

Parents Pressuring Their Kids to be Active: Parent Self-Efficacy, Other-Efficacy, and Negative Social Control

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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 behavior (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)**
 - (Wilson, Spink & Priebe, 2010)
- Parent self-efficacy (9 items)**
 - Adapted from proxy efficacy survey (Shields & Brawley, 2006)
- Other-efficacy (8 items)**
 - Adapted from child self-efficacy survey (Mottl et al., 2000)

Findings

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: $R^2 = .47$, $F(1,22) = 19.80$, $p < .001$
- Step 2: $R^2_{\text{change}} = .12$, $F(2,20) = 3.09$, $p = .07$

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

$\beta = .21$, $p = .12$

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

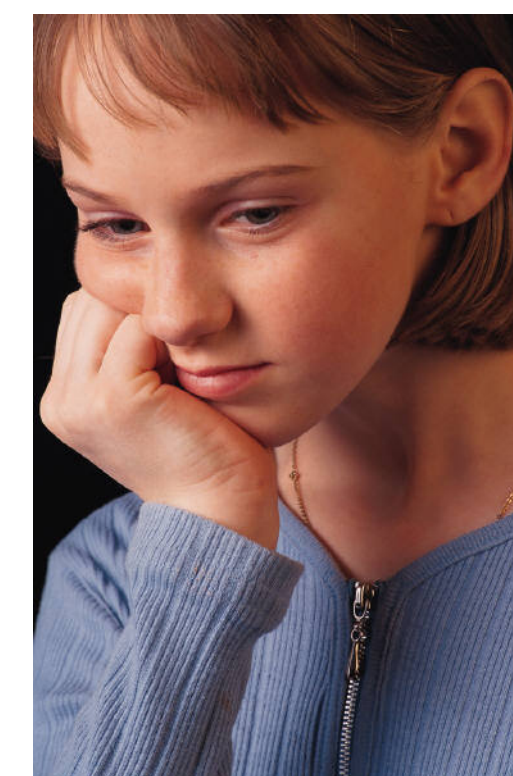
$\beta = -.27$, $p = .03$

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

Parent use of negative social control tactics

When you wanted your child to do more PA, how often did you:

- Nag your child to be active
- Order your child to be active



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

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 $\alpha = .79$) and other efficacy (cronbach $\alpha = .88$) 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 predicting negative social control one week later

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)



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