

Parental Influence on Children's Developmental Outcomes in Middle Childhood and Adolescence

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Humans have the longest maturation period among all mammals. Humans have approximately 20 years of maturation before they become adults. This is a relatively long period compared with the maturation time for dogs, which become grown-ups within one to two years, monkeys, which are also primates, and elephants, which live as long as humans. However, even after their physical maturation is complete, humans are less completely functional in other developmental areas: the cognitive ability, personality, and socio-emotional ability of humans are further developed in later periods of development.

This long period of human maturation has two implications to child development. First, each child has a great potential. Young children obtain lots of opportunity to improve various competence for a long time, and have a better life later on. Second, the importance of the parent-child relationship is underlined. The parent-child relationship is the first social relationship that a child forms, and it could influence child development longer than any other social relationships that he/she develops in subsequent life stages.

Newborns and infants usually spend most of their waking hours with their parents, but this time is reduced up to as much as half during children's preschool years. In middle childhood and adolescence, children's time

spent with peers or teachers becomes longer than that spent with their parents. Thus, the patterns and purposes of parent-child interactions and its influence on child outcomes vary with the developmental stages.

The current issue of the *Korean Journal of Child Studies* presents nine empirical studies. Many of these studies examined parents' influence on children's developmental outcomes in middle childhood and adolescence. Comparing the findings of such studies relative to children's age from infancy to later adolescence might be interesting.

In summary, these studies showed that gender differences in the types of attachment security, which might be established on the basis of parent-child interactions, were observed more clearly in boys in middle childhood, and that male adolescents' communication with their mothers affected their coping abilities, but this was not the case for female adolescents. Studies also reported that the parental attitude perceived by college students was also found to significantly affect students' regulatory focus via ego-resilience, and that the relations among parenting stress, parenting behavior, and a child's socio-emotional development varies with the status of the mother's employment. Especially, a study focused on examining father-child relationship. Attachment to fathers,

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as well as to mothers, affected the life satisfaction of high school students, but the influence of fathers was marginal after peer and romantic relationships were considered.

This issue also includes studies on topics other than the parent-child relationship. These studies suggested that children's language ability played an important role in the link between media use and peer interaction, and that children's temperament could be a protective factor for depression, and children's behavior problem could be a risk factor for intelligence.

Furthermore, a study on personality education for teachers indicated that communication ability was one of the significant factors of the Teaching Competency Scale. An eco-centered education program was found to increase emotional intelligence in preschool children. Thus, children should be encouraged to go outside and enjoy

the beautiful nature as an activity of eco-centered program in fall.

Hana Song, Editor-in-Chief
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Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this editorial was reported.

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