TOGETHER WE CAN: INCREASE COUPLE FUNCTIONING FOR LOW-SES FAMILIES

by

Lindsey Almond

April, 2018

Director of Thesis: Dr. Eboni Baugh, PhD

Major Department: Human Development and Family Science

This study was conducted to understand how parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship are influenced by the adapted Together We Can relationship program. Researchers were interested in determining how socioeconomic status and race impact outcomes. Researchers sampled 26 Caucasian and African American individuals. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and the spillover hypothesis assist with understanding how the participant's environments have impacted their current relationship and parenting practices, as well as explain the program's results. Statistically significant differences were found between pre and posttests. Further analyses showed racial and socioeconomic differences. As society continues to form increased romantic relationships and parenting systems, relationship education programs should be evaluated with varied populations.

Keywords: Relationship, parenting, co-parenting, socioeconomic status, parenting efficacy, minority, Together We Can, Ecological theory, spillover hypothesis

TOGETHER WE CAN: INCREASE COUPLE FUNCTIONING FOR LOW-SES FAMILIES

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Human Development and Family Science

East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters in Human Development and Family Science

by

Lindsey Almond

April, 2018

TOGETHER WE CAN: INCREASE LOW-SES FAMILY AND COUPLE FUNCTIONING

by

Lindsey Almond

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF THESIS: _____
Eboni Baugh, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____
Jacquelyn Mallette, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____
Kate Harcourt, PhD

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
AND FAMILY SCIENCE: _____
Sharon Ballard, PhD

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE
SCHOOL: _____
Paul Gemperline, PhD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationships can largely influence the physical health and overall well-being of an individual (DuPree, Whiting, & Harris, 2016). Relationship stability and satisfaction can be difficult to maintain with life's daily stressors; one partner's perception of stress can influence the couple's communication (Zemp, Nussbeck, Cummings, & Bodenmann, 2017). Lack of communication may lead to conflict within the romantic relationship, in turn causing depression, substance abuse, and possibly divorce (McCormick, Hsueh, Merrilees, Chou, & Cummings, 2017). Stress can also intensify the negative impacts of conflict within a relationship (McCormick et al., 2017). Couples who are better prepared to manage stress, improve their communication, and deal with conflict have a higher chance of relationship satisfaction.

Whether or not couples can positively manage their stress and conflict influences other aspects of their lives. Spillover theory suggests that positive or negative events that happen in one environment can influence another environment (Kirkland et al., 2011; Pedro, Ribeiro, & Shelton, 2012). Empirical research supports the spillover from one environment, or event, to another; affecting multiple systems such as a parent-child relationship or a couple relationship (Zemp et al., 2017). External stressors that occur outside of the couple dynamic have been shown to flow into the couple relationship and decrease relationship satisfaction (Zemp et al., 2017).

Ecological theory follows the same framework where an individual's environments interact to impact relationships and development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). One aspect of relationship education programs is to provide skills to individuals and couples so that negative stressors do not spill over into other environments. Previous studies involving relationship education have attempted to examine how programs have influenced a couple's communication, conflict resolution, and relationship satisfaction (Dupree et al., 2016; McGill et al., 2016).

Evidence suggests that relationship education programs can be effective for both typical couples and couples who are at greater risk (Dupree et al., 2016); however, participants who are considered higher risk, have shown to benefit more so than others (Dupree et al., 2016; McGill et al., 2016). For all samples of relationship education participants, research indicates a decrease in depression and anxiety, and an increase in individual self-esteem (McGill et al., 2016).

Researchers have begun to recognize the need to understand relationship education programs amongst a diverse group of people. McCormick et al. (2017) recognized that low socioeconomic status (low-SES) and minority individuals may be at heightened risk for unstable environments and relationships; examples include a higher divorce and break up rate. In a study of relationship education with African American couples conducted by Barton et al. (2017), programs that have a focus on improving communication showed positive correlations to relationship satisfaction. Another study found that regardless of ethnicity or socioeconomic status, participants benefitted from relationship education programs (Dupree et al., 2016).

Although researchers have begun expanding research with diverse populations, more research is still needed to understand the effectiveness of relationship education programs. An area of diversity within relationship education programs that has limited empirical evidence, are individually attended programs instead of couple attended (Dupree et al., 2016). The limited research available supports the idea that individual participants report more positive communication and perception of satisfaction in a relationship (Dupree et al., 2016).

How parenthood is influenced by relationship education is also an under-researched aspect of relationship education programs. Becoming a parent can be one of the most rewarding life experiences. However, the transition into parenthood creates role and relationship changes due to the family structure alteration (Katz-Wise, Priess, & Hyde, 2010). Previous empirical

literature demonstrates that when parents commonly exhibit positive parenting behaviors, their children are more likely to have healthy development and display higher well-being (Chau & Giallo, 2015; Kim, 2015; Morrill, Hawrilenko, & Córdova, 2016). Therefore, it is essential that parents learn what positive parenting behaviors are, and how to use them. For example, the National Extension Parent Education Model (NEPEM), an evidence based parenting intervention, operates from the notion that the skills of positive parenting can be built and fostered; nevertheless, this takes effort (Kim, 2015).

Cowan and Cowan (2002) reported how parent education programs have demonstrated their ability to increase positive parenting behaviors. Many community leaders such as judges and social workers, have supported parent education efforts because they also prevent abuse, lower school dropout rates, and address other issues that may occur within a family (Bryan, DeBord, & Schrader, 2006). Parent education courses can help foster positive parenting behaviors, and additionally help to increase parent's self-efficacy; this translates into confidence in parental ability, and feelings of being in control in child-rearing situations (Zilberstein, 2016).

Although helpful, many current parent education programs are not meeting the needs of a variety of family types. Many of these programs are made for Caucasian, middle-class, married couples (Ooms & Wilson, 2004), as well as for parents with children under the age of five (Bryan et al., 2006). Many do not encompass the specific needs of families who may have a low-SES, are minorities, are unmarried, or have children older than five. Families who are unmarried and low-SES are often labeled as "Fragile Families" because of their greater risk of disbanding (Randles, 2014; Sorensen, Mincy, & Halpern, 2000). Another reason that these types of families do not always have access to, or participate in, parent or relationship education programs is because they can be costly (Bryan et al., 2006).

Another limitation of current parent education programs, is that many do not include aspects of relationship education between the parenting couple (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013). According to Zemp et al. (2017), those who are parents report lower relationship satisfaction than those who are not parents. Cummins and Davies (2002) demonstrated that the relationship between a parenting couple has been shown to affect parenting and their children's well-being. Again, this correlation of parent and relationship education has been under investigated in fragile or low-SES families (Carlson & McLanahan, 2006). Due to this lack of information on a specific population, researchers are encouraged to expand this literature to better understand parent and relationship education in underprivileged groups (Harcourt, Adler-Baeder, Rauer, Pettit, & Erath, 2017; Randles, 2014). It is suggested that combining parent education and relationship education can improve a couple's relationship by teaching aspects like communication skills which will in turn increase the couple's ability to positively parent their children (Albritton, Angley, Grandelski, Hansen, & Kershaw, 2014; Morrill et al., 2016).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the program, Together We Can, by comparing a low-ses and minority sample with a middle to high-ses Caucasian sample. The authors hypothesize that after engaging with the program, participants will have improved their parenting self-efficacy, as well as have increased knowledge of communicating within their couple relationship. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and the spillover hypothesis will be used to address the effects of multiple influences on the couple and parent relationships.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Low-Socioeconomic Status and Minority Families

Low-socioeconomic status families. Low-SES and minority status may impact the couple relationship and parenting behaviors (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Carlson & McLanahan, 2006). Empirical research from Conger, Conger, and Martin (2010), supports the idea that couples who are low-SES, have lower levels of relationship quality and stability. Low-SES couples experience specific stressors due to their socioeconomic status such as instability in finances, housing, employment, work hours, transportation, and child care that may reduce their overall relationship quality and stability (Randles, 2014; Williams & Cheadle, 2016; Zilberstein, 2016). Low-SES individuals are also at an increased risk for low literacy, living in unsafe neighborhoods, violence, and accumulation of debts (Ooms & Wilson, 2004). This increased risk of stressors can lend itself to poorer relationships and child outcomes in the form of lower self-efficacy, energy, engagement, and positive interactions (Albritton et al., 2014; Chau & Giallo, 2015). Low-SES families may be at risk for increased stressors and they generally have less access to resources to develop healthy relationships and practices (Randles, 2014).

Minority families. Along with SES differences, Clark, Young, & Dow (2013) found ethnic differences in family structure and parenting behaviors. Within the 36 percent of children who have unmarried parents, 46 percent of the African American population and 69 percent of the Hispanic population have unmarried parents (Hamilton, Ventura, Martin, & Sutton, 2005). These numbers suggest that unmarried minority parents who are low-SES may be at greater risk for relationship and parenting complications.

Co-parenting. Although not all couples are married, many are still a part of a co-parenting relationship. Co-parenting indicates that all people caring for a specific child are

working together to raise that child and divide the responsibilities that accompany parenting (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Carlson & McLanahan, 2006). Regardless of marital status, parents will be better equipped to parent when they both care for the child, value the other's involvement with the child, communicate with each other, and respect each other (McHale, Kuersten-Hogan, & Rao, 2004).

Father Involvement. It may prove harder for unmarried women to have positive outlooks about father involvement because they are more likely to experience intimate partner violence, relationship termination, and increased romantic partner changes (Albritton et al., 2014). While the mother's attitude about the father's involvement highly predicts father involvement, fathers typically engage more with their child if they feel like they have a positive relationship with the mother regardless of marital status (Cox & Shirer, 2009). As research has continuously found father involvement to be an important factor for positive child outcomes, parent and relationship education that addresses co-parenting is increasingly important (Marczak, Becher, Hardman, Galos, & Ruhland, 2015).

Importance of education. The parent's ability to positively co-parent relies on their willingness to learn new skills within their couple relationship and in parenting (Cox & Shirer, 2009). Many low-SES parents are receiving information on improving relationships and parenting through methods that are not empirical, such as the media (Berkule-Silberman, Dreyer, Huberman, Klass, & Mendelsohn, 2010). Although their sources of information are not empirically based, low-SES couples show high levels of interest in parent and relationship education (Ooms & Wilson, 2004). Specific relationship education courses that focus on strengthening married or unmarried couple relationships have the potential to improve the couple's parenting (Carlson & McLanahan, 2006; Clark et al., 2013). Although relationship and

parent education is exceedingly important for low-SES and minority families, research indicates that these fragile families have more initial difficulty maintaining the positive outcomes of the education due to the adversity they experience in everyday life (Leijten, Raaijmaker, de Castro, & Matthys, 2013; Zilberstein, 2016). However, when evaluated in their natural environment, the skills gained from relationship and parent education become more noticeable if provided informational resources (Leijten et al., 2013); such resources include how to handle finances, behavioral problems, and stress management.

Relationship Education

A positive relationship between a parenting couple can predict their use of positive guidance techniques (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013). Some characteristics of a positive, romantic couple relationship are qualities such as commitment, satisfaction, and love (Curran, Burke, Young, & Totenhagen, 2016). Research suggests that the addition of a child and stressors related to parenting may cause issues in communication and relationship satisfaction (Zemp et al., 2017). Relationship education programs that focus on parenting have the potential to confront couple and co-parenting problems that can result in these negative parenting and child outcomes (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013).

Parent focus in relationship education. When a parenting couple is able to communicate and support each other, they are better able to work together to parent (Pedro et al., 2012). Along with the environmental stressors that low-SES families juggle, couple relationship stressors have the potential to deduct warmth from the parent-child relationship (Morrill et al., 2016). This association between the couple's relationship and its impact on their child's outcome has been shown throughout literature (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Carlson & McLanahan, 2006; Harcourt et al., 2017). Both mother's and father's parenting potential is impacted by their

7

relationship with each other, showing the need for relationship and parent education (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013).

Effects of negative couple relationships. Couples who are experiencing challenges within their relationship may exhibit problems with communication, which can negatively impact their intimacy (Albritton et al., 2014). Conflict and decreased relationship quality can alter a couple's parenting by increasing the harshness of discipline, reducing involvement, and increasing the conflict in the parent-child relationship (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Albritton et al., 2014; Buehler & Gerard, 2002); these interactions have the potential to negatively impact children's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development (Adler-Baeder et al, 2013; Kirkland et al., 2011). In a meta-analysis conducted by Almeida, Wethington, & Chandler (1999), parents were 50% more likely to have a negative interaction with their child if they had conflict with the other parent the day before.

Positive parenting behaviors. Some of the positive parenting skills included in parenting education are: how to show support, affection, warmth, and acceptance, as well as meaningful involvement with positive reinforcement (Morrill et al., 2016). Improvement on these skills can positively increase a child's psychosocial adjustment, cognitive development, and decrease the likelihood of behavioral problems (Albritton et al., 2014). For mothers, increased relationship satisfaction can influence positive parenting and parenting self-efficacy (Kershaw et al., 2013). Although many studies have focused on the outcomes for mothers, both mothers and fathers express interest in relationship and parent education; especially aspects to improve communication (Albritton et al., 2014).

Education implications. Relationship and parent education programs have the potential to increase relationships and co-parenting by increasing parenting self-efficacy, communication

skills, listening skills, anger management, and by reducing parental stress (Cox & Shirer, 2009; Harcourt et al., 2017). For low-SES parents, relationship education programs have also been shown to reduce negative parenting behaviors that are associated with at-risk populations (e.g. corporal punishment, oppression of children, and lack of empathy; Clark et al., 2013). Randles (2014) expressed how these education programs positively influence the family's environment by increasing involvement and economic stability. Benefits of relationship and parent education programs have lasting effects on parents and children that improve relationships and outcomes (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013).

Together We Can

This study will assess the effectiveness of an adapted version of the Together We Can program (Duncan, Futris, Mallette, Karlsen, & Shirer, Under Development). The original Together We Can program is research based and comprised of relationship education components deemed essential by the National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Network (NERMEN) (Kirkland et al., 2011; Shirer et al., 2009). NERMEN is a model that certifies relationship education programs are created with an empirical base (Futris & Adler-Baeder, 2014); thus, NERMEN components are supported by previous research findings. The seven components that encompass this are (i) choose (being deliberate with relationship choices), (ii) care for self (well rounded wellness), (iii) know (being informed on partner's life), (iv) care (using tender behaviors), (v) share (cultivating a sense of cohesiveness), (vi) manage (acknowledging and healthily coping with differences), and (vii) connect (have positive social support; Futris & Adler-Baeder, 2014).

Together We Can focuses on strengthening relationships, for a variety of relationship types, within a low-SES population (Harcourt et al., 2017; Kirkland et al., 2011; Shirer et al.,

9

2009). It is theory laden and is based off the framework of experiential learning theory, which states that individuals learn by changing their experiences (Kirkland et al., 2011). Although Together We Can is not a parent education program, it is geared towards improving parent's co-parenting relationship which has been shown through research to improve parenting efficacy as well. Participants within the program are able to increase their couple and parenting relationships despite marital status (Harcourt et al., 2017; Kirkland et al., 2011), providing a wider range of possible participants. Education programs like Together We Can, that focus on co-parents, are becoming increasingly important for varying family structures. The parenting, or co-parenting, relationship has a significant impact on the relationship between parent and child, as well as the child's outcomes (Clark et al., 2013).

The adapted Together We Can curriculum consists of four modules focused on taking care of the family, self, relationships, and children's future (Duncan et al., Under Development). The topics and goals within the modules focus on subjects such as attainable goal setting, stress management, conflict resolution, maximizing parenting time, communication skills, and preparing for a healthy future (see Table 1). This curriculum includes a condensed version of the main concepts from the original Together We Can program. The adaptation of the program cuts the required time in half so that participants devote 8 hours instead of 16. Shortening the program will provide participants an opportunity to reap similar benefits of the full program, but with less time commitment. A shortened time commitment will entice more people to participate, and decrease dropout rates due to the hectic schedules that many people within a low-socioeconomic status face.

Table 1

Together We Can – Adapted 8 Hour Module Fundamentals

Module Name	Lesson Topics	Module Goals
Module I: Taking Care of My Family	Getting Started on Your Journey, and Building an Intentional Family	• Learn about the program • Learn about importance of record keeping • Reflect on the past • Set overall goals • Understand basics of a strong family • Make plan to strengthen family
Module II: Taking Care of Myself	Managing Stress, and Parenting Together	• Understand stress • Learn about importance of co-parenting • Learn how to maximize parenting time • Reflect on importance of child support
Module III: Taking Care of My Relationships	Building Friendships: Positive Stroke, Avoiding Discounting; Listening to Face, Voice, and Body; and Managing Conflict: Escalating and De-escalating	• Significance of praising remarks • Learn to notice and understand non-verbal messages • Learn to handle defensive listening • Learn to manage conflict in co-parenting relationship
Module IV: Taking Care of My Future for My Children	Taking Care of My Future for My Children	• Experience mindfulness • Understand challenges of step-families • Take steps towards a positive future for family and child

It is important to the program that the lessons guide participants on matters that relate to their lives, and additionally provides an empowering and informal learning setting (Kirkland et al., 2011). Lessons within the program specifically focus on aspects of positive parenting and couple relationships, stress management, parental involvement, family strengths, and communication (Harcourt et al., 2017; Kirkland et al., 2011; Shirer et al., 2009). Farris et al. (2013) suggested that programs which increase skills to problem solve and cope with life events,

have the potential to better prepare participants to deal with their everyday lives. By providing these lessons within a class format, participants have the ability to discuss their struggles and achievements with people similar to them (Randles, 2014).

Only introductory research has been conducted with the adapted program thus far. However, previous research has indicated that low-SES parents enjoy the opportunity to take time to focus on their relationships and parenting (Randles, 2014). Within the couple relationship, the original Together We Can program has been shown to improve levels of trust and satisfaction, while also decreasing hostility; within both the parenting and couple relationship, it has been shown to increase positive decision making, problem solving, and a better understanding of how the parent-child relationship is affected by the couple relationship (Harcourt et al., 2017; Randles, 2014). Cox and Shirer (2009) reported that when families are provided the opportunity to make plans with specific goals, they can better make decisions based on the plans and goals they have set. Together We Can provides these families the opportunity to do just that.

Theoretical Framework

The use of theory within this study is intended to establish a foundation and guide the research. When theory is not used within research, it limits the generalizability of the results (Bengtson, Acock, Aleen, Dilworth-Anderson, & Klein, 2005). Bronfenbrenner (1979) explains ecological theory as the interaction over time between a developing person and the environment; this theory will be used as a framework to understand the connection between the parent relationship and the parent-child relationships. Ecological theory is comprised of four main environmental structures: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem encompasses an individual's immediate surroundings,

characteristics, and relationships; next, the mesosystem connects two of the microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The exosystem does not directly involve the individual, but can indirectly impact them; lastly, the macrosystem incorporates the rules and norms of the culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner (1979) believed that when structures within the environment, such as including a relationship and parenting education program, are altered, the individual's development and behavior can also be altered.

Adler-Baeder et al. (2013) implemented ecological theory to stress the importance of a positive couple relationship on subsequent positive child outcomes. Specifically, the nature of the relationship between parents has been shown to affect later adjustment and well-being of children (Cummings & Davies, 2002). Pedro et al. (2012) found ecological theory to support the idea that not only does a positive couple relationship lead to positive child outcomes, but also leads to more cooperation and respect between parents. Due to these correlations between relationships, an educational program based on the family, instead of the individuals separately, is an appropriate design (Kim, 2015). On account of their findings that environmental stressors can lead to positive growth and interest in developing stress management skills, McGill et al. (2016) suggests ecological theory's continued use in assessing relationship education outcomes and the impact of the environment.

Just as ecological theory expects various influences to affect the parent and parent-child relationships, the spillover hypothesis expects positive or negative events within one relationship to affect other relationships (Kirkland et al., 2011; Pedro et al., 2012). Clark et al. (2013) explains spillover as the transfer of behaviors or moods caused by one setting to impact another. Krishnakumar and Buehler (2000) found support for this idea when they used the spillover hypothesis to explain how conflict between parents can negatively impact parenting. Likewise, a

positively correlated spillover effect has been supported between the quality of a relationship and both parent's parenting behaviors (Carlson & McLanahan, 2006). The spillover hypothesis is exceedingly pertinent to the population of this study with the expectance that a lower socioeconomic, minority families will have multiple stressors that may impact their environments. The current behaviors and practices of participants in their relationship and parenting habits will be assessed through this framework. Both ecological theory and the spillover hypothesis will guide the practices in this study to look at the family process with a multitude of lenses.

Present Study

This study evaluates an adapted version of the program, Together We Can, by comparing low and high socioeconomic status individuals and Caucasians and African Americans. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and the spillover hypothesis assist with understanding how the participant's environments have impacted their current relationship and parenting practices, as well as explain the program's results. This study helps to gain more insight into the effectiveness of the adapted Together We Can relationship education program by evaluating the research questions: (i) Does the adapted version of Together We Can increase parenting efficacy? (ii) Does the adapted version of Together We Can positively influence the co-parenting relationship? and (iii) How do minority individuals and Caucasian individuals differ on their parenting efficacy and co-parenting relationship outcomes? It is hypothesized that after engaging with the program, participants will have improved their parenting self-efficacy as well as have increased knowledge of communicating within their couple relationship

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Research Design

This study was conducted to understand how parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship are influenced by the adapted Together We Can relationship education program. Together We Can was specifically created with the intention to target low-SES and unmarried co-parenting participants. The authors hypothesized that upon completion of the adapted Together We Can program, participants would indicate an increase in parenting efficacy and report a more positive co-parenting relationship. The methodology used employed pre and post-tests to measure the effect of the program. After IRB approval was granted, participants were recruited through North Carolina towns by flyers and word of mouth; specific participant inclusion criteria are later discussed. Flyers were placed around the Eastern North Carolina towns in child care centers, churches, and other public facilities. These recruitment areas were selected with the intention of reaching a variety of potential participants. Flyers provided possible participants with information on the date, time, location, sign up method, incentive and purpose of the study. As incentives, food and fast food gift cards were provided to increase participation in the full length of the program.

Interested participants signed up via email or phone. Pre-tests were printed and brought to the first program meeting for all participants to complete. Before completing the pre-test, interested participants signed an informed consent form that explained the purpose of the relationship programming, the possible benefits, the possible negatives, and their understanding that they could stop participating at any time. The pre-test included demographic information (ex. gender, age, income), as well as Likert-type scale questions measuring co-parenting,

relationships, and parenting efficacy. At the end of the last program meeting, participants received a hardcopy of the posttest to complete.

Procedure

The program was held at two different research sites: a community outreach center in Farmville, NC and the Anson County Partnership for Children in Wadesboro, NC.

Sample

In order to adequately explore the effects of Together We Can, we sampled 26 participants, who all completed both pre and post surveys, 19 (73.1%) females and 7 (26.9%) males (see Table 2). To be eligible to participate, participants had to be at least 18 years of age and either pregnant, a parent, or the caregiver of a child. Participants were also required to speak English to be eligible. The ethnicity of the sample was evenly dispersed with (50%) Caucasians and (50%) African Americans. The largest portion of participants had a high school degree (26.9%), followed by some college credit with no degree (23.1%), a community college degree (19.2%), a bachelor's degree (15.4%), a master's degree (11.5%) and a doctoral degree (3.8%). A majority of the sample was employed full-time (73.1%), (7.7%) were employed part-time, (15.4%) were retired, and (3.8%) were homemakers. The socioeconomic status of the sample included 18 (69.2%) participants with an annual income of less than 40,000 dollars and 8 (30.8%) participants with an annual income greater than 40,000 dollars. The majority of the sample were in a married relationship (65.4%), (19.2%) were single, and (15.4%) were divorced. The mean age of participants was 54.88 years, $SD = 13.73$. The majority of the population were caring for 2 children (23.1%).

Table 2

Participant Characteristics Pertaining to Relationship Status

Participant Characteristics	In a Dating Relationship $n = 16$	Not in a Dating Relationship $n = 10$
Race		
White/Caucasian	11 (66.8%)	8 (80%)
Black/African American	5 (31.3%)	2 (20%)
Gender		
Female	11 (68.8%)	2 (20%)
Male	5 (31.3%)	8 (80%)
Age		
Minimum	27	23
Maximum	77	70
Mean	54.69	55.20
Standard Deviation	13.76	14.43
Educational Attainment		
High school or equivalent	4 (25%)	3 (30%)
Some college credit, no degree	4 (25%)	2 (20%)
Community college	2 (12.5%)	3 (30%)
Four-year college	4 (25%)	0 (0%)
Master's degree	1 (6.3%)	2 (20%)
Doctoral degree	1 (6.3%)	0 (0%)
Employment Status		
Full time	12 (75%)	7 (70%)
Part time	1 (6.3%)	1 (10%)
Retired	2 (13.5%)	2 (20%)
Homemaker	1 (6.3%)	0 (0%)
Income		
Failed to Answer	1 (6.3%)	0 (0%)
Less than $39,999	8 (50.2%)	9 (90%)
Above $40,000	7 (43.9%)	1 (10%)

Measures

The pre-test survey included a section of demographics. The list of demographic questions includes: race, age, gender, education level, relationship status, number of children, relationship to the child, income, and employment status. These characteristics aided in understanding how the personal characteristics of the participants affect the collected data. The

pre and post-tests also included questions about parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship.

Relationship quality. An adapted version of the HMRE study evaluation was used to determine relationship quality and parenting efficacy (Duncan et al., Under Development). The scale that assesses relationship quality is broken down into 11 different subscales: choose, share, know, connect, manage, care, couple quality, family harmony, confidence/dedication, positive/negative partner feelings, and relationship efficacy. Each scale uses, or adapts, a previously constructed scale or HMRE study researcher-created questions.

The choose scale consists of three questions from an adapted version of the Commitment Inventory scale (Stanley & Markman, 1992) and three questions created by HRME researchers (Duncan et al., Underdevelopment). This scale was used to determine partner's commitment to each other. This Likert-type scale ranges from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree," with questions such as "My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything else in my life. The Commitment Inventory scale has an average Cronbach's alpha of .77. The choose scale in this study has a Cronbach's alpha of .90.

The share scale consists of two questions from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale-revised (Busby, Christensen, Crane & Larson, 1995) and three questions developed by HRME researchers (Duncan et al., Under Development). This is a five question Likert-type scale that ranges from "never" to "more often than once a day," with questions such as "make time to touch base with each other." The Dyadic Adjustment Scale-revised has reports of a Cronbach's alpha of .85. In this study, the share scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .93.

The know scale consists of eight questions from the Love Maps Questionnaire (Gottman & Silver, 1999) that were adapted from a true/false measure into a Likert-type scale that ranges

from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." The six questions assess how well an individual knows their partner and perceives their partner's knowledge of them; a sample question is, "I know my partner's current life stresses." In this study, the know scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .97.

The connect scale consists of four questions from the Couple Social Integration Measure (Stanley & Markman, 2007); it was adapted into a Likert-type scale that ranges from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." This four question scale assesses the couple's social network or support and asks questions such as "many of our friends are friends of both of us." In this study, the connect scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .88.

The manage scale consists of 16 Likert-type scale questions that range from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree". The Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire (Buhrmester, Furman, Wittenberg, & Reis, 1988) with a Cronbach's alpha of .83, and provides two questions to the overall scale. The Negative Interaction Scale (Stanley, Markman, & Whitton, 2002) has a reported Cronbach's alpha of .80, and provides four questions to the overall scale. The Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Christensen & Sullaway, 1984) has Cronbach's alpha scores that range from .73 to .78, and provides six questions to the overall scale. HRME researchers (Duncan et al., Under Development) created the final four questions to the overall scale. In this study, the manage scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .88.

The care scale consists of 10 Likert-type scale questions that ranges from "never" to "more often than once a day." This scale pertains to emotional and physical expressions of love. The Socioemotional Behavior Scale (Huston & Vangelisti, 1991) Cronbach's alpha ranging from .88 to .94, provides 8 questions to the overall scale. The Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire

(Buhrmester et al., 1988) with a Cronbach's alpha of .83, provides 2 questions to the overall scale. In this study, the care scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .97.

The couple quality scale consists of three questions from the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983). This scale assesses the strength of the current relationship. This Likert-type scale ranges from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree" and asks questions such as "our relationship is strong." The Quality Marriage Index reports a Cronbach's alpha of .76. In this study, the couple quality scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .98.

The family harmony scale consists of three questions from the Family Harmony scale (Banker & Gaertner, 1998). This scale is Likert-type, ranging from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree" and asks questions such as "there are many disagreements in my house." The Family Harmony scale reports a Cronbach's alpha of .88. In this study, the family harmony scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .50.

The confidence/dedication scale consists of three questions from the Commitment Inventory (Stanley & Markman, 1992). This Likert-type scale, on a range of "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree," addresses positive thoughts of the couple's future and asks questions such as "I feel very confident when I think about our future together." The original Cronbach's alphas for the Commitment Inventory scale averaged .77. In this study, the confidence/dedication scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

The positive/negative partner feelings scale consists of two questions that assess the positive and negative feelings towards their partner. These questions were pulled from the Positive and Negative Quality in Marriage Scale (Fincham & Linfield, 1997). This Likert-type scale ranges from "not at all positive/negative" to "extremely positive/negative." Cronbach's

alpha scores have been reported between .87 and .91 for men, and .89 and .90 for women. In this study, the positive/negative partner feelings scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .68.

The relationship efficacy scale consists of 9 Likert-type scale questions that range from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." Questions are from the Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships Scale (Riggio et al., 2011) and determined individual assessment of romantic relationship ability with questions such as, "I feel insecure about my ability to be a good romantic partner." The Cronbach's alpha for the Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships scale is .89. In this study, the relationship efficacy scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .73.

Parenting efficacy. The parenting efficacy scale consists of 6 Likert-type scale questions that range from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." Questions are from the Parenting Sense of Competence scale (Gibaud-Wallston & Wandersman, 1978) and determines individual assessment of parenting efficacy such as "I understand how my actions affect my child". Cronbach's alpha for the Parenting Sense of Competence scale range from .76 to .87. In this study, the parenting efficacy scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .87.

The parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months scale consists of 19 Likert-type scale questions that range from "never true" to "always true." Questions are from the Infancy Parenting Styles Questionnaire (Arnott & Brown, 2013) and assess self-reports on parenting behaviors such as, "I encourage my baby to develop skills such as walking or talking." Cronbach's alpha for the Infancy Parenting Styles Questionnaire scale is .72. In this study, the parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .73.

The parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years scale consists of 19 Likert-type scale questions that range from "never true" to "always true." Questions are from the Parent Behavior Inventory (Lovejoy, Weis, O'Hare & Rubin, 1999) and assess self-reports on parenting behaviors such as,

"I have pleasant conversations with my child." Cronbach's alpha for the Parent Behavior Inventory scale ranges from .73 to .81. In this study, the parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .86.

The parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years scale consists of 22 Likert-type scale questions that range from "never true" to "always true." Questions are from the Ghent Parental Behavior Scale (Van Leeuwen & Vermulst, 2004) and assess self-reports on parenting behaviors such as, "I teach my child to follow rules." Cronbach's alpha for the Infancy Parenting Styles Questionnaire scale ranges from .67 to .80. In this study, the parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .86.

The coparenting scale consists of 12 Likert-type scale questions that range from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." Questions are adapted from the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory-Applicant Co-Parenting Scale (Cherry & Orme, 2011) and asks questions about the participant's partner such as, "works with me to solve problems specific to our child." Cronbach's alpha for the Casey Foster Applicant Inventory-Applicant Co-Parenting Scale ranges from .71 to .88. In this study, the coparenting scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .79.

The parenting stress scale consists of 10 Likert-type scale questions that range from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree." Questions are adapted from the Parental Stress Scale (Berry & Jones, 1995) and asks questions about the participant's partner such as, "works with me to solve problems specific to our child." Cronbach's alpha for the Parental Stress Scale ranges from .89 to .91. In this study, the parenting stress scale has Cronbach's alpha of .88.

Data Analysis

Data was entered into SPSS version 23 (IBM, 2015). Any variables that needed to be recoded were done so before data analysis took place. Data was then analyzed using paired

samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA statistical tests, and regressions within the SPSS software. The main research questions to be answered from this study were: (i) Does the adapted version of Together We Can increase parenting efficacy? (ii) Does the adapted version of Together We Can positively influence the co-parenting relationship? and (iii) How do minority individuals and Caucasian individuals differ on their parenting efficacy and co-parenting relationship outcomes?

To assess these questions a pre and post-test helped to analyze the outcomes over time. A correlational analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship. Correlational analyses were also conducted to assess the influence of race and income on the parenting and relationship scales. Paired samples t-tests examined the correlation of the pre and post parenting and relationship scales. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine the influence of race, income, and relationship status on post parenting and relationship scales. Finally, regressions were conducted to further understand the influence of race, income, and relationship status on post parenting and relationship scales

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Prior to testing the hypotheses, initial descriptive statistics for the outcomes were assessed (see Table 3). Preliminary assumption testing was also conducted to check for normal distribution, skewness, kurtosis, independence, normality, reliability and homogeneity. Assumptions were supported for most variables with the exception of the connect scale and parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years scale.

Table 3
Variable Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Choose Pre	26	1.67	7.00	5.35	1.37	-.850	.497
Choose Post	25	2.67	7.00	5.54	1.17	-.643	.033
Share Pre	25	1.00	7.00	4.31	1.67	-.779	-.155
Share Post	25	1.00	7.00	4.72	1.75	-.521	-.271
Know-self Pre	25	1.00	7.00	5.03	1.61	-1.141	.956
Know-self Post	25	2.00	7.00	5.42	1.21	-.872	1.544
Know-partner Pre	25	1.00	7.00	5.09	1.45	-.845	1.199
Know-partner Post	25	1.00	7.00	5.21	1.42	-.934	1.802
Connect Pre	25	1.00	7.00	5.29	1.39	-1.594	2.974
Connect Post	25	1.00	7.00	5.65	1.32	-2.084	5.877
Manage-self Pre	25	4.00	7.00	5.17	.983	.522	-1.057
Manage-self Post	25	4.00	7.00	5.13	1.01	.788	-.790
Manage-partner Pre	25	3.63	7.00	4.99	.959	.713	-.542
Manage-partner Post	25	2.50	7.00	4.93	1.07	.099	.283
Care-self Pre	25	1.00	7.00	4.68	1.88	-.535	-.724
Care-self Post	25	1.00	7.00	5.08	1.73	-.654	-.374
Care-partner Pre	25	1.00	7.00	4.58	1.97	-.487	-.811
Care-partner Post	25	1.00	7.00	4.86	1.89	-.627	-.586
Couple Quality Pre	25	1.00	7.00	5.54	1.49	-1.235	2.124
Couple Quality Post	25	3.00	7.00	5.73	1.26	-.744	-.244
Family Harmony Pre	25	3.00	7.00	5.20	1.24	.075	-1.207
Family Harmony Post	25	3.50	7.00	5.24	1.11	.160	-1.175
Confidence/Dedication Pre	25	1.00	7.00	5.54	1.55	-1.264	1.731
Confidence/Dedication Post	25	3.00	7.00	5.92	1.17	-.878	.059
Partner Feelings Pre	24	1.00	8.00	5.25	1.48	-1.520	3.127
Partner Feelings Post	25	1.00	10.00	5.60	1.75	.015	2.871
Relationship Efficacy Pre	24	3.00	6.75	4.92	1.03	.255	-.712
Relationship Efficacy Post	24	3.00	7.00	4.80	1.18	.459	-.434
Parent Efficacy Pre	26	3.00	7.00	5.11	1.19	.017	-1.260
Parent Efficacy Post	25	3.00	7.00	5.08	1.22	.269	-1.114
Coparenting Pre	24	3.75	6.67	5.22	.914	-.021	-1.145
Coparenting Post	24	3.33	7.00	5.35	.962	-.033	-.468
Parenting bhvs. 0-23m Pre	22	3.00	5.47	4.52	.586	-.675	.660
Parenting bhvs. 0-23m Post	20	2.95	5.89	4.62	.742	-.560	.425
Parenting bhvs. 2-5y Pre	20	3.25	6.78	5.77	.840	-1.579	3.296
Parenting bhvs. 2-5y Post	20	3.28	6.79	5.84	.975	-1.222	.900
Parenting bhvs. 6-18y Pre	25	3.05	6.48	5.52	.812	-1.562	2.555
Parenting bhvs. 6-18y Post	24	3.29	6.50	5.64	.784	-1.807	3.473
Parenting Stress Pre	25	1.00	4.30	3.08	.869	-.746	.199
Parenting Stress Post	22	1.00	7.00	3.18	1.18	.991	4.891

A correlational analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship. Statistically significant correlations were found between parenting efficacy and the co-parenting relationship (specifically the coparenting scale and couple quality scale, see Table 4). A Person's r data analysis revealed parenting efficacy posttests and coparenting posttests were positively correlated ($r=.41$, $p<.043$) and parenting efficacy posttests and couple quality posttests were positively correlated ($r=.61$, $p<.001$).

Table 4
Correlations for Parenting Efficacy and Co-Parenting Relationship

Variables	1.	2.	3.
1. Parenting Efficacy	--		
2. Coparenting	.416*	--	
3.Couple Quality	.614***	.706***	--

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Correlations were also conducted to assess the influence of race and income on the parenting and relationship scales (see Table 5). A Person's r data analysis revealed race the know-self scale pretests were negatively correlated ($r=-.42$, $p<.035$); race and the parenting efficacy pretests were positively correlated ($r=.53$, $p<.005$); race and the parenting efficacy posttests were positively correlated ($r=.48$, $p<.013$); and income and the parenting stress pretests were positively correlated ($r=.49$, $p<.011$).

Table 5
Correlations for Race and Income

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Race	--					
2. Income	.187	--				
3. Know-self Pre	-.423*	-.118	--			
4. Parenting Efficacy Pre	.534**	-.101	-.081	--		
5. Parenting Efficacy Post	.488*	.064	-.063	.812***	--	
6. Parenting Stress Pre	.240	.498*	-.049*	.103	.082	--

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Correlations were also found between pre and posttests. A Person's *r* data analysis revealed the following pre and post relationship scales to be positively correlated: choose (r=.54, p<.005); share (r=.67, p<.000); know-partner (r=.50, p<.010); connect (r=.39, p>.049); manage-self (r=.76, p>.000); manage-partner (r=.50, p>.010); care-self (r=.82, p<.000); care-partner (r=.77, p<.000); couple quality (r=.67, p<.000); family harmony (r=.58, p<.002); confidence/dedication (r=.71, p<.000); and relationship efficacy (r=.67, p<.000). The following pre and post parenting scales were found to be positively correlated: parenting efficacy (r=.81, p<.000); parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months (r=.64, p<.002); parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years (r=.75, p<.000); parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years (r=.65, p<.001); coparenting (r=.77, p<.000); and parenting stress (r=.50, p<.018).

Table 6

Correlations for Pre and Post Relationship Scales

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.
1. Choose Pre	--																							
2. Choose Post	.547*	--																						
3. Share Pre	.554*	.496*	--																					
4. Share Post	.357	.764*	.679*	--																				
5. Know-partner Pre	.640*	.591*	.672*	.411*	--																			
6. Know-partner Post	.354	.811*	.459*	.713*	.503*	--																		
7. Connect Pre	.800*	.529*	.588*	.333	.782*	.264	--																	
8. Connect Post	.396*	.791*	.421*	.645*	.377	.812*	.397	--																
9. Manage-self Pre	.422*	.608*	.640*	.677*	.391	.411*	.380	.437*	--															
10. Manage-self Post	.080	.444*	.534*	.649*	.153	.454*	.006	.369	.769*	--														
11. Manage-partner Pre	.448*	.525*	.692*	.596*	.440*	.381	.414*	.332	.891*	.702*	--													
12. Manage-partner Post	-.013	.479*	.359	.631*	-.007	.580*	-.084	.500*	.511*	.784*	.503*	--												
13. Care-self Pre	.589*	.710*	.831*	.715*	.818*	.616*	.687*	.537*	.521*	.413*	.584*	.328	--											
14. Care-self Post	.370	.809*	.632*	.841*	.613*	.806*	.413*	.714*	.515*	.449*	.487*	.455*	.827*	--										
15. Care-partner Pre	.605*	.641*	.823*	.661*	.811*	.457*	.734*	.413*	.574*	.424*	.675*	.285	.921*	.673*	--									
16. Care-partner Post	.473*	.767*	.579*	.777*	.603*	.685*	.505*	.635*	.518*	.395	.593*	.435*	.785*	.876*	.773*	--								
17. Couple quality Pre	.518*	.684*	.801*	.598*	.842*	.641*	.712*	.557*	.491*	.349	.499*	.313	.866*	.716*	.802*	.628*	--							
18. Couple quality Post	.255	.787*	.473*	.740*	.481*	.824*	.299	.741*	.406*	.371	.380	.474*	.688*	.905*	.551*	.809*	.673*	--						
19. Family harmony Pre	.510*	.666*	.862*	.652*	.660*	.573*	.558*	.491*	.686*	.537*	.747*	.457*	.793*	.654*	.800*	.619*	.864*	.631*	--					
20. Family harmony Post	.046	.449*	.458*	.592*	.106	.496*	.015	.486*	.368	.591*	.290	.704*	.392	.547*	.327	.452*	.464	.634*	.583*	--				
21. Confidence/dedication Pre	.316	.590*	.758*	.574*	.690*	.405*	.630*	.440*	.496*	.354	.500*	.236	.772*	.598*	.803*	.569*	.861*	.527*	.759*	.337	--			
22. Confidence/dedication Post	.267	.747*	.584*	.785*	.514*	.703*	.449*	.742*	.492*	.392	.450*	.469*	.719*	.852*	.677*	.840*	.724*	.893*	.669*	.593*	.713*	--		
23. Relationship efficacy Pre	.274	.540*	.562*	.522*	.308	.506*	.141	.497*	.811*	.702*	.789*	.564*	.491*	.526*	.485*	.477*	.429*	.509*	.712*	.488*	.341	.461*	--	
24. Relationship efficacy Post	.134	.402	.458*	.516*	.182	.430*	-.020	.342	.621*	.875*	.535*	.693*	.417*	.385	.367	.328	.319	.315	.489*	.597*	.211	.286	.672*	--

$* p < .05$

Table 7

Correlations for Pre and Post Parenting Scales

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
1. Parenting efficacy Pre	--											
2. Parenting efficacy Post	.812*	--										
3. Parenting bhvs. 0-23 months Pre	.210	.139	--									
4. Parenting bhvs. 0-23months Post	.110	-.042	.648*	--								
5. Parenting bhvs. 2-5 years Pre	.432	.408	.506*	.660*	--							
6. Parenting bhvs. 2-5 years Post	.359	.253	.277	.546*	.753*	--						
7. Parenting bhvs. 6-18 years Pre	.439*	.420*	.482*	.486*	.692*	.455*	--					
8. Parenting bhvs. 6-18 years Post	.322	.624*	.286	.230	.543*	.370	.651*	--				
9. Coparenting Pre	.110	.186	-.095	.182	.411	.494*	.314	.459*	--			
10. Coparenting Post	.162	.416*	.007	.068	.338	.461*	.234	.627*	.774*	--		
11. Parenting stress Pre	.023	.079	.164	-.074	-.096	-.351	.323	.010	-.426*	-.366	--	
12. Parenting stress Post	.103	.082	.090	-.113	-.638*	-.349	.167	-.112	-.473*	-.234	.500*	--

* $p < .05$

Paired samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the pre and post survey scales of the adapted Together We Can program. Though no statistically significant results were found using paired samples t-tests, means at pre and posttests are positively increased. Due to finding no statistically significant results, researchers further divided the data into grouping categories. Significant results were found when grouping participants by relationship status, as either in a dating relationship, or not in a dating relationship and by income, as either low income with an annual income of $39,999 or less, or high income with an annual income of $40,000 or more.

Parenting Efficacy

Researchers were interested in examining if the adapted Together We Can relationship education program increased parenting efficacy (research question #1). Researchers were also interested to see how racial differences accounted for changes in parenting efficacy (research question #3).

In a dating relationship. One way between-groups analyses of variance were conducted to explore the influence of relationship status, specifically being in a dating relationship, on parenting (see Table 8). Participants were divided into two groups depending on their race (Group 1: White/Caucasian; Group 2: Black/African American). There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.001$ level in post parenting efficacy for race: $F (1, 14) = 16.59$, $p = .001$. The actual difference in mean scores between the groups was large. The effect size, calculated using eta squared was .54.

Table 8

ANOVA for Race on Parenting Efficacy for Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Between Groups	10.184	1	10.184	16.590**
	Within Groups	8.594	14	.614	
	Total	18.778	15		

* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting Efficacy, Race

Simple linear regressions were calculated to predict posttest parenting outcomes based on pretest parenting scales and race (see Table 9). Significant regression equations were found for: pretests for parenting efficacy and race ($F(2, 13) = 25.94$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .80; pretests for parenting behaviors for children 0 to 23 months and race ($F(2, 10) = 6.21$, $p = .018$), with an R^2 of .55; pretests for parenting behaviors for children 2 to 5 years and race ($F(2, 9) = 6.78$, $p = .016$), with an R^2 of .60; pretests for coparenting and race ($F(2, 13) = 15.14$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .70; and pretests for parenting stress and race ($F(2, 12) = 26.87$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .81.

Table 9

ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Parenting scales and Race on Post-Parenting scales for Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	15.015	2	7.508	25.941***
	Residual	3.762	13	.289	
	Total	18.778	15		
2	Regression	3.738	2	1.869	6.211*
	Residual	3.009	10	.301	
	Total	6.748	12		
3	Regression	2.220	2	1.110	6.782*
	Residual	1.473	9	.164	
	Total	3.692	11		
4	Regression	7.832	2	3.916	15.146***
	Residual	3.361	13	.259	
	Total	11.193	15		
5	Regression	8.632	2	4.316	26.871***
	Residual	1.928	12	.161	
	Total	10.560	14		

$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting efficacy, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months, Race
3. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years, Race
4. Predictors: (Constant), Coparenting, Race
5. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting stress, Race

Not in a dating relationship. One way between-groups analyses of variance were conducted to explore the influence of relationship status, specifically not being in a dating relationship, on parenting scales; however, no statistically significant differences were found.

Simple linear regressions were calculated to predict posttest parenting outcomes based on pretest parenting scales and race (see Table 10). Significant regression equations were found for: parenting efficacy based on pretests for parenting efficacy and race ($F(2, 6) = 5.91$, $p = .038$), with an R^2 of .66; and parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years based on pretests for parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years and race ($F(1, 5) = 7.61$, $p = .040$), with an R^2 of .60.

Table 10

ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Parenting scales and Race on Post-Parenting scales for Non-Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	11.285	2	5.643	5.918*
	Residual	5.721	6	.953	
	Total	17.006	8		
2	Regression	6.770	1	6.770	7.618*
	Residual	4.443	5	.889	
	Total	11.213	6		

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting efficacy, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years, Race

Income. Simple linear regressions were calculated to predict posttest outcomes for parenting scales based on pretests for parenting scales and income (see Table 11). Statistically significant differences were found for the following scales: parenting efficacy (($F(2, 22) = 23.78$, $p = .000$) with an R^2 of .68), parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months (($F(2, 17) = 8.02$, $p = .004$) with an R^2 of .48), parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years (($F(2, 16) = 10.48$, $p = .001$) with an R^2 of .56), parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years (($F(2, 21) = 8.033$, $p = .003$) with an R^2 of .43), coparenting (($F(2, 21) = 15.72$, $p = .000$) with an R^2 of .60), and parenting stress (($F(2, 19) = 3.70$, $p = .044$) with an R^2 of .28).

Table 11

ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Parenting scales and Low-Income on Post-Parenting scales

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	24.468	2	12.234	23.783***
	Residual	11.317	23	.514	
	Total	35.784	24		
2	Regression	5.092	2	2.546	8.026**
	Residual	5.393	17	.317	
	Total	10.485	19		
3	Regression	9.650	2	4.825	10.489***
	Residual	7.360	16	.460	
	Total	17.009	18		
4	Regression	6.140	2	3.070	8.003**
	Residual	8.026	21	.382	
	Total	14.167	23		
5	Regression	12.786	2	6.393	15.722***
	Residual	8.540	21	.407	
	Total	21.326	23		
6	Regression	8.336	2	4.168	3.706*
	Residual	21.370	19	1.125	
	Total	29.706	21		

$*p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting efficacy, Income
2. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months, Income
3. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years, Income
4. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years, Income
5. Predictors: (Constant), Coparenting, Income
6. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting Stress, Income

Co-Parenting Relationship

Researchers were interested in examining if the adapted Together We Can relationship education program positively increased the co-parenting relationship (research question #2). Researchers were also interested to see how racial differences accounted for changes in the co-parenting relationship (research question #3).

In a dating relationship. One way between-groups analyses of variance were conducted to explore the influence of relationship status, specifically being in a dating relationship, on relationship scales (see Table 12). Participants were divided into two groups depending on their

race (Group 1: White/Caucasian; Group 2: Black/African American). There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level on care-self for race: $F (1, 14) = 7.84, p = .014$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared was 0.35. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level on couple quality for race: $F (1, 14) = 5.22, p = .038$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared was 0.27.

Table 12
ANOVA for Race on Relationship Scales for Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Between Groups	7.716	1	7.716	7.848*
	Within Groups	13.764	14	.983	
	Total	21.480	15		
2	Between Groups	3.273	1	3.273	
	Within Groups	8.776	14	.627	
	Total	12.049	15		

**$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$* $p < .01$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Care-self, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Couple quality, Race

Simple linear regressions were calculated for participants in a dating relationship to predict posttest outcomes for relationship scales based on pretests relationship scales and race (see Table 13). A significant regression equation was found for share and race ($F(2, 13) = 5.75, p = .016$), with an R^2 of .47. A significant regression equation was found for manage-self and race ($F(2, 13) = 19.50, p = .000$), with an R^2 of .75. A significant regression equation was found for care-self and race ($F(2, 13) = 11.34, p = .001$), with an R^2 of .63. A significant regression equation was found for care-partner and race ($F(2, 13) = 7.46, p = .007$), with an R^2 of .53. A significant regression equation was found for couple quality and race ($F(2, 13) = 16.30, p = .000$), with an R^2 of .71. A significant regression equation was found for family harmony and race ($F(2, 13) = 8.07, p = .005$), with an R^2 of .55. A significant regression equation was found for confidence/dedication and race ($F(2, 13) = 6.46, p = .01`$), with an R^2 of .49. A significant

regression equation was found for relationship efficacy and race ($F(2, 13) = 18.88$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .74.

Table 13
ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Relationship scales and Race on Post-Relationship scales for Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	12.622	2	6.311	5.758*
	Residual	14.248	13	1.096	
	Total	26.870	15		
2	Regression	13.549	2	6.774	19.509***
	Residual	4.514	13	.347	
	Total	18.063	15		
3	Regression	13.656	2	6.828	11.346***
	Residual	7.824	13	.602	
	Total	21.480	15		
4	Regression	14.281	2	7.140	7.464**
	Residual	12.437	13	.957	
	Total	26.718	15		
5	Regression	8.615	2	4.307	16.306***
	Residual	3.434	13	.264	
	Total	12.049	15		
6	Regression	8.728	2	4.364	8.078**
	Residual	7.022	13	.540	
	Total	15.750	15		
7	Regression	4.649	2	2.325	6.462*
	Residual	4.677	13	.360	
	Total	9.326	15		
8	Regression	14.539	2	7.269	18.883***
	Residual	5.005	13	.385	
	Total	19.543	15		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Manage-self, Race
3. Predictors: (Constant), Care-self, Race
4. Predictors: (Constant), Care-partner, Race
5. Predictors: (Constant), Couple quality, Race
6. Predictors: (Constant), Family harmony, Race
7. Predictors: (Constant), Confidence/dedication, Race
8. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship efficacy, Race

Not in a dating relationship. One way between-groups analyses of variance were

conducted to explore the influence of relationship status, specifically not being in a dating

relationship, on relationship scales (see Table 14). Participants were divided into two groups

depending on their race (Group 1: White/Caucasian; Group 2: Black/African American). There

was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level on family harmony for race: $F (1, 7)$

$= 9.55, p = .018$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared was 0.57. There was a statistically

significant difference at the $p < .01$ level on relationship efficacy for race: $F (1, 6) = 16.15, p =$

$.007$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared was 0.72.

Table 14
ANOVA for Race on Relationship scales for Non-Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Between Groups	5.837	1	5.837	9.559*
	Within Groups	4.274	7	.611	
	Total	10.111	8		
2	Between Groups	6.675	1	6.675	16.150**
	Within Groups	2.480	6	.413	
	Total	9.154	7		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Family harmony, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship efficacy, Race

Simple linear regressions were calculated to predict posttest relationship outcomes based

on pretest relationship scales and race (see Table 15). Significant regression equations were

found for: care-self based on pretests for care-self and race ($F(2, 6) = 13.73, p = .006$), with an

R^2 of .82; care-partner based on pretests for care-partner and race ($F(2, 6) = 8.35, p = .018$), with

an R^2 of .73; family harmony based on pretests for family harmony and race ($F(2, 6) = 5.79, p =$

$.040$), with an R^2 of .65; and relationship efficacy based on pretests for relationship efficacy and

race ($F(2, 5) = 7.08, p = .035$), with an R^2 of .73.

Table 15

ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Relationship scales and Race on Post-Relationship scales for Non-Dating Participants

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	30.012	2	15.006	13.730**
	Residual	6.557	6	1.093	
	Total	36.569	8		
2	Regression	37.376	2	18.688	8.353*
	Residual	13.424	6	2.237	
	Total	50.800	8		
3	Regression	6.661	2	3.331	5.793*
	Residual	3.450	6	.575	
	Total	10.111	8		
4	Regression	6.766	2	3.383	7.083*
	Residual	2.388	5	.478	
	Total	9.154	7		

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
1. Predictors: (Constant), Care-self, Race
2. Predictors: (Constant), Care-partner, Race
3. Predictors: (Constant), Family harmony, Race
4. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship efficacy, Race

Income. Income was separated into two groups (Group 1: $39,999 and below; Group 2: $40,000 and above). Simple linear regressions were calculated to predict posttests for relationship scales based on pretests for relationship scales and income (see Table 16). Posttests for the following relationship scales were significant: choose (($F(2, 22) = 5.09, p = .015$) with an R^2 of .31), share (($F(2, 22) = 9.51, p = .001$) with an R^2 of .46), know-partner (($F(2, 22) = 4.55, p = .022$) with an R^2 of .29), manage-self (($F(2, 22) = 17.39, p = .000$) with an R^2 of .61), manage-partner (($F(2, 22) = 4.01, p = .033$) with an R^2 of .26), care-self (($F(2, 22) = 23.90, p = .000$) with an R^2 of .68), care-partner (($F(2, 22) = 16.49, p = .000$) with an R^2 of .60), couple quality (($F(2, 22) = 9.38, p = .001$) with an R^2 of .46), family harmony (($F(2, 22) = 5.69, p = .010$) with an R^2 of .34), and relationship efficacy (($F(2, 21) = 8.86, p = .002$) with an R^2 of .45).

Table 16

ANOVA for the Regression Equation Pre-Relationship scales and Income on Post-Relationship scales

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	10.506	2	5.253	5.097*
	Residual	22.676	22	1.031	
	Total	33.182	24		
2	Regression	34.381	2	17.190	9.510***
	Residual	39.770	22	1.808	
	Total	74.150	24		
3	Regression	14.256	2	7.128	4.551*
	Residual	24.454	22	1.566	
	Total	48.710	24		
4	Regression	15.176	2	7.588	17.390***
	Residual	9.600	22	.436	
	Total	24.776	24		
5	Regression	7.444	2	3.722	4.018*
	Residual	20.380	22	.926	
	Total	27.825	24		
6	Regression	49.367	2	24.683	23.901***
	Residual	22.720	22	1.033	
	Total	72.086	24		
7	Regression	51.863	2	25.932	16.491***
	Residual	34.594	22	1.572	
	Total	86.458	24		
8	Regression	17.600	2	8.800	9.388***
	Residual	20.622	22	.937	
	Total	38.222	24		
9	Regression	10.138	2	5.069	5.692**
	Residual	19.591	22	.891	
	Total	29.729	24		
10	Regression	17.023	2	8.512	11.757***
	Residual	15.928	22	.724	
	Total	32.951	24		
11	Regression	14.830	2	7.415	8.862**
	Residual	17.571	22	.837	
	Total	32.401	23		

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

1. Predictors: (Constant), Choose, Income
2. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Income
3. Predictors: (Constant), Know-partner, Income
4. Predictors: (Constant), Manage-self, Income
5. Predictors: (Constant), Manage-partner, Income
6. Predictors: (Constant), Care-self, Income
7. Predictors: (Constant), Care-partner, Income

8. Predictors: (Constant), Couple quality, Income
9. Predictors: (Constant), Family harmony, Income
10. Predictors: (Constant), Confidence/dedication, Income
11. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship efficacy, Income

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study evaluated parenting efficacy and couple relationship outcomes for the adapted Together We Can program. Together We Can is a strength-based relationship education program that targets a low-SES co-parenting population (Harcourt et al., 2017; Kirkland et al., 2011; Shirer et al., 2009). Though Together We Can is a relationship education program, and not parenting education, researchers employed ecological theory and spillover hypothesis to connect the two. These theories state that the environments and relationships an individual occupies influence other environments, relationships, and situations in other aspects. Empirical research has shown the co-parenting relationship to translate into the parent-child relationship and child's well-being (Cummins & Davies, 2002). These theories frame the understanding of Together We Can participant's original parenting practices and program outcomes.

As low-SES and minority individuals are at increased risk for unstable environments and relationships (McCormick et al., 2017), researchers were interested in the influence of socioeconomic status and race on the Together We Can program outcomes. Researchers were interested in three specific research questions: (i) Does the adapted version of Together We Can increase parenting efficacy, (ii) Does the adapted version of Together We Can positively influence the co-parenting relationship, and (iii) How do minority individuals and Caucasian individuals differ on their parenting efficacy and co-parenting relationship outcomes?

RQ1: Does the adapted version of Together We Can increase parenting efficacy?

RQ2: Does the adapted version of Together We Can positively influence the co-parenting relationship?

When assessing all parenting and relationship scales, positive correlations were found between multiple parenting and relationship scales. Specifically, parenting efficacy was

positively correlated to both the coparenting scale and couple quality scale. Researchers anticipated this correlation as coparenting has been empirically shown to impact the parent-child relationship and child outcomes (Clark et al., 2013). A positive coparenting relationship spills over into parenting, allowing the parent to feel more secure and confident in their abilities (Kirkland et al., 2011).

Racial differences were also found for parenting efficacy. Hamilton et al. (2005) report minority individuals have higher rates of not being married to their child's parent. Therefore, racial differences in parenting efficacy may be partially due to co-parenting conflict causing the parent to have lower parental efficacy. Correlations were also found between income and parenting stress. As low-SES families experience the specific stressors due to their socioeconomic status, they may also have less resources to show resiliency in times of stress.

It is anticipated these differences were found due to the influence of the varying contextual factors. Ecological theory supports the idea that individuals come from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds that influence their relationship and parenting behaviors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These results prompted researchers to further classify participants into relationship status and socioeconomic status to group participants with those who have similar environmental factors to gain better insight into the results.

RQ3: How do minority individuals and Caucasian individuals differ on their parenting efficacy and co-parenting relationship outcomes?

When assessing how race influenced the posttests, researchers grouped participants based off two factors: relationship status and socioeconomic status. Relationship status has been shown to be an influential mediator of both parenting and relationship behaviors (Pedro et al., 2012). Relationship status was broken down into those in a dating relationship and those not in a dating

relationship. Income was separated into participants with an annual income below $39,999 and above $40,000.

Parenting

Statistically significant differences were found between individuals who were in a relationship and race for the parenting scales: parenting efficacy, parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months, parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years, coparenting, and parenting stress. Parenting efficacy and parenting behaviors have continuously been linked; parents who are not confident in their parenting abilities are likely to engage in poorer parenting behaviors (Biehle & Mickelson, 2011). However, researchers found an association in this study between individuals being in a relationship and having less statistically significant differences. This suggests parents in a dating relationship may have more overall parental confidence than parents not in a dating relationship. Pertaining to coparenting, coparenting will be easier when both parents value the other parent's involvement, communicate and respect each other (McHale et al., 2004). Parents who are in a dating relationship, but also attending a relationship education program, may be exhibiting coparenting differences that influence their relationship.

For participants who were not in a dating relationship, statistically significant differences based on race were found for the parenting scales: parenting efficacy and parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years. As discussed previously, it is not surprising to find significant differences in both parenting efficacy and parenting behaviors, as they are empirically correlated (Biehle & Mickelson, 2011). A non-dating parent may also feel unequipped to positively parent their child, as they may have fewer partner supports than a dating parent.

Differences were also found based on socioeconomic status for the parenting scales: parenting efficacy, parenting behaviors 0 to 23 months, parenting behaviors 2 to 5 years,

parenting behaviors 6 to 18 years, coparenting, and parenting stress. Researchers suspect

parenting differences were found based off socioeconomic status because of the environmental

factors in these participant's everyday lives. Differences in parenting behavior may be attributed

to less accurate sources of parenting information. Low-SES parents have been shown to use

parenting information from popular press, or media, rather than empirical or evidence based

information (Berkule-Silberman et al., 2010). Similarly, low-SES parents may be more likely to

have parenting stress due to fewer financial and supportive resources (Albritton et al., 2014).

Co-Parenting Relationship

Pertaining to the co-parenting relationship, statistically significant differences were found

between participants who were in a dating relationship and race for the relationship scales: share,

manage-self, care-self, care-partner, couple quality, family harmony, confidence/dedication, and

relationship efficacy. Racial differences may have been found for these post scales due to the

relationship program needs of Caucasians compared to African Americans. Barton et al. (2017)

suggests relationship education programs focusing on communication skills may be more salient

for African American participants. African American couples were also found to have increased

positive relationship education outcomes over any other race (Barton et al., 2017), possibly

accounting for the racial differences found for participants who were in a dating relationship.

Participants who were not in a dating relationship had more statistically significant

differences based on race. Differences were found for the following relationship scales: care-self,

care-partner, family harmony, and relationship efficacy. These differences are partially

accounted for by relationship status. Participants who were not in a dating relationship with their

child's other parent may have shown differences in family harmony due to differences in

involvement. Unmarried mothers are less likely to favor father involvement because they are at

increased risk for negative partner outcomes such as relationship termination, changes, or violence (Albritton et al., 2014). In general, relationship education programs are more effective for individuals who are more susceptible to relationship adversity (DuPree et al., 2016). As these individuals were not in a secure, dating relationship with their child's parent, they are at higher risk for relationship problem within the co-parenting relationship and may benefit more from relationship education.

Socioeconomic status was also found to play a significant role on the relationship scales: choose, share, know-partner, manage-self, manage-partner, care-self, care-partner, couple quality, family harmony, confidence/dedication, relationship efficacy. Low-SES, especially for parents with young children, is associated with decreased couple quality between partners (Williams & Cheadle, 2016). Randles (2014) argues couples who are not married and low-SES may have a harder time adapting to the skills learned in relationship education programs. Due to decreased resources and increased stressors, low-SES individuals may report a particularly difficult time using the learned skills as frequently (Randles, 2014).

Conclusions

Separating the participants into different relationship groups uncovered interesting results. More statistically significant differences were found for the relationship scales; however statistically significant differences were also found for the parenting scales. Since Together We Can is a relationship education, it is important to note the parental differences found amongst participants. Relationship education programs, such as Together We Can, that target parents have the potential to address both couple and co-parenting situations that may spillover into parenting and child outcomes (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Kirkland et al., 2011).

Together We Can program targets these individuals who are low-SES and may not be in a martial relationship with his/her child's other parent. It focuses on the specific environment of this population and how it influences parenting and the coparenting relationship. Thus, the correlations that were found between pre and posttests were further explained in regard to socioeconomic status, race, and relationship status. These contextual factors should be considered in future program development, evaluation, and research.

Implications. Relationship education programs have the potential to positively impact the couple and parent-child relationships, ultimately increasing stability, support, and child well-being (Adler-Baeder et al., 2013; Morrill et al., 2016; Randles, 2014). Relationship education classes geared towards parents should incorporate topics that may specifically influence parents. Cowan et al. (2009) support the idea that educational programs that focus on parenting have the ability to maintain and increase couple quality and relationship efficacy. Albritton et al. (2014) reiterates the stance that low-SES and minority populations are higher risk and will prosper from programs that strengthen their relationships and parenting behaviors. Strengths differ depending on the contextual factors of the population. It is imperative to understand how these strengths are molded, and how they continue to evolve. Relationship education programs must provide appropriate examples, skills, and resources that correlate to the targeted population.

Limitations. Participants surveyed were from two low-SES towns in North Carolina, and may not be a representative sample of the program outcomes for Together We Can. However, the intention of this study was to recruit participants with lower socioeconomic statuses. Participants also had a wide age range, as well as a high mean age, which could skew the data since parenting changes over time. Younger parents tend to report feeling less parenting efficacy than older parents, which has the potential to influence their positive or negative parenting

46

behaviors (Kershaw et al., 2013). Similarly, younger and less educated parents focus on the safety of their child, while older and more educated parents focus on the development of their child (Kim, 2015).

Another limitation of this study is through survey implementation. Surveys were dispersed to participants at the first and last of the four sessions. This may not have provided a large enough gap in time to adequately assess participant's parenting and relationship qualities before and after the program. The survey was also unclear on how to respond to the relationship questions; participants may have been responding on their past relationship instead of their current one. For example, questions such as "In the past month, how often would you say the following events occurred between you and your partner," and "Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes your partner" could have been difficult for participants not currently in a relationship to answer. Participants may have responded based off their most recent romantic partner, or their child's parent.

Future research. Additional research is needed to better understand how the relationship program, Together We Can, influences participant outcomes. As the new adapted version is shortened to require less time from the participants in hopes of increased retention, further research is needed to decipher the impact of the condensed material. Though it is a relationship education program geared towards co-parents, it has influential parenting themes throughout the program. Thus, as society continues to accept increased diversity in romantic relationships and parenting systems, the program should be evaluated with a varied population.

This study had a small sample size with participants that differed from the population Together We Can targets. It is anticipated that increased statistically significant results would be

found with a larger sample size, and a sample of strictly unmarried co-parents. An additional study with this population and a larger sample should be conducted to better analyze the results.

Researchers are taking measures to expand research with diverse populations; however, more research is needed to understand how race, socioeconomic status, and family structure modify the effectiveness of relationship education programs. An additional study should be conducted to assess moderators on the Together We Can outcomes. Qualitative research should also be conducted to assess the needs and desired changes of low-SES and minority individuals within parenting and relationship education.

REFERENCES

Adler-Baeder, F., Calligas, A., Skuban, E., Keiley, M., Ketring, S., & Smith, T. (2013). Linking changes in couple functioning and parenting among couple relationship education participants. *Family Relations, 62*(2), 284-297. doi:10.1111/fare.12006

Albritton, T., Angley, M., Grandelski, V., Hansen, N., & Kershaw, T. (2014). Looking for solutions: Gender differences in relationship and parenting challenges among Low-Income, young parents. *Family Process, 53*(4), 686-701. doi:10.1111/famp.12088

Almeida, D. M., Wethington, E., & Chandler, A. L. (1999). Daily transmission of tensions between marital dyads and parent-child dyads. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 61*(1), 49-61.

Arnott, B., & Brown, A. (2013) An exploration of parenting behaviours and attitudes during early infancy: Association with maternal and infant characteristics. *Infant and Child Development.* doi:10.1002/icd.1794.

Banker, B. S., & Gaertner, S. L. (1998). Achieving stepfamily harmony: An intergroup-relations approach. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12*, 310 – 325.

Barton, A. W., Beach, S. R. H., Lavner, J. A., Bryant, C. M., Kogan, S. M., & Brody, G. H. (2017). Is communication a mechanism of relationship education effects among rural african americans? *Journal of Marriage and Family, 79*(5), 1450-1461. doi:10.1111/jomf.12416

Bengtson, V. L., Acock, A. C., Aleen, K. R., Dilworth-Anderson, P., & Klein, D. M. (2005). *Sourcebook of family theory & research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Berkule-Silberman, S. B., Dreyer, B. P., Huberman, H. S., Klass, P. E., & Mendelsohn, A. L. (2010). Sources of parenting information in low SES mothers. *Clinical Pediatrics, 49*(6), 560-568. doi:10.1177/0009922809351092

Berry, J.D. & Jones, W.H., (1995) The Parental Stress Scale: initial psychometric evidence. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 12*, 463 – 472.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryan, G. M. J., DeBord, K., & Schrader, K. (2006). Building a professional development system: A case study of north carolina's parenting education experiences. *Child Welfare, 85*(5), 803-818.

Buehler, C., & Gerard, J. M. (2002). Marital conflict, ineffective parenting, and children's and adolescents' maladjustment. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*(1), 78-92. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2002.00078.x

Buhrmester, D., Furman, W., Wittenberg, M. T., & Reis, H. T. (1988). Five domains of interpersonal competence in peer relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55*(6), 991-1008.

Busby, D. M, Christensen, C., Crane, D. R., & Larson, J. H. (1995). A revision of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for use with distressed and nondistressed couples: Construct hierarchy and multidimensional scales. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 21*(3), 289-308

Carlson, M. J., & McLanahan, S. S. (2006). Strengthening unmarried families: Could enhancing couple relationships also improve parenting? *Social Service Review, 80*(2), 297-321. doi:10.1086/503123

Chau, V., & Giallo, R. (2015). The relationship between parental fatigue, parenting self-efficacy and behaviour: Implications for supporting parents in the early parenting period. *Child: Care, Health and Development, 41*(4), 626-633. doi:10.1111/cch.12205

Cherry, D. & Orme, J. (2011). Validation study of a coparenting scale for foster couples. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 5*, 564-589. doi:10.1080/15548732.2011.617285.

Christensen, A., & Sullaway, M. (1984). *Communication patterns questionnaire.* Unpublished manuscript, University of California, Los Angeles.

Clark, C., Young, M. S., & Dow, M. G. (2013). Can strengthening parenting couples' relationships reduce at-risk parenting attitudes? *The Family Journal, 21*(3), 306-312. doi:10.1177/1066480713476841

Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., & Martin, M. J. (2010). Socioeconomic status, family processes, and individual development. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 685–704.

Cowan, P. A., & Cowan, C. P. (2002). What an intervention design reveals about how parents affect their children's academic achievement and behavior problems. In J. G. Borkowski, S. L. Ramey, & M. Bristol-Power (Eds.), *Parenting and the child's world: Influences on academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development* (pp. 75–97). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Cowan, P. A., Cowan, C. P., Pruett, M. K., Pruett, K., Wong, J. J., & LaRossa, R. (2009). Promoting fathers' engagement with children: Preventive interventions for low-income families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(3), 663-679. 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00625.x

Cox, R. B., & Shirer, K. A. (2009). Caring for my family: A pilot study of a relationship and marriage education program for low-income unmarried parents. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy, 8*(4), 343-364. doi:10.1080/15332690903246127

Cummings, E. M., & Davies, P. T. (2002) Effects of marital conflict on children: Recent advances and emerging themes in process-oriented research. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 43*, 31 – 63.

Curran, M. A., Burke, T. J., Young, V. J., & Totenhagen, C. J. (2016) Relational sacrifices about intimate behavior and relationship quality for expectant cohabitors. *Marriage & Family Review, 52*(5), 442-460. doi:10.1080/01494929.2015.1113225

Duncan, J., Futris, T.G., Mallette, J., Karlsen, A., & Shirer, K. (Under Development). *Together We Can: Creating a Healthy Future for our Family (Adapted)*. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension.

DuPree, D. G., Whiting, J. B., & Harris, S. M. (2016). A person-oriented analysis of couple and relationship education: Person-oriented analysis of relationship education. *Family Relations, 65*(5), 635-646. doi:10.1111/fare.12222

Fincham, F. D., & Linfield, K. J. (1997). A new look at marital quality: Can spouses feel positive and negative about their marriage? *Journal of Family Psychology, 11*, 489-502.

Futris, T., & Adler-Baeder, F. (2014). *The National Extension Relational and Marriage Education Model: Empirically derived core concepts for programs*. USDA/CSREES.

Gibaud-Wallston, J., & Wandersman, L.P. (1978). *Development and utility of the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale*. Paper presented at the meeting of American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada.

Gottman, J. & Silver, N. (1999). The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Hamilton, B. E., Ventura, S. J., Martin, J. A., & Sutton, P. D. (2005). *Preliminary births for 2004. Health e-stats*, 20-24.

Harcourt, K. T., Adler-Baeder, F., Rauer, A., Pettit, G. S., & Erath, S. (2015). Relationship education for incarcerated adults. *Family Process, 56*(1), 75-90. doi:10.1111/famp.12164

Huston, T. L., & Vangelisti, A. L. (1991). Socioemotional behavior and satisfaction in marital relationships: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61*(5), 721-733.

IBM Corp. (2015). IDM SPSS Statistics for Macintosh, Version 23.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Katz-Wise, S. L., Priess, H. A., & Hyde, J. S. (2010). Gender-role attitudes and behavior across the transition to parenthood. *Developmental Psychology, 46*(1), 18-28. doi:10.1037/a0017820

Kershaw, T., Murphy, A., Lewis, J., Divney, A., Albritton, T., Magriples, U., & Gordon, D. (2013). Family and relationship influences on parenting behaviors of young parents. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 54*(2), 197-203. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.08.012

Kim, Y. (2015). Variations in perceived parenting education preferences: A person-centered approach. *Early Child Development and Care, 185*(7), 1118-1133. doi:10.1080/03004430.2014.980407

Kirkland, C. L., Skuban, E. M., Adler-Baeder, F., Ketring, S. A., Bradford, A., Smith, T., & Lucier-Greer, M. (2011). Effects of relationship/marriage education on co-parenting and children's social skills: Examining rural minority parents' experiences. *Early Childhood Research & Practice, 13*(2)

Krishnakumar, A., & Buehler, C. (2000). Interparental conflict and parenting behaviors: A meta-analytic review. *Family Relations, 49*(1), 25-44. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2000.00025.x

Leijten, P., Raaijmakers, M. A. J., de Castro, B. O., & Matthys, W. (2013). Does socioeconomic status matter? A meta-analysis on parent training effectiveness for disruptive child behavior. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 42*(3), 384-392. doi:10.1080/15374416.2013.769169

Lovejoy, M. C., Weis, R., O'Hare, E., & Rubin, E. C. (1999). Development and initial validation of the Parent Behavior Inventory. *Psychological Assessment, 11*(4), 534-545.

Marczak, M. S., Becher, E. H., Hardman, A. M., Galos, D. L., & Ruhland, E. (2015). Strengthening the role of unmarried fathers: Findings from the co-parent court project. *Family Process, 54*(4), 630-638. doi:10.1111/famp.12134

McCormick, M. P., Hsueh, J., Merrilees, C., Chou, P., & Cummings, E. M. (2017). Moods, stressors, and severity of marital conflict: A daily diary study of low-income families. *Family Relations, 66*(3), 1-16. doi:10.1111/fare.12258

McGill, J., Adler-Baeder, F., Bradford, A. B., Kerpelman, J., Ketring, S. A., & Sollie, D. (2016). The role of relational instability on individual and partner outcomes following couple relationship education participation. *Family Relations, 65*(3), 407-423. doi:10.1111/fare.12201

McHale, J. P., Kuersten-Hogan, R., & Rao, N. (2004). Growing points for coparenting theory and research. *Journal of Adult Development, 11*(3), 221-234

Morrill, M. I., Hawrilenko, M., & Córdova, J. V. (2016). A longitudinal examination of positive parenting following an acceptance-based couple intervention. *Journal of Family Psychology, 30*(1), 104-113. doi:10.1037/fam0000162

Norton, R. (1983). Measuring marital quality: A critical look at the dependent variable. *Journal of Marriage & the Family, 45*, 141-151.

Ooms, T., & Wilson, P. (2004). The challenges of offering relationship and marriage education to low-income populations. *Family Relations, 53*(5), 440-447. doi:10.1111/j.0197-6664.2004.00052.x

Pedro, M. F., Ribeiro, T., & Shelton, K. H. (2012). Marital satisfaction and partners' parenting practices: The mediating role of coparenting behavior. *Journal of Family Psychology, 26*(4), 509-522. doi:10.1037/a0029121

Randles, J. M. (2014). Partnering and parenting in poverty: A qualitative analysis of a relationship skills program for low-income, unmarried families. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 33*(2), 385-412. doi:10.1002/pam.21742

Riggio, H. R., Weiser, D., Valenzuela, A., Lui, P., Montes, R., & Heuer, J. (2011). Initial validation of a measure of self-efficacy in romantic relationships. *Personality and Individual Differences, 51*, 601-606.

Shirer, K., Chen, C., Contreras, D., Hamler, S., Harris, A., Lacina, H. . . . Cardona, J. R. (2009). *A curriculum to improve co-parenting relationships of single parents. Together we can: Creating a healthy future for our family*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Extension.

Sorensen, E., Mincy, R., & Halpern, A. (2000). Redirecting welfare policy toward building strong families. *Strengthening Families series*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Stanley, S. M, & Markman, H. J. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 54*(3), 595-608.

Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2007). Couple Social Integration Measure. Unpublished

    measure. Greenwood Village, CO: PREP, Inc.

Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., & Whitton, S. W. (2002). Communication, conflict, and

    commitment: Insights on the foundations of relationship success from a national survey.

    Family Process, 41(4), 659.

Van Leeuwen, K. G., & Vermulst, A. A. (2004). Some psychometric properties of the Ghent

    Parental Behavior Scale. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 20*(4), 283-298.

Williams, D. T., & Cheadle, J. E. (2016). Economic hardship, parents' depression, and

    relationship distress among couples with young children. *Society and Mental Health,*

    6(2), 73-89. doi:10.1177/2156869315616258

Zemp, M., Nussbeck, F. W., Cummings, E. M., & Bodenmann, G. (2017). The spillover of child-

    related stress into parents' relationship mediated by couple communication. *Family*

    Relations, 66(2), 317-330. doi:10.1111/fare.12244

Zilberstein, K. (2016). Soapbox: Class matters in parenting interventions. *Clinical Child*

    Psychology and Psychiatry, 21(3), 359-367. doi:10.1177/1359104516630774

APPENDEX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: Lindsey Almond
CC:
     Eboni Baugh
Date: 10/23/2017
Re: UMCIRB 17-001923
     Together We Can

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 10/22/2017. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #2.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

ECU

East Carolina University Research Survey – Together We Can – Weekly Series

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of this survey is to learn more about you, your relationships, and your experiences as a parent. Your participation in the research study is voluntary. You may choose to stop taking part in the research at any time. However, your participation may benefit future education programs and thereby other families.

We hope that you will answer all the questions on this survey, but you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. If you need help while completing the survey, please ask the program instructor.

Your Survey ID
1. Please enter the ID you were given for this survey: _____

A Little Bit About You
2. Gender (please circle)
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Other: _____

3. Race
   a. White
   b. Hispanic or Latino
   c. Black or African American
   d. Native American or American Indian
   e. Asian/Pacific Islander
   f. Other: _____

4. Level of Education Completed
   a. Elementary School
   b. Middle School
   c. Some High School
   d. High School or equivalent (GED)
   e. Some college credit, no degree
   f. Community College
   g. Four Year College (Bachelor's degree)
   h. Master's degree
   i. Doctorate degree
   j. Other: _____

5. What is your employment status?
   a. Employed full time (40+ hours per week)
   b. Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)
   c. Unemployed and currently looking for work
   d. Unemployed and not currently looking for work
   e. Student
   f. Retired
   g. Homemaker
   h. Unable to work

6. What is your current level of income
   a. Less than $10,000
   b. $10,000 to $19,999
   c. $20,000 to $29,999
   d. $30,000 to $39,999
   e. $40,000 to $49,999
   f. $50,000 to $59,999
   g. $60,000 to $69,999
   h. $70,000 to $79,999
   i. $80,000 to $89,999
   j. $90,000 to $99,999
   k. $100,000 or more

7. Number of Children You Care For: _____
   a. What is your relationship to each of these children? (ex. Child 1 I am a step-parent)
   b. _____
      _____

8. Relationship Status
   a. Single (Never married)
   b. Married, or in a domestic partnership
   c. Widowed
   d. Divorced
   e. Separated

9. Month/Year you were born (ex. 12/1983): _____

About Your Relationship

Please answer the survey questions about yourself and your partner as honestly as possible. All responses will remain confidential and will not be seen by your partner. Please answer these questions about the person you co-parent with.

10. Are you currently in a dating or couple relationship?
    a. Yes
    b. No

11. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes you: (Check one box for each question)

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything else in my life.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. I may not want to be with my partner a few years from now.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. I want this relationship to stay strong no matter what rough times we may encounter.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I commit effort every day to making my relationship work.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. I always think about how my choices could affect my relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I always make an effort to focus on my partner's strengths.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

12. In the <u>past month</u>, how often would you say the following events occurred between you and your partner?

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Three-four times a week	Once a day	More often than once a day
A. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. Engage in and/or talk about outside interests together.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. Make time to touch base with each other.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. Talk with each other about our day.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Participate in and/or talk about one another's hobbies.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

13. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>you:</u>

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. I know my partner's current life stresses.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. I know some of my partner's major aspirations and hopes in life.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. I know my partner's current major worries.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I know my partner pretty well.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

14. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>your partner:</u>

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. My partner knows my current life stresses.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. My partner knows my own hopes and aspirations.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. My partner knows my current major worries.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. My partner knows me pretty well.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

15. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>you and your partner:</u>

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. Many of our friends are friends of both of us.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
B. We know people who care about us and our relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. If we were to need help getting by or encountered a crisis, we would have friends or family to rely on.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. As a couple, we try to help others in need.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

All couples have disagreements in their relationship. And, couples deal with their problems in different ways.

For the next set of questions, think about the arguments or disagreements you and your partner had <u>during the past month</u>.

16. First, rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>you</u> during the past month in a typical disagreement:

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. I am able to see my partner's point of view and really understand it, even if I don't agree.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. When things "get heated" I suggest we take a break to calm down.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. I can easily forgive my partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I shout or yell at my partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. I hit, grab, or push my partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I express my feelings to my partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I blame, accuse, or criticize my partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. I avoid discussing the problem.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

17. Now, please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>your partner</u> during the past month in a typical disagreement:

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. My partner is able to see my point of view and really understand it, even if he/she doesn't agree.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
B. When things "get heated" my partner suggests we take a break to calm down.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. My partner can easily forgive me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. My partner shouts or yells at me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. My partner hits, grabs, or pushes me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. My partner expresses his/her feelings to me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. My partner blames, accuses, or criticizes me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. My partner avoids discussing the problem.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Next, think about your daily interactions with your <u>partner during the past month</u>.

18. On average, how often in the past month did <u>you:</u>

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Three-four times a week	Once a day	More often than once a day
A. Say "I love you" to your partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. Do something nice for your partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. Initiate physical affection with your partner (e.g., kiss, hug).	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. Share emotions, feelings, or problems with your partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Tell your partner things you appreciate about him/her and how much you care for him/her.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

19. On average, how often in the past month did <u>your partner:</u>

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Three-four times a week	Once a day	More often than once a day
A. Say "I love you" to you.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. Do something nice for you.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. Initiate physical affection with you (e.g., kiss, hug).	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. Share emotions, feelings, or problems with you.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Tell you things he/she appreciates about you and how much he/she cares for you.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Overall Relationship Quality

Last, think about how you feel about your current relationship

20. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with each of the following:

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. We have a good relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. Our relationship is strong.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. My relationship makes me happy.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. Generally there is a feeling of contentment and happiness in my house.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Overall, there are more happy feelings than unhappy feelings in my house.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. There are many disagreements in my house.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I feel good about our prospects to make this relationship work for a lifetime.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. I feel very confident when I think about our future together.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. We have skills a couple needs to make a marriage last.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Select your response to each of the following statements.

21. Considering only <u>negative feelings</u> you have towards your partner, and ignoring the positive ones, how negative are these feelings?

Not at all Negative 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Extremely Negative 10

22. Considering only <u>positive feelings</u> you have towards your partner, and ignoring the negative ones, how positive are these feelings?

Not at all Positive 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Extremely Positive 10

Doing everything needed to keep a romantic relationship going can be challenging. Every relationship has its ups and downs.

23. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes how <u>you</u> have felt about your relationship during the past month.

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. Failure in my romantic relationship only makes me want to try harder.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. When I make plans in my romantic relationship, I am certain I can make them work.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. I have difficulty focusing on important issues in my romantic relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. If I can't do something successfully in my romantic relationship the first time, I keep trying until I can.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems that come up in my romantic relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I find it difficult to put effort into maintaining success in my romantic relationship.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I feel insecure about my ability to be a good romantic partner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. One of my problems is that I cannot come up with the energy to make my romantic relationship more successful.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. Having a successful romantic relationship is very difficult for me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Being A Parent

This part of the survey asks questions to help us understand your family and your experiences with being a parent.

24. First, consider <u>your</u> thoughts and attitudes about parenting children, in general. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>you.</u>

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. I understand how my actions affect my child.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. I would make a fine role model for a new parent to follow in order to learn what she/he would need to know in order to be a good parent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. Being a parent is manageable, and any problems are easily solved.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. When something is troubling a/my child, I am always able to figure it out.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Considering how long I've been a parent, I feel completely confident as a parent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I honestly believe I have all the skills necessary to be a good parent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

25. Thinking about how you and your partner parent your biological, step, adopted, and/or foster children, please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with how well each statement describes <u>your partner.</u>

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. My partner strongly supports my parenting efforts.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. My partner has similar beliefs about how to parent children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. My partner says cruel and hurtful things about me in front of our child(ren).	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. My partner has differing views on how to discipline children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. My partner tries to get our child(ren) to take sides when we argue.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. My partner talks things over with me about our child(ren) every day.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. My partner shares parenting responsibilities with me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. My partner argues with me about our child(ren).	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. My partner works with me to solve problems specific to our child(ren).	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
J. My partner backs me up in parenting.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
K. My partner undermines my parenting.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
L. My partner is a good parent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

26. Which best describes the age of your <u>youngest child</u>?
    a. 0-23 months
    b. 2-5 years old
    c. 6-18 years old
    d. I am expecting/pregnant

27. Please describe your youngest child

    e. Gender
        i. Female   ii. Male

    f. Relationship
        i. Biological
        ii. Adopted
        iii. Stepchild
        iv. Foster

28. There are a variety of ways that parents interact with their children ages 0-23 months. Parents may try their best to "do it all," but it's not always possible or easy. Thinking about how you interact with your youngest child, indicate how true you think each statement below is.

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
A. You can spoil a baby.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. My baby needs to learn the difference between right and wrong.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. It is never too young to start disciplining a child.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. Sometimes my baby cries to try and manipulate me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Babies under 1 year do not need discipline.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I have a strict day-to-day routine for my baby.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. Babies need a routine.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. Everyone is happiest when the baby is in a routine.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. My baby sets his/her own routine.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

29. Continue thinking about how you interact with your youngest child as you indicate how true you think each statement below is

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
J. A routine makes a baby calm and secure.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
K. Babies should be encouraged to entertain themselves.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
L. I make sure I put my baby down regularly.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
M. Cuddling babies all the time makes them too dependent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
N. I generally like to keep my baby as close as possible to me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
O. I encourage my baby to develop skills such as walking or talking.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
P. I do lots of organized activities with my baby.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Q. I make sure I play, read, or sing with my baby very regularly.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
R. Babies need lots of parental input such as reading and activities.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
S. It is very important my baby meets developmental milestones.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

30. There are a variety of ways that parents interact with their children ages 2-5 years old. Parents may try their best to "do it all," but it's not always possible or easy. Thinking about how you interact with your youngest child, indicate how true each statement below is about you

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
A. I have pleasant conversations with my child.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. I try to teach my child new things.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. My child and I hug and/or kiss each other.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I laugh with my child about things we find funny.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. My child and I spend time playing games, doing crafts, or doing other activities together.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I listen to my child's feelings and try to understand them.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I thank or praise my child.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. I offer to help, or help my child, with things he/she is doing.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. I comfort my child when he/she seems scared, upset, or unsure.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
J. I hold or touch my child in an affectionate way.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
K. I lose my temper when my child doesn't do something I ask him/her to do.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

31. Continue thinking about how you interact with your youngest child as you indicate how true each statement below is about you

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
L. I grab or handle my child roughly.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
M. I demand that my child does something (or stops doing something) right away.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
N. I complain about my child's behavior to him/her.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
O. When my child misbehaves, I let him/her know what will happen if he/she doesn't behave.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
P. I threaten my child.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Q. I say mean things to my child that could make him/her feel bad.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
R. When I'm disappointed in my child's behavior, I remind him/her about how much I've done for him/her.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
S. When my child asks for help or attention, I ignore him/her or I make him/her wait until later.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

32. There is a variety of ways that parents interact with their children ages 6-18 years old. Parents may try their best to "do it all," but it's not always possible or easy. Thinking about how you interact with your youngest child, indicated how true each statement below is about you

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
A. I teach my child to adapt to the habits in our family.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. I ask my child about his/her hobbies and interests.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. I teach my child that he/she is responsible for his/her own behavior.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I threaten with a punishment, but in the end I don't carry it out.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. I know who my child's friends are.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. I compliment my child every day.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I teach my child to solve his/her own problems.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. I teach my child to handle belongings with respect.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. I let my child out of punishment early.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
J. I tell my child many times that I will discipline his/her behavior before I do so.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
K. I teach my child to make his/her own decisions.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

33. Continue thinking about how you interact with your youngest child as you indicate how true each statement below is about you

	Never True	Almost Never True	Rarely True	Neutral	Sometimes True	Usually True	Always True
L. I show affection to my child every day.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
M. I spend time with my child every day.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
N. I teach my child respect for authority.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
O. I make time to listen.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
P. I keep track of how my child is doing in school.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Q. I teach my child to follow rules.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
R. I discuss problems and/or disagreements and we work together to find a solution.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
S. I am aware of how my child spends money.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
T. I talk with my child about fair consequences when rules are broken.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
U. I always know where my child is.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

34. Being a parent can be both rewarding and stressful at times. Please rate how strongly you disagree or agree with each of the following statements.

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed	Agree	Stongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. The behavior of my children is often embarrassing or stressful to me.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
B. Having children has been a financial burden.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
C. If I had it to do over again, I might decide not to have children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
D. I sometimes worry whether I am doing enough for my children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
E. Caring for children sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
F. Having children leaves little time and flexibility in my life.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
G. I feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
H. Having children has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I. It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
J. The major source of stress in my life is my children.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O