Parents Pressuring Their Kids to be Active: Parent Self-Efficacy, Other-Efficacy, and Negative Social Control
Larissa A. Kraft, Kathleen S. Wilson, & Melissa M. Nelson
Department of Kinesiology, California State University, Fullerton

Introduction

• Physical activity (PA) has been linked to decreased obesity (Must & Tybor, 2005) and cardiovascular risk factors (Andersen et al., 2006)
• Parents may use social control to regulate their child’s physical activity behaviors (Wilson & Spink, 2011)
  ➢ Negative social control involves pressuring or nagging their child (Wilson & Spink, 2010)
  ➢ Use of this type of social control has not been shown to be effective in eliciting behavior change (Wilson & Spink 2010)
  ➢ Antecedents of negative social control have yet to be identified
• Interactions in relationships may be influenced by perceptions of relational efficacy (Lent & Lopez, 2002)
  ➢ Self-efficacy – parents’ confidence in themselves
  ➢ Other-efficacy – parents’ confidence in their child
• Possible antecedent of negative social control may be self-efficacy and other-efficacy

Purpose

• To evaluate if negative social control use by parents is linked to parental self-efficacy and other-efficacy

Methods

Participants
• Parents (N=24)
  ➢ Majority classified as white, female, & married
  ➢ Children – mostly female (58.3%)
  ➢ Mean age = 5.6 years, SD = 4.1, range 2-16 years

Procedures
• Online survey
• Emailed link to a second survey one week later

Measures
➢ Negative social control (2 items)
  ➢ Parent self-efficacy (8 items)
    ➢ Adapted from proxy efficacy survey (Shields & Brawley, 2006)
  ➢ Other-efficacy (8 items)
    ➢ Adapted from child self-efficacy survey (Motl et al., 2000)

Analysis:
• Hierarchical multiple regression:
  ➢ DV: Negative social control (time 2)
  ➢ Step 1: Negative social control (time 1)
  ➢ Step 2: Parent efficacy and other-efficacy (time 1)

Results Summary:
• Step 1: R² = .47, F(1,22) = 19.80, p<.001
• Step 2: R² change = .12, F(2,20) = 3.09, p=.07

Findings

Parent Self-Efficacy
(Confidence of parent to manage their child’s PA)

I am confident that I can:
➢ Motivate my child to do PA
➢ Set realistic PA goals for my child

β = .21, p=.12

Parent self-efficacy did not predict negative social control use

Other-Efficacy
(Confidence in child to manage their own PA)

I am confident that my child can:
➢ Be physically active during his/her free time on most days
➢ Be physically active during his/her free time on most days no matter how busy his/her day is

β = -.27, p=.03

Parents used negative social control when they lacked confidence in their child’s ability

Discussion

• Parents’ self-efficacy did not predict negative social control use
  ➢ Results differ from suggestion by Lent & Lopez that parents’ confidence in their own ability might influence their interactions with their child
• Other-efficacy (confidence in child) predicted use of negative social control
  ➢ Consistent with Lent & Lopez suggestion that other-efficacy may influence the interaction within the dyad
  ➢ Indirect support for this finding can be drawn from the link between perception of difficulty in changing behavior and use of negative control (Butterfield & Lewis, 2002)

Limitations

• Efficacy questions were modified for this study, thus have limited reliability and validity evidence
  ➢ Both parent self-efficacy (cronbach α = .79) and other efficacy (cronbach α = .88) showed acceptable internal consistency
• Small sample size requires replication in larger and more diverse sample
• Parents may under-report their use of negative social control given its negative connotations

Strengths

• Focused on negative social control, which has received little attention despite parents and children reporting its use
• Used a prospective design with efficacies focusing on negative social control, which has received little attention despite parents and children reporting its use

Future Directions

• Examine these efficacies as predictors of collaborative and positive social control
• Examine the effect of quality of relationship between child and parent on social control use
  ➢ Low level of relationship satisfaction predicted increased use of negative tactics (Butterfield & Lewis, 2002)

These preliminary results suggest that parents’ decisions to use negative social control may be affected by their perceptions of their child’s capabilities to be active