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Factors Associated with Positive Relationships between Stepfathers and Adolescent Stepchildren

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Abstract

This study employs nationally representative data on adolescents and their stepfathers ($n = 2085$) from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) to examine factors associated with positive stepfather-stepchild relationships in married stepfamilies. Results reveal substantial variability in the perceived quality of adolescents' relationships with stepfathers. Structural equation models using Wave I data reveal that close relationships with mothers and close ties between mothers and stepfathers are positively related to the perceived quality of adolescents' relationships with stepfathers. Longitudinal models using Waves I and II do not yield definitive results but suggest that the direction of influence runs in both directions, with the mother-child relationship and the stepfather-stepchild relationship mutually reinforcing one another. We identify a number of other factors that are associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties, as well as a few factors that may be less consequential than previously thought. Most of the correlates of positive stepfather-stepchild relationships are similar for boys and girls; for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics; and for stepfamilies of various durations.

Keywords

Father-child relations; Family relations; Parent-adolescent relations; Stepfamilies; Structural Equation Modeling

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1. Introduction

The rise in divorce during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States led to a corresponding increase in remarriage and stepfamily formation. Although the divorce rate declined during the 1980s, the percentage of children born to never-married mothers has increased, and many of these mothers and their children eventually form stepfamilies. Currently, nearly one third of all children in stepfamilies (and nearly two thirds of Black children in stepfamilies) enter this family form after a nonmarital birth (Bumpass, Raley, and Sweet, 1995; Teachman and Tedrow, 2008). Almost 8% of all U.S. children were living with a stepparent in 2009 (Kreider and Ellis, 2011). Estimates of children ever spending some time in a stepfamily during their childhood are much higher, at approximately 30% (Bumpass et al., 1995). The vast majority of stepfamilies involve married couples, although children are increasingly likely to be living in cohabiting stepfamilies (Kreider and Ellis, 2011).

Many previous studies compare stepfamilies with other family types, with two continuously married parents and their children usually serving as the normative comparison group. As Coleman, Ganong, and Fine (2000) argued, this approach tends to emphasize the deficits of stepfamilies rather than the factors that facilitate positive outcomes within stepfamilies. To move beyond an implicit deficit-comparison perspective, it is necessary to study stepfamilies as a distinct family form (see also Sweeney, 2010). Rather than making comparisons *between* stepfamilies and other family types, a *stepfamily-focused* approach makes comparisons *within* stepfamilies—the approach of the current study. A stepfamily-focused approach also directs attention to factors and processes that are unique to, or particularly prevalent in, stepfamilies (e.g., the nonresident father-child relationship, presence of stepsiblings, duration of the stepfamily). Focusing on differences between family structures (the more common approach) limits the analysis to variables that all family structures have in common and, consequently, makes it difficult to understand processes that are unique to stepfamilies.

We focus on the quality of relationships between stepfathers and stepchildren, because the vast majority of children living in stepfamily households reside with a stepfather rather than a stepmother (Stewart, 2007). Close and supportive relationships with stepfathers may be beneficial for children's development and achievement (King, 2006). Yet prior research indicates a great deal of variability in the quality of stepfather-stepchild relationships. Using nationally representative data from Add Health, King (2006) found that almost as many adolescents reported being “not close” to their stepfather (40%) as being “close” (60%). Despite the potential importance of the topic, we have only a limited understanding of the factors that promote positive stepfamily functioning and facilitate the formation of positive stepfather-stepchild ties (Coleman et al., 2000), especially from the viewpoint of stepchildren (see Jensen and Shafer, 2013, for a recent exception).

This study employs nationally representative data on adolescents and their stepfathers from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). Our central question is, “What factors are associated with positive (or negative) relationships between stepfathers and stepchildren?” Positive relationships are defined in this study as stepchildren's perceptions of closeness and engagement with stepfathers in activities and communication.

Our theoretical perspective assumes that the quality of stepfather-stepchild relationships depends on a large number of contextual factors. For this reason, we examine an array of contextual factors, several of which have received little or no attention in prior research (e.g., religiosity, number of prior father figures). We also consider whether the factors that are associated with positive stepfather-stepchild relationships are similar for boys and girls; for Whites, Blacks and Hispanics; and for stepfamilies of shorter and longer durations. This knowledge can aid in the creation of more effective interventions to foster strong stepfather-stepchild ties. For example, if little variation exists among adolescents in the factors that promote positive stepfather-stepchild ties, then interventions to foster stronger ties are likely to work equally well for diverse groups of adolescents. If significant variation exists among adolescents in the factors that promote positive ties, however, then interventions need to be sensitive to these differences to be more effective.

A limitation of prior research is the lack of attention to racial and ethnic diversity in stepfamilies. Many studies have been based on convenience samples of White middle-class stepfamilies. Moreover, most studies have focused exclusively on stepfamilies formed after divorce rather than after nonmarital childbearing, the latter being more common among Blacks (Stewart, 2007). Even studies based on nationally representative surveys often lack samples of minorities large enough to allow for meaningful comparisons. As a result, we know little about how stepfamily processes vary with race and ethnicity (Stewart, 2007). The current study pays particular attention to how the perceived quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship, and its correlates, vary between Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics.

The current study focuses on adolescence—a crucial point in the life course for accomplishing key developmental tasks and avoiding risky behaviors. Adolescents desire greater autonomy and spend increasing amounts of time with peers (Furstenberg, 2000). Many families experience declines in parental involvement and increases in parent-child conflict as children enter adolescence (Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan, 2000). Although adolescence can be a challenging time for all families, these processes are exacerbated in stepfamilies (Bray and Easling, 2005). Yet, close and supportive parent-child relationships are important for adolescents in stepfamilies, given that these youth are especially vulnerable to peer influence and at greater risk for poor outcomes (Hetherington and Kelly, 2002). A better understanding of stepfamily processes during this crucial time period is warranted.

1.1. Conceptual Model

Our study draws on Doherty, Kouneski, and Erickson's (1998) ecological-contextual theory of fatherhood. According to this perspective, responsible fathers actively share with mothers in the emotional, physical, and financial care of their children. Fatherhood is largely socially constructed, however, and is especially sensitive to contextual influences, both interpersonal and environmental. Motherhood, in contrast, is less variable. Consistent with this assumption, studies show that father involvement, compared with mother involvement, is more sensitive to factors such as whether parents reside with children (Hawkins, Amato, and King, 2006) and the quality of coparental relationships (Furstenberg and Cherlin, 1991). We extend this theory by arguing that the social norms regarding stepfathers (compared with

biological fathers) are even weaker and less clear (Sweeney, 2010). The continuing “incomplete institutionalization” of stepfamilies (Cherlin, 1978) leads to uncertainty about the proper role of stepfathers and, presumably, a great deal of variability in how men enact the stepfather role. This theory suggests the necessity of examining the main and interactive effects of a range of contextual variables to understand the role of stepfathers in children’s lives.

Although we examine a variety of family characteristics, we pay particular attention to how the stepfather-stepchild relationship is related to (and presumably influenced by) other relationships in the family. Several theoretical perspectives support the importance of this focus. Family systems theory (Minuchin, 1974) assumes that all parts of the family system are interconnected, and that changes or problems in one subsystem, such as the mother-stepfather dyad, have the potential to affect other subsystems, such as the stepfather-stepchild dyad. Life course theory (Elder, 1998), with its emphasis on “linked lives” or how individual lives are connected to other lives across the life course, also suggests the need to understand how the stepfather-stepchild relationship is influenced by other important family relationships. As Marsiglio (2004) notes, stepfathers must negotiate their places in the lives of their partners, their stepchildren, and even their stepchildren’s biological fathers. Given the normative ambiguity surrounding the stepfather role, relationships between mothers, children, and biological fathers (all of which predate the stepfather-stepchild relationship) provide opportunities and constraints that shape how stepfathers interact with stepchildren.

Our conceptual model is shown in Figure 1. The model assumes that the stepfather-stepchild relationship develops within the context of other family relationships, including the mother-child, the nonresident father-child, and the mother-stepfather relationship. These variables are proximate to the stepfather-stepchild relationship and, hence, are likely to be the most influential. The influence of other contextual factors (referred to as background variables in the figure) is more distal. These variables (such as child gender and age) can affect the stepfather-stepchild relationship directly, although their influence is also likely to be indirect, that is, through the more proximate relationship variables. Of course, stepfathers also may influence other relationships in the family. For this reason, we use longitudinal data from Waves I and II of the Add Health data set to assess the direction of influence between stepfather-stepchild relationships and other family relationships.

1.2. Previous Research

Mother-Child Relationship—The closeness of the mother-child relationship appears to be an important contextual variable, but whether it facilitates or impedes close ties between stepfathers and stepchildren is unclear. Some scholars have suggested that children who are close to their mothers may feel threatened by the entrance of stepfathers, whom they view as competitors for maternal time and attention (Thomson, Mosley, Hanson, and McLanahan, 2001). Alternatively, children who are close to their mothers may be especially willing to accept stepfathers and want these relationships to succeed. Similarly, mothers with close ties to their children may work to ensure that stepfather-stepchild bonds also are close (Marsiglio, 1992). Consistent with the latter perspective, several cross-sectional studies report positive correlations between the quality of mother-child and stepfather-stepchild ties

after remarriage (e.g., Dunn, Cheng, O'Connor, and Bridges, 2004). In the first study to examine the quality of the mother-adolescent bond prior to remarriage, King (2009) found a strong association between close mother-adolescent relationships and the formation of close ties to stepfathers within the first year of their entry into the household.

Nonresident Father-Child Relationship—Evidence from previous studies is unclear on whether children's relationships with non-resident fathers affect their relationships with stepfathers. One perspective assumes that the two relationships are "in competition" with one another. Due to feelings of loyalty to the father, some children may resent the stepfather's presence and reject his authority (Buchanan, Maccoby, and Dornbusch, 1996). Other children may avoid forming close relationships with stepfathers because they do not want to hurt the nonresident father's feelings (Ganong and Coleman, 2004). Moreover, when nonresident fathers are highly involved in their children's lives, stepfathers may assume that close involvement on their part is neither necessary nor desirable (Harris and Ryan, 2004; Marsiglio, 2004). In contrast, when nonresident fathers are uninvolved, children may welcome new father figures, and mothers may make extra efforts to encourage these relationships (Roy and Burton, 2007). Consistent with these ideas, a few studies have reported negative associations between children's closeness to nonresident biological fathers and their closeness to stepfathers (e.g., Dunn et al., 2004).

Alternatively, having close ties to nonresident fathers may not preclude children from developing close ties to stepfathers (King, 2006). Many nonresident fathers adopt a companionable or permissive role that does not compete with a stepfather's authority or parenting (Bray and Easling, 2005). Further, children with close relationships to nonresident fathers may develop close ties to stepfathers if child characteristics (e.g., easy to get along with) contribute to the quality of *all* the child's relationships (Dunn et al., 2004). Indeed, most studies have not found significant correlations between nonresident father involvement and stepfather-stepchild relationship quality (e.g., Jensen and Shafer, 2013). In the first study to examine the quality of the nonresident father-adolescent bond prior to remarriage, King (2009) found no association between frequent contact or a close father-adolescent relationship and the formation of close ties to a new stepfather within the first year of entry into the household. Overall, these contradictory ideas and findings make it difficult to predict how nonresident father-child relationships might affect stepchild relationships, although they highlight the need for additional inquiry on this topic.

Mother-Stepfather Relationship—In general, parents in mutually-satisfying marriages are more responsive to children's needs than are parents in troubled marriages, and the same principle is likely to hold in stepfamilies. Moreover, a good marriage may make a mother more willing to support close ties between her new husband and her children (Marsiglio, 2004). Observing a positive marital relationship also may lead children to be more accepting of their stepfathers (Hetherington and Kelly, 2002). Many studies report a positive link between marital quality and the quality of parent-child relationships (Erel and Burman, 1995), including studies of stepfamilies (King, 2006).

Distal Family and Child Characteristics—With respect to *gender*, several studies report that boys have better relationships with stepfathers than do girls (Jensen and Shafer,

2013; Pasley and Moorefield, 2004). With respect to *age*, stepfather involvement (and parental involvement in general) tends to decline as children enter adolescence (Stewart, 2005), desire greater autonomy, and spend more time with peers, in extracurricular activities, and in after-school employment (Furstenberg, 2000; Hosley and Montemayor, 1997).

Only a few studies have examined *racial or ethnic* differences in stepfather-stepchild relationships, and these studies have yielded mixed findings (e.g., Hofferth and Anderson, 2003; King, 2006, 2009; Marsiglio, 1992). On the one hand, compared with white stepfamilies, minority stepfamilies are more likely to confront stressful conditions and disadvantages, including poverty or near poverty, unemployment or underemployment, marital strain, and negative reactions from social service workers—all of which can create challenges to successful stepfamily functioning (McLoyd, Cauce, Takeuchi, and Wilson, 2000; Rasheed, 1999; Stewart, 2007). On the other hand, scholars have suggested that Black stepfathers, compared with White stepfathers, may be more easily and quickly integrated into the household because of the tradition of including non-blood-related kin into family life (Stewart, 2007).

Although rarely examined in stepfamilies, *religiosity* has been linked to involvement with, and closer ties to, children among biological mothers and fathers (King, 2003, 2010). Most religions emphasize the importance of family relationships and encourage parents to be actively involved in the lives of their children (Mahoney, Pargament, Murray-Swank, and Murray-Swank, 2003; Wilcox, 2002). Religious institutions also sponsor and support activities that bring family members together, potentially enhancing the quality and closeness of relationships (Ellison, 1992). For these reasons, stepfather-stepchild ties may be enhanced to the extent that stepfamily members are religious and participate in a religious culture.

In general, the *length of time that a stepfamily has been together* (and an earlier age at stepfamily formation) has been found to be associated with closer stepfather-stepchild bonds (King, 2006; Sweeney, 2010). Previous studies have shown that paternal education is positively associated with paternal involvement in general (Amato, 1998), and at least one study has shown that *stepfather education* is associated with higher levels of involvement with stepchildren in particular (Cooksey and Fondell, 1996).

As a general rule, the larger the *number of siblings* in a stepfamily, the less attention an individual child is likely to receive from a stepfather (Blake, 1985, 1989). The type of siblings (*full, step, or half*) may also matter, although research on this topic is limited. Some studies suggest that children are closer to stepfathers when stepsiblings are not in the household (White, Brinkerhoff, and Booth, 1985), and that stepfather involvement declines when a half sibling is born (Stewart, 2005). Other studies, however, report that stepchildren in blended families have more involvement with stepfathers than do stepchildren in non-blended families (e.g., Hofferth and Anderson, 2003), that stepfathers are more likely to adopt their stepchildren when the couple have shared biological children (Lamb, 2007), and that the birth of half-siblings promotes family solidarity for some stepchildren that increases their affection for the stepparent (Ganong, Coleman, and Jamison, 2011).

Children *born outside of marriage* have weaker ties to their nonresident biological fathers (King, Harris, and Heard, 2004), which may allow stepfathers to play a larger role in their lives, although King (2009) did not find any evidence to support this idea. A previously unexplored factor involves the *number of prior father figures*. Children who have experienced the turmoil created by prior entrances and exits of multiple stepfather figures may be reluctant to form attachments to a new stepfather, as greater family instability undermines parent-child relationships in general (Cavanagh, Schiller, and Riegle-Crumb, 2006).

Moderating Variables—Contextual variables can influence the stepfather-stepchild relationship directly, indirectly, or by moderating the influence of other variables. For exploratory purposes, we assess the potential moderating roles of three variables: race/ethnicity, child gender, and time since stepfather entry.

Although prior research suggests that boys have closer relationships with stepfathers than do girls, it is less clear whether the same factors predict having positive ties to stepfathers for boys and girls. Adolescent girls in stepfamilies may be at particular risk given that they are less likely than boys to feel close to each of their parents—stepfathers, nonresident fathers, and mothers (King, 2006; Mitchell, Booth, and King, 2009) and more likely to disengage from their families (Hetherington, Bridges, and Insabella, 1998). Thus, other negative family dynamics, such as marital conflict or experiencing multiple father figures, may have a more negative influence on ties to stepfathers for girls than boys.

It is unknown whether similar factors are associated with stepfather-child ties for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, although many possibilities are worth considering. For example, rates of nonmarital childbearing are much higher (and more normative) for Blacks than for Whites (Smock and Greenland, 2010). Consequently, whether a child was born in marriage may have fewer consequences for the development of close ties to stepfathers in Black families than in White families. On a different note, the strong correlation among Blacks between church attendance and quality of family life (Ellison, 1997; Stewart, 2007) suggests that religion may be particularly important among Blacks in fostering stepfather-stepchild ties.

The factors that are associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties at early stages of the relationship may differ from those that predict positive ties at later stages. For example, the quality of the mother-child bond may be particularly crucial when stepfathers first join the household (King, 2009). But as time passes and children build more independent relationships with stepfathers, other factors may take on increasing importance in the trajectory of the stepfather-stepchild relationship.

1.3. Goals and Contributions of the Current Study

The current study has three goals. First, we assess the links between other family relationships (which we view as proximal influences) and the quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship. We use structural equation methods to model these relationships as latent variables using cross-sectional data from Wave I. Because we are interested in the direction of influence between these relationships, we also model reciprocal associations

between family relationships using Wave I and Wave II data. Second, we examine how a variety of background variables are related to stepfather-stepchild relationships. Our conceptual model assumes that these distal variables have direct effects on relationships with stepfathers, as well as indirect effects through other family relationships. Third, for exploratory purposes, we consider the potential moderating role of three variables: child gender, race and ethnicity, and the number of years a stepfamily has been together.

We rely on data from the first two waves of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), which were collected in 1994–95 and in 1996. We focus on stepfather families because the number of children living in stepmother households is comparatively small, and their representation in Add Health is too limited to conduct a detailed analysis. The current study also is limited to married stepfathers because adolescents in the Add Health study living with mothers and cohabiting partners were not asked questions about their relationships with stepfathers. Despite this limitation, stepfamilies that began as cohabiting partnerships but later married are included in the present study. Stepmother households and cohabiting stepfamilies are likely to differ in important ways from married stepfather families (King, 2007, 2009; Nock, 1995) and deserve attention in future research. Although the Add Health sample is less than perfect, its large size, national representativeness, and the availability of information on a variety of family relationships and characteristics makes it one of the best available data sets for understanding stepfamily relationships in adolescence.

The current study makes a number of important contributions to our knowledge regarding factors associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties. We consider a large number of contextual factors, including several that have received little or no attention in prior research, such as the role of religiosity and the number of prior father figures with whom adolescents have lived. We also note that a number of other factors examined in prior research (such as the presence of step- and half-siblings in the household) have yielded mixed findings; consequently, new research is needed to clarify how they are related to stepfamily functioning. Because the current study draws on data from a large nationally representative sample of adolescents, we are able to examine racial-ethnic differences in stepfather-stepchild relationships in greater detail than has been possible in prior research. Another unique aspect of the current study is its consideration of variation by gender, race-ethnicity, and stepfamily duration in the factors associated with positive stepfather-stepchild relationships.

The use of structural equation methods with latent variables also provides two innovative advantages. First, it provides better, more comprehensive measures of family relationships. For example, our measure of positive stepfather-stepchild relationships is based on multiple indicators, including stepchildren's perceptions of closeness, sharing a variety of activities with stepfathers, and engaging in multiple topics of communication. In contrast, prior research has relied on limited measures of the stepfather-stepchild relationship, including studies based on Add Health that used a single question regarding perceived closeness to the stepfather (King, 2006, 2009). Second, our statistical model examines both the direct effects of contextual factors and the indirect effects of these factors through other family

relationships. Most prior research has examined direct effects only and thus has overlooked potentially significant indirect effects.

2. Data and Methods

2.1. Data

Information was drawn from the subset of Add Health adolescents in grades 7 through 12 who participated in the Wave 1 in-home interviews ($n = 20,745$). Parent data ($n = 17,670$) were collected from one parent (usually the biological mother) for each in-home sampled student. Sample weights make these data nationally representative of adolescents in grades 7–12 in the U.S. during the 1994–1995 school year (see Bearman, Jones, and Udry, 1997, for a detailed description of the data). From the main sample of 20,745, the analytic sample for this study was restricted to adolescents with valid sample weights who reported that they were living with their biological mother and a stepfather ($n = 2,085$).

The longitudinal analysis was based on adolescents who were interviewed on a second occasion in 1996. The Wave II sample design excluded adolescents who were in 12th grade at Wave I. This exclusion reduced the number of adolescents with stepfathers to 1,803. Another 255 adolescents did not provide interviews in 1996. We also excluded 356 adolescents who no longer were living with a stepfather in Wave II. These restrictions reduced the final longitudinal sample to 1,192.

2.2. Method

Because relationship quality is a latent variable, we relied on structural equation modeling with latent variables to model relationship constructs as well as the interplay between family relationships. Data analyses were conducted in MPlus version 6 (Muthén and Muthén, 2010). A full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) technique was used to handle missing data. This approach minimizes missing data bias while using all available data in parameter estimation (Enders and Bandalos, 2001). Results are based on weighted data, with adjustments made for clustering and stratification in the Add Health sample design. Descriptive statistics are based on non-missing, weighted data using unstandardized scales.

2.3. Measures

The latent construct *positive stepfather-stepchild relationship* was measured with three observed indicators: stepfather-stepchild closeness (5 items rated on a five-point scale, $\alpha = 0.90$, $\bar{x} = 3.86$, $SD = 0.93$), activities that stepfathers engaged in with their stepchildren during the previous four weeks (sum of 5 binary items, $\bar{x} = 0.95$, $SD = 1.12$), and communication between stepfathers and stepchildren during the previous four weeks (sum of 3 binary items, $\bar{x} = 1.06$, $SD = 1.08$). The variables used to create this measure were drawn from adolescent responses to the in-home questionnaire (unless otherwise noted, all variables refer to the Wave I survey). Additional information on the measures used to construct the stepfather-stepchild latent construct is provided in Table 1.

The latent construct *positive mother-child relationship* was measured with three observed indicators drawn from the adolescent interview: mother-child closeness (5 items rated on a

5-point scale, $\alpha = 0.85$, $x = 4.42$, $SD = 0.63$), activities that mothers engaged in with their children during the previous four weeks (sum of 5 binary items, $x = 1.50$, $SD = 1.06$), and communication between mothers and children (sum of 3 binary items, $x = 1.69$, $SD = 1.06$). The wording of these items was essentially identical to the items used to create the stepfather-stepchild construct.

The latent construct *positive nonresident father-child relationship* was measured with three observed indicators drawn from the adolescent interview: nonresident father-child closeness (1 item asking adolescents how close they feel to their biological fathers, $x = 2.63$, $SD = 1.55$), activities that nonresident fathers engaged in with their children (sum of 5 binary items, $x = 0.89$, $SD = 1.33$), and communication between nonresident fathers and their children (sum of 3 items, $x = 0.99$, $SD = 1.21$). The wording of these items was similar to the items used to create the stepfather-stepchild and mother-child constructs.

The latent construct *positive mother-stepfather relationship* was measured with three observed indicators drawn from the mother interview: the degree of happiness (1 item asking mothers to rate current relationship happiness from 1 to 10, $x = 8.50$, $SD = 1.66$), a question on whether the couple has *not* talked about separation (1 = *no, have not talked*, 0 = *yes, have talked*, $x = .80$, $SD = .40$), and a measure of how *infrequently* the couple fights (1 = *fight a lot*, 4 = *not at all*, $x = 2.83$, $SD = 0.78$). Higher values on each of these variables indicated higher quality marital relationships.

With respect to the background variables, the respondent's age was measured in years ($x = 15.39$, $SD = 1.78$). The adolescent's gender was a binary variable with females (51%) coded 1 and males coded 0. Respondents were categorized into a series of dummy variables based on four racial/ethnic groups: non-Hispanic white (69%; reference group), non-Hispanic black (13%), Hispanic (12%), and other (6%). The adolescent's religiosity was measured with a scale of three items that dealt with the frequency of church attendance, the frequency of participation in church activities, and the importance of religion in the adolescent's life ($\alpha = 0.82$, $x = 2.46$, $SD = 0.98$). The length of time in the stepfamily was measured in years ($x = 7.43$, $SD = 4.61$). The stepfather's level of education was measured as a continuous variable ranging from 1 (less than a high school education) to 4 (college degree or beyond; $x = 2.54$, $SD = 1.01$). Continuous variables indicating the number of full- ($x = 0.72$, $SD = 0.88$), step- ($x = 0.17$, $SD = 0.59$), and half-siblings ($x = 0.63$, $SD = 0.92$) in the household also were included. A binary variable indicated that the adolescent was born in marriage (77%). The number of father figures experienced by adolescents ($x = 1.96$, $SD = 0.65$) drew on a series of questions about the mother's relationship history and was calculated as the number of coresidential relationships (marriages and cohabitations) the child had been exposed to since birth. Information on the stepfather's education, the number of prior father figures, whether the adolescent was born in marriage, and the quality of the mother-stepfather relationship was obtained from the mother interview and all other variables were created using reports from the adolescent.

The longitudinal analysis involved Wave II versions of the following variables: positive stepfather-stepchild relationship, positive mother-child relationship, and positive nonresident father-child relationship. All variables were measured identically in Wave II, and the means,

standard deviations, and reliability coefficients were similar to those in Wave I. The positive mother-stepfather variable had to be omitted, however, because mothers (the source for this information) were not interviewed in Wave II.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Results

The descriptive statistics reported in Table 1 reveals a great deal of variability in the relationships between adolescents and their stepfathers. Although a majority of adolescents perceived having close relationships with stepfathers (as indicated by responses in the top two agreement categories on the individual items), a substantial minority gave low-to-moderate ratings on items reflecting closeness (38%), feeling that the stepfather cares (19%), whether the stepfather is warm and loving (31%), satisfaction with communication (33%), and the relationship in general (28%). Similarly, almost half (45%) reported not engaging in any of the five activities with their stepfathers in the prior four weeks, and 43% reported not discussing any of the three topics presented (school, grades, or dating/parties).

3.2. Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis was employed to assess how well the latent relationship variables fit the data. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and confirmatory fit index (CFI) were taken as indicators of the overall goodness of fit. The measurement model is presented in Figure 2 and Table 2. Several modifications of the measurement model were made in an iterative fashion to adjust for correlated residuals. (All of these cases involved adding correlations between residuals for the same indicator, such as communication, which suggests the presence of method variance.) The overall fit of the measurement model was satisfactory, with $\chi^2(43) = 159.021$, RMSEA = 0.04, and CFI = 0.91.

The standardized loadings of all observed indicators on the latent variables were high (0.35 to 0.96), which supports the hypothesized factor structure. Correlations between latent variables revealed that stepfather-stepchild relationship quality was positively and significantly associated with mother-child relationship quality and mother-stepfather relationship quality. These findings suggest that adolescents' relationships with stepfathers tend to be positive when other family relationships also are positive. Stepfather-stepchild relationship quality also was positively correlated with the nonresident father-child relationship, which suggests that the two relationships are not necessarily "in competition" with one another.

3.3. Structural Model

Following the conceptual model in Figure 1, the structural model assumes that the mother-child relationship, the nonresident father-child relationship, and the mother-stepfather relationship are proximal influences on the quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship. The model also assumes that background (distal) variables have direct effects on the stepfather-stepchildren relationship, as well as indirect effects through other family relationships. The goodness of fit indices suggested that the structural model fit the data

well: $\chi^2(177) = 601.23$, RMSEA = 0.03, and CFI = 0.91. Table 3 shows the regression coefficients for the structural paths. To facilitate interpretation, the coefficients for the relationship variables (which have no intuitive unit of measurement) are fully standardized, whereas the coefficients for the background variables are based on standardized dependent variables only. In other words, the coefficients for the background variables can be interpreted as effect sizes.

Two of the three relationship variables, positive mother-child relations and positive mother-stepfather relations, were significantly associated with positive stepfather-stepchild relations, controlling for child and family characteristics (see Table 3). The association between adolescents' ratings of their relationships with mothers and stepfathers was substantial ($b = 0.536$). This relatively strong association, however, may partly reflect the fact that adolescents provided both sets of ratings. Nevertheless, the association between the mother-stepfather relationship and the stepfather-stepchild relationship also was moderately large (0.299). And because mothers provided ratings of their relationships with husbands (stepfathers), the association was not inflated by same-source bias. These findings are consistent with our assumption that family relationships are good predictors of children's relationships with stepfathers. The regression coefficient for the quality of the nonresident father-child relationship was low and not statistically significant, however—a point we return to in the discussion.

With respect to the background variables, daughters reported lower quality relationships with their stepfathers than did sons (-0.188), with the gap being nearly one fifth of a standard deviation. This coefficient represents the estimated direct effect of gender. Table 3 also reveals that being female was positively associated with the mother-child relationship, and the mother-child relationship, in turn, was positively associated with the stepfather-stepchild relationship. A Sobel (1982) test of mediation indicated that the indirect effect of gender through the mother-child relationship ($0.173 \times 0.536 = 0.093$) was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). In other words, adolescent gender had indirect as well as direct effects on stepfather-stepchild relationships. (Because the model was estimated with correlational data, references to "effects" here and elsewhere in the text refer to the logic of the model and are not meant to be conclusive evidence of causation.)

Older adolescents perceived having less positive relationships with their stepfathers, with each year of age being associated with a decline of about one tenth of a standard deviation (-0.092). Age also was associated negatively with the perceived quality of the mother-child relationship. A Sobel test of mediation indicated that the indirect effect of age on the stepfather-stepchild relationship was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). In this case, the indirect effect of age ($-0.203 \times 0.536 = 0.109$) was as strong as the direct effect.

The adolescent's level of religiosity was positively associated with reporting higher quality stepfather-stepchild relations ($b = 0.086$). Religiosity also was positively associated with the perceived quality of the mother-child relationship ($b = 0.252$). Once again, the Sobel test was significant ($p < 0.001$), which indicates that religiosity had an indirect as well as a direct effect on stepfather-stepchild relations.

The longer the stepfamily had been together, the higher the perceived quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship, with each year representing an increase of exactly one tenth of a standard deviation. Length of time also was negatively associated with the mother-stepfather relationship, which may reflect a general tendency for marital quality to decline with marital duration. Because the quality of the mother-stepfather relationship was related to the quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship, the number of years together had an indirect negative effect ($-0.178 * 0.299 = -0.053$) on the stepfather-stepchild relationship, which was weak but statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). These results suggest that time is linked with the perceived quality of stepfather-stepchild relations in a complex manner. As the years pass, adolescents appear to feel closer to their stepfathers. But time also appears to erode the quality of the mother-stepfather relationship, which may lead adolescents to feel less close to their stepfathers.

Finally, the more full siblings living in the household, the better the relationships between adolescents and their stepfathers were reported to be ($b = 0.098, p < 0.01$). This variable had no indirect effects, however. No other significant indirect effects appeared in the data.

3.4. Multigroup Models

Multigroup models were used to assess the moderating roles of adolescent gender, race/ethnicity, and stepfamily duration (tables not shown but available upon request). Because the duration variable had many values, we partitioned it into three groups: two years or less (16.1%), between three and nine years (49.4%), and ten years or more (34.5%). Tests of factorial invariance were performed prior to the multigroup analysis to ensure that the measurement of the stepfather-stepchild relationship was comparable across groups. For each moderator (gender, race/ethnicity, duration), an unconstrained model allowed the factor loadings of the latent variable to vary freely across groups, and a constrained model fixed the factor loadings of the latent variable to be the same across groups. We compared the unconstrained and constrained models using the Satorra-Bentler chi-square test and changes in the CFI, as recommended by Kline (2011). These analyses indicated that the stepfather-stepchild relationship latent variable could be measured in the same way (i.e., with the same factor loadings) across groups based on gender, race, and duration—a necessary prerequisite for moderation analysis.

Multigroup models were employed to test for the moderation of structural pathways between the independent variables in Table 3 and the stepfather-stepchild relationship. Evidence of moderation was based on estimating alternative models in which structural paths were either constrained or allowed to vary across groups. Once again, we used the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square statistic for omnibus significance testing. This procedure revealed that none of the associations between the independent variables and positive stepfather-stepchild relationships varied by adolescent gender. That is, the factors that are associated with reporting positive (or negative) relationships with stepfathers appear to be the same for boys and girls.

The factors linked with adolescent reports of stepfather-stepchild relationship quality also were similar for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, with one exception. Mother-stepfather relationship quality was significantly and positively associated with reported stepfather-

stepchild relationship quality for Hispanic adolescents ($b = 0.176, p < 0.001$) and White adolescents ($b = 0.136, p < 0.001$), but not for Black adolescents ($b = 0.023, ns$). The difference between Hispanics and Blacks was statistically significant ($p < .05$). The coefficient for Whites, which was between the values for Hispanics and Blacks, was not significantly different from the coefficients for Blacks or Hispanics. Thus, the mother-stepfather relationship was not associated with the quality of adolescent-stepfather ties among Blacks, despite the fact that this association was observed among Whites and Hispanics.

With respect to years in a stepfamily, only one significant interaction emerged. The association between being born in a marriage and the perceived quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship differed significantly with the amount of time in the stepfamily. Youth in stepfamilies for only a short time (two years or less) reported having significantly worse relationships with their stepfathers if they had been born within marriage rather than outside of marriage ($b = -0.409, p < 0.05$), controlling for other family relationships and characteristics. There was no significant association between being born in a marriage and the perceived quality of the stepfather-stepchild relationship, however, among youth in mid-term (three to nine years) or long-term (ten years plus) stepfamilies. The differences between coefficients for short- and mid-term ($p < 0.01$) and short- and long-term ($p < 0.05$) stepfamilies were statistically significant.

3.5. Longitudinal Analysis

Two longitudinal analyses modeled reciprocal paths between Wave II versions of the stepfather-stepchild relationship latent variable and (1) the mother-child relationship latent variable and (2) the nonresident father-child relationship latent variable, respectively (tables not shown). We identified the models by using Wave I latent variables as instruments for the corresponding Wave II latent variables. These models are essentially equivalent to estimating the effect of change in one latent variable on change in a second latent variable. (For a general description of nonrecursive models, see Kline, 2011.)

With respect to the mother-child relationship, the structural equation model fit the data well: $\chi^2(48) = 233.107$, RMSEA = 0.06, and CFI = 0.94. Not surprisingly, the Wave I latent variables were strong and significant predictors of their Wave II counterparts. Specifically, the standardized path from Wave I to Wave II was .71 ($p < .001$) for the stepfather-stepchild relationship and .71 ($p < .001$) for the mother-child relationship. The reciprocal paths between the Wave II variables were comparable in magnitude, although neither was fully statistically significant. Specifically, the path from the stepfather-stepchild relationship to the mother-child relationship was .19 ($p = .146$), and the path from the mother-child relationship to the stepfather-stepchild relationship was .20 ($p = .083$). The corresponding paths for the nonresident father-child relationship were weak and not statistically significant.

Although these results are not definitive, they suggest the possibility of reciprocal associations between children's ties with mothers and stepfathers. That is, adolescents who became closer to (or more distant from) their mothers tended to become closer to (or more distant from) their stepfathers, and vice versa. Although this interpretation seems plausible, a clearer test will require new data. The estimated reciprocal effects may have been weak (and

not fully significant) because these family relationships changed relatively little over the one-year period. The strong stability coefficients reported above are consistent with this interpretation. (Measures from later waves of Add Health, when many children were no longer living at home with parents, are not comparable to those used in this analysis and therefore could not be incorporated.)

4. Discussion

As Coleman, Ganong, and Fine (2000, p. 1301) noted in their decade review of stepfamily research in the 1990s, “we continue to be limited in our understanding of variables that contribute to positive stepfamily functioning, and we know little about factors that facilitate the formation of positive stepparent-stepchild bonds... Knowledge of African American, Latino, and other ethnic stepfamilies remains woefully inadequate as well.” A decade later, these limitations remain (Stewart, 2007; Sweeney, 2010). The current study was designed to address these gaps in the literature on stepfamilies.

Consistent with prior research suggesting variability in adolescent’s closeness to stepfathers (King, 2006), our study provides further evidence for substantial variability in stepfather-stepchild relationships in other domains as well. Many adolescents appear to be quite involved with their stepfathers, as reflected in the frequency of shared activities and communication about important topics such as school. Many adolescents also report having close, warm, and caring relationships with stepfathers. In contrast, a substantial minority of adolescents report having emotionally distant and uninvolved relationships with stepfathers.

Results point to a number of factors that are associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties. The model explains almost 50% of the variance. Consistent with our conceptual model, stepfather-stepchild ties are stronger when the mother-child relationship is reported to be close. This finding contradicts the notion that closeness to mothers leads children to resent their stepfathers (Thomson et al., 2001) but is consistent with the notion that closeness to mothers facilitates children’s acceptance of mothers’ new partners (Dunn et al., 2004; King, 2009; Marsiglio, 1992). Our longitudinal analysis hinted that these two relationships influence one another in a reciprocal fashion, although more research is necessary to confirm this possibility. We found no evidence that adolescents with involved nonresident fathers are more (or less) likely to report having positive relationships with stepfathers. Although prior research on this question is mixed, our findings support recent studies showing that the two relationships are more or less independent of one another (Jensen and Shafer, 2013; King, 2009). Taken together, these findings regarding the role of the mother-child and nonresident father-child relationships are important because they suggest that having strong ties to either biological parent does not interfere with developing strong ties to stepfathers, and indeed, in the case of the mother-child relationship, may even facilitate it.

Our results also point to religiosity as a previously overlooked factor associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties. In fact, religious adolescents reported more positive ties with all of their parents: stepfathers, mothers, and nonresident biological fathers. Future research is warranted on exactly what it is about religion that is associated with stronger

family bonds, such as profamily values (Mahoney et al., 2003; Wilcox, 2002) or shared involvement in religious communities (Ellison, 1992).

Contrary to expectations that having a large number of siblings might lead to receiving less attention from the stepfather, having more full siblings was positively associated with the stepfather-stepchild relationship. This may indicate something about the stepfather (e.g., family-oriented) and his willingness to marry a partner who already has a number of children, or to mothers seeking out and marrying men who are good with children and exhibit a commitment to parenthood (Goldscheider and Kaufman, 2006).

Several factors were associated with a greater risk of poorer stepfather-stepchild ties. Girls, older adolescents, and recently formed stepfamilies exhibited less positive stepfather-stepchild relationships compared to boys, younger adolescents, and longer-term stepfamilies. These gender and age differences are consistent with several prior studies of stepfamilies (King, 2006; Pasley and Moorefield, 2004; Sweeney, 2010), and with research on father-child relationships more generally. That longer-term stepfamilies report more positive stepfather-stepchild relationships suggests that these relationships improve over time, but further research is needed to rule out alternative explanations. The recently formed stepfamilies in our sample also consist of those formed during the stepchild's adolescence, which is known to be a difficult time to form cohesive stepfamilies (Bray and Easling, 2005). It may be this characteristic rather than the length of time in a stepfamily that is more consequential for stepfather-stepchild ties. We are not able to disentangle how much of these differences in stepfather-stepchild relationship are due to age of the child, duration of the stepfamily, or the child's age at stepfamily formation because they are all interrelated. Further, families in which stepfathers and stepchildren do not get along may be more likely to dissolve quickly and are therefore selected out of the population of long-term stepfamilies. Longitudinal data following stepfather-stepchild relationships over time are needed to shed light on this issue.

Some scholars have suggested that the presence of step- or half-siblings makes it more difficult for children to form close bonds with stepfathers (Stewart, 2005; White et al., 1985). In the present study, however, the number of stepsiblings and half siblings in the household were unrelated to reports of positive stepfather-stepchild relationships.

Previous research has shown that the turmoil of multiple entrances and exits of parent figures elevates children's risk for a variety of problems (Cavanagh et al., 2006). The present study, however, found no evidence that having a series of father figures undermines children's ties with current stepfathers. We also found that children born outside of marriage reported having closer ties to stepfathers than did children born within marriage, but only within the first two years of remarriage. Children may find it easier to bond with stepfathers when they have not been through the stress of a formal parental divorce. Correspondingly, adolescents born within marriage may face circumstances that make it difficult to navigate close stepfather-stepchild relationships: a recent transition to a stepfamily that took place during adolescence, coupled with a more extensive history of living with the biological father prior to the mother's remarriage. (Consistent with this interpretation, being born within marriage was positively associated with closeness to nonresident fathers.) Because

these two variables—the number of previous father figures and whether children were born within marriage—have been studied rarely in the stepfamily literature, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions without additional research.

A unique feature of the current study was its ability to distinguish indirect from direct effects of variables. For example, daughters had weaker ties with stepfathers than did sons. At the same time, however, daughters were closer to mothers than were sons, and being close to mothers was positively associated with being close to stepfathers. Closeness between mothers and daughters, therefore, appeared to partly compensate for the tendency for daughters to be less close to stepfathers. Similarly, the trend for religious adolescents to be closer to stepfathers appeared to be partly a direct effect of religiosity and partly an indirect positive effect of religiosity on the quality of the mother-adolescent relationship. Moreover, as the number of years together increased, adolescents appeared to feel closer to their stepfathers. But time also appeared to erode the quality of the mother-stepfather relationship, which, in turn, appeared to lead adolescents to feel less close to their stepfathers. Generally speaking, examining direct and indirect effects of background variables (via their influences on family relationships) yields more information than does looking only at direct effects in regression models (the approach of most previous studies) and can provide nuanced insights into family processes that are consistent with a systems level of analysis.

A notable finding from the current study is the apparent lack of racial-ethnic differences in stepfather-stepchild relationships. Despite the many differences in family patterns and trends, we found no evidence that stepfather-stepchild relationships were perceived to be better or worse in White or minority families. Furthermore, the factors associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties discussed above appear to be equally important for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics. The only exception was the lack of an association between the quality of the mother-stepfather relationship and ties between stepfathers and stepchildren in Black families. This finding is consistent with Stewart's (2007) suggestion that the quality of the relationship between the mother and stepfather may be less consequential for Black children.

Although our study identified a number of important factors that were associated with positive stepfather-stepchild ties, data limitations precluded an examination of other potentially important factors that should be examined in future research. For example, data were not available on the quality of the mother-nonresident father relationship or the extent of their coparenting, which may also have implications for stepfather-stepchild ties. A better understanding of the influence of siblings requires more attention to the nature and quality of these relationships as well. Data limitations also precluded an examination of cohabiting stepfamilies, a growing family form.

Given that many U.S. children are growing up apart from their biological fathers, and given that recent cohorts of stepfathers are spending more time with stepchildren (Marsiglio, 2004), strengthening stepfather-stepchild relationships may be a useful strategy for improving children's well-being. Practitioners have developed a number of programs in recent years to improve communication and general family functioning in stepfamilies (Lucier-Greer and Adler-Baeder, 2012). Our findings indicate that most of the correlates of

positive stepfather-stepchild ties are similar for boys and girls, for adolescents from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and for stepfamilies of various durations. These findings suggest that interventions to foster strong stepfather-stepchild ties can work equally well for diverse groups of adolescents. The transition to stepfamily living creates many challenges for modern stepfamilies and presents a number of risks for children (Bray, 1999, p. 268). But despite these challenges and risks, parents in stepfamilies who engage in close and supportive relationships with their children and stepchildren have the potential to create well-functioning families that serve as positive environments for children's development and achievement.

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We examine factors associated with positive stepfather-child ties during adolescence
Results reveal substantial variability in stepfather-stepchild relationships
Mother-child and mother-stepfather ties strongly predict stepfather-child ties
Correlates of positive ties are similar by gender, race, and stepfamily duration

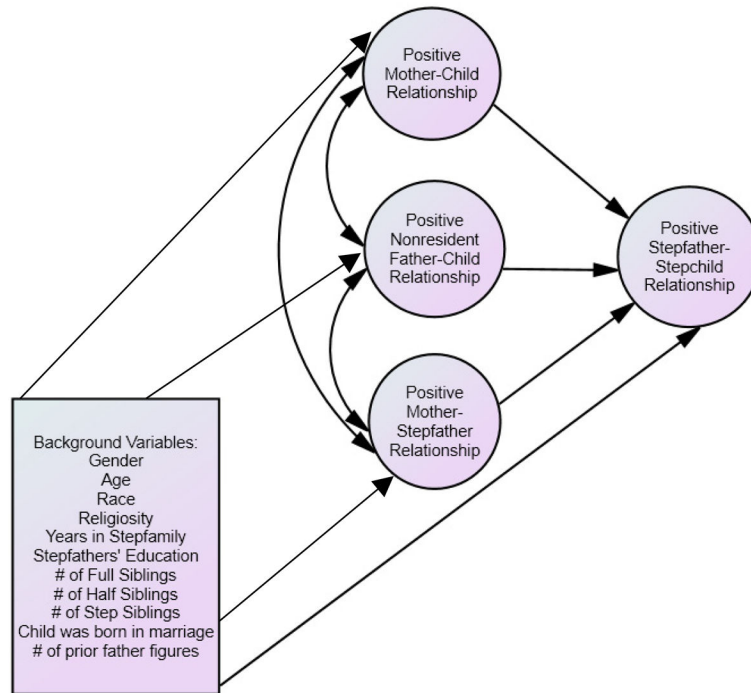


Figure 1.
Conceptual Model

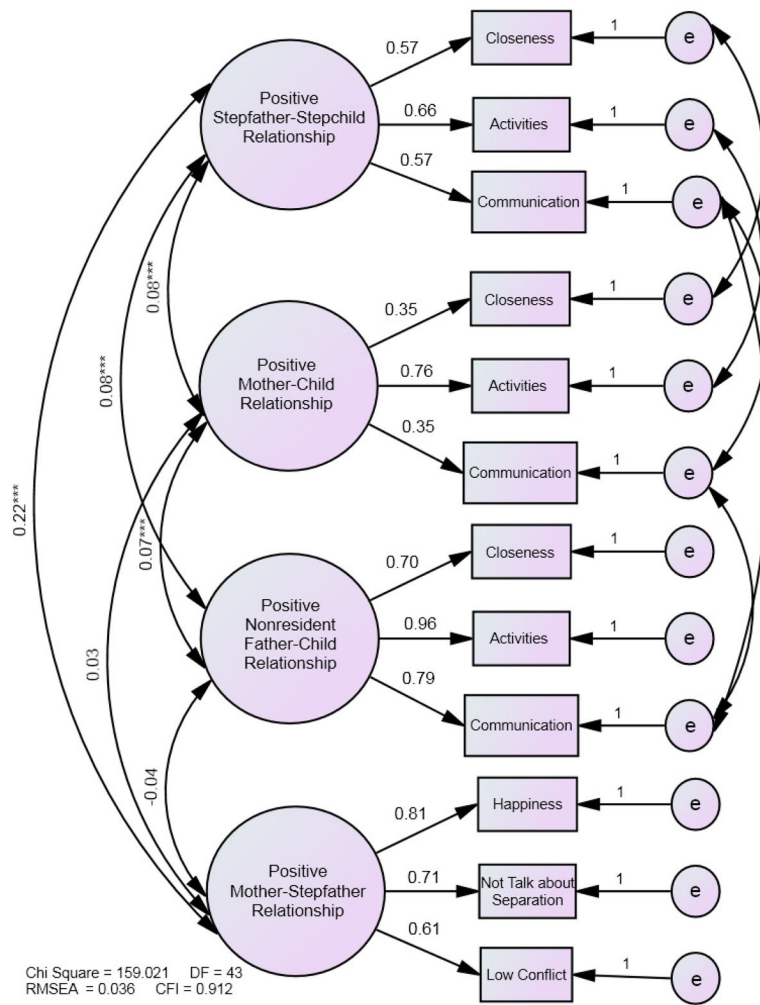


Figure 2.
 Measurement Model (Standardized Coefficients)

Table 1

Descriptive Information about Stepfather-Stepchild Relationship Indicators

	\bar{x}	SD	% low	% high
<i>Closeness</i>				
Feel close with stepfather	3.72	1.17	38	62
Think stepfather cares about you	4.33	0.94	19	81
Stepfather is warm & loving	3.78	1.09	31	69
Satisfaction with communication	3.67	1.14	33	67
Satisfaction with relationship	3.81	1.11	28	72
	<u>% Does activity/talked about topic</u>			
<i>Activities</i>				
Gone shopping		24		
Played sports		25		
Gone to church		19		
Gone to event		17		
Worked on school project		10		
(Did no activities)		45		
<i>Communication</i>				
Talked about dating or parties		27		
Talked about grades		42		
Talked about things at school		37		
(Didn't talk about any topic)		43		

Note: Results are weighted & based on non-missing data; Low = responses of “somewhat/neither agree or disagree,” “very little/disagree,” and “not at all/strongly disagree”; High = response of “very much/strongly agree,” and “quite a bit/agree”

Table 2

Measurement Model		Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error
<i>Factor Loadings</i>					
Positive Stepphater-Stepchild Relationship (SF-SC)					
Closeness	1.000	(0.00)	0.566		(0.04)
Activities	0.786	(0.08)	0.660		(0.04)
Communication	0.872	(0.11)	0.570		(0.04)
Positive Mother-Child Relationship (M-C)					
Closeness	1.000	(0.00)	0.350		(0.04)
Activities	1.541	(0.22)	0.755		(0.05)
Communication	0.948	(0.15)	0.350		(0.04)
Positive Nonresident Father-Child Relationship (NRF-C)					
Closeness	1.000	(0.00)	0.701		(0.03)
Activities	0.641	(0.06)	0.957		(0.03)
Communication	0.626	(0.07)	0.788		(0.03)
Positive Mother-Stepfather Relationship (M-SF)					
Happiness	1.000	(0.00)	0.810		(0.03)
Not Talk about Separation	0.530	(0.04)	0.711		(0.04)
Low Conflict	0.350	(0.03)	0.606		(0.03)
<i>Correlations</i>					
SF-SC with M-C	0.082 ^{***}	(0.02)	0.626 ^{***}		(0.04)
SF-SC with NRF-C	0.078 ^{***}	(0.02)	0.146 ^{***}		(0.04)
SF-SC with M-SF	0.218 ^{***}	(0.05)	0.330 ^{***}		(0.05)
M-C with NRF-C	0.072 ^{***}	(0.02)	0.248 ^{***}		(0.04)
M-C with M-SF	0.026	(0.02)	0.073		(0.05)
NRF-C with M-SF	-0.037	(0.07)	-0.025		(0.05)
<i>Error Correlations</i>					
Mom Close with SF Close	0.218 ^{***}	(0.02)	0.428 ^{***}		(0.03)
Mom Comm. with SF Comm.	0.224 ^{***}	(0.02)	0.539 ^{***}		(0.03)

	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error
Mom Activities with SF Acts.	0.090***	(0.01)	0.575***	(0.05)
NRF Comm. with Mom Comm.	0.137***	(0.02)	0.384***	(0.06)
NRF Comm. with SF Comm.	0.088***	(0.02)	0.268***	(0.05)
Chi Square	159.021	DF 43		p < 0.001
RMSEA	0.036	CFI 0.912		

Note:

* p < 0.05,

** p < 0.01,

*** p < 0.001

Table 3

Structural Model Predicting Adolescents' Relationship with their Stepfather

	Positive Stepfather-Stepchild Relationship	Positive Mother-Child Relationship	Positive Nonresident Father-Child Relationship	Positive Mother-Stepfather Relationship
<i>Family Relationships</i>				
Positive Mother-Child Relations	0.536***			
Positive Nonresident Father-Child Relations	-0.033			
Positive Mother-Stepfather Relations	0.299***			
<i>Child's Characteristics</i>				
Female	-0.188**	0.173*	-0.137*	0.004
Age	-0.092**	-0.203***	0.002	0.042
Hispanic ^a	-0.191	-0.091	-0.312***	0.095
Black ^a	0.026	0.062	-0.018	-0.077*
Other Race ^a	-0.018	0.213	-0.347***	-0.228
Religiosity	0.086*	0.252***	0.126***	0.035
<i>Family Characteristics</i>				
Years in Stepfamily	0.100*	-0.007	-0.173***	-0.178***
Stepfather's Education	0.010	0.122***	0.106***	0.017
# of Full Siblings	0.098**	0.029	0.022	-0.002
# of Half Siblings	0.002	0.035	-0.027	0.038
# of Step Siblings	-0.010	0.029	-0.037	0.019
Child was born in marriage	0.043	0.084	0.219***	0.042
# of prior father figures	-0.003	0.009	-0.016	-0.036
R-square	0.488	0.164	0.155	0.042
N	2085	RMSEA	0.03	
Chi-Square	601.23	CFI	0.91	
DF	177			

Note: Coefficients for the family relations variables are fully standardized. Coefficients for all other variables are standardized on the dependent variable only.

^aWhite is reference group;

* $p < 0.05$,
** $p < 0.01$,
*** $p < 0.001$.