting practices play a significant role in children's developmental outcomes.

Parenting dimensions, styles, and practices. The study of parenting has typically been conceptualized in terms of effective and ineffective elements of parenting. Some researchers

have defined various dimensions of parenting to describe general themes of parent tendencies (e.g., Schaefer, 1965b). Others have taken a categorical approach to relate clusters of behaviours to a style of parenting (e.g., Baumrind's authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles). Even still, other parenting researchers have examined particular parenting practices and behaviours as a way to explain parenting styles or dimensions (e.g., Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Despite an abundance of parenting research, several gaps remain in the parenting literature and definitions of some terms are still confounded (e.g., control), necessitating congruence in the literature on terminology and definitions. What follows is a brief historical review of the literature on these characteristics of parenting.

The dimensional perspective of parenting examines the degree of use of target behaviours that comprise common parenting practices. Schaefer (1965a; 1965b) described three distinct dimensions based on factor analysis: (a) psychological autonomy/psychological control, (b) rejection/acceptance, and (c) firm control/lax control dimensions, to distinguish the severity and types of parental control behaviours (Schaefer, 1965a; 1965b; see Figure 1). The Acceptance/Rejection scale represented the positive emotional, egalitarian, and affectionate components as well as the hostile, neglectful, and detached components of the parent-child relationship. The Psychological Control/Psychological Autonomy dimension encompassed a range of practices that discourage children from developing separately from their parents, such as intrusiveness, guilt-induction, and harsh punishment, whereas the levels of independence granted to children and the lack of discipline present represented higher psychological autonomy. Finally, the Firm Control/Lax Control dimension referred to the amount and severity of discipline used and strictness that parents imposed on their children (Schaefer, 1965a).

Schaefer's conceptualization of parenting dimensions provided an alternative perspective to Baumrind's parenting styles.

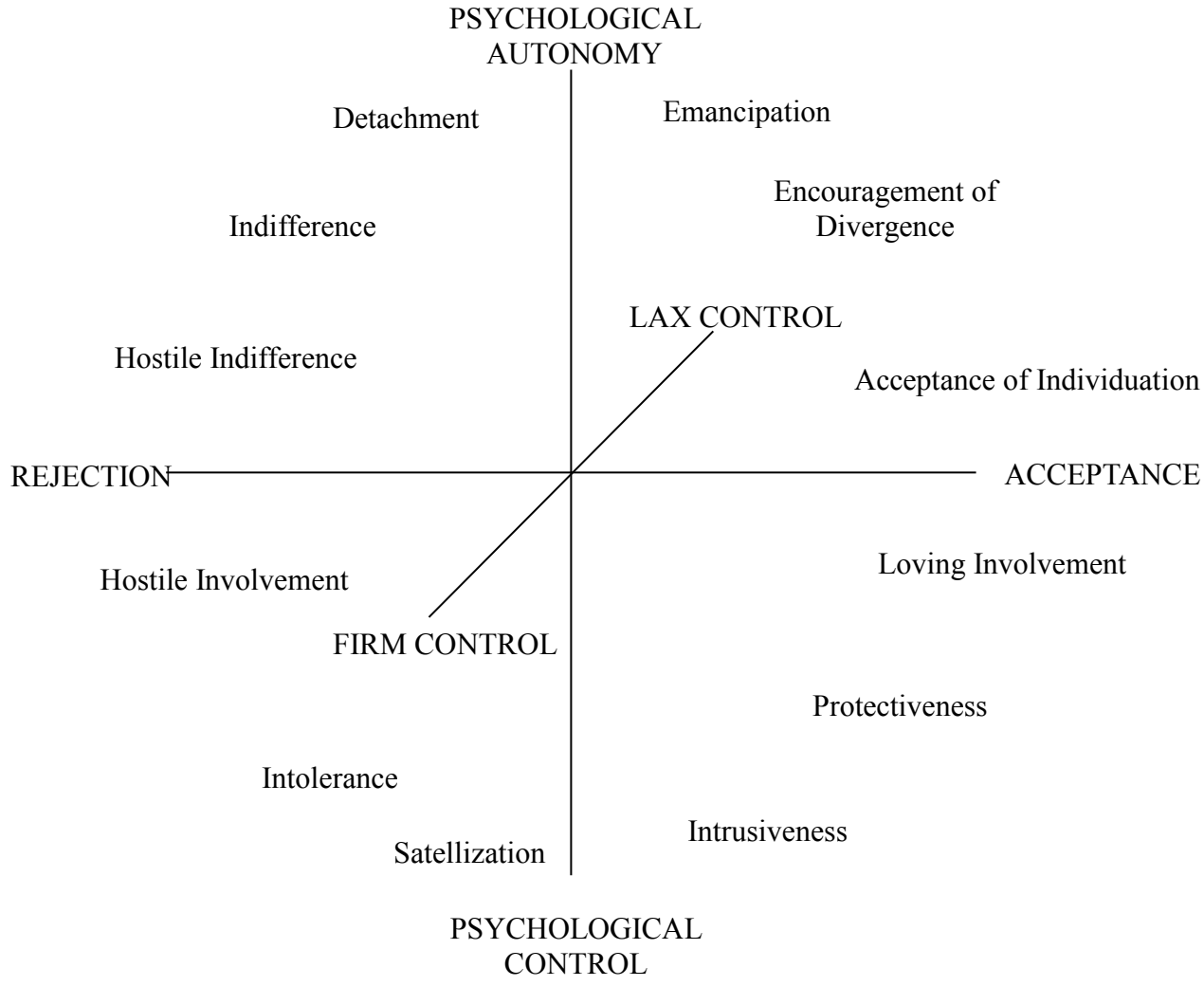

Figure 1. Reproduction of Schaefer's (1965b) dimensional perspective of parenting.

Early research on parenting also attempted to categorize parenting behaviours to better conceptualize general patterns emerging in these early interactions. Diana Baumrind (1966) focused on the degree of control and warmth in a parent-child relationship as an indicator of categorical parenting styles. Specifically, she investigated three categories of parenting style prototypes: (a) permissive, (b) authoritarian, and (c) authoritative, which were indicative of general patterns of childrearing practices among caregivers (i.e., parents). According to

Baumrind's (1966) original empirical research, permissive parents tend to allow their children to be autonomous in their decision-making, refrain from using punishing behaviours, and react in an affirming and accepting manner to the child's needs and desires. Permissive parents tend to use reason to encourage certain behaviours but avoid any sort of control or maintenance of standards; in fact, these parents attempt to avoid authority of any kind with their children (Baumrind, 1966). Authoritarian parents aim to control their child's behaviours and beliefs according to a previously set standard and prefer to be seen as the ultimate authority (Baumrind, 1966). Children's autonomy is typically discouraged and punitive measures are frequently used if standards are not upheld (Baumrind, 1966). Finally, authoritative parents seek to use reason and democratic procedures when discussing discipline practices with their children (Baumrind, 1966). Although authoritative parents aim to encourage their children's self-regulation and autonomy, they still maintain a particular standard for behaviours and attitudes (Baumrind, 1966). Baumrind's seminal research on parenting styles remains one of the most influential on the topic, leading others to improve and expand on her typologies.

In a later paper, Baumrind (2012) differentiated between parents' different ways of asserting power in order to better define the types of control being used by authoritative and authoritarian parents, coercive and "confrontive" power assertion. Power assertion was defined as the control parents put on children during times of conflict (Baumrind, 2012). She asserted that it is essentially how parents affirm their power over their children that defines their parenting style (Baumrind, 2012). Coercive power is mainly concerned with maintaining the hierarchy of the parent-child relationship and tends to be arbitrary; discipline practices tend to be dictatorial and domineering (Baumrind, 2012). This power type is reflective of authoritarian parenting styles. Conversely, confrontive power assertion is concerned with regulating children's

behaviour, and discipline practices tend to be reasoned and negotiable (Baumrind, 2012). Therefore, confrontive power assertion is associated with authoritarian parenting styles. As such, differentiating control types helps better define Baumrind's original parenting styles.

Over decades of research, parenting studies have consistently identified two main constructs, parental involvement and control, that relate to parenting practices. Parental involvement in terms of parental warmth, acceptance, responsiveness, and child-centredness addresses how parents are available for children and provide them with emotional support throughout development (Grolnick, 2003). The multifaceted dimension of control emerges as equally present in the parent-child relationship and has been described as parents being autocratic, restrictive, and authoritarian (Grolnick, 2003). These two dimensions grew from an integration of research on parenting practices and parenting styles meant to determine the most parsimonious way to examine parenting behaviours as they relate to children's socialization.

To reflect this change in the parenting literature, Baumrind's prototypes were refined according to two factors that emerged in the literature as essential to parenting behaviours: (a) responsiveness and (b) demandingness. The product of this evolution of parenting styles is demonstrated in Figure 2 (Baumrind, 1996; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). First, responsiveness (i.e., warmth) encourages dyadic synchrony so parents are better attuned to children's needs (Baumrind, 1996; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Furthermore, parental warmth, clear communication, and a secure attachment are essential to respond to children's needs and desires (Baumrind, 1996). Second, demandingness (i.e., control) takes into account how parents communicate their expectations. Specifically, this aspect includes parental confrontation, monitoring, and consistent discipline as methods of influencing behaviour (Baumrind, 1996; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Figure 2 demonstrates the parenting typologies that have been

described depending on the levels of demandingness and responsiveness displayed by the parents, providing a practical framework for describing various parenting practices (Baumrind, 1991; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parenting typologies are now ubiquitous in the parenting literature and have encouraged further investigation on the implications of these behaviours on children.

	Responsiveness (High)	Responsiveness (Low)
Demandingness (High)	Authoritative	Authoritarian
Demandingness (Low)	Permissive / Indulgent	Uninvolved / Neglectful

Figure 2. Parenting styles based on responsiveness and demandingness.

While the literature on parenting styles provides a useful framework to understand how parents are engaged in the socialization process of children, Steinberg and colleagues have expanded this model to distinguish *how* parenting styles influence children's outcomes, by suggesting that parenting styles are a context rather than a process (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). They propose that parenting style is merely a step within parenting. Parenting values and goals (e.g., academic achievement is important) determine particular parenting practices (e.g., Mom helps child with homework), which influence the parenting style the parent associates with most (e.g., authoritative). Finally, the child's willingness to be influenced or socialized leads to certain developmental outcomes based on parental behaviours (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Understanding parenting styles as a context rather than a process may be a useful perspective on the relationship between parenting styles and practices and their influence on children's socialization.

A broad overview of the parenting styles literature indicates that authoritative parenting leads to positive child outcomes, while authoritarian and permissive parenting tend to be

associated with negative child outcomes. In a study with preschool children, authoritative parenting styles were predictive of fewer child behaviour problems in African American families, which echoes the results indicated in research conducted with European American families (Querido, Warner, & Eyberg, 2002). Authoritative parenting was also associated with higher self-esteem and academic self-efficacy in Chinese and European American college age students (Querido et al., 2002). Children and adolescents also appear to be more competent in several areas, such as academics, and are less likely to get in trouble compared to their peers when parents engage in authoritative parenting (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991). As such, authoritative parenting has been related to a host of positive outcomes in children of diverse backgrounds and across a variety of ages.

In comparison, several studies have demonstrated varying results in children's outcomes when it comes to authoritarian parenting. Authoritarian parenting was related to academic self-efficacy and lower depression but only in Chinese American students (Li, Costanzo, & Putallaz, 2010). However, studies found that academic achievement was negatively related to authoritarian parenting with regards to academics in children from Hong Kong, the United States, and Australia (Leung, Lau, & Lam, 1998). Conversely, academic achievement was positively related to general authoritarianism in families in Hong Kong and among less educated families in the United States and Australia (Leung et al., 1998). Furthermore, studies with Korean- and Anglo-American children demonstrated that authoritarian parenting was negatively related to perspective-taking (O'Reilly & Peterson, 2014). Additional studies with undergraduate students found that authoritarian parenting was related to obsessive-compulsive symptoms and dysfunctional cognitions consistent with obsessive-compulsive disorder (Timpano, Keough, Mahaffrey, Schmidt, & Abramowitz, 2010). Although findings are less consistent compared to

research on authoritative and permissive parenting styles, the majority of research with authoritarian parents appears to demonstrate more negative outcomes for children whose parents use this style predominantly.

Finally, studies investigating the effect of permissive and neglectful parenting have yielded consistent results. In a study with adolescents, parents who were reported by their children as being more indulgent (i.e., permissive) reported high self-confidence; however, they also showed less interest in school and greater experimentation with antisocial activities (Lamborn et al., 1991). Uninvolved (i.e., neglectful) mothers were also found to have children who were more likely to engage in relational aggression in childhood (Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van IJzendoorn, & Crick, 2011). Although this is a brief discussion about the relationships between different parenting styles and child outcomes, these results suggest that important associations do exist that can help us understand how parenting styles play a role in children's social development.

Parental Structure, Negative Control, and Autonomy Support

As is highlighted in my literature review on parenting, there are multiple perspectives on definitions of what "parenting" is, as well as varying terminology and definitions of parenting concepts. These inconsistencies have caused confusion. For instance, the term "control" has been used interchangeably in the literature with 20 other different terms[1], ranging from positive control (e.g., structure) to negative control (e.g., psychological control) (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009). In addition, a variety of definitions of parental control have been used in the parenting research (see Table 1). Finally, although earlier research suggested that psychological control

[1] Terms used to describe control in the literature: hostile control, authoritarian, discipline, demanding, dominance, protective, punishment, restrictive, authoritative, coercive, power assertion, possessiveness, pressure, strictness, behavioural control, psychological control, firm/lax control, intrusiveness, forceful control, monitoring, structure, limit-setting

and autonomy support were opposing ends of the same dimension (e.g., Schaefer, 1965a), more recent literature demonstrates that they are distinct concepts (e.g., Barber, Stolz, Olsen, Collins, & Burchinal, 2005; Silk, Morris, Kanaya, & Steinberg, 2003). As such, for the purposes of this dissertation, a brief review of parental structure, negative control, and autonomy support is warranted.

Table 1

A Selection of Terminology and Definitions for "Parental Control" from the Literature.

Term Used	Definition	Example Reference
Intrusive, "Negative" Control		
Authoritarianism	- Not sharing decision-making power with children, assuming a stance of personal infallibility, becoming inaccessible when displeased (a way demandingness is demonstrated)	Baumrind, 1966
Coercive power assertion	- Force applied by a parent in a conflict of wills with a child in a disciplinary context that is arbitrary, pre-emptory, and concerned with maintaining hierarchy in family by using threats & commands	Baumrind, 2012
Control	- Pressure parents put on their children to think, feel, or behave in desired ways	van der Bruggen et al., 2008
Psychological control	- Parental control that intrudes on the psychological and emotional development of the child	Barber et al., 2005
	- Intrusive parental control in which parents attempt to manipulate their children's behaviour, identity, and psychological development	Morris et al., 2002
	- Parental attempts to regulate or intrude on children's psychological and emotional development through methods such as constraining verbal expression, invalidating feelings, and inducing guilt	Pomerantz & Eaton, 2000
	- Presence of parental dominance, aggression, rejection, and capricious discipline	Schaefer, 1965a; 1965b
Structure, Limit-Setting		
Behavioural control	- Reasonable imposition of a regulating structure on children's behaviour (e.g., supervision, monitoring, demandingness)	Barber et al., 2005
	- Parental attempts to regulate or oversee children's behaviour through methods such as monitoring, limit setting, and positive reinforcement	Pomerantz & Eaton, 2000
Confrontive power assertion	- Force applied by a parent in a conflict of wills with a child in a disciplinary context that is reasoned, negotiable, outcome-oriented and concerned with regulating child's behaviour even if forceful and demanding	Baumrind, 2012
Demandingness	- Parental requests made on the child to become integrated into the family whole by their maturity	Baumrind, 1966
	- Demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the	

	child who disobeys	
Firm vs. lax control	- Absence or presence of permitting extreme independence and lax discipline	Schaefer, 1965a; 1965b
Monitoring	- Careful attention to children's behaviour and associated contingencies where parents exert influence by sensitively fitting their behaviour to behavioural cues from children	Maccoby & Martin, 1983
Strictness-supervision	- Monitoring and setting limits on children's behaviour	Lamborn et al., 1991
Structure	- Parents' organization of children's environment to facilitate children's competence through clear & consistent guidelines, expectations, and rules, predictable consequences, clear feedback about their actions	Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009
	- The degree to which parents attempt to provide organization, rules, and routines in their children's daily lives	Sessa et al., 2001

Structure. For the purposes of this dissertation research, I use the term structure to address positive aspects of parenting commonly known as "behavioural control" in the literature (e.g., Barber et al., 2005). Grolnick and Pomerantz (2009) recommended using the term *structure* rather than *behavioural control* when referring to parents engaging in limit-setting, monitoring, and organization of children's daily lives in order to reduce confounding negative and positive control, echoing some of the confusion surrounding Schaefer's (1965) terminology of Firm/Lax Control (Barber et al., 2005; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Pomerantz & Eaton, 2000). Further, this distinction is necessary due to the unique influence structure has on children's outcomes compared to psychological control, for instance.

It has been suggested that one of parents' fundamental responsibilities is to provide structure in children's daily lives to optimize the development of children's competence in particular environments (Bradley, 2007). Structure, from Bradley's perspective, is particularly important in times of stress or challenging circumstances. Examples of methods for implementing structure include providing children with family routines, organization of activities, time management, and scaffolding activities. Structure in the environment can be a protective factor against stressful life circumstances and is associated with fewer adverse developmental outcomes, lower childhood anxiety, and better coping strategies (Bradley, 2007). Other beneficial outcomes have also been demonstrated in the parenting literature.

In a study examining junior high children and their parents, it was found that structure was related to a variety of children's academic outcomes. For instance, higher levels of clear and consistent guidelines were positively associated with children feeling in control of academic outcomes, their perceived cognitive competence, engagement in school, and academic performance; clear and consistent guidelines were negatively correlated with maladaptive beliefs

about school (Farkas & Grolnick, 2010). Additionally, other components of structure (e.g., rationale, opportunity to succeed, and information feedback) were similarly associated with several other academic outcomes (e.g., self-worth, belief in their effort, and homework practices), demonstrating beneficial school-related behaviours and cognitions for children (Farkas & Grolnick, 2010). Therefore, parental structure can help children develop a variety of positive behaviours and cognitions relating to school.

Further research has demonstrated that structure benefits children's overall competence and adjustment (i.e., adaptive behaviours) in society. Multiple studies involving children and adolescents have shown that structure was negatively associated with antisocial behaviours. These behaviours are possibly due to greater ability to inhibit negative behaviours or to an increase in supervision, decreasing the chances of negative influences from peers (Barber et al., 2005; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Furthermore, a longitudinal study examining various elements of supportive parenting (e.g., maternal involvement with peers, discussions of conflict, and discipline) in children from Kindergarten to Grade 6 indicated that calm discussions about conflicts and less harsh discipline predicted fewer externalizing behaviours in Kindergarten children and better academic performance (Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 1997). While components of parental structure may have many positive outcomes for children, contrasting results exist in the literature on psychological control.

Negative control. Negative control focuses on a variety of controlling behaviours focused on the child's psychological world (e.g., thoughts and emotions), being directive instead of collaborative, intrusive instead of monitoring, and coercive instead of democratic (Barber, 2002; Morris et al., 2002). Negative control (often called psychological control) is intrusive, manipulative and constraining, and manifests in a variety of ways, such as guilt-induction, love

withdrawal, instilling anxiety, and invalidating the children's perspective (Barber & Harmon, 2002). Parents who use negative control also tend to be overly critical of their children, restrict their child's opinions, and engage in high coercive power assertion (Baumrind, 2012; Morris et al., 2002). As a consequence, negative control parenting does not lend itself to the fostering of independence as the child attempts to separate from their parents (Barber, 2002). This definition of negative control will be used in this dissertation in examining this construct with regard to middle childhood. What follows is a brief review of the literature surrounding negative control to demonstrate its role in children's development.

Negative control is related to several outcomes in middle childhood. Negative parental control is associated with children's internalizing behaviours. A meta-analysis examining the role of negative parental control on children's anxiety demonstrated that these two elements are significantly associated, in particular with girls, children who are in elementary school, and those in higher socioeconomic status families (van der Bruggen et al., 2008). Furthermore, a study using self-report data indicated that children's perceptions of their parents' negative control behaviours mediated the relationship between parents' use of negative control and their child's anxiety (Nanda, Kotchick, & Grover, 2012). This research supported the view that children may develop anxiety because they perceive their parents as hindering independence or that they perceive many areas of their lives as uncontrollable (Nanda et al., 2012). Additional research has shown associations with negative control in a variety of areas impacting children's everyday life. For instance, research has demonstrated that parents' use of negative control tends to be related to lower self-esteem, short-term compliance, and excessive inward focus on their own emotions rather than those of others (Grolnick, 2003). Furthermore, authoritarian parenting was related to maternal negative emotionality (e.g., anger); this negative emotion was related to lower self-

esteem in children (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). Clearly, the use and perception of negative control impacts children's development.

Certain negatively controlling behaviours can lead to various outcomes affecting children's social behaviours. For instance, parents withdrawing love may set up negative expectations for children's future relationships with others and can create conflicts with children and their parents or peers, relating to adjustment difficulties (Barber et al., 2005; Nelson & Crick, 2002). In addition, negative control (defined in the cited study as parental psychological control) was related to relational aggression, particularly for girls, and physical coercion was predictive of aggression in boys (Nelson & Crick, 2002; Nelson, Hart, Yang, Olsen, & Jin, 2006). This relationship was further demonstrated in a recent meta-analysis that found an association between parental negative control and children's engagement in relational aggression in adolescence (Kuppens, Laurent, Heyvaert, & Onghena, 2013), which provides strong support for the importance of the influence of negative control on socialization behaviours.

Autonomy. Autonomy supportive (or granting) parents encourage children to have control over their own environment and act independently without feeling coerced (Grolnick, 2003). To this end, autonomy supportive parents give children choice over certain actions with ample reasoning and explanation over the children's options (Gagne, 2003). The four main components of autonomy supportive behaviours are: (a) providing a rationale for requests, (b) showing empathy for others, (c) providing choice to the child, and (d) using uncontrolling language (Joussemet, Koestner, Lekes, & Landry, 2005). While autonomy support is related to both structure and psychological control, literature on the topic has demonstrated unique developmental outcomes for children.

Autonomy support, in the context of parenting, has traditionally been conceptualized as the opposite of psychological control. Recently, it has become clearer that parents can be both psychologically controlling *and* autonomy-supportive or neither (e.g., neglectful) (Barber et al., 2005; Kunz & Grych, 2013). Factor analysis has demonstrated that psychological control and autonomy support are related but distinct concepts (Barber et al., 2005; Kunz & Grych, 2013). Parents who are autonomy supportive tended to encourage their children's individual decision-making and the development of independence by encouraging individual expression (Silk et al., 2003). Importantly, if autonomy support levels were also high, psychological control was not related to externalizing problems, particularly aggression (Kunz & Grych, 2013). Similar results were found with internalizing problems, where psychological control was related to more internalizing behaviours only when autonomy support was low (Kunz & Grych, 2013). These results add to the evidence that autonomy support and psychological control may be distinct concepts.

Autonomy support has also been related to children's academic outcomes. For instance, autonomy support was associated with children being persistent and competent when solving difficult tasks, having greater school readiness, and performing better in school (Grolnick, 2009). In a longitudinal study examining historical interview and questionnaire data, developmental differences were found in terms of the impact of maternal autonomy support on children's outcomes (Joussemet et al., 2005). Specifically, maternal autonomy support in Kindergarten was related to various outcomes in Grade 3, such as social and academic adjustment and reading achievement (Joussemet et al., 2005). Furthermore, researchers found more congruence between social and academic adjustment when maternal autonomy support was high, which was possibly related to the children's self-regulation and internalizing abilities (Joussemet et al., 2005).

Moreover, a study involving 10 to 12 year olds investigating autonomy supportive behaviours used by parents during a discussion task demonstrated that autonomy granting behaviours were associated with fewer externalizing behaviours in children (Kunz & Grych, 2013). Therefore, taken together, these findings support the notion that parents' autonomy support benefits children's independence and decision-making.

Fathers and Parenting

After decades of mother-centric parenting research, father-specific research is beginning to emerge in the parenting literature, demonstrating the unique aspects of father-child relationships. A new generation of fathers is beginning to engage more with their children; however, the research to date on fathers has tended to be focused on paternal involvement and not qualitative aspects of parenting (Schoppe-Sullivan, Kotila, Jia, Lang, & Bower, 2013). Fathers have been found to engage equally in caregiving behaviours when living with the mother, and they create attachments with their children at the same time as the mother (Collins, Madsen, & Susman-Stillman, 2002; Lamb, 2010). Fathers also tend to engage in more physical play with their children (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2013). In addition, as reported in one study, when parent employment status was controlled, fathers read books, told stories, and played indoors with their child at equal rates as mothers (Giallo, Treyvaud, Cooklin, & Wade, 2013). Although, traditionally, fathers have not been included in parenting research for a variety of reasons, recent research indicates that they are frequently involved in their children's upbringing and play an important role in children's development, including socialization and attachment.

Several studies have found fewer differences than expected between fathers and mothers' parenting behaviours (e.g., in engagement in academics or emotional functioning), but evidence is lacking on whether the two parents contribute differentially to their children's development

(e.g., Giallo et al., 2013). For example, one study suggested that fathers modelled their involvement on the mothers' involvement; specifically, they judge their own involvement with their children based on their partner's involvement (Pleck & Hofferth, 2008). Importantly, fathers who were involved with their children engaged in closeness, sharing, and listening behaviours, as did mothers (Pleck & Hofferth, 2008). However, recent correlational research indicated that fathers' authoritarian and authoritative parenting explained unique contributions to toddlers' externalizing behaviours when compared with mothers (Rinaldi & Howe, 2012). Moreover, a review of the father literature indicated that greater father involvement is related to fewer externalizing problems, better social skills, and more empathy in children (Downer, Campos, McWayne, & Gartner, 2013). Furthermore, negative control from fathers predicted problems with social competence, but father engagement in activities was related to the development of social competence (Cabrera & Mitchell, 2009). Therefore, although research on fathers is still in its infancy, it is becoming clear that both mothers and fathers contribute to parenting in unique and important ways.

Findings related to father-child attachment have been extremely inconsistent throughout the years. The inconsistency is possibly because father-child attachment security is a relatively new area of research, with its basis rooted in the original research on mother-child attachment (Caldera, 2004; Kochanska & Kim, 2010). Furthermore, little of the available literature focuses on parent-child relationships in middle childhood specifically. Overall, when considering both parents' attachment styles to their infant, children with behavioural problems tended to be insecurely attached to both of their parents (Kochanska & Kim, 2010). For example, in middle childhood, children who were perceived as having greater externalizing problems were more insecurely attached to their fathers than the mothers? (Kochanska & Kim, 2010). However,

research in the area also tends to suggest inconsistent findings. For example, a study investigating infant father-child attachment found that father engagement in caregiving (e.g., feeding, dressing) predicted higher attachment security, whereas engagement in play, availability, shared responsibility with mother, and nurturing attitudes were not predictive of father-child attachment security (Caldera, 2004). Interestingly, despite opposite findings with mothers and their children, Brown and colleagues found that neither father involvement nor parenting quality was significantly correlated with father-child attachment security (Brown, McBride, Shin, & Bost, 2007). Finally, moderation analyses demonstrated that father involvement was related to lower attachment security when fathers showed lower positive emotions; when fathers showed higher levels of positive affect, father involvement and attachment security were unrelated (Brown et al., 2007). This review of father-child attachment literature demonstrates the inconsistent nature of the field currently. Although research in the area is in its infancy, some unique findings are evident, warranting further investigation.

Children's Perspectives of their Parents' Behaviours

Children's perspectives are a crucial source of information about their experiences with their parents (Scott, 2000). Children's perceptions of their parents' behaviours, and not only their actual behaviours, contribute to building a positive relationship between parent and child as well as healthy outcomes for children (Kuppens, Grietens, Onghena, & Michiels, 2009; Morris et al., 2002). Although much of the research on children's perspectives comes from adolescents, younger children can also provide valuable information about parent-child relationships (Borland, Laybourn, Hill, & Brown, 1998; Kuppens et al., 2009).

Despite the paucity of literature in this area, some emerging research reveals promising new directions. Using a puppet interview protocol, 5- to 8-year-old children were asked about

their perceptions of their parents' and their own behaviours to determine whether their perceptions were related to internalizing and externalizing problems (Stone et al., 2013). Research indicated that perceived psychological control (i.e., a type of negative control) was associated with more internalizing behaviours, particularly in younger children and girls. These results remained consistent regardless of perceived parental behavioural control or perceived levels of parental responsiveness. Similar results were found with children's externalizing behaviours wherein perceptions of higher psychological control were associated with higher externalizing behaviours even when controlling for perceived parental behavioural control and responsiveness, particularly for older children and boys (Stone et al., 2013).

Using a longitudinal design, Young, Lennie, & Minnis (2011) investigated children's perceptions of parental psychological control (i.e., a type of negative control) and its impact on psychopathology. Eleven-year-old children were asked about experiencing emotional neglect and control behaviours, with follow-ups at 13 and 15 years of age. The families whose children reported more neglectful and controlling behaviours had more family conflict than the other families. Furthermore, their children experienced more than twice the chance of being diagnosed with psychiatric disorders by 15 years of age. Children who did not perceive their parents as "optimal" (e.g., were not perceived as loved, were not allowed to make decisions) had increased levels of psychiatric symptoms (e.g., depressive symptoms) compared to children of optimal parents, although symptoms did not reach clinical significance (Young et al., 2011). Therefore, these findings suggest that children's perceptions of their parents' behaviours can influence children's mental health.

Research has shown that older elementary school children may not perceive their parents' use of control as beneficial. This becomes particularly important when also considering

children's self-esteem. For instance, Pomerantz and Eaton (2000) found that children's perceptions of maternal control were related to low self-esteem when they also believed that the control behaviours meant their parents considered that they were incompetent. Furthermore, other children's outcomes, as perceived by peers, were related to children's perceptions of their parents' behaviours (Shulman, Collins, & Dital, 1993). For instance, perceptions of low parental control and high autonomy support by fathers were related to children being perceived as more self-reliant. In addition, children who perceived their parents as more rejecting tended to engage in rebellious behaviours (Shulman et al., 1993). Overall, these findings suggest that children's perceptions of parents' behaviours can have an impact on their experiences during their upbringing, which can influence social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes. The present study focuses on children's perception of their relationship with fathers.

Parenting in Middle Childhood

Middle childhood encompasses a large age range from approximately 5 to 12 years of age (Collins et al., 2002). As children grow from being infants to adolescents, many changes occur in their cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic development. Although many critical periods of development have been achieved before middle childhood, the school age years remain a period of increasing competence and refinement in a variety of skill areas. For instance, while children older than five years of age have achieved many of the necessary building blocks for language acquisition, middle childhood is a period in which language competence and usage increase in sophistication (e.g., expanding of vocabulary, and learning more figurative uses of language) (Palermo, 1984). Children in middle childhood also begin to refer and describe themselves in terms of psychological characteristics and personality traits more than physical attributes (Rosen & Patterson, 2011). In terms of physical development, steady growth occurs, in both weight and

height (Zembar & Blume, 2009). Importantly, due to various genetic and environmental factors, children are also experiencing puberty at younger ages. It is suggested that some girls may begin noticing changes associated due to puberty between 8 to 10 years old (Zembar & Blume, 2009). Cognitively, children in middle childhood begin to develop their ability to reason inductively, as they can use physical elements in their environment to create hypotheses about their experiences (Boyd & Bee, 2009). Further, in their social environments, school-aged children are learning to engage more with peers outside of the home and are more actively engaged in building relationships with others using more refined social skills, having a better understanding of others, and understanding the concept of friendship (Zembar & Blume, 2009). Although middle childhood is not a developmental period characterized by leaps and bounds, crucial changes are occurring that can affect their relationships with others.

Using a qualitative design, Borland and colleagues (1998) investigated many aspects of middle childhood and parenting: Their main finding was that children began to show more independence and self-reliance in middle childhood. Mothers and fathers reported having difficulty balancing the safety concerns and limits they set on their children while encouraging autonomy and independence. As children approached adolescence, it became more important for parents to find creative ways to foster compliance in their children. When interviewing children about their perspectives of certain parenting behaviours, children were able to recognize that their mothers and fathers can provide care while disciplining or controlling their actions. In fact, children expected these behaviours from their parents; furthermore, few children in late middle childhood reported being concerned about their parents' overprotectiveness. This is in contrast with findings in the adolescent literature with respect to parental control (Borland et al., 1998).

These results suggest that children have unique perspectives with respect to parental control in this age group, which has yet to be investigated thoroughly.

Middle childhood is of particular interest for the study of parental structure, negative control, and autonomy support. Children in this age group are becoming more vocal and independent, are spending less time in constant contact with their primary caregivers, are spending more time with siblings and peers, and are receiving less direct supervision in their activities as they begin attending formal school (Collins et al., 2002; Kerns, 2008). Therefore, parents are required to adjust their parenting behaviours to respond to this change. Due to the increased experience in formal educational experience during this time, children's cognitive development becomes more advanced as they become more comfortable with abstract thought (Collins et al., 2002). Importantly, children in this age group are also able to better understand social relationships by taking others' perspectives and differentiating individual personality traits, which aids in the development of social competence (Collins et al., 2002). Cognitive and social changes in middle childhood development are unique because parents remain concerned with their parenting behaviours during this developmental period.

While some research has suggested that middle childhood is a time when parents can relax control, some research suggests otherwise (Borland et al., 1998). Interviews conducted with mothers, fathers, and children indicated that parents still have anxiety over parenting during middle childhood, particularly as children are nearing adolescence. The late middle childhood ages were seen to be more open to negative influences and as a "last chance" to influence their children's development before adulthood. Furthermore, as children develop, mothers and fathers have higher expectations for their children's behaviours and intentions, but children still require

parental reassurance and support for many areas of their lives, potentially creating increased conflict throughout middle childhood (Borland et al., 1998).

Whereas there is a paucity of research on the specific differences throughout middle childhood that might contribute to variance in parenting behaviours, emerging research suggests that further distinctions in age groups might be needed. In a self-report study examining children's perceptions of their own and mothers' parenting behaviours, 5-year-old children reported more internalizing behaviours and fewer externalizing behaviours compared to 8-year-old children (Stone et al., 2013). This is important to note because children at different age groups may have different needs and abilities to regulate certain behaviours; therefore, parenting behaviours may adapt accordingly. Furthermore, when interviewing children about their perspectives of how adults can best support their well-being, different priorities and themes emerged when comparing different age groups (Borland et al., 1998). This study observed that while 5-year-old children's happiness was reflected in obtaining material goods, 7-year-old children referred increasingly to positive relationships and achievement (Borland et al., 1998). Further, 9-year-olds began to better understand relationships and 12-year-olds became more sophisticated in their appreciation for the closeness of friendships, group identity, and life successes (Borland et al., 1998). Importantly, as children develop through middle childhood, they begin to disagree with their parents more often and realize that they are not "all-knowing" as previously believed, which is a crucial point when considering children's perspectives of their mothers and fathers (Borland et al., 1998). These developmental differences can also play a role in how school-aged children perceive their parents' control and autonomy behaviours.

In terms of structure and control behaviours, parents' knowledge of their children's activities is still high compared to those of adolescents. However, children and parents begin to

develop mutual understanding of each other during later years of middle childhood, which contributes to their relationship quality (Collins et al., 2002; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). During this time, parents do not engage in as much physical punishment compared to infancy but adapt to a method of discipline that encourages development of children's autonomous thinking and behaviour. For example, parents may utilize the children's sense of guilt, take away privileges, and have discussions around the morality of children's behaviours (Collins et al., 2002). Furthermore, children in middle childhood are increasingly able to understand that their parents' authority rises from them having more knowledge and skills than children have, which allows parents to engage in greater reasoning and discussion with their children about discipline (Maccoby, 1984). Whereas distinct changes in parenting behaviours during middle childhood have not been found in the literature to date, more research is needed to identify distinct differences in children's perspectives of these behaviours across middle childhood.

Children require some amount of autonomy as they move through middle childhood. As such, parenting becomes more child-centred (Collins et al., 2002). Furthermore, mothers who support their children's autonomy in their daily activities tend to have children who are more self-regulating and achieve better grades in some academic areas (Gagne, 2003; Joussemet al., 2005). Increased autonomy occurs over time as parents allow their children to adopt some control over some areas of their lives as the child nears adolescence (Maccoby, 1984). As such, parents have the additional challenge to encourage independence in their children as they become increasingly connected with others outside of the family unit.

Research Methods in Parenting Research

To appropriately investigate aspects of parenting and the parent-child relationship, researchers engage in a variety of research methods. Three of the most common methods are: (a)

interviews, (b) self-report questionnaires, and (c) observations, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Since the selected research method influences the data generated, careful consideration is critical to the validity of a study.

Interviews. When gathering data about parenting or parent-child relationships, study participants are frequently used as the primary informants, whether by interview or questionnaire format (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). As such, interviews enable researchers to generate a breadth and depth of information and to give participants' ample opportunity to clarify and expand on responses that may be vague, unclear, or unique (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). Although an important advantage of using interviews is the richness of the data, interviewer biases can occur based on personal, cultural, or methodological factors (e.g., expectation of a hypothesis). Structured interviews are believed to reduce bias compared to unstructured interviews since the format and wording remain consistent for all participants; however, it has also been argued that this does not allow for the complexity of responses that may occur (Cohen et al., 2011). Essentially the aim is to engage participants in truthful responses. However, for many parents, social desirability is a strong factor that may influence how they respond to particular questions about their parenting and parent-child relationship (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). When interviews are used with children, they are often altered in order to fit the developmental needs of the participants (e.g., Della Porta & Howe, 2012; Stone et al., 2013). Other methods have benefits in their efficiency of use.

Self-report (surveys and questionnaires). Proponents of surveys and questionnaires argue that the anonymity of these methods leads to increased reliability and validity of the collected data. However, there are other biases that emerge, such as response bias and selection bias (Cohen et al., 2011; Sattler, 2014). Fortunately, many standardized self-reports (e.g.,

Behavior Assessment Scale for Children – Second Edition; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) have built-in reliability and validity checks that look for response patterns or inconsistencies in responses (Sattler, 2014). In addition, questionnaires tend to be more cost and time effective, particularly since many can be conducted online at the participant's convenience (Cohen et al., 2011; Whitcomb & Merrell, 2013). Unfortunately, questions may have different meanings to individuals and the researcher is unable to respond to clarifications about certain items that may be ambiguous (Cohen et al., 2011). Therefore, carefully worded questions and appropriately selected response types can help improve the accuracy of responses. Several parenting researchers use this meth either alone or in conjunction with other methods to access different perspectives of parents, in particular (e.g., Caron et al., 2006; Herbert et al., 2012). Some research methods are used in an attempt to provide more objective reports on behaviours.

Observational methods. Another frequently employed method in the parenting research is observation, particularly following the criticisms of participants as informants using interviews and self-reports (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Observations aim to provide an outsider perspective on parenting, where an unobtrusive observer examines recorded or live interactions for particular characteristics (Kerig, 2001). A key benefit to engaging in observational research is that participants can interact in a naturalistic environment, which provides researchers with a glimpse at "real-life" (Whitcomb & Merrell, 2013). Alternatively, participants are observed in a laboratory setting, which allows for greater control of extraneous variables (Sattler & Riddell, 2014a). People engage in behaviours that do not necessarily align with their self-perceptions; therefore, observations can provide unique information and insights into family processes (Kerig, 2001). However, observational research is expensive and time consuming (Kerig, 2001; Lindahl, 2001). Furthermore, issues with inter- or intra-observer reliability occur, but these may be

addressed with structured coding schemes and well-trained observers (Lindahl, 2001). Studies that have utilized observations often examine parent-child interactions (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 1978; Stevenson & Crnic, 2013).

The Current Study

Parents have a crucial role in the healthy development of their children. Research to date suggests that the more structure and autonomy-supportive behaviours are used by parents, and the less negatively controlling behaviours are used, the more children will be socially and emotionally healthier with fewer behaviour problems. While more research has been conducted on structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours in toddlers and adolescents, relatively little research has investigated middle childhood experiences with these parental practices. Furthermore, even less research has considered children's own perspectives of their experiences with their parents in this age group. Therefore, future research investigating these areas of interest is needed and could help promote the development of a healthy society.

Given the limited research on father-child relationships, this study offers unique contributions to the literature. First, only a handful of studies compare fathers' and children's perspectives of parenting behaviours; much of the research on parenting behaviours is focused on mothers using self-report questionnaires or observations, and few studies directly elicit children's perceptions of parenting behaviours, for example. Second, this study includes children across middle childhood in a wide age range. Middle childhood is a stage that is relatively ignored in much of the literature due to the belief that it is a latency period of development. Third, research on father-child attachment security is also limited, particularly when it comes to this stage of development.

The current research employs a cross-sectional, correlational study design. The research questions focused on examining various associations between children's and fathers' perceptions of parenting behaviours and children's functioning through the use of interviews and questionnaires. The study was a cross-sectional design, as the data from two age groups was collected concurrently and not longitudinally. The children in the two age groups consisted of different children thus forming two age cohorts. In addition, this dissertation provides an exploration of the richness of the data in the form of quotations from my interviews to provide a context for the study's quantitative results. This study investigated the following research questions and expected the stated hypotheses:

1. Do fathers' perceptions and children's perceptions of structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours predict distinct behavioural functioning (i.e., internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours) in children? It was hypothesized that children's perceptions of less parental structure will be related to greater externalizing behaviours, higher negative control will be related to greater internalizing behaviours, and higher autonomy support will be related to positive adaptive behaviours and fewer externalizing behaviours. The literature has demonstrated that different informants' reports of behaviours may be related to unique functioning (e.g., Rinaldi & Howe, 2012; Taber, 2010); however, there is not enough literature to determine what unique differences in functioning that may occur specifically between fathers and children.

2. Do children's and fathers' perceptions of fathers' use of structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours differ at two stages of middle childhood (i.e., younger children versus older children)? The literature has demonstrated that children of different ages have various expectations of their parents' roles or interpret the meaning of their parents'

behaviours differently (e.g., Pomerantz & Eaton, 2000). Therefore, it was hypothesized that 10-year-old children would perceive a decrease in the use of structure, an increase in negative control, and a decrease in parental autonomy support compared to 6-year-old children.

3. What role does father-child attachment play in the relationship between children's perceptions of fathers' behaviours (i.e., use of structure, negative control, and autonomy support) and children's behavioural functioning (i.e., internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours)? It was hypothesized that father-child attachment will moderate the relationship between children's perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviours and children's behavioural outcomes. For example, compared to children who are insecurely attached, it was expected that children would have more positive behavioural outcomes if they had a secure attachment with their fathers, even if their perceptions of their fathers' behaviours were negative. Alternatively, it was anticipated that children who had positive perceptions of their fathers' behaviours, but were insecurely attached, would have more negative behavioural outcomes than if they had a secure father-child attachment. Through the literature, attachment quality has been related to children's expectations of their relationships, interpretations of others' emotions, and children's developmental outcomes (Fraley et al., 2006; Ranson & Urichuk, 2008; Weinfield et al., 2008).

4. How do fathers and children perceive fathers' use of parental structure, negative control, and autonomy support? This question serves primarily as an exploratory description of the role fathers play in parenting children; as such, a hypothesis is not appropriate. The literature on parenting is vast when involving mothers (e.g., Maccoby & Martin, 1983). With the increased engagement of fathers in their children's lives as they take on more caregiving tasks, it is important to understand the various roles fathers play with regard to providing care for their children. This thesis provides a variety of excerpts from participant interview transcripts to

describe the roles of fathers in particular areas of parenting and to shed further light on the involvement of fathers.

Method

Participants

Participants consisted of 55 school-aged children and their fathers recruited from the greater Edmonton (Alberta) and Montreal (Quebec) areas by convenience sampling. In Edmonton, I recruited children and fathers mainly through schools, after school programs, parenting groups, university list serves, posters around the University of Alberta campus (e.g., Clinical Services – Educational Psychology), and by word of mouth, inviting them to participate in a father-child study. I was approved to connect with four school boards and eight community organizations, afterschool programs, and/or private schools in Edmonton and Montreal; I distributed approximately 2,000 letters and posters. Parents contacted me directly if they were interested in participating. In Edmonton, I collected data from 32 father-child pairs. In Montreal, I recruited 23 father-child pairs by contacting a local, private primary school and through word of mouth. I offered participants a small token of appreciation for participation in the study (e.g., stickers/pencils for children, gift card draw for fathers).

Children who participated were between the ages of 5 and 12 and for the purposes of the current study were divided into two age groups to represent early and later middle childhood (43.8% between 5 to 8 years old and 56.2% between 9 and 12 years old). The distribution of children's age ranges was bimodal, because recruitment was focused specifically on children ages 6 and 10. Sixty-two percent of children were boys and 38% were girls. Families were from relatively homogenous ethnic backgrounds across the two cities. More than three-quarters of the fathers described their children as Canadian / Caucasian / European, 5% were Filipino, 2% were

Mexican, 2% were Middle Eastern, and 13% were of mixed backgrounds. Over 60% of the fathers were born in Canada, while a third had lived in Canada more than five years. In terms of the fathers' relationship within the family, 89% of fathers who participated were married, almost all to the child's biological mother, 96% were the participating child's biological father, and the remaining 4% were adoptive and stepfathers who were active in parenting their children. Regarding fathers' age ranges, 13% were under age 36, 47% were between 36 to 45 years old, 33% of fathers were between 46 to 55 years old, and 7% were over 55 years old. Finally, over 70% of fathers had at least completed college / university degrees or graduate / professional degrees and 89% reported a household income of above $80,000.

Procedures

The present study received ethics review and approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board 1. Prior to starting the research, I conducted pilot testing with two father-child dyads in Montreal, Quebec. Following pilot testing, no major changes were made to the interview questions, questionnaires, or general procedures; therefore, these data were used in the analyses. For those participants who were recruited via primary schools, school board procedures were used to disseminate study information letters and consent forms (see Appendices A and B). Participants voluntarily returned consent forms if they were interested in participating. I also obtained assent from the children upon meeting the family, according to previously approved procedures by the University and school boards (see Appendix D).

I conducted the majority of data collection in the families' homes; however, two families' interviews were conducted at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Education and four interviews were conducted at a school in Montreal. Fathers independently completed two questionnaires while I interviewed the children. The first questionnaire focused on their children's functioning

and the second asked about the demographic variables of the child and family, such as education level and marital status of the parents.

I conducted interviews with the children individually, without the presence of the parents to facilitate open and honest responses. After a brief rapport-building period (e.g., talking about school, summer vacation), I presented children with six scenarios asking about everyday situations (e.g., doing homework or chores) accompanied with visual prompts (see Appendix E for visual prompts). Finally, children responded to a series of questions with forced-choice responses about their attachment relationship with their father; when necessary, I would read the questions and answers to the child. I also interviewed fathers about their experiences with their child using the same scenarios used with the children (see Table 2 for fathers' and children's participation in each step of the process).

Table 2

Description of Variables and Their Data Sources

Variable	Description	Source
Attachment	Child-father attachment score	Children's responses to *Security Scale* questionnaire
Externalizing	Children's level of externalizing behaviours (e.g., hyperactivity, aggression)	Father's responses on *Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition*
Internalizing	Children's level of internalizing behaviours (e.g., anxiety, depression)	

Adaptive	Children's level of adaptive behaviours (e.g., functional communication, social skills)	
Father Structure	Amount of structure (e.g., limit setting, routines) father uses	Coded based on father reports in response to scenarios
Father Negative Control	Level of negative control (e.g., directiveness, rejection) father uses	
Father Autonomy Support	Level of autonomy support (e.g., negotiation, discussions) father uses	
Child Structure	Amount of structure (e.g., limit setting, routines) father uses	Coded based on child reports in response to scenarios
Child Negative Control	Level of negative control (e.g., directiveness, rejection) father uses	
Child Autonomy Support	Level of autonomy support (e.g., negotiation, discussions) father uses	

Measures

Demographics questionnaire. Fathers responded to a short questionnaire on demographic information to determine the type of sample that was obtained for the current study (see Appendix F). Participants were asked about their age, child's gender, father's relation to child, marital status, household income, education level, and ethnic background.

Children's social and emotional functioning. The *Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition* (BASC-2; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) assesses children's social and emotional functioning in a variety of areas from different reporters' perspectives. The entire system has measures for individuals aged 6-25 years old, with self-reports for children, and proxy reports for parents, and teachers. The BASC-2 examines internalizing behaviours, externalizing behaviours, and adaptive behaviours compared to children of the same age and gender.

The proxy report used by fathers in this study to provide a measure of their child's social and emotional functioning was the *BASC-2 Parent Rating Scale-Child* (PRS-C). It is designed for children ages 6 to 11 years of age and has 160 items describing a variety of positive and negative behaviours. Fathers responded on a 4-point scale: never, sometimes, often, and almost always. For example, some statements were: "Teases others," "Worries about making mistakes," or "Adjusts well to changes in routines." Raw scores are converted to *t*-scores, with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. For the clinical scales (e.g., externalizing and internalizing behaviours), scores of 59 and below are typical to above average scores, scores over 60 are considered "At-Risk," and scores over 70 are considered "Clinically Significant." For the adaptive scales, typical or above average scores fall within the 41-70+ range, "At Risk" scores

are between 31-40, and "Clinically Significant" scores are 30 and below. The BASC-2 PRS is widely used in both research and clinical settings and provides reliable and valid information on the children's social, emotional, and behavioural functioning. Furthermore, it is a standardized, norm-referenced measure, with the BASC-2 manual reporting reliability alphas from .75 to .93 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). Reliability alphas from the current study are .79 for externalizing behaviours, .84 for internalizing behaviours, and .85 for adaptive behaviours.

Parent-child attachment security. Attachment security of the father-child relationship was examined from the children's perspectives using a questionnaire. The *Security Scale* (Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996; see Appendix H) is designed to ask children about their perspectives of their attachment security to their father and has been used with middle childhood and adolescents in studies examining parent-child attachment and peer relationships, among others (e.g., Kerns et al., 1996; Kerns et al., 2001). Items are designed to address children's tendency to rely on their parent in times of need as well as their ability to communicate with their parent. Fifteen items are formatted in a dichotomous fashion (e.g., "Some kids find it easy to trust their father but other kids are not sure if they can trust their father"). Children then choose which statement is more like them and then choose if the statement is "really true" or "sort of true" for them. Higher scores represent a more secure attachment to the caregiver in question. Reliability *alphas* in the literature ranged from .63 to .87 for children asking about their mothers and fathers, with older children providing more reliable answers (Kerns et al., 2001). Furthermore, previous studies indicated similar *alphas* with older middle childhood (Kerns et al., 1996). Reliability *alpha* from the current study was .62, and removing particular items from the questionnaire did not significantly improve reliability.

Children's and fathers' perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviours. I accessed children's and fathers' perceptions of fathers' behaviours by presenting hypothetical, real-life scenarios and asking how the fathers would respond in the scenarios. Scenarios developed and tested by Della Porta and Howe (2012) were provided to children (see Appendix G) and consisted of occurrences that commonly happen between parents and children in middle childhood. Original scenarios by Della Porta and Howe were more specific and geared toward the mother (e.g., "It is past your bedtime, and you really don't want to go to bed, but your mom

wants you to go to sleep. What would she say or do?"). These were slightly altered for my study and made more general and geared toward children's interactions with their fathers (e.g., "It is bedtime. What does that look like in your home? What would your dad say and do at your bedtime? What would your dad say or do if you didn't want to go to bed?"). The scenarios covered a range of common issues, such as bedtime, doing homework, or use of technology, for instance. I also showed children visuals (i.e., cartoon pictures) to help them respond to the questions (see Appendix E). In the interview, I asked fathers and children about what these scenarios typically looked like between the father and the child, with specific prompts asking about what fathers would say and do if the child did not comply. In addition, I asked fathers about routines and rules that would be in place in their homes regarding these scenarios (see Appendix G for interview protocols). Additional prompts were used, particularly with the children, if more elaborate information was required or children required more context to answer the questions. Some prompts were: "Can you think of an example?" "What are the things you need to do before bed?" "What are your favourite foods to eat at dinner?" The length of time for the child interviews ranged from 7 min 47 sec to 19 min 11 sec (M = 12 min 11 sec, SD = 2 min 45 sec) and father interviews ranged from 10 min 07 sec to 32 min 13 sec (M = 19 min 25 sec, SD = 5 min 14 sec).

Coding of Interviews with Children and Fathers

Senior undergraduate student volunteers were trained and coded interview responses using a coding scheme created for the purposes of the proposed research. I developed the coding scheme to capture common behaviours surrounding structure, negative control, and autonomy support (see Appendix I). Recurring aspects of parental structure, negative control, and autonomy support in existing questionnaires, and observational coding schemes in the literature

informed the proposed coding scheme (e.g., Barber et al., 2005; Gordon, 2009; Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Kunz & Grych, 2007; Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Each major code contains several minor codes that also serve as definitions to aid the coding process; for instance, examples of negative control may entail fathers invalidating their child's feelings or withdrawing love. I frequently made further elaborations on the codes or refinements to the coding scheme throughout the coding process according to the data that were collected for the current study.

For an entire transcript, coders ranked each parent behaviour code (structure, negative control, and autonomy support) with a 1 (absent / never / very low), 2 (little / few), 3 (some), or 4 (several / frequent / high) across the six scenarios. Therefore, each child transcript had three scores and each father transcript had three scores corresponding to each of the parent behaviours, for a total of six codes per parent-child dyad. To help with the reliability of coding, coders were encouraged to label statements from the interviews that matched a particular subcode (e.g., Structure – limit setting); these codes were considered for both frequency and quality for scoring the entire transcript, but individual statements were not coded specifically. Subcodes were recorded for the purposes of qualitatively describing the data but were not calculated in reliability scores.

I trained two independent coders (i.e., senior undergraduate psychology students at the University of Alberta) on the coding scheme created for the proposed study. I shared basic parenting theory with the coders and discussed the elements of the coding scheme, without divulging the expected results or research questions of the current study. Then, I demonstrated how to proceed with coding by discussing various transcripts with the coders. Coders trained on 10 out of the 110 transcripts and began to code independently (i.e., independently from the

researcher) once acceptable intraclass correlations (ICCs) of .70 were obtained. The literature demonstrates that an ICC between .61 and .80 is deemed "substantial," and so a larger ICC was used as a benchmark for the current study (Landis & Koch, 1977). Furthermore, ICCs are an appropriate method of measuring inter-rater agreement for ordinal data (Hallgren, 2012). Coders double coded 30/110 (27%) of the transcripts to ensure consistent scoring; this proportion of double coding is consistent with methodology used in other observational and interview research, in which researchers typically double code between 20-30% of the data (e.g., Golombok et al., 2014; Green et al., 2010; Havighurst, Wilson, Harley, Prior, & Kehoe, 2010; Pasalich, Dadds, Hawes, & Brennan, 2011). Coders engaged in frequent conversation over the various codes and definitions, and disagreements over coding were resolved by discussion. ICCs for the current study were .74 for structure, .78 for negative control, and .72 for autonomy support. Finally, I performed periodic reliability checks throughout the coding process to minimize any drifting in coding (Sattler & Riddell, 2014).

Results

The current study investigated fathers' and children's perspectives of fathers' parenting behaviours, children's functioning, and father-child attachment. First, I present descriptive data on the main variables. This is followed by preliminary correlations and group differences identified to determine the associations between the variables of interest in the current study. Next, the main research questions of the current study are answered by a combination of regressions and *t*-tests analyses. Finally, excerpts and descriptions from select interviews are presented to illustrate the types of responses fathers and their children provided. These descriptions illustrate the variations in responses to provide a picture of the types and range of behaviours fathers might use in everyday situations.

Descriptive Information

The descriptive statistics for the three parenting behaviours (i.e., structure, negative control, and autonomy support) reported by fathers and children, the three child behaviours (i.e., externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours), and father-child attachment scores are presented in Table 3. Overall, my sample mostly fell within the mid-range of possible scores on a variety of measures, including the BASC-2 (i.e., externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours) and the coding of fathers' parenting behaviours. It should be noted that for the selected continuous variables (i.e., attachment, externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive scores), the means are the most representative measure of central tendency. However, for interval variables (e.g., structure, negative control, and autonomy support), the median is the most representative measure of central tendency.

Table 3

Minimums, Maximums, and Measures of Central Tendency

Variable Name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (*SD*)	Median
Attachment[1]	34	60	49.5 (5.4)	50
Externalizing[2]	34	63	48.8 (6.3)	49
Internalizing[2]	33	64	47.0 (7.1)	46
Adaptive[2]	32	66	51.9 (7.7)	53
Structure Father[3]	1	4	2.7 (0.75)	3
Negative Control Father[3]	1	4	2.6 (0.83)	3
Autonomy Support Father[3]	2	4	2.9 (0.71)	3
Structure Child[3]	1	4	2.2 (0.63)	2
Negative Control Child[3]	1	4	2.7 (0.73)	3

Autonomy Support Child[3]	1	4	2.2 (0.64)	2

Possible ranges of scores of each measure: [1]: Security Scale 15-60; [2]: BASC-2 20-120; [3]: Coding Scheme 1-4

Preliminary Analyses

I ran bivariate Spearman's correlations prior to analyzing for the main research questions (see Table 4) to determine an initial quantitative picture of the existing relationships in the data. Spearman's correlations are more appropriate for ordinal data, such as the rankings for the perceptions of parenting behaviours. The correlations provide information about how different variables are related. In the social sciences, correlations of ± .1 are small effects, ± .3 are moderate effects, and ± .5 are large effects (Field, 2013).

Overall, a number of important significant correlations were found in the current study. First, the age of the child was not significantly related to any behavioural functioning of the children, nor reported parenting behaviours. Second, attachment scores were moderately positively correlated with children who perceived more autonomy support from fathers (r = .28, p = .041).

Third, children's behavioural outcomes were associated with several variables. Specifically, children's externalizing behaviours were highly negatively related to children's adaptive behaviours (r = -.49, p = .00) and moderately negatively associated to fathers' perceptions of their use of autonomy support (r = -.29, p = .03). In addition, a moderately, significant correlation was found between children's internalizing behaviours and their perception of their fathers' use of structure (r = .27, p = .048).

Fourth, and finally, perceptions of certain parenting behaviours were moderately associated to each other. Notably, fathers' and children's perceptions of structure were moderately, positively correlated to each other (r = .39, p = .003), and children's perception of

their fathers' use of structure was also moderately, positively related to children's perception of their fathers' use of autonomy support (r = .40, p = .003). In addition, fathers' perceptions of their use of negative control were strongly, negatively related to their perceptions of their use of autonomy support with their children (r = -.51, p = .00). Lastly, fathers' and children's perceptions of the fathers' use of autonomy support were positively associated (r = .31, p = .02).

Due to distinct environmental differences between two groups of my sample (i.e., the sample from Montreal versus the sample from Edmonton), group differences were investigated on perceptions of parenting behaviours and father-child attachment. Seven independent sample *t*-tests were run with the two cities as the independent grouping variables; dependent variables were the perceptions of structure, negative control, autonomy support from fathers and children, and father-child attachment (totalling seven dependent variables). Interpretation of these *t*-tests should be done with caution, as running a high number of comparisons significantly increases the chance of committing a type-I error, rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true. Results of the *t*-tests suggest that children in the Edmonton sample (M = 51.25, SE = .88) had higher attachment security ratings compared to children in the Montreal sample (M = 47.04, SE = 1.05). These differences were significant, t = 4.21, p = .003, with a large effect, d = .84. In addition, on average, children in the Montreal sample (M = 2.91, SE = .15) perceived greater negative control by their fathers compared to children in the Edmonton sample (M = 2.47, SE = .12). This difference was significant, $t(53)$ = -2.33, p = .024), with a relatively substantial effect, d = .66. No other comparisons were significant. Therefore, results presented below including negative control or attachment should be interpreted with caution; at best, these group differences likely created some noise in the results.

Main Research Questions

The following section outlines the current study's research questions, analyses conducted, and level of support with hypotheses. The research questions explore the relationships, differences between the two age groups, and predictive nature of the three parenting behaviours (i.e., structure, negative control, or autonomy support) from the perspectives of children and fathers, children's behavioural functioning (i.e., externalizing, internalizing, or adaptive behaviours), father-child attachment, and child age.

Table 4

Spearman's Correlations Between Variables of Interest

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age	–	-.14	.17	.23	.01	-.22	-.07	.02	-.03	.11	.18
2. Attachment[1]		–	-.12	-.05	.13	.11	-.08	.17	.20	-.17	.28*
3. External[2]			–	.26	-.49*	-.21	.19	-.29*	.22	.24	-.07
4. Internal[2]				–	-.16	.13	-.04	-.00	.27*	-.02	.25
5. Adaptive[2]					–	.14	-.26	.26	.08	-.03	.04
6. Structure Father[3]						–	-.17	.17	.39*	-.00	.20
7. Negative Control Father[3]							–	-.51*	-.16	-.01	-.18
8. Autonomy Support Father[3]								–	.13	-.10	.31*
9. Structure Child[3]									–	-.18	.40*
10. Negative Control Child[3]										–	-.25
11. Autonomy Support Child[3]											–

* $p < .05$; [1]: Security Scale (Kerns et al., 1996); [2]: BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004); [3]: Coding scheme

Question 1. Do fathers' perceptions and children's perceptions of structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours predict distinct behavioural functioning (i.e., internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours) in children? I ran multiple stepwise regressions using IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 23 including scores from coded transcripts regarding perceptions of parenting behaviours (i.e., structure, negative control, and autonomy support) by both fathers and children to predict children's behavioural outcomes (i.e., internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours based on scores from the BASC-2). I chose stepwise regressions due to a lack of strong, evidence-based theory on the relationship of perceptions of fathers' parenting behaviours with children's behavioural outcomes. My study followed the minimum standard recommended in the literature of approximately 8 to 10 participants per variable in a multiple regression (Green, 1991). Assumptions of normality, linear relationship, and homoscedasticity were met for these analyses (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). The computer software enters variables into the regression and removes them one by one by in order to determine the best predictor of the dependent variables. Fathers' perception of their use of autonomy was the best predictor for both externalizing behaviours and adaptive behaviours. Specifically, fathers' perceptions of their use of autonomy support predicted an 8% decrease in reported externalizing behaviours in children $F(1, 53) = 4.7$, $p = .035$, $R^2 = .08$ (see Table 5). Furthermore, fathers' perception of their use of autonomy support predicted a 7% increase in reported adaptive behaviours in children $F(1,53) = 4.19$, $p = .046$, $R^2 = .07$.

Table 5

Multiple Stepwise Regressions Predicting Externalizing and Adaptive Behaviours in Children

	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*b*	*SE B*	*Beta*	*p*
DV: Externalizing Behaviours[1]						
Autonomy – Father[2]	.08	.06	-2.52	1.16	-.29	.035
DV: Adaptive Behaviours[1]						
Autonomy – Father[2]	.07	.06	2.95	1.44	.27	.046

n = 55; [1]: BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004); [2]: Coding scheme

As can be seen in the excluded variables in Table 6, no other perceptions of parenting behaviours, whether by fathers or children, significantly predicted children's behavioural outcomes for the current sample.

Table 6

Multiple Stepwise Regression Predicting Externalizing and Adaptive Behaviours in Children – Excluded Variables

	Beta In	*t*	*p*
DV: Externalizing Behaviours[1]			
Structure – Father[2]	-.14	-1.06	.30
Negative Control – Father[2]	.08	.50	.62
Structure – Child[2]	-.12	-.90	.37
Negative Control – Child[2]	.19	1.40	.17
Autonomy Support – Child [2]	.05	.38	.70
DV: Adaptive Behaviours[1]			
Structure – Father[2]	.13	.95	.35

Negative Control – Father[2]	-.10	-.63	.53
Structure – Child[2]	.10	.75	.46
Negative Control – Child[2]	.02	.17	.87
Autonomy Support – Child[2]	-.04	-.27	.79

[1]: BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004); [2]: Coding scheme

As stepwise regressions do not present statistical results if no variables are entered into the equation, nonsignificant results from simultaneous multiple regressions are presented below in Table 7 for comparison for the parenting behaviours that were not predictive of children's internalizing behaviours.

Table 7

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions Predicting Internalizing Behaviours in Children

	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*b*	*SE B*	*Beta*	*p*
DV: Internalizing Behaviours[1]	.13	.02				
Structure – Father[2]			.46	1.40	.05	.74
Negative Control – Father[2]			-.12	1.36	-.01	.93
Autonomy Support – Father[2]			-1.33	1.65	-.13	.42
Structure – Child[2]			2.18	1.79	1.22	.23
Negative Control – Child[2]			1.4	1.38	1.02	.31
Autonomy Support – Child[2]			2.52	1.74	1.45	.15

[1]: BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004); [2]: Coding scheme

Question 2. Do children's and father's perceptions of fathers' use of structure, negative control, and autonomy supportive behaviours differ at two stages of middle childhood (i.e., younger children versus older children)? I ran six independent sample *t*-tests to answer this

question. Each *t*-test compared two groups (i.e., younger children from 5-8 years old and older children from 9-11 years old). Dependent variables were the three parenting behaviours (i.e., structure, negative control, and autonomy support) from the perspective of the children and the fathers, for a total of six dependent variables. Assumptions regarding normal distribution, homogeneity of variance, and independence of observations were met (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). There were no significant differences between the two age groups with regards to the coded scores for parenting behaviours from either the perspective of children or fathers (see Table 8).

Table 8

Independent Samples t-*Tests Comparing Perceived Parenting Behaviours Used with Older Versus Younger Children*

Dependent Variable	*t*	*p*	*d*	*Younger Mean*	*Older Mean*
Structure – Father[1]	1.50	.14	.40	2.92	2.61
Negative Control – Father[1]	.48	.64	.11	2.62	2.51
Autonomy Support – Father[1]	-.52	.60	-.15	2.83	2.93
Structure – Child[1]	-.53	.60	-.09	2.17	2.26
Negative Control – Child[1]	-.26	.79	-.07	2.63	2.68
Autonomy Support – Child[1]	-1.14	.26	-.29	2.13	2.32

[1]: Coding scheme

Question 3. What role does father-child attachment play in the relationship between children's perceptions of fathers' behaviours (i.e., use of structure, negative control, and autonomy support) and children's behavioural functioning (i.e., internalizing, externalizing, and adaptive behaviours)? To determine the best predictor of children's functioning (i.e., externalizing, internalizing, adaptive behaviours), I ran three separate stepwise regressions.

Attachment scores and children's perceptions of parenting behaviours were entered as independent variables, and dependent variables for each regression were the externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours of the child. Assumptions of normal distribution, linear relationship, and homoscedasticity were met (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). I ran these regressions initially to determine whether father-child attachment was predictive of any of the dependent variables in advance of investigating further interactions. Results indicated that no variables were entered into this model, demonstrating that level of attachment, as rated by children, did not significantly predict the children's behaviour functioning as rated by fathers. Therefore, a moderation analysis was not conducted. Since stepwise regressions do not present statistical results if variables are not entered into the equation, the resulting significant results from simultaneous multiple regressions are presented below in Table 9 for comparison. As is demonstrated in Table 9, standardized regression coefficients (*Betas*) are quite small (i.e., ranging from an absolute value of .10-.12); this suggests that with changes in father-child attachment security, children's outcomes result in a change of about 10%, representing a nonsignificant predictor model. Notably, the direction of the change is in the expected direction.

Table 9

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions of Father-Child Attachment[1] *Predicting Children's Functioning*

Dependent Variables	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*b*	*SE B*	*Beta*	*p*
Externalizing Behaviours[2]	.01	-.01	-.12	.16	-.11	.44
Internalizing Behaviours[2]	.01	-.01	-.13	.18	-.10	.49
Adaptive Behaviours[2]	.01	-.00	.17	.20	.12	.38

[1]: Security Scale (Kerns et al., 1996); [2]: BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004)

To visually demonstrate the interactions investigated in the current study, scatterplots were used . Since the interaction effects were not significant in the current study, a set of graphs is presented as a visual example of the nonsignificant findings. There are three graphs below demonstrating the scatter of data between father-child attachment security and levels of one of the dependent variable, children's externalizing behaviours. Each graph represents a different level of children's perspectives of autonomy support, low (code of 1; see Figure 3), a little (code of 2; see Figure 4), and some (code of 3; see Figure 5). A graph for a code of 4 is not presented below because there was only one data point in the graph. What can be seen below are the low associations between attachment and externalizing behaviours across the three levels of fathers' autonomy support. If an interaction were present, one would see relationships of different strengths or directions between attachment and externalizing behaviours at different levels of autonomy support.

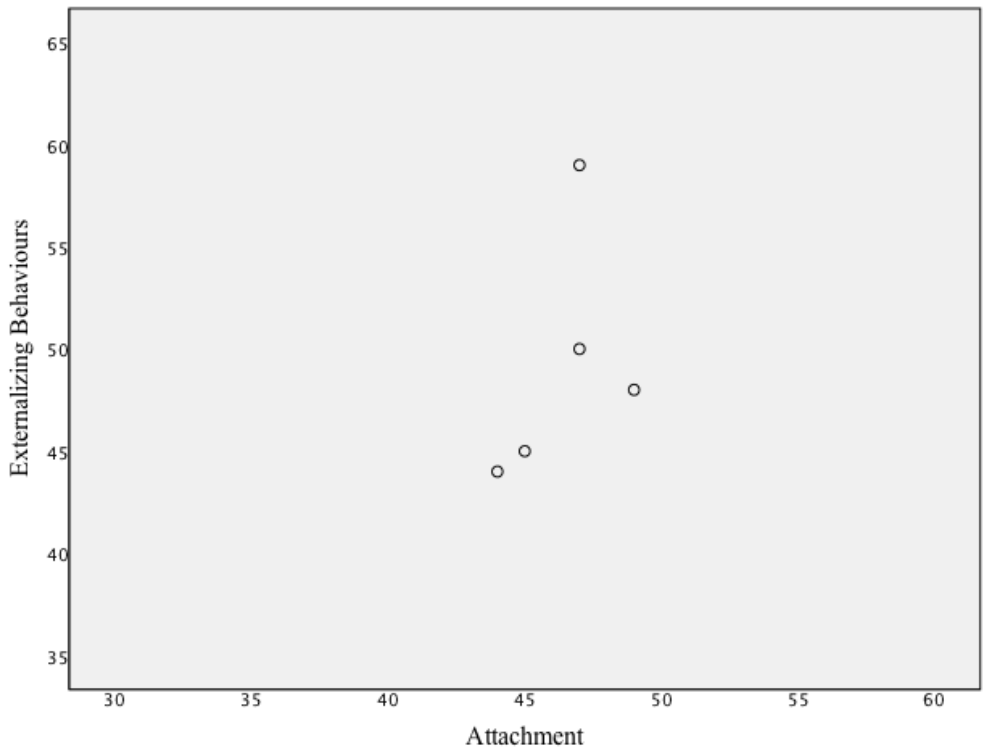

Figure 3. Low autonomy support - child perspective (code of 1)

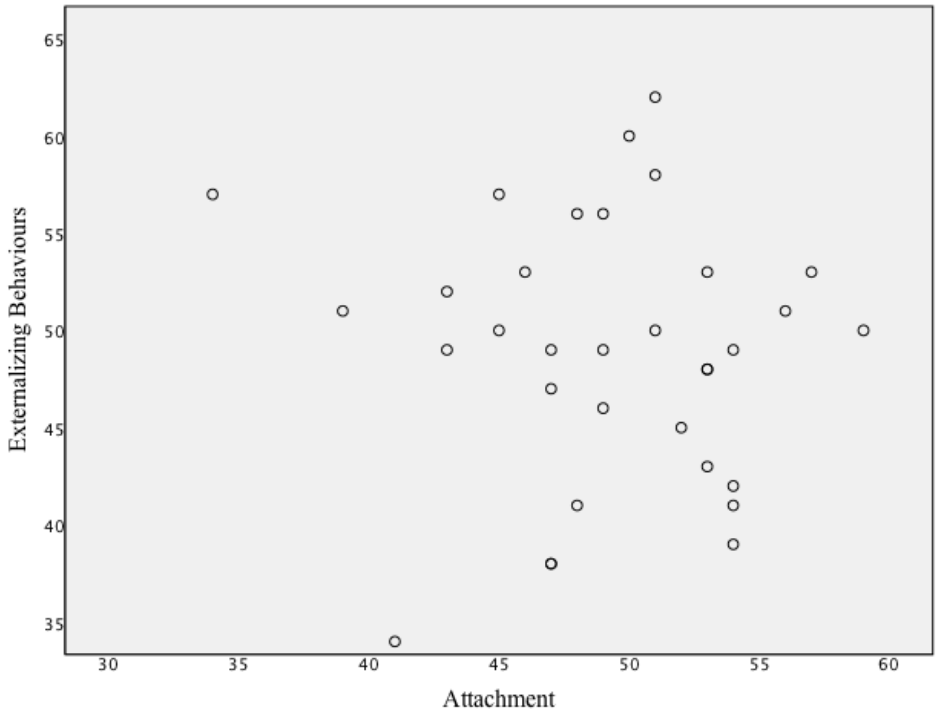

Figure 4. Little autonomy support - child perspective (code of 2)

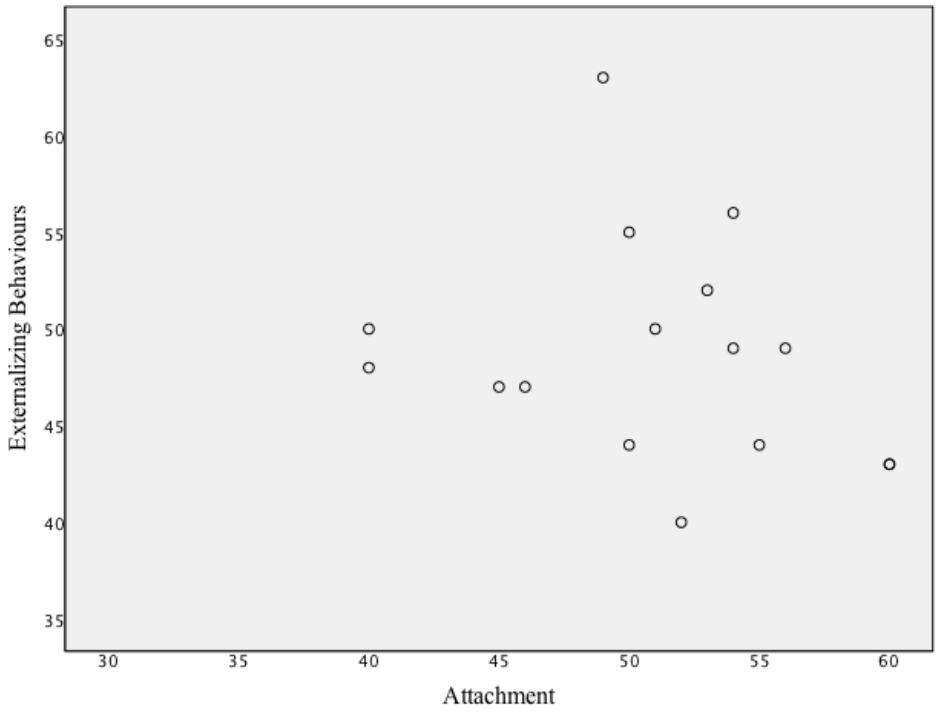

Figure 5. Some autonomy support - child perspective (code of 3)

In summary, it was found that fathers' perceptions of their use of autonomy support predicted a decrease in externalizing behaviours and an increase in adaptive behaviours in children. Perceptions of structure and negative control were not found to predict children's behavioural outcomes, nor were age differences found in the parenting behaviours used. Finally, attachment did not moderate the relationship between fathers' parenting behaviours and children's functioning.

Question 4. Given that there is a paucity of research on fathers' roles in parenting, it is informative to describe the types of responses that were obtained by both fathers and children to explore what fathering might look like in typical, everyday situations. The excerpts provided below give the reader a greater understanding of the richness of this study's data and illustrates the types of responses fathers and children shared. The intention of this section is to present examples of descriptive data from the transcripts while keeping the quantitative aspects of the study untouched. What follows is a series of excerpts from transcripts of some of the most common, as well as some of the more interesting responses, from fathers and children.

Structure. When it comes to parenting, providing structure is important for setting up expectations and appropriate limits for children. For the present study, structure was defined as providing limits to children (e.g., clear and consistent guidelines), engaging in scaffolding or positive feedback (e.g., prompting, collaboration), monitoring (e.g., non-intrusive supervision), and routines (e.g., daily schedules) (e.g., Barber et al., 2005; Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Structure was a common parenting technique described by fathers in this study.

Fathers' responses. Some fathers outlined guidelines they presented to their child and how they put limits on certain activities in a way their child understood, while others explained

fewer expectations. For instance, one father reported clear expectations about electronic use in the home. In this excerpt, the father indicated time limits for electronics, with certain exceptions (i.e., school projects and weekends):

> There is a rule that applies to everybody in the house. There is actually no electronic use during the school days. So there's no iPad use, unless it's used for school projects or if he needs to research something. But really there's no playing video games for anybody in the house on weekdays, and on weekends they get half an hour a day.

Fathers discussed routines within the household, particularly routines at bedtime. Fathers also shared routines for completing homework and chore lists, and occasionally fathers did not have to ask their child to follow through on certain tasks. The father quoted below indicated a detailed schedule of activities once their child got home from school, requiring little prompting from the father:

> Well for example, when he comes home, he's allowed a half hour to relax. Then he's supposed to do his homework. And he's supposed to finish his homework by the time we get home. Um... then at night he does his reading or his French dictée [spelling test] with his mom. Uh, in the morning, his responsibility is to get up, get breakfast together, put away his dishes, get dressed, pick up his clothes from the floor, pack up his stuff for school, and be ready to go.

In contrast, other fathers did not have set expectations for their children. Additionally, one type of structure, low limit-setting, was occasionally demonstrated in fathers giving in or giving up in certain situations when expectations were not followed-through with and limits were not adhered to. When asked about certain routines during the day, some fathers also admitted that the structure was less than what they would like. In addition, this father suggested that the problem was not "bad":

> Father: Well usually it's not bad. We used to try to do the time thing but, it kind of fell in the water.
> Interviewer: Like a set amount of time you mean?
> Father: Yeah we used to do an hour a day.
> Interviewer: Okay.

> Father: But that kind of went in the water, just because it did. All the kids, that's what they're doing all the time, all the time. I mean we even sometimes... I always get disappointed when we go on a road trip and everybody's doing their own, but the older ones are doing it too. Like [Mom] will say, "I'm on my computer." How do I tell him to get off his, right?

Lack of consistency or "playing it by ear" was another response among fathers, as was demonstrated by the following quotation. Families with older siblings with different rules could have changed what consistent structure looked like in the family:

> F: So we'll be consistent if we notice it's an issue, but we're not consistent with taking away all the electronics at bedtime. It's just if we notice if one of them is having an issue, we might do that for a few weeks. Then if it doesn't seem to be an issue we let it slide back in…
> I: So depending on if it comes back up, that kind of thing…
> F: So, obviously if we found him playing on his iPod under the sheets at 11 o'clock at night every night, well, we'll be finding his iPod every night and making sure we had it. [...] Um so, [Sibling] it's more... if she doesn't have anything to do, it's more I'll find her flopped in her bed watching a movie, TV. So [we] just kind of turn it off. But again, we don't have a hard, fast rule. It's more uh, generally we don't, generally during the week, there's not a lot of TV during the week. On the weekends, they have generally a lot of activities so…
> I: And just playing it by ear and figuring it out as you go…
> F: So yeah, general policy was no TV during the week because they are busy with homework and other stuff. But as they age, it slips a bit more, and they become more independent, and unfortunately that mixes it up for [Child's name] a bit so…that's about it.

Some fathers described how they assisted their children in certain activities and provided scaffolding for the child to develop additional skills and achieve incremental success. Fathers and children shared how they engaged in teamwork or how fathers provided positive feedback to promote skill development. When discussing how they would handle it if their child did not like food at the table, some fathers encouraged children when trying new foods: "When they try it, you try to celebrate with them, and even if they didn't like it, you celebrate the fact that they tried it, that's about all you can do." Other fathers talked about helping out with homework and encouraging their child's academic strengths. When discussing nightly reading, one father said:

> Reading's not a big problem. We love reading together, both ways: I read with her or for her, she reads for me. It works well, French and English. And what's fun in French, there's some words I don't know, so I'll ask her, and it's pretty cool. She knows the word, I like to play that up.

Fathers' responses demonstrated a range of responses from low structure to high levels of structure. Fathers discussed a variety of parenting behaviours such as limit setting, scaffolding, positive reinforcement, and teamwork in their engagement with everyday activities with their children. Importantly, the above excerpts suggested that many fathers in the current sample were actively engaged with the families' daily events.

Children's responses. Many children were also clear on the expectations of certain rules in the home and were able to give detailed descriptions of their evenings or routines. For instance, when asked what his father would say or do when it was time to do chores, one child shared: "[Dad] says, 'When you get home make sure you know what to do.' [I: And how do you know what to do?] C: We remember, and sometimes they put down a list." Similarly, another child described his after-school routine in detail:

> I'll do my math, and then I sometimes do my reading and my writing. But for now, I just do my math, because I usually don't have a lot of time because we have to have a bath or shower. When my dad's home late, we have supper at that time, then we get a bath, or shower. And we usually stay in the bath for a couple minutes, 10 minutes, then it's usually, like, 7 o'clock, and, like, I mean we have to, like, get dressed into our pyjamas. And then I would just brush my hair in my bathroom, because I'd want to see if I got it all straight enough, and I usually just brush my bangs off to the side a bit. And I usually just do my homework, have a snack, a really quick snack, and then just go to bed.

Children also described times where there was a lack of structure, expected routines, or consistency in implementing the rules. When one child was asked about rules regarding technology use, the child denied any rules implemented by his father: "C: I can play whatever I want." Furthermore, some children described their father "forgetting" or not pursuing the initial request to follow through on a particular chore:

> Child: Like he would say, "[Child's name] you don't do anything around the house." So I would say, "Okay, I'll do it if I can get an allowance," and I'll give him a price. And he'll be like, "Fine."
> Interviewer: And what would happen if you don't do it?
> Child: If I don't do my chores? Half the time, I think he would forget, and the other half he would tell me to do it.

Similarly, the following quotation demonstrates what might happen if the father "gave up" and did not maintain consistent expectations or follow through with requests. This child was asked what his father would say or do if it was time to complete his chores:

> C: "Come clean your room."
> I: Mmhmm, and then what happens?
> C: Then I don't usually go and clean my room.
> I: No?
> C: I say, "How about tomorrow?" and then I don't usually do it tomorrow.
> I: What does your dad usually say about that?
> C: Then he says, "Fine I'll clean your room."

In contrast, children also described instances where they did what their father wanted them to do regarding helping out with family chores, such as helping with groceries.

> C: Can you carry this? Um, if he has two bags, he will give me one, and if it's too heavy, he will try to find one that's lighter for me to carry.
> I: And what if you didn't want to do it? What if you were like, "No I don't want to!" What would he say or do?
> C: I don't do that so…
> I: You don't do that, so usually you help out?
> C: Yeah.

Some children perceived their fathers as monitoring their behaviours and activities, such as completing homework or their use of technology. Fathers and children described monitoring efforts such as having computers in shared spaces in the house or designating certain time blocks that could be used for Internet searches. These monitoring behaviours also occurred without being intrusive, which some fathers described as challenging. Children described how fathers engaged themselves with the homework process: "He would, he would normally ask me do I have any homework, and if I said no he would look through my backpack." Conversely, some

children described low monitoring due to their father not being home. For example, "He's at work, so it's usually me by myself doing my work so, not much."

Children's responses demonstrated that they were often aware of rules in the home or where they perceived less structure. Children reported times when their fathers "gave up" or "gave in" to their children's demands or attempts to avoid compliance. However, children still described a variety of experiences regarding fathers' involvement in the monitoring, limit-setting, and structure in the home.

Negative control. Negative control parenting describes behaviours that engage in excessive regulation of the child's behaviours, thoughts, or feelings. For the present study, negative control was defined as being rejecting (e.g., sarcasm, harsh criticism), withdrawing love (e.g., conditional love), limiting expression (e.g., parent-led solutions, coerciveness), or directiveness/intrusiveness (e.g., commanding child, threats, nagging) (e.g., Kunz & Grych, 2007). When negative control occurred, it was more subtle than stereotypical controlling behaviours, such as physical punishment. In fact, the "withdrawing love" type of negative control was extremely rare and "limiting expression" was relatively infrequent across both father and child interviews.

Fathers' responses. Some fathers described particular ideas about how their child should think or act. Some harsh language was used when children and fathers were in conflict. One father described his reaction when his son did not want to play hockey due to the child's perceived performance:

> It's during sports, he plays hockey, you know, "I suck, I'm not a good goalie, the kids don't like me, they make fun of me, I'm an idiot, I'm a shitty goalie", he talks like that. I'm like, "You know what? I don't want to hear this; the fact of the matter is you're defeating yourself, you're beating yourself up for no reason, what are you trying to do? You are trying to enjoy playing this sport, being with your friends, and having a good time? Or you're beating yourself up and you're not enjoying what

> you're doing, so why are you playing? Then your mother and I will donate all the equipment we bought you to someone who wants to play, you know?"

Similarly

> And when playing sports, he's very hard on himself, and when he doesn't do well he wants to quit. I tell him, "Look, you know our last name is [S], [S]'s don't quit. The worst thing you can do is give up. That's the wrong attitude, that's a loser attitude, and you always tell me you're not a loser. Even if you're not enjoying it anymore, you made the commitment; you have to see it through [...] and if next time it's not something you're going to see through, then don't commit to it.

More subtle versions of negative control, directiveness and intrusiveness were also evident in the interviews. Directiveness included any commanding of the child, making threats, imposing overly harsh consequences, or using power assertion for compliance as the ultimate goal. Intrusiveness was demonstrated when fathers asked too many questions of their child or nagged them. In a rare instance, a father described punishments following noncompliance: "If she has a meltdown then, well she ends up in the garage, and locked away in there until she's ready to start cooperating" Alternatively, alternative approaches were discussed occasionally, for example when the child was immersed in his technology: "He wasn't listening with his phone, [he] sort of flipped me off. [I] just happened to have something that looked like a phone, [I] brought it out back, and smashed it with a hammer. And the compliance that came from that was phenomenal."

Other fathers described using raised voices, a more stern tone of voice, or strong language to indicate the seriousness of the request or to share their frustration. When one father was asked what he would say or do to get his child off technology, he suggested that raised voices were commonplace in the home:

> And, we have to get angry, raise our voices, "[Child's name] turn that off now, or I'm going to take it, and I'm going to throw it in the garbage!" I don't know how many times I've said that throughout the year: "I'm going to break it, I'm going to

> throw it in the garbage, I'm going to confiscate it, you're going to lose it." It gets to that point to get him off of the electronics.

Fathers also used strong language as an effective strategy to gain compliance at dinnertime:

> Getting him at the table is sometimes difficult. He likes to say he's not hungry or he's got something to do, so basically – not always, but sometimes, we have to say, "Dinner's being served now, get your ass to the table." That's how we have to talk to him sometimes, and he gets annoyed. But the fact of the matter is, he knows how important I find that time of the day.

Some fathers articulated how they used consequences to gain their children's cooperation. "Uh if... the only thing I threaten to punish him with is taking away his iPad and his electronic games. That's the main – only thing I use."

Fathers also described nagging their children to get them to comply. Some fathers indicated that repeatedly asking their child was necessary, while others suggested that it did not work, and yet they continued to try this method. The many examples of repetitive requests in the data; was coded negative control due to the intrusiveness of the behaviour, particularly when it is unsuccessful. When asked what bedtime looked like with his child, one father described a nightly ritual of nagging:

> F: "It's time to go to bed," 10 times, before it actually happens. Oh my God, every night, it's just me repeating and repeating, so it usually drags. In our household, unfortunately, they always go to bed very late. I hear kids in families go to bed at 7... that never happened in my house. They were like 3 years old or 2, I can't remember, and they always went to bed at 9 or later. So it's a constant battle, basically. "Come on guys let's go, let's go," before you know it, it's 9:30, 10 o'clock, even on a school night. That's pretty much it... it's just repeating and getting them going and…
> I: So it sounds like you get resistance every night.
> F: Oh God yeah. All the time.

Other fathers were aware that the technique of nagging could "wear down" their child to agreement or compliance:

> He's a pretty tough one ... he doesn't really respond to discipline very well. So [Child], I mean, he kind of has an expectation, he's a 10-year-old. You just have to

> use attrition, keep asking over and over and over and over again kind of thing. He's not exactly a go-getter.

It was clear in the data that fathers' perspectives on their negative control behaviours tended to be subtler, and some excerpts above might be interpreted differently with a different tone of voice. Fathers rarely described overtly harsh responses to follow through on punishment. In summary, it appeared that fathers in the current study utilized common methods of parenting (e.g., nagging, threats) that many parents likely use, even in the face of the knowledge that it was not an effective strategy.

Children's responses. Children perceived fathers using negative control when they negated their child's emotions, tried to change how they felt about something, or put their child down. This child explained how his father attempted to help him with his math homework:

> Like he'll be like, "This times this equals this." And really, really fast... and then he'll be like, "And you figured it out by doing this, and this, and this and..." And then he'll probably like draw it on a piece paper, and I still wouldn't get it because he draws it way too complicated with a whole bunch of numbers everywhere. And then I would just be like, "I don't get it," and then he'll be like, "Well, why don't you get this? This is obvious."

Although this child did not articulate that they felt their feelings were negated or that their competence was in question, one might presume some negative effect on the parent-child relationship. Similarly, father themselves did not describe instances of withdrawing love from their child but one child described a situation where a consequence implemented by his father was removing positive parent-child time following noncompliance. While this was not coded as withdrawing love, it can be seen as using the father-child relationship as a source of punishment or reward:

> I: What happens if you don't pick up your toys?
> C: They usually take away something.
> I: Like what?

> C: Like maybe if that was at the end of the day, then he would say he wouldn't sing any songs to me.

When fathers engaged in limiting their children's expression, children reported fathers interrupting the child, being coercive with the child (e.g., bribing), or pushing parent-led solutions to resolve conflicts. When describing how dads would handle a problem at school, some children indicated their father's preferred way of solving an issue involved not asking their child for their perspective. The following excerpt showed a child's frustration with her father's way of solving a friend conflict at school:

> C: He would talk to the principal - to tell the principal. He'd probably tell my teacher. And he'd talk to the kid's parents. And I'm like, and that's why I only bring the most serious problems to him, because I'm like, "If you're gonna talk to the principal, the kid's parents, and my teacher, and his teacher!" Um...
> I: It's too much?
> C: I don't even know what to say!
> I: That's too much?
> C: Yeah!

Some children perceived their fathers as thinking they "know better" than them and described situations when a father might deny their child outright from attempting to independently solve a friend problem. For instance, when asked what the father would say or do if the child wanted to resolve an issue with a friend, one child stated, "He would tell me to listen to his advice and not go by myself." Similarly, another child perceived their father as letting them attempt to solve a problem by him or herself, but the child perceived the father as preferring his own solution. In response to the same question above, one child stated:

> C: He would say... He would let me do it, but he wouldn't be too happy about it, I think…
> I: How come?
> C: I think he won't be happy, because it might just happen again, and he wouldn't be that happy about it if that happens.
> I: So he would want to make sure that it's fixed the best way?
> C: Mmhmm.

Many of the children's reports of fathers' threats were typical, commonplace consequences, such as taking away technology or other privileges. Consequences that were coded as negative control rather than structure would be unnecessarily harsh or did not take into account the child's point of view. One father threatened to tell the teacher if homework was not being completed appropriately:

> C: He would say, "You need to do your homework, or I'll e-mail your teacher and say you didn't do your homework."
> I: Uh oh. That doesn't seem very good does it?
> C: Then I'll do it.
> I: Then you'll do it. That will kind of force you to do it, eh?

Children also shared their memories of their father using a raised tone of voice, which mirrored some fathers' reports:

> C: Well sometimes at breakfast I really don't feel like eating, but my dad forces me to eat.
> I: How does he force you to eat?
> C: Well he just like puts it in front of me and like, sometimes if he gets really mad he like yells at me, then after I do.

One child described a physical method of gaining compliance. The following is an excerpt from a child who reported what his father would say or do if he wanted the child to go out and play instead of watching television:

> C: Yeah, I don't play a lot, but sometimes I watch TV a lot, and sometimes my dad gets mad and tells me to go outside or come and play at the park with him. So he like takes, he like hides the remotes, or my mom does. Most of the time my mom hides the Xbox remotes.
> I: Oh so you can't even play. So what if you're already playing it, what happens? What does your dad say?
> C: If I am already playing, my mom or dad says, like, sometimes he like drags me outside, or like unplugs the remote from the TV or takes them away, but mostly my mom takes them away, mostly my dad drags me outside.
> I: He'll just force you outside or whatever right? Well you're lucky because you're close to the park too.
> C: Yeah.
> I: So what happens if you really didn't want to turn it off, you wanted to keep

> playing?
> C: Well if I really didn't, I'd like, try to stay, but he'd like force me and drag me and I'd get like really mad.

In summary, children's responses demonstrated an array of examples of how they perceived their fathers engaging in negative control parenting behaviours. Children perceived their fathers yelling or using a harsh tone of voice beyond being stern. Children also reported instances of punishment, threats, and physical action (e.g., dragging) in order to obtain compliance, as well as frequent instances of being directive or intrusive. Interview data also depicted instances when children perceived parents as being closed to their children's perspectives.

Autonomy support. Autonomy support fosters a child's independence and considers the child as an active member of the family. Methods of engaging in autonomy support include considering the child's emotions, feelings and opinions, negotiating, engaging in joint problem-solving, providing justifications or discussing a situation, and providing suggestions or choices as to the desired action (e.g., Kunz & Grych, 2007). Fathers who used autonomy support in the current study attempted to make certain undesirable tasks more enjoyable, which took into account the child's developmental level or interests.

Fathers' responses. Fathers engaged in a variety of autonomy supportive behaviours with their children. Instances when fathers encouraged their child to independently solve problems were coded as autonomy support. When asked about how he handled a problem at the child's school, this father did not impose his ideas on his child:

> I try to encourage him to come up with his own way. I mean a common phrase I tell him is, "You can't control how others treat you, but you can control how you react to it. And how others treat you is not a reflection of who you are, but rather how you handle a situation and how you react." And I encourage him. But yeah, as they get older we're trying to get them to resolve their own issues and come up with their own solutions. And that happens even with the kids [here at home] as they fight. Rather

> than me stepping in like, okay, talk about it, and come up with a solution, and then come back and see me, so it works well.

Fathers also described moments when they allowed their child to make certain decisions on their own. When discussing how his child dealt with a conflict with classmates, this father appeared to trust his child's decision on how to solve it:

> I think that reminds me, there's a boy recently that he's been aggressive, and [Child] actually steps in for his friends here, because these boys are too rough. He'll go up to them and say, "You have an anger problem, stop it." Like he will step up and speak up and [Child] says, "Daddy I'm not sure I'll be able to be his friend anymore." And I say, "Fine, that's – you do what you need to do. If you feel like he's been mean to you or anybody else, then he'll have to come around."

When considering their child's perspective, some fathers reflected on their experiences with their own parents and about practices they may have disagreed with. One father discussed how he tried to understand his child's perspective and interests. When asked what he would say or do if his child did not want to eat some food at dinner, one father stated:

> It depends on the day, you know. It depends on her mood. I'm not going to force it. Um, I was forced to do that as a kid, and I resented it. I still feel it to this day [laughter], and the last thing that I want is my kids to worry about different kinds of foods. So if they feel that they don't want to try something, ok, fine. We've got a whole lifetime, it's okay.

One aspect of the definition of autonomy support includes an understanding of what the child is capable of and encouraging independent work. One father described how he encouraged his child to be responsible for his own schoolwork:

> His mom and I made a conscious effort starting in about grade 4 to not meddle at all in his schoolwork. And we essentially let him know that if he has any questions he can come to us, but we don't actually sit down and look at what's due; When do you have to do this? We try to shift the responsibility to him because we think he's capable of handling it, and that's worked well. So sometimes he comes and he gets all excited about some science problem or some math problem and wants my opinion, and we'll discuss it. Or he reads this great book and he wants to tell us about it, so we are happy to. I'm happy to sit and listen and give him my perspective, but we don't handhold.

Similarly, another father described how he considered the child's age or developmental level in choosing certain parenting strategies:

> F: What we were trying one moment is we had points, a paper. We had a line – if you do the dishwasher, if you empty lunchbox, everything, there was some system of points we were keeping up. So if he was doing it, then 2 points, and at the end we rewarded him by watching a bit more TV or doing something else.
> I: And does he like that system? Is he able to follow it?
> F: It was good to start. Now we took it out. We tried to say not anymore – in the end it was no more points. It was more like when he was…
> I: When he was younger…
> F: Yeah it was between like 6 and 8.

Another element of autonomy support involves joint problem-solving, where the father and child talk out the situation at hand to find a plausible solution, rather than the father instructing the child on how to proceed. This father's account demonstrated a combination of discussion and considering the child's perspective:

> Well she typically has... you ask, "Well have you tried this?" "Yes I have." Or we ask her, "Well what have you done?" And, "Well I told them I didn't want to do that anymore." And you see what steps she's taken rather than just telling her what to do. You know what have you done, what steps did you take, did it work or no it didn't, what do you think you could do next time, or what's the next step you can take next time. Get her thinking about it. Very rarely do we say, "We'll fix that for ya." Well no, wait a minute, you have to deal with that stuff. This is life.

Negotiation between fathers and children involves give-and-take, where each member of the party receives something they wanted. Negotiation was a common strategy with both fathers and children. This father described a typical negotiation that was a frequent theme throughout the interviews:

> Most of the time, if you lay it out for [her]: Here's how we want to do it, and here's our plan, she's most of the time pretty good. And if she wants to put in her two cents, how things... how she thinks things should go, we'll listen to that, and we'll negotiate and go from there.

Fathers sometimes described that children would delay complying for requests. For instance, one father indicated that his child followed through with a request after a short period of delay in order to finish what the child was doing:

> He reacts very well. It depends on what it is. If it's something he's already done before, he usually will do it. Or if he's doing something else he'll say, "Oh Dad, I've got to do this. I'm just letting you know I'll do it in a few minutes" or something.

In many of the father-child relationships represented in the data, discussion was another common theme. Discussion was either in the form of talking through a situation or talking about other people's perspectives or experiences. In addition, many fathers resorted to explanations or justifications to elaborate on why certain tasks were required by the child or to explain the consequences of a particular action. Providing explanations and justifications were frequently coded examples of encouraging autonomy. One father discussed the chores his child needed to complete and reasons why they were important.

> I would basically give him a logical reason as to why. For instance, if we take the cat litter, I'd say well, "The cat needs to do her business. If you don't clean her litter, she won't be able to you know... that's going to cause the cat discomfort, and you know. And therefore you're not caring for the cat - we're not caring for the cat well. [...] So I need you to take care of that so that the cat is good, you know, can do what she needs to do."

One method of convincing a child to do an undesired behaviour (e.g., turning off technology) was with a friendly request and an offer of an alternative, pleasurable activity, rather than resorting to demanding the child to comply. This father described suggesting activities he could do with his child as a motivator to turn off the electronics:

> I'd like that the conversation would be less... Not so much just, "Get off the iPad" or, "Get off the PS3," but give them an alternate activity. It's not just, "Stop what you're doing" or, "Just the thought of you being on your iPad is bugging me." I'd rather it not be a scolding, but more of a, "OK, let's stop this now, and let's all go up, take a walk to the park" or, "Let's go walk up the street for a Slurpee or something." So that it's not just, "You have to stop doing what you're doing because I told you to" but, "Let's do something else."

Fathers reported a number of autonomy supportive parenting behaviours in the current study. They discussed providing their children with options for compliance, engaging in frequent discussions and explanations regarding everyday situations, and negotiation to promote their children's follow through. Finally, fathers also encouraged independent thinking and problem-solving, with some fathers recognizing that this helps children develop important skills for the future.

Children's responses. Children's responses were surprisingly similar and represented many of the same parenting techniques as the fathers' reported. Children often discussed how fathers would check in with them, which demonstrated a way of validating their experiences or emotions. For example, when one child was asked about what his father would say or do if problems with friends occurred, he responded, "Well, he'd probably ask me how I'm feeling or something."

The process of negotiation gave the child a voice and provided an opportunity for children to have a say in certain aspects of family functioning. Children often began the negotiation process following a request from fathers to do something. For instance, one child tried to delay her bedtime, using some explanation to convince her father to let her stay up later:

> C: Like on a weekend if I have nothing early in the morning, then I might like uh, just tell him, "Can I just stay up for another tiny bit because I have nothing in the morning and I can sleep all day basically?" And if he says no then like, then I'll go just go to bed.
> I: Would he usually say no to that or yes?
> C: Uh I probably usually get another like 10 minutes.

In certain described instances, children attempted to avoid complying with a request. Following this attempt, some children indicated that their father tried to negotiate with the child. In the following example, the child recounted how her father encouraged her to try new foods:

> C: Um he'd probably like, tell me to... I'd probably tell him like, "Dad can I not eat this?" or something. And then he'd probably say like, "Yeah," or, "You have to try something like 10 times to see if you like it or not."
> I: Mm, and would you usually try…
> C: And I'd try like a little nibble.

Children often recognized that their fathers used justifications to explain why they were requesting a particular action. This occurred when fathers explained why the child needed to go to sleep, why they needed to eat certain foods, or why homework needed to be completed. One child stated, "Well he will just like, tell me you have to go to bed because you'll be tired tomorrow."

Children also perceived fathers asking them to complete tasks, suggesting proper actions, or providing their child with choices. This was typically done with gentle or collaborative language and frequently allowed the child some degree of choice in how to comply with the father's request. When a child was asked what would happen if the child wanted to have a later bedtime, the child described what her father would say, "Don't stay up too late. You should go to bed now, lights off."

Suggestions of alternative behaviours were somewhat common and seemed to foster compliance. Children reported that fathers suggested different activities, which allowed the child to consider what else he or she could do, rather than outright refusing to follow through on a request. For instance, when asked to go outside to play, one child described how fathers would make it seem like a pleasurable activity, rather than denying them electronics: "He would tell me it's not good for me if I stay too long on the iPad, and he would give me a goal to do outside, like for example, beat my juggling record in soccer, something like that." Finally, another child described a similar situation with multiple alternative solutions: " He would like put some

examples down, like we could go bike riding, play in the backyard, invite a friend over, but do something active instead of playing on our electronics."

Essentially, fathers and children gave a variety of responses that illustrated multiple parenting behaviours with their children. Participants described examples in their daily activities relating to structure, negative control, and autonomy support with a range of experiences and perspectives across fathers and children. The preceding descriptions of the data provide an important window into the daily activities and interactions of fathers and children in middle childhood. What follows is a discussion of the results in light of research in the area of fathers and parenting.

Discussion

The overarching goal of this dissertation was to gain insight into the types of parenting behaviours in which fathers engage with their children in middle childhood and what parenting behaviours are predictive of children's functioning. I investigated these issues by asking fathers and children about what typically happens during everyday situations. In line with my hypotheses, fathers' perceptions of autonomy support predicted decreased externalizing behaviours and increased adaptive behaviours. However, I did not find significant results regarding my other hypotheses. Overall, fathers endorsed some similar parenting behaviours as have been seen in the literature on mothers. Furthermore, results suggested that fathers' parenting behaviours can influence children's functioning. I will also discuss the implications of this study, limitations, and future directions of research.

Consistency of Fathers' and Children's Reports

Possible relationships exist between fathers' and children's perceptions of parenting, which might have implications for children's outcomes. This study found that children's and

fathers' perceptions of structure and autonomy supportive parenting behaviours were congruent, somewhat contrary to the research available on mothers. In fact, mothers' perceptions are sometimes inconsistent with children's perceptions of parenting, with objective observers' reports of parenting behaviours found to be most similar to children's perceptions of parenting (Sessa et al., 2001). For example, Kuppens and colleagues (2009) found that mothers', fathers', and their 8- to 10-year-old children's ratings of parenting behaviours were related but had unique components, with weak relationships evident between both parents' and children's perceptions of psychological control and small correlations for parents' and children's perceptions of behavioural control (i.e., structure) and support. Therefore, my study's significant, moderate correlation between fathers' and children's perceptions of structure and autonomy support is relatively consistent with the literature except for the slightly greater strength in association in the current study. Moreover, it might be that when children's perceptions of their parents' parenting behaviours are more consistent with those of their parents, they tend to have better overall outcomes in adjustment. For example, Gaylord and colleagues found that the greater the discrepancy between fathers' and children's reports of parental control and mothers' and children's reports of discipline, the more internalizing behaviours children displayed (Gaylord, Kitzmann, & Coleman, 2003). The implications of congruent perspectives in the parent-child relationships remain an important consideration when working with potentially disorganized parent-child dyads in clinical settings, where parents and children members have difficulty seeing eye-to-eye. Furthermore, results from this study suggest that self-reports remain valuable sources of information; however, obtaining reports from different informants within the parent-child relationship is a critical component to accessing various perceptions of experiences.

Importantly, parents' and school age children's perceptions of parenting behaviours have been found to make unique contributions to the prediction of children's outcomes. For instance, Gaylord and colleagues (2003) found children's perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' use of discipline did not predict children's functioning, while both parents' perceptions of their use of discipline predicted internalizing and externalizing behaviours. In addition, children's reports of their mothers and fathers' perceptions of discipline were predictive of peer acceptance, while parents' perceptions were not . Similarly, this study's results demonstrated that fathers' perceptions (and not children's perceptions) of their use of autonomy support was predictive of both greater adaptive skills and decreased externalizing behaviours, suggesting unique contributions to children's functioning depending on the informant.

Fathers' Autonomy Support

In the current study, fathers' perceptions of autonomy predicted more adaptive behaviours and fewer externalizing behaviours in children, consistent with findings in the literature. For instance, an observational study with children in Grade 4 looked at mothers' and fathers' warmth, limit-setting (i.e., structure), and psychological autonomy (i.e., autonomy support) toward their children during a variety of tasks (Mattanah, 2001). In this case, fathers' use of autonomy was associated with adaptive outcomes in their children over and above their use of warmth and limit-setting (i.e., structure; Mattanah, 2001), which is exactly in line with the current study. Furthermore, using questionnaires to investigate parenting behaviours and children's outcomes in toddlers, fathers' authoritative parenting (i.e., high control, high warmth) was associated with more adaptive behaviours and fewer externalizing behaviours in the toddlers (Rinaldi & Howe, 2012). Finally, Kunz and Grych (2013) also found that autonomy supportive behaviours by both parents were related to fewer externalizing behaviours in Grade 5 to 6

children. Therefore, it appears that fathers' perceptions of using autonomy support is an important factor in influencing children's adaptive and externalizing behaviours. The results of the current study suggest that fathers play an important role in child-rearing and caretaking in a variety of situations.

Results of this study suggest that perceptions of parenting behaviours can have important implications for children's functioning, both at home and in school. In fact, the relationship between parental autonomy support and adjustment in school (i.e., a combination of low externalizing behaviours and high adaptive behaviours) begins to form when children are in middle childhood rather than in kindergarten (Joussemet et al., 2005). Children's perceptions of supportive parenting (i.e., structure and autonomy) predicted teacher's reports of children's lower externalizing behaviours (Gaylord et al., 2003). Similarly, others have found that fathers' support for autonomy predicted fewer problem behaviours as perceived by a classroom teacher (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2004). The current study's findings are important given theories that fathers may contribute more significantly to children's functioning outside of the home environment (i.e., school) compared to mothers (Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000). As such, this study's findings with fathers are congruent with much of the existing literature on maternal parenting behaviours, suggesting that fathers' and mothers' parenting behaviours could potentially be conceptualized in similar ways, while still contributing unique outcomes to children's development (Fagan, Day, Lamb, & Cabrera, 2014).

Fathers' Negative Control and Structure

Surprisingly, fathers' or children's perceptions of negative control were not related to or predictive of children's behavioural outcomes in this study; notably, most fathers did not report great amounts of negative control. It is likely that the study lacked the power necessary to predict

these outcomes, paired with the fact that the children in the collected sample were relatively well-adjusted and ratings of negative control were not particularly high. The lack of significant findings was unexpected due to the vast amount of existing literature demonstrating that parenting that involves negative control is associated with more problematic functioning in children. For instance, fathers' negative emotionality predicted increased externalizing behaviours in children (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2004). Furthermore, child behaviour dysregulation mediated the relationship between fathers' intrusiveness (i.e., negative control) and children's poor social skills in preschoolers with developmental disabilities (Stevenson & Crnic, 2013). Higher levels of fathers' parental structure and lower levels of negative control (e.g., frequency of commands) were related to decreased externalizing behaviours in preschoolers; similarly, fewer commands by fathers were related to fewer internalizing behaviours in children (Herbert, Harvey, Lugo-Candelas, & Breaux, 2012). Additionally, in a sample of Chinese fathers and children in late middle childhood, overly controlling behaviours by the father were related to a number of adjustment problems in children when coupled with fewer caring behaviours in the relationship (Yin, Li, & Su, 2012). Others have found that mothers who use high levels of psychological control (i.e., negative control) with high behavioural control (i.e., structure) have children with high internalizing and externalizing problems (Caron, Weiss, Harris, & Catron, 2006). Ultimately, much of the literature suggests that fathers' negative control behaviours are likely to have negative effects on children's adjustment, which is contrary to the nonsignificant findings of this study.

It is notable that most of the children in the collected sample rated themselves as having a secure attachment with their father. Additionally, the vast majority of children fell in the average range for the externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours. Therefore, the lack of

findings in the current study may be most reflective of relatively well-adjusted children. Further, the current study did not find any relationship between fathers' use of structure and children's behavioural functioning. Behavioural control (i.e., structure) by parents predicted lower levels of externalizing behaviours and higher levels of internalizing behaviours in their children, similar to findings of Caron and colleagues (2006). As mentioned, parental structure was also associated with fewer externalizing and internalizing behaviours in preschoolers (Herbert et al., 2012). Overall, a number of studies have found that positive father involvement and feeling close to their father leads to a number of positive outcomes in children, including fewer internalizing behaviours, fewer externalizing behaviours, greater persistence and problem-solving, and better performance in school, among other outcomes (for a review, see Allen, Daly, & Ball, 2012). This study did not find any relationships between children's and fathers' perceptions of parental structure and children's externalizing, internalizing, or adaptive behaviours, suggesting that these concepts were not related in the present sample.

Child Age Differences

Contrary to expectations, I found no significant differences in parenting behaviours reported by participants or children's outcomes in functioning between early (ages 5-8) and late middle childhood (ages 9-12). This was unexpected due to theories describing developmental changes during middle childhood, particularly with the larger age gap of children obtained in the study. Nonsignificant differences in children's perceptions of parenting behaviours between the two age groups might suggest that parents may use similar strategies regardless of age. Additionally, it is possible that structure, negative control, and autonomy support are used consistently during middle childhood, but that other qualitative differences may exist in how

these strategies are implemented or are perceived by younger or older children, issues which were not determined in this study.

Overall, it was expected that parenting behaviours would change with the children's ages. Throughout middle childhood, children develop additional cognitive skills or self-regulatory strategies; therefore, one might expect different outcomes in behavioural functioning at early versus later stages of middle childhood (Collins et al., 2002). During the school-age years, steady, incremental development occurs in areas such as engagement in more complex reasoning and language, more sophisticated relationship-building with peers, and greater independence as children get closer to adolescence (Borland et al., 1998; Boyd & Bee, 2009; Palermo, 1984; Zembar & Blume, 2009). Furthermore, longitudinal studies have compared developmental differences, parenting differences, and variations in family interactions in middle childhood and adolescence (e.g., Shanahan, McHale, Crouter, & Osgood, 2007). As such, it is realistic to expect differences in behavioural functioning throughout the childhood years, although less research has been conducted investigating differences between early and late middle childhood, despite considerable developmental variability between 5 and 12 years old.

Some differences in parent-child interactions change with age, particularly between middle childhood and adolescence; however, few studies have compared different age groups within middle childhood. Therefore, although this study did not find significant differences between age groups, it still adds data to the existing literature in the area; perhaps there is something unique about the collected sample that leads to perceptions of parenting behaviours being consistent across age groups. Shanahan and colleagues (2007a) found that paternal warmth toward children tends to decrease between the ages of 8 and 16, given difficult developmental shifts in the transition to adolescence. Additionally, the same researchers reported that father-

child conflict tended to increase in early adolescence (i.e., around age 13) for first-born children (Shanahan, McHale, Osgood, & Crouter, 2007). A longitudinal study investigating parenting behaviours and children's externalizing behaviours found that fathers' proactive parenting was associated with fewer externalizing behaviours at age 7 (Denham et al., 2000). However, at age 9, fathers' anger was associated with children's externalizing behaviours, whereas fathers' happiness was unrelated to children's outcomes (Denham et al., 2000). These results suggest that the associations between some parenting behaviours and some children's outcomes might change over time. Other researchers have demonstrated that the relationship between mothers' and fathers' parenting and attachment was stronger in older middle childhood, particularly with monitoring behaviours, suggesting that parent-child relationships might look different at different age groups in middle childhood (Kerns et al., 2001). Importantly, the literature comparing different age groups within middle childhood is scarce, but it is possible that parents in the current study maintained their parenting behaviours regardless of their child's age, at least in this sample.

Behavioural expectations often change throughout middle childhood. Although children begin to develop more mature reasoning or planning abilities, expectations for children also develop (Collins et al., 2002). Furthermore, children have increased cognitive abilities and greater ability to function socially with others, suggesting age would have an observable difference in children's overall functioning, which contradicts the current study's nonsignificant findings on this matter (Scales, 2014). Mothers' and adolescents' reports of autonomy in decision making increase in the adolescent years for many areas of life; however, parents' ability to relinquish control over decisions may depend on the situation (Daddis & Smetana, 2005; Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Daddis, 2004). For example, parents perceive children as having

more power making decisions within the personal (e.g., independence seeking) domain compared to matters of safety within the prudential domain (Della Porta & Howe, 2012). Importantly, research with mothers and children has demonstrated that mothers' reports of making conventional decisions (e.g., responsibility, chores, manners) changes very little throughout middle childhood to adolescence compared to other types of decisions, which is most consistent with my study's nonsignificant age differences (Smetana et al., 2004; Wray-Lake, Crouter, & McHale, 2010). The current study's scenarios were primarily within the conventional (e.g., responsibility) domain rather than personal or prudential domains, possibly explaining the lack of age differences for fathers' parenting behaviours and children's outcomes.

Father-Child Attachment

In my study, it was somewhat surprising to find that father-child attachment security was unrelated to structure and negative control, particularly based on the literature with mothers. Furthermore, father-child attachment did not change the relationship between children's perspectives of parenting behaviours and their behavioural outcomes, as hypothesized in the proposed moderation analysis. However, it is important to note that initial differences between the participants from the two recruitment sites found that father-child attachment was higher in the sample collected in Edmonton compared to from the sample collected in Montreal, which could have added a spurious relationship that interfered with finding significant results. Attachment literature, particularly with mothers, indicates that a secure attachment leads to more positive outcomes in children. Parental monitoring of children in Grades 3 and 6 (and similarly, children who cooperate with their parents' monitoring behaviours) were related to more secure attachment between the child and their mother or father (Kerns et al., 2001). Additionally, secure attachment between parents and children has been related to closer parental monitoring (e.g., a

type of structure), cooperation in children, greater problem-solving skills, and more positive lifestyles (e.g., Kerns et al., 2001; Ranson & Urichuk, 2008). Alternatively, an insecure attachment can exacerbate behavioural functioning (e.g., internalizing behaviours) depending on certain individual characteristics of the child (Al-Yagon, 2014). Similarly, research on Israeli children and their families demonstrated that, beyond five years old, mother-child attachment is more strongly predictive of several elements of behavioural functioning (Sagi-Schwartz & Aviezer, 2005). Notably, father-child attachment has a short and inconsistent history in the research thus far. Since my study did not find that attachment moderated the association between perceptions of parenting behaviours and children's behavioural functioning, this could add to the literature that father-child attachment has a different relationship with aspects of the parent-child relationship. This suggests that although the father-child relationship is important for early interactions, the exact nature of the effect of attachment security remains unknown.

Over the years, research in attachment indicates that secure attachment is related to a number of different positive childhood outcomes, such as self-regulation and children's understanding aspects of their relationships with their parents (Bosman & Kerns, 2015). For example, attachment scores (i.e., more securely attached children to their fathers) increased as father reporting of autonomy support increased, suggesting that a secure attachment and the use of autonomy support as a parenting strategy are related in some way (Bosman & Kerns, 2015). In addition, a securely attached infant is more likely to explore his or her environment, as they refer back to their caregiver as a safe base (e.g., Bowlby, 1969). Arguably, allowing exploration can be similar to a parent supporting the school-aged child's autonomy, as the parent fosters their child's independence in the world, and this is particularly true for fathers (Bretherton, 2010). Similarly, caring actions by parents within secure relationships might encourage children to

voice their own opinions and feelings, a core component of autonomy support (Bosman & Kerns, 2015).

Early on in parenting research, researchers recognized that fathers form attachment bonds with their children in an important way, although the mother was preferred as an attachment figure in the vast majority of cases (Bretherton, 2010). Despite these early findings, however, there is a paucity of research on father-child attachment, particularly in middle childhood. Furthermore, inconsistent findings exist for father-child attachment insecurity and internalizing and externalizing behaviours in children, with many studies finding small or non-existent relationships, similar to the current study (for a review, see Moss & Lecompte, 2015). For example, a mixed observational-questionnaire study with toddlers and their fathers found that fathers' parenting quality did not have any direct associations with attachment security; however, parenting quality moderated the relationship between attachment security and father involvement (Brown et al., 2007). Moreover, both amount and quality of father involvement might be related to father-child attachment security (e.g., Brown et al., 2007; Caldera, 2004). For instance, when parenting quality was low, greater father involvement with their toddlers was negatively associated with attachment security, while parenting quality had no effect on the relationship between father involvement and attachment security when quality was high (Brown et al., 2007). Similarly, father engagement in caregiving was related to attachment security between father and the infant (Caldera, 2004). However, Caldera (2004) also found that father engagement in other activities (e.g., play/reading, shared responsibility, and nurturing attitudes) was unrelated to father-infant attachment. Notably, the current study did not investigate fathers' sensitivity or engagement specifically, which can impact the predictive nature of father-child attachment security. In addition, as previously mentioned, few children had low scores on the attachment

measure. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the father-child attachment literature suggests that complex factors are at play, which are not yet well understood.

Fathers in middle childhood seem to have an especially important role in serving as the child's secure base from which the school-aged child can explore his environment safely and develop independence (Bretherton, 2010). Some early research with fathers and the *Adult Attachment Interview* suggested attachment styles that were distinct from mothers' (Bretherton, 2010). In fact, a meta-analysis by van IJzendoorn and De Wolff (1997) indicated that 45% of children were secure with both parents, but 38% were insecure with one parent but secure with another (Bretherton, 2010). Taken together, these findings suggest that investigations on father-child attachment are still in their infancy. Importantly, father-child attachment may lead to unique behavioural outcomes compared to mother-child attachment, supporting the addition of fathers in parenting research.

Overall, very few studies have investigated father-child attachment and parenting quality or behaviours, and many questions still remain to be addressed (Brown et al., 2007). Furthermore, whether this difference is due to methodological differences or actual inherent relationship differences is unknown at this point, particularly since there is no agreed-upon method of measuring parent-child attachment in middle childhood (Bosman & Kerns, 2015). My study used a questionnaire, which is a method frequently used with middle childhood children (e.g., Kerns et al., 1996). Moreover, given the inconsistent results in the existing literature, my study's nonsignificant results might add to the literature that suggests that father-child attachment might have a unique association with children's outcomes compared to mother-child attachment.

Discussion of Descriptive Excerpts from the Interview Transcripts

The current study presented a number of excerpts from the transcripts obtained from fathers and children regarding their interactions during everyday activities. These excerpts were intended to provide a description of the richness of the data from the current study as well as to demonstrate the types of responses both fathers and children shared. In fact, one important strength of the methodology selected for this study (i.e., interviews) was that it allowed for greater discussion of the issues at hand, rather than restricting responses by way of questionnaires. Furthermore, interviews are the only way to access others' detailed *perceptions*. It is clear from the quotations outlined above that while there was a variety of responses from participants, common themes remained throughout. Responses above suggest that many fathers likely engage in similar parenting behaviours as mothers do, as shown in the literature to date (e.g., Saginak & Saginak, 2005).

Many of the fathers in the current study described their choice of parenting behaviours using "We", in other words, referring to both of the parents collaborating. Having this perspective suggests a more united front of agreed-upon parenting rules and strategies in the home, rather than each parent having different parenting approaches. The responses from fathers mirror much of the more recent research on mothers and fathers. Traditionally, fathers were seen to have a more simplistic role in parenting, such as time involved with child or their role as a breadwinner (for a review, see Pleck, 2012). However, recent research has indicated that mothers' and fathers' roles are converging and becoming more similar, particularly in more recent years (Fagan et al., 2014). For example, in one study a majority of Mexican-American fathers studied saw themselves as very involved in the parenting of their preschool children (Gamble, Ramakumar, & Diaz, 2007). Moreover, the emerging research on co-parenting and

greater equity in gender roles suggests that the fabric of our families is changing, particularly as mothers are more involved in fulltime work (e.g., Saginak & Saginak, 2005). The excerpts presented demonstrated that the fathers in this sample often described their parenting behaviours similar to mothers' parenting.

The excerpts from the transcripts illustrated a range of responses from children as young as 5 years old. Although children's answers tended to be shorter and significantly less detailed, a number of children's responses provided unique insight into their perceptions of their fathers' parenting strategies, which has implications for how fathers and their children interact. For instance, some children described situations where the father appeared to negate their opinions or the child did not feel his/her difficulties were understood, for example when the father was helping a child with homework. Some of the audio data contained harsher vocal tones in the descriptions of children and fathers, which may not come across with the sample intensity in written text; these tonal differences can change a child's interpretation of the intention of the fathers' words or actions. Regardless of the age of the child, a rich amount of data are available from the transcripts demonstrating unique and important information that can be gleaned from young children who are given the opportunity to share their perspectives.

Children's and fathers' responses, as illustrated in my study, bring to mind a number of important clinical implications. In clinical work with children, parents and other caregivers are a critical part of the progress of both the assessment and treatment of childhood problems (e.g., behavioural, academic). My interviews illustrate that fathers are becoming more equally involved in child rearing; therefore, a father is an important family member to include in work with children. Furthermore, fathers have unique insight into their role as a parent and their influence in the family unit. Additionally, my interviews with children emphasize the importance

of accessing children's perceptions of their daily experiences as part of assessment or treatment in a clinical setting. Regardless of the veracity of their responses, their interpretations of events can signal important implications for how they interact with family members or peers. Moreover, in practice, having knowledge about the strategies in which parents engage is important information for clinicians about how to address ongoing behavioural concerns. For instance, if a parent reported high amounts of negative control as well as high amounts of structure and autonomy support, family interventions might look different than for a parent who reported high negative control but low structure and autonomy support. Being able to access this information through interviews with parents is a critical clinical skill to develop. Overall, the excerpts from my transcripts offer unique perspectives on family interactions from two members of family who are often forgotten in parent-child research.

In working with the transcripts, the coding scheme used in this study helped to elucidate a number of themes that occurred in a variety of families. For instance, some fathers and children described daily routines and schedules that appeared laid out and clear, which were coded as evidence of "structure". In these moments, children often were able to recite how their homework or afterschool routine and expectations were clear. This approach provides predictability for children, creates limits for their behaviour, and provides consistent guidelines, which tend to lead to fewer behaviour problems and better overall adjustment (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009). Additionally, other participants shared moments when there was collaboration on a task or the parent provided prompting that was within the child's ability for follow-through. These parenting behaviours allow for immediate parental feedback for the internalizing of values (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009). Finally, low structure was seen in the transcripts as having few routines or expectations; for example, some parents described how they did not have rules for

technology use in the home. This was seen as a lack of structure due to the limited guidance children receive for their behaviours with this activity. Both fathers and children naturally discussed many elements of day-to-day structure that fathers typically implemented throughout the interviews.

Although aspects of negative control tended to be more difficult to code in the transcripts, fathers and children still discussed many aspects of negative parenting behaviours in subtler forms. It is possible that using an interview format may not have elicited as much of this strategy as originally hoped due to wanting to seem more positive or fathers feeling embarrassed to raise instances of negative parenting. For example, a common theme throughout the transcripts was the use of directiveness or intrusiveness in parenting behaviours. Children and fathers spoke frequently about nagging or threatening children with harsh consequences; these strategies were more focused on compliance without a regard for effectiveness or allowing a chance for the child to comply. Another common strategy was fathers creating and enacting parent-led solutions for the child's problems. While some children voiced their concerns to their father, some appeared exasperated while speaking with me, suggesting they were not happy with their father's solution. Subtle elements of negative control were obtained through interviews, although perhaps a combination of questionnaire and interview could have encouraged more frequent reporting of this behaviour; alternatively, my sample of parents could use this strategy less frequently than the population as a whole.

Autonomy support was a strategy commonly used by fathers as reported by both children and fathers. In fact, in my relatively high-functioning sample, many fathers described their parenting as having a democratic flavour, with frequent discussion, consideration of their child's feelings or interests, and negotiation. Parenting using autonomy supportive strategies allows the

child to gain independence and understand they have a control over their actions (Joussemet et al., 2005). It emphasizes the child's existence as an individual in the family who also has rights, feelings, and perspectives that are valid (Silk et al., 2003). One of the most commonly used strategies as reported by both fathers and children was the engagement in some negotiation following a request from fathers. Children and fathers engaged frequently in some kind of give-and-take, where children received something out of the situation (e.g., an extra 10 minutes of computer time) and the fathers' requests were often followed up with eventual compliance. Another common use of autonomy support was when fathers explained or justified their requests with their children. Explanations provide children with additional information about the situation in order to convince them to comply with requests rather than simply demanding compliance using power assertion. Furthermore, given the quantitative results discussed in this thesis, autonomy support is an important strategy for a child's functioning, such as adaptive behaviours and independence.

Interviews are an accessible methodology to gather detailed information from research participants with ample opportunities for clarifications and elaborations. Conducting interviews for my study allowed me to address issues beyond the scope of quantitative research questions, offering future qualitative researchers opportunities to delve into the responses further in a more systematic manner. The interviews with fathers and children demonstrated a number of important features. Fathers appeared to engage in similar parenting behaviours as mothers, as demonstrated in the above discussion. Furthermore, the excerpts clearly illustrate that children have an important point of view that should be accessed in parent-child research. Finally, the collected transcript excerpts lend themselves to important discussions on the implications with doing clinical work with fathers and children. The above descriptions of interview excerpts

provided an important perspective into the experiences of fathers and their children in everyday situations on their use of parenting strategies such as structure, negative control, and autonomy support.

Limitations

There are a number of emerging areas of research in the father-child parenting literature. The current investigation on fathers' use of structure, negative control, and autonomy support in relation to children's behavioural outcomes (e.g., externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours) serves to expand the research in the area. A number of factors particular to the current study leave room for improvement for future studies on a similar topic. The limitations reduce the ability to extrapolate the present findings to a more general population and could have prevented more significant results.

Notably, the current study had a sample of children that was relatively well-adjusted, with behavioural functioning within the average range; therefore, the lack of age differences in parenting behaviours and children's behavioural outcomes could have been due to restricted variability in the data. In addition, the two age groups were not equally distributed and the younger and older age groups that were created for the current study were artificial due to recruitment procedures, perhaps influencing the sensitivity in finding age differences. However, using age 8 as a mid-way marker aligns with some literature indicating a shift in children's thinking at 7 to 8 years old (Blume & Zembar, 2007). Finally, dividing the two groups into younger and older children decreased the sample size considerably in each group, thereby decreasing the statistical power required to find potential age differences. Future studies should aim to access a wider age range of children across different developmental periods in order to investigate age differences in parenting and children's behavioural outcomes appropriately.

The participants in this study represented an upper-middle to upper class sample of families from two Canadian urban centres. Families had above average household incomes; however, fathers were not necessarily equally participatory in the child-rearing activities. Although there is no way to know how socioeconomic status might have impacted the results of the study, some research has suggested that more negative control parenting behaviours as well as increased behavioural problems occur in families of lower income or who live in more difficult neighbourhoods (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). However, it is important to reiterate that 89% of the families in the current study reported household incomes of above $80 000, which is not considered lower income. Notably, although my study's participants appear relatively homogenous on the surface, I received a range of responses from both fathers and children that adds to the richness of the data, which is a significant strength of my study.

Sampling methods varied slightly depending on access to participants. For instance, in one urban centre, participants were recruited by word of mouth, primarily through one school. Alternatively, other fathers were recruited more generally through a variety of school boards and community organizations. The different sampling methods could have further influenced the sample that was obtained; for instance, the families might represent a particular socioeconomic status that is distinct from other families, as suggested in the group differences found between the Montreal and Edmonton samples. Furthermore, it is possible that there are qualitative differences in the family structure or belief system between the different samples. Additionally, since families were self-selecting for the study, there may be some inherent differences that exist between my participants and those who did not participate. These possible impacts of the sampling methods or specific characteristics of the participating families cannot be determined from the present results; however, these are potential areas for further study.

Finally, the current study had a small sample size of 55 father-child dyads. A small sample size reduces the power to find significant statistical results, particularly when conducting multiple regressions with several independent variables (Green, 1991). There is some disagreement in the literature about the sample size needed depending on the number of variables in the regression; however, the current study was most consistent with the minimum ratio of the existing guidelines (Green, 1991). Furthermore, the lack of specificity in the findings could have been due to a lack of investigation into covariates (Caron et al., 2006). Similarly, children's behavioural functioning may be predicted better by the total effect of parenting behaviours, rather than discrete dimensions, which is difficult to investigate with a small sample size (Caron et al., 2006). As such, there may be additional group differences or predictions that could have been made with the current sample with additional participants. A limitation related to the qualitative analysis is that the interviews were not conducted with the intent of qualitative analysis.

Future Directions

There are a number of areas for future research in fathering and father-child relationships given that the research is in its infancy and is evolving from early research on father involvement (e.g., Lamb, 2010). Much of the research on fathers was historically investigating father involvement, which is an important component of parenting, but clearly only provides a narrow perspective of the role fathers play in children's development. More recently, research on fathers' parenting encompasses the entire family unit as well as activities in which fathers engage to round out our understanding of fathers' impact on children's development (e.g., Allen et al., 2012). Future research on parenting in general would be best to investigate mothers and fathers in combination or how the parenting of one might influence the other. Furthermore, there is a

paucity of research on father-child attachment security even though Bowlby recognized both caregivers as important attachment figures early on in his work. The inconsistent findings that exist in father parenting research leave many unanswered questions; future research on father-child attachment security across all ages would be an important contribution to understanding father-child relationship quality. Additionally, other methodologies that represent authentic experiences can be valuable to access similar information. Finally, future studies could take a more systematic, deliberate qualitative approach in order to gauge both children's and fathers' experiences with parenting in a variety of home and family situations. Similarly, the interview transcripts from this study could be further analyzed using thematic analysis, which would improve the understanding of the detail obtained from my participants. There remain a number of potentially productive approaches for research in parenting centred on fathers and their children, which provide exciting directions for researchers and clinicians alike.

Conclusion

The current study served to expand the research literature on fathers' parenting behaviours and children's functioning in middle childhood. The current study found that fathers' autonomy support predicted lower externalizing and higher adaptive behaviours in children. While a number of nonsignificant findings are inconsistent with previous literature, it is important to note that much of the parenting research is conducted with mothers or has a relatively out-dated understanding of fathers' ever-changing role in the family unit. Furthermore, due to the emerging nature of research in fathers' parenting behaviours and father-child attachment security, much is still to be learned about the intricacies of fathers' importance in the development of his children. Overall, the current study reinforced the notion that fathers engage

in a variety of tasks and caregiving behaviours and illustrated the complex nature of the father-child relationship, a topic that leaves much more to be discovered.

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Appendix A: Information Letter to Fathers

Dear Parents:

I am Allyson Funamoto, a third year doctoral student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. I am currently looking for participation from fathers and their children for my doctoral dissertation.

I am writing to ask for your participation in a study about fathers and their interactions with their young children. I am looking for children **6 years old or 10 years old** and their **fathers** to participate.

We know a lot about different kinds of parenting mostly because of research conducted with mothers and their children. However, we know that fathers are also an important part of children's lives and help foster a healthy development.

Who can participate?
Fathers and their 6-year-old or 10-year-old child

What will we have to do?
If you choose to participate in this study, you and your child will meet with a researcher for about 1 hour each to answer some interview questions about your interactions with your child. You will also fill out some questionnaires about demographics (for example, your child's age) and your child's behaviours. You have the option of filling out these forms with the research assistant or on your own time. The interview questions will be audio recorded for later analysis.

Why should we participate?
In my experience, families find participating in this type of study to be fun and informative. It is an opportunity for fathers to learn more about themselves and their children. All fathers who participate will be entered into a draw to win one of two $50 gift certificates for Chapters.

What if we change our minds?
Since participation is completely voluntary, if there is a question you don't want to answer, just let the researcher know. Also, you can ask for your data to be removed up until the data is analyzed. We do not expect that taking part in the study will be harmful to you or your child.

Once the study is complete, if you are interested, you can receive a summary of the research results.

Will my information be kept private? How will it be used?
Your name will not appear on any of the information you give us. Only the researchers will have access to your information. All information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Alberta. I will analyze the information collected with a research assistant who has signed a confidentiality agreement. The information will be stored in a locked room and will be shredded or deleted from computer files or destroyed once it is no longer being used for research.

Data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years following the completion of research. The overall results of this study will be used in my dissertation, presented at conferences, and published in academic journals. However, your family and any information you provide will not be identified and will be kept confidential. This information will never include your name, your child's name, or identifying information about your family.

Your involvement in this study and the information gathered will be kept confidential as described above, with the exception of any instance/evidence of current child abuse, which we would be required to report by law.

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. Please keep this letter for your records.

What if I have more questions about the study?
If you have more questions about the study, please contact:

Allyson Funamoto, MEd
University of Alberta
Department of Educational Psychology
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5
(780) 246-3057
funamoto@ualberta.ca

Dr. Christina Rinaldi, PhD, RPsych
University of Alberta
Department of Educational Psychology
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5
(780) 492-7471
crinaldi@ualberta.ca

If you have any concerns about this study, you may contact the Research Ethics Office (780-492-2615). This office has no direct involvement with this project.

Appendix B: Parent Consent Form

I, _____, hereby
(print name of father)

- ☐ Consent
- ☐ Do Not Consent

To have Allyson Funamoto and a volunteer research assistant (for example, a senior undergraduate or graduate student) meet with my child and me to engage in the following activities:

- Asking interview questions about interactions between fathers and children
- Providing questionnaires to complete related to parenting, child development, and father-child interactions

I also understand that the results of this research will be used only in the following cases:

- Presentations, reports, and written products (e.g., thesis, dissertations, articles for publication) for other researchers, educators, parents, and early childhood programs.

_____
Signature of parent

_____
Date

Please provide us with contact information so I may contact you about your participation in the project.

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

For further information concerning the completion of the consent form, please contact:

Allyson Funamoto, MEd
University of Alberta
Department of Educational Psychology
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5
(780) 246-3057
funamoto@ualberta.ca

Dr. Christina Rinaldi, PhD, RPsych
University of Alberta
Department of Educational Psychology
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5
(780) 492-7471
crinaldi@ualberta.ca

Appendix C: CAPS Application and Approval

1. Provide a brief description of your research project.
Children approximately 6- and 10-years-old and their fathers will be recruited for this study. Approximately 100 father-child dyads will be recruited through schools in the Edmonton and surrounding areas, from family and parenting organizations, through Edmonton-based parenting websites, and by word of mouth. The current research will investigate fathers' and children's perceptions of their fathers' structure, psychological control, and autonomy support based on separate interviews with children and their fathers. Specifically, children and fathers will be asked to describe what happens in particular situations based on real-life scenarios. Fathers will be asked additional questions about their children's behaviours and demographic information about the family. Finally, children will respond to questions about their attachment relationship with their fathers. Differences between the two children's age groups as well as fathers' and children's perceptions will be examined in relation to children's functioning. Results from the current research will shed some light on a unique perspective of parenting behaviours on children's development.

2. Describe how this activity is of value to the school(s) or school district(s) involved:
The current study will allow researchers to find out more information about father-child relationships. Since most research is focused on mothers and their children, this is an important area of study. While the current research will not directly impact the school district or the schools, it can provide valuable information about father-child relationships that can play an essential role in students' development and functioning. This information can inform researchers on how fathers can support their children throughout their schooling. If desired, short presentations about the current study and a review of parent-child relationship literature can be given to a group of interested parents, teachers, and/or administrators.

3. Suggested personnel, school and time involved.
The current study requests that schools and teachers distribute information letters to parents of children who are 6 years old (Grades 1 & 2) and 10 years old (Grades 4 & 5). Interested participants (i.e., fathers and their children) will contact the researcher directly to engage in the study; therefore, schools do not need to be involved in collecting consent forms. The researcher will conduct the study in participants' homes at their convenience.

Approval from three school boards is requested in order to reach a greater number of families who may be interested in participating in the current study.

4. Anticipated project timeline and completion date of final report.
Data collection is expected to begin January 13, 2015 until the end of the summer (August 2015). The final dissertation is anticipated to be completed by December 2016. An abbreviated report can be submitted to the school board earlier than this date.

Appendix D: Assent Procedures

Principal Investigator: Allyson Funamoto, MEd

We want to tell you about a research study we are doing. A research study is a way to learn more about something. We would like to find out more about children and their dads. You are being asked to join the study because your parents also want to help with the study.

If you agree to join this study, you will be asked to talk with me and answer many questions about your things your dad might say and do. I will visit your home once or twice to ask you and your father questions about what he does and says as a dad.

Nothing bad will happen to you if you help with this study, but it might be hard to think about some of the stories we talk about.

This study will help us learn more about how children and their dads are with each other.

You do not have to join this study. It is up to you. You can say okay now and change your mind later. All you have to do is tell us you want to stop. No one will be mad at you if you don't want to be in the study or if you join the study and change your mind later and stop.

Before you say **yes or no** to being in this study, we will answer any questions you have. If you join the study, you can ask questions at any time. Just tell the researcher that you have a question.

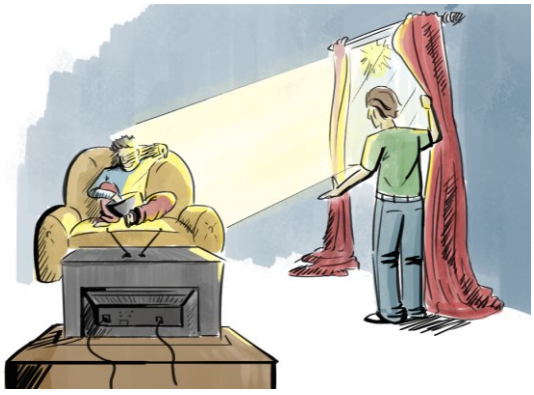
If you have any questions about this study please feel free to contact Allyson Funamoto at (780) 246-3057.

____ Yes, I will be in this research study. ____ No, I don't want to do this.

_____	_____	_____
Child's name	Signature of the child	Date
_____	_____	_____
Person obtaining Assent	Signature	Date

Appendix E: Visuals for Child Interviews

Created by Maurits Volk.



Appendix F: Demographics Questionnaire

Child's Name: _____

Child's Age: _____ (years and months)

Child's Birth Date: _____ / _____ / _____
yyyy / mm / dd

Child's Gender: Male Female

What is the ethnic or cultural origin of your child? Please specify as many as applicable.

_____

_____

For example: Canadian, English, French, Chinese, Italian, German, Scottish, East Indian, Irish, Cree, Mi'kmaq (Micmac), Métis, Inuit (Eskimo), Ukrainian, Dutch, Filipino, Polish, Portuguese, Jewish, Greek, Jamaican, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Chilean, Salvadorian, Somali, etc.

How many years have you lived in Canada?

a. Less than 2 years
b. 2-5 years
c. More than 5 years
d. Born in Canada

Relationship status of parent (parent filling out this sheet):

a. Single
b. Married
c. Common-law
d. Divorced
e. Separated
f. Widowed

Relationship of father to child who is participating in the current study:

a. Biological father
b. Adoptive father
c. Step-father
d. Legal guardian (specify: _____)
e. Other father figure (specify: _____)

Primary caregiver age range (your age):

a. 13-17 years old
b. 18-25 years old
c. 26-35 years old
d. 36-45 years old
e. 46-55 years old
f. 56 + years old

How many years of formal education have you completed (parent completing this sheet)?

a. 8 years of schooling or less
b. Junior high school graduate
c. Partial high school training
d. High school diploma/GED
e. Certificate in Trade/Technology
f. Partial College/University
g. College/University degree
h. Graduate/Professional education

Approximate combined annual income of your household (please circle one):

a. Less than $19,999
b. $20,000 - $39,999
c. $40,000 - $59,999
d. $60,000 - $79,999
e. $80,000+

Appendix G: Interviews of Scenarios for Children and Fathers

Adapted from Della Porta & Howe, 2012

Children's Scenarios

I will read you some everyday things that most kids and their dads know about. After each one, I will ask you what would really happen for you.

1. It is time to clean your room or do your chores.
    a. What would your dad say and do?
    b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want to do it?
2. It is time to do your homework.
    a. What would your dad say and do?
    b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want to do it?
3. It is time to eat dinner.
    a. What would your dad say and do?
    b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want to eat the food?
4. It is your bedtime.
    a. What would your dad say and do?
    b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want to go to bed?
5. It's a sunny day and you are enjoying watching television or playing a computer game, but it's time to go play outside.
    a. What would your dad say and do?
    b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want to go outside?
6. You are having a problem at school with a friend or a teacher, and your father is trying to help.

a. What would your dad say and do?

b. What would your dad say and do if you didn't want him to help you?

Fathers' Scenarios

Parenting or being a dad can be one of the most rewarding yet challenging experiences for men. I am looking to find out about all sorts of behaviours fathers may engage in with their children. I want to hear about the positive and the negative behaviours. I will ask you to tell me about several everyday situations that you would encounter with (name of child).

1. Your child needs to complete chores or clean his/her room. Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child does not want to do this?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding chores, if any?
2. Your child needs to complete homework at home. Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child does not want to complete homework?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding homework, if any?
3. It is dinnertime at home. Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child did not want to eat the food offered at dinner?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding dinnertime, if any?

4. It is your child's bedtime. Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child does not want to go to bed?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding bedtime, if any?
5. Your child is using technology (e.g., watching television, playing on computer/tablet/smartphone). Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child did not want to turn off their game/TV show?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding technology use, if any?
6. Your child has a problem at school (for example, with peers, teacher). Describe what this situation might look like with you and your child.
    a. What would you do or say if your child told you about what had happened?
    b. What routines or rules are in place regarding your child asking for your help?

Appendix H: The Security Scale

(Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996)

Instructions to Child:
This questionnaire asks about what you are like with your dad – like how you act and feel around him. Before we get to those questions, let's try a practice question. Each question talks about two kinds of kids, and we want to know which kids are most like you. Decide first whether you are more like the kids on the left side or more like the kids on the right side, then decide whether that is sort of true for you, or really true for you, and circle that phrase. For each question you will only circle one answer.

Practice Question:

	Some kids would rather play sports in their spare time.		**BUT**	Other kids would rather watch T.V.	
	Really true for me	Sort of true for me		Sort of true for me	Really true for me

1.	Some kids find it easy to trust their dad		**BUT**	Other kids are not sure if they can trust their dad.	
	Really true for me	Sort of true for me		Sort of true for me	Really true for me

2.	Some kids feel like their dad butts in a lot when they are trying to do things		**BUT**	Other kids feel like their dad lets them do things on their own.	
	Really true for me	Sort of true for me		Sort of true for me	Really true for me

3.	Some kids find it easy to count on their dad for help		**BUT**	Other kids think it's hard to count on their dad.	
	Really true for me	Sort of true for me		Sort of true for me	Really true for me

4.	Some kids think their dad spends enough time with them		**BUT**	Other kids think their dad does not spend enough time with them.	

		Really true for me	Sort of true for me		Sort of true for me	Really true for me
5.	Some kids do not really like telling their dad what they are thinking or feeling			**BUT**		Other kids do like telling their dad what they are thinking or feeling.
6.	Some kids do not really need their dad for much			**BUT**		Other kids need their dad for a lot of things.
7.	Some kids wish they were closer to their dad			**BUT**		Other kids are happy with how close they are to their dad.
8.	Some kids worry that their dad does not really love them			**BUT**		Other kids are really sure that their dad loves them.
9.	Some kids feel like their dad really understands them			**BUT**		Other kids feel like their dad does not really understand them.
10.	Some kids are really sure their dad would not leave them			**BUT**		Other kids sometimes wonder if their dad might leave them.

11. Some kids worry that their dad might not be there when they need him/her

Really true for me | Sort of true for me

BUT

Other kids are sure their dad will be there when they need him/her.

Sort of true for me | Really true for me

12. Some kids think their dad does not listen to them

Really true for me | Sort of true for me

BUT

Other kids do think their dad listens to them.

Sort of true for me | Really true for me

13. Some kids go to their dad when they are upset

Really true for me | Sort of true for me

BUT

Other kids do not go to their dad when they are upset.

Sort of true for me | Really true for me

14. Some kids wish their dad would help them more with their problems

Really true for me | Sort of true for me

BUT

Other kids think their dad helps them enough.

Sort of true for me | Really true for me

15. Some kids feel better when their dad is around

Really true for me | Sort of true for me

BUT

Other kids do not feel better when their dad is around.

Sort of true for me | Really true for me

Appendix I: Parental Structure, Negative Control, and Autonomy Support Coding Scheme

For an entire transcript, rank each parent behaviour code (structure, negative control, and autonomy support) from 1 to 4. Coders are encouraged to label statements from the interviews that matched a particular subcode (e.g., Structure – limit setting); these codes are considered for both frequency and quality for scoring the entire transcript, but individual statements are not coded specifically. Subcodes can be recorded for in order to describe the responses but do not have to be calculated in reliability scores. Each instance of a code (i.e., structure, negative control, and autonomy) will be rated on a 4-point scale for each participant. Therefore, each participant receives three scores representing the three behaviours, from both children's and fathers' perspective.

General Code	Subcode	Definition/Description	Examples
Structure	*Limit-Setting*	Clear & consistent guidelines; child knows what happens if child does something wrong (predictability); reasoned & democratic discipline; create family rules together; putting parameters on activities; expectation that certain consequence/ reinforcement comes following action; (note: dad giving up, giving in, doing task himself demonstrates LOW LIMIT SETTING)	*"I know if I don't do my room, I can't watch TV"; Warnings about activity change (i.e., in 5 min we need to set the dinner table); "We are only allowed 45 min of computer a day"*
	Scaffolding / Feedback	Constructive feedback about child's actions (what was done well, improvements to be made); prompting; step-by-step instructions to help child; help; collaboration; teamwork; providing opportunities to meet expectations; doing things together; dad helping out with task; praise/positive reinforcement	*"First put your clothes away, then your books"; helping with homework*
	Monitoring	Must be non-intrusive; knowing what child is doing, child tells parent what she/he is doing, knows what schoolwork child has, who friends are; supervision	*"My dad asks what I'm doing on the computer"; "homework is done in the kitchen so we can keep track"*
	Routines	Child knows what time she/he needs to do in the morning, making lunches, creating schedules with child, knowing what chores child has to do (no rule about certain thing may demonstrate low limit setting)	*Bedtime routines; "I always do my homework after snack, so I just do it";*

1 = Absent structure / No routines or rules / No monitoring of activities / No limit-setting or guidance for activities **2 = Little structure / Few routines or rules / Little monitoring of activities / Low limit-setting or guidance for activities** **3 = Some structure / Some routines or rules / Some monitoring of activities / Some limit-setting or guidance for activities** **4 = High structure / Several routines or rules / High monitoring of activities / Much limit-setting or guidance for activities**			
Negative Control	*Rejection*	Laughing at child; negating child's expression of emotions; sarcasm; tries to change how child feels about something; making child feel guilty; attacking self-esteem; saying things are the child's fault; says mean things to child; criticisms about ideas; manipulation of child's thoughts/emotions	*"My dad never listens to what I want to do"; "Dad doesn't like my ideas"*
	Withdrawing Love	Love is conditional on child conforming or following parent, parent is not as nice with child if child doesn't obey	*"Dad would ignore me until I did my homework"*
	Limiting Expression	Verbal or physical; does not let child continue speaking (interrupts); speaking for child; changing the subject with child; making decision without child input; parent-lead solutions; coerciveness, bribing	*"There's no discussion, no negotiation, no, that's it"; He would just turn off the TV*
	Directiveness / Intrusiveness	Commands child (e.g., using "should" "have to", etc); does things for child or tells them what advice they should follow; parent asking too many questions; imposing harsh consequence without discussion; threats; ultimatums; power assertion; deprivation of privileges; focuses on compliance as goal; nagging	*"He would go talk to my friend's parents about the bullying, and I don't want him to do that"; "he just always wants to know what I'm doing and doesn't leave me alone"*
1 = Absent negative control / No rejection / Never limits expression / Never directive or intrusive **2 = Low negative control / Little rejection / Rarely limits expression / Rarely directive or intrusive** **3 = Some negative control / Some rejection / Sometimes limits expression / Sometimes directive or intrusive** **4 = Lots of negative control / A lot of rejection / Frequently limits expression / Often directive or intrusive**			
Autonomy Support	*Consideration of Child*	Considering child's emotions, opinions, thoughts, interests, etc.; setting up activity to increase attractiveness or decrease aversiveness; child's interests are addressed & promoted; encourages independent thinking; child feels she/he can think for him/herself; child's opinion is just as important as adults';	*Taking a game-like approach, singing or joking around; acknowledging child's perspective, supporting working through friend issue, "I know you don't want to, but*

		child feels she/he can form own opinions; listens to child's dissenting point of view, child can talk about his point of view; parent reacts nondefensively when disagreed with; acknowledging child's perspective; empathizing; validating child's feelings	*this is your homework"*
	Negotiation	Making a deal, some give-and-take to each get what they want; joint problem solving	*"I just need 10 more minutes to finish this show, then I will clean up"; eating a few bites of food, you can play with toys after you clean up*
	Explanations / Discussions	Justifications; explaining the value or necessity of completing a task to motivate compliance; giving others' perspectives of a situation; talking about values/positive personality traits (except if induces guilt); rationalizations of why they need to do things; explanation of consequences; discussing situation	*"You should pick up your dirty clothes or else they will start to smell"*
	Requests / Suggestions	Allows child some degree or choice to comply or how to complete task; this is less directive and more collaborative/gentle-sounding language; providing choices	*"Let's clean up this mess"; "Time to turn off the TV"; "My dad just asks me to do it"*

1 = No autonomy support / No consideration of child / Does not understand or tolerate child / No negotiation / No explanations
2 = Little autonomy support / Little consideration of child / Little understanding / Little negotiation / Few explanations
3 = Some autonomy support / Some consideration of child / Some understanding / Some negotiation / Some explanations
4 = Significant autonomy support / High consideration of child / High understanding / Frequent negotiation / Frequent explanations

Coding schemes adapted from:
Parental Psychological Control & Autonomy Granting Coding System, Kunz & Grych, 2007
Various definitions of structure (e.g., Barber, 2005; Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Maccoby & Martin, 1983)
Autonomy from Gordon, 2009 (Master's thesis).