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1	The TRAF-interacting protein (TRAIP) is a regulator of the spindle assembly					
2	checkpoint					
3						
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26 ABSTRACT

Accurate chromosome segregation during mitosis is temporally and spatially coordinated by 27 fidelity-monitoring checkpoint systems. Deficiencies in these checkpoint systems can lead to 28 chromosome segregation errors and aneuploidy and promote tumorigenesis. We report that 29 the TRAF-interacting protein (TRAIP), a ubiquitously expressed nucleolar E3 ubiquitin ligase 30 important for cellular proliferation, was localized close to mitotic chromosomes. Its functional 31 inactivation in HeLa cells by siRNAs decreased the time of early mitosis progression from 32 nuclear envelope breakdown to anaphase onset and increased the percentages of chromosome 33 34 alignment defects in metaphase and lagging chromosomes in anaphase compared to control cells. The decrease in progression time was corrected by the expression of wild-type but not 35 by an ubiquitin ligase deficient form of TRAIP. TRAIP-depleted cells by-passed taxol-36 induced mitotic arrest, and significantly reduced kinetochore levels of MAD2 but not of other 37 38 spindle checkpoint proteins in the presence of nocodazole. These results imply that TRAIP regulates the spindle assembly checkpoint, MAD2 abundance at kinetochores and the accurate 39 40 cellular distribution of chromosomes. The TRAIP ubiquitin ligase activity is functionally required for the spindle assembly checkpoint control. 41

42

44 INTRODUCTION

The equal distribution of chromosomal DNA during mitosis is ensured by a highly complex 45 process in which the control of APC/C (anaphase-promoting complex) activity is crucial 46 (Foley and Kapoor, 2013; Kops et al., 2005; Pines, 2011). APC/C activity is regulated by the 47 spindle assembly checkpoint (SAC) proteins MAD1, MAD2, BUBR1, BUB1, BUB3 and 48 MPS1, which sense whether or not chromosomes are connected in a bi-oriented manner to 49 opposite spindle poles through microtubules (Foley and Kapoor, 2013; Khodjakov and Pines, 50 2010; Santaguida and Musacchio, 2009). The strength of the SAC critically depends on the 51 MAD2 abundance at kinetochores (Collin et al., 2013; Heinrich et al., 2013)). Defects in 52 chromosome segregation control cause chromosomal instability and aneuploidy, common 53 54 characteristics of human solid tumors (Holland and Cleveland, 2012).

Ubiquitination is a highly conserved biochemical process attaching ubiquitin monomers to 55 proteins (Dikic et al., 2009; Welchman et al., 2005). The TRAF-interacting protein 56 (TRAIP/TRIP/RNF206) is a RING-type E3-ubiquitin-ligase (Besse et al., 2007), but hitherto 57 58 no in vivo substrate has been identified. Ectopically expressed TRAIP interacts with TRAF proteins and represses NF-κB signaling (Besse et al., 2007; Lee and Choi, 1997), although 59 this might not be physiologically (Chapard et al., 2012). TRAIP is expressed ubiquitously at a 60 61 low level (Lee and Choi, 1997; Su et al., 2004) in nucleoli (Zhou and Geahlen, 2009) of interphase cells but is over-expressed in breast cancer cell lines (Zhou and Geahlen, 2009) and 62 in basal cell carcinomas (Almeida et al., 2011). 63

Both TRAIP knock-out mice (Park et al., 2007) and mutants of NOPO (Merkle et al., 2009), 64 the Drosophila homolog of mammalian TRAIP, die early in development due aberrant 65 proliferation and mitosis. TRAIP transcription is strongly down-regulated upon induction of 66 cell cycle exit, and its knock-down decreased proliferation and caused a G1/S phase block in 67 keratinocytes (Almeida et al., 2011). TRAIP interacts with CYLD (Regamey et al., 2003) and 68 Syk (Zhou and Geahlen, 2009), two tumor suppressors (Bailet et al., 2009; Bignell et al., 69 2000; Coopman et al., 2000; Lee et al., 2005; Moroni et al., 2004), and with DNA polymerase 70 η , which facilitates translessional synthesis after DNA damage (Wallace et al., 2014). 71

We report that the TRAIP protein preferentially localized around condensed chromosomes in pro- and metaphase and on chromosomal DNA from anaphase during mitosis. Its functional inactivation accelerated the progression through early phases of mitosis, reduced MAD2 recruitment to kinetochores and led to increased mitosis defects. Our findings strongly support the implication of TRAIP in SAC regulation.

78 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

79 TRAIP preferentially localizes at the periphery of chromosomes in early mitosis

Analysis of endogenous TRAIP expression by immunofluorescence detection in mitotic cells 80 showed localization around prometaphase and co-localization with anaphase chromosomes 81 (Fig. 1A). To determine the specificity of the utilized antibody, immune detection of 82 endogenous TRAIP in HeLa cells was analyzed 24h after transfection with two siRNAs 83 targeting TRAIP (siTRAIP1 and siTRAIP2) or a scrambled negative control siRNA 84 (siCTRL). Both TRAIP mRNA and protein levels were reduced to around 30% in TRAIP-85 86 depleted compared to control cells (Suppl. Fig. S1A). The immunofluorescence signal of endogenous TRAIP was observed in the nucleoplasm of either siCTRL- or siTRAIP-treated 87 88 cells during interphase (Fig. 1B). After treatment of cells with a short detergent extraction before fixation, removing soluble proteins (Nalepa et al., 2013), the signal became nucleolar 89 90 in control and disappeared in TRAIP-depleted cells. The signal in mitotic cells was localized close to congressing chromosomes in prometaphase and associated with condensed 91 92 chromosomes in anaphase in control but was strongly reduced in siTRAIP- treated cells (Fig. 1C). 93

To validate further TRAIP localization, a lentiviral vector driving expression of a functional 94 (Suppl. Fig. S2, (Besse et al., 2007; Zhou and Geahlen, 2009)) TRAIP-GFP was used to infect 95 HeLa cells stably expressing α -tubulin-mRFP and H2B-CFP. In early mitotic phases cells, 96 TRAIP-GFP dispersed throughout the cytoplasm and converged at the chromosome periphery 97 while in later phases it co-localized with chromosomes (Fig. 1D). A small fraction 98 99 accumulated during telophase in cytoplasmic particles, probably corresponding to nucleolusderived foci (NDF) and pre-nucleolar bodies (PNB) (Dundr et al., 1997; Ma et al., 2007; Van 100 101 Hooser et al., 2005).

102 The perichromosomal layer appears in prometaphase and disappears in telophase/cytokinesis 103 (Hernandez-Verdun and Gautier, 1994; Ma et al., 2007; Van Hooser et al., 2005). Nucleolar proteins and RNAs bind to the surface of chromosomes at the beginning of mitosis and are 104 105 incorporated again into newly formed nucleoli during telophase (Dundr et al., 1997; Van Hooser et al., 2005). Different biological functions have been assigned to chromosomal 106 peripheral proteins (CPP) forming the perichromosomal layer (Hernandez-Verdun, 2011; 107 Hernandez-Verdun and Gautier, 1994; Ma et al., 2007; Matsunaga and Fukui, 2010). Our 108 analysis identified the nucleolar protein TRAIP as a CPP and prompted us to investigate 109 TRAIP function in mitosis. 110

TRAIP regulates progression through early phases of mitosis

We examined the consequences of silencing TRAIP expression on mitosis duration using 113 siRNAs and fluorescence time-lapse imaging of HeLa cells expressing H2B-EGFP and a-114 tubulin-mRFP (Toso et al., 2009), taking nuclear envelope breakdown (NEB) as starting time 115 t=0min (Meraldi et al., 2004). In siCTRL-transfected cells, the median duration of mitosis 116 was 116.7min (95% confidence interval (CI) =111.7-123.3min, range from 75 to 275min). 117 The high variability of mitosis duration was mainly caused by the time between NEB to 118 anaphase-onset (Lim et al., 2013; Mchedlishvili et al., 2012; Rieder et al., 1994; Toso et al., 119 120 2009) which varied from 20 to 200min (median 53.3min, 95% CI=46.7-61.7min). The time 121 from anaphase to cytokinesis fluctuated only moderately from 45 to 85min (median 63.3min, 122 95% CI=60-66.7min) (Figs. 2A-D).

The average time of complete mitosis of siTRAIP1 or 2 treated cells was reduced to 96.7min 123 124 (95% CI=95-101min) or 90min (95% CI=87.7-91.7min), respectively (Fig. 2A). Although the duration from anaphase to cytokinesis with siTRAIP1 (range 45 to 95min; median 66.7min, 125 126 95% CI=63.3-70min) and siTRAIP2 (range 45 to 80min; median 58.3min, 95% CI=56.7-63.3min) was very similar to control cells, the time from NEB to anaphase-onset was 127 128 significantly reduced to 30min (95% CI=28.3-33.3min, range 20 to 75min) with siTRAIP1 and 26.7min (95% CI=26.7-28.3min, range 20 to 85min) with siTRAIP2 (Figs. 2B-C). Ninety 129 percent of TRAIP-depleted cells accomplished the onset of anaphase within 45min after NEB 130 compared to only 50% of control cells (Fig. 2E). In the skew-normal frequency distribution of 131 anaphase-onset times, a first population (peak of the distribution) with rapid and uniform 132 chromosome congression and a second with longer anaphase-onset times (active spindle 133 checkpoint) can be distinguished (Meraldi et al., 2004; Rieder et al., 1994). In control siRNA-134 transfected HeLa cells, the skew normal distribution of anaphase-onset times had a peak 135 (mode) at 31.8±1.2min whereas in TRAIP-depleted cells a shift to 28.4±0.4min (siTRAIP1) 136 or 24.2±0.4min (siTRAIP2) was observed (Fig. 2F). The NEB to anaphase-onset time in cells 137 transduced with siRNA-resistant TRAIP before siRNA transfection was indistinguishable 138 139 from the control while a catalytically inactive TRAIP mutant (C25A) failed to rescue (Fig. 2G). Although MAD2 is a frequent siRNA off-target (Hubner et al., 2010; Sigoillot et al., 140 2012; Westhorpe et al., 2010), expression of MAD2, MAD1, BUB1 and BUB3 remained 141 unchanged after TRAIP KD (Suppl. Fig. S1B-C). Together with the rescue data it is therefore 142 unlikely that TRAIP KD phenotypes are caused by off-target effects. These findings 143 suggested that the ubiquitin ligase TRAIP is implicated in the regulation of NEB to anaphase-144 145 onset time.

146 TRAIP loss enhances chromosome alignment defects and lagging chromosomes.

147 Since a reduced NEB to anaphase-onset time could induce aberrant chromosome segregation (Meraldi and Sorger, 2005; Michel et al., 2001; Perera et al., 2007), we examined whether 148 TRAIP depletion affected chromosome behavior. The number of TRAIP-depleted cells 149 dividing with a bipolar spindle and giving rise to two living daughter cells was not 150 significantly different from control cells. Mitotic indexes in siRNA-treated cells were 151 examined by anti-phospho-Histone H3(Ser28) and anti-α-tubulin immunostaining. Although 152 mitotic indexes were comparable (Fig. 3A), the percentage of cells in prophase was reduced 153 154 by 10 to 20 % in TRAIP-depleted compared to control cells (Fig. 3B), consistent with shorter NEB to anaphase-onset times. In TRAIP-depleted mitotic cells synchronized by a double-155 156 thymidine block the percentage of non-aligned chromosomes at the metaphase plate was increased compared to the control (38.5±4.9% siRNA#1, 37.1±7.6% siRNA#2, 19.6±7.5% 157 158 control; mean±s.d) (Figs. 3C and E). Chromosome segregation errors were detected in mitotic cells treated with either siTRAIP1 or 2 compared to control cells (15.7±4.5% or 19.5±6.7% 159 160 vs. 9.7±2.9%; mean±s.d.) (Figs. 3D and F). As expected, chromosome alignment and segregation errors were increased in MAD2-depleted cells supporting the reliability of our 161 162 data (Figs. 3E-F). In summary, TRAIP down-regulation in HeLa cells leads to chromosome 163 misalignment and segregation defects.

164

165 TRAIP loss decreases spindle assembly checkpoint function

Our results demonstrated that early mitosis and chromosome behavior are affected in response 166 to TRAIP KD, suggesting a role of TRAIP in the SAC. To investigate whether TRAIP KD 167 enabled HeLa cells to bypass the SAC, a taxol-induced mitotic arrest assay (Stegmeier et al., 168 2007a) assessing mitotic index and nuclear morphology was undertaken. CYLD and MAD2 169 siRNAs were used as controls for mitotic entry delay and SAC bypass (Draviam et al., 2007; 170 Meraldi et al., 2004; Stegmeier et al., 2007a; Stegmeier et al., 2007b). Only 13±8% 171 (mean±s.d.) of MAD2- or 51±15% of CYLD-depleted cells were mitotic (Fig. 4A-B) 172 (Stegmeier et al., 2007b) compared to control cells (74±7%). In TRAIP depleted cells a 173 reduced mitotic index (siRNA#1, 52±16%; siRNA#2, 53±8%) (Fig. 4B) and multilobed 174 nuclear morphology (Stegmeier et al., 2007a; Stegmeier et al., 2007b), similarly to MAD2 175 siRNA treated cells (Figs. 4A and C), was found, demonstrating that loss of TRAIP led to a 176 checkpoint-bypass phenotype. However, TRAIP depletion leads to a smaller effect than 177 MAD2 knock-down. Whether this reflects a phenotypic difference or is due to differences in 178 the degree of mRNA knockdown remains to be seen. Our data indicated that TRAIP depletion 179

was less effective compared to MAD2 knockdown (Suppl. Fig. S1A). To summarize, loss of
TRAIP reduced mitotic arrest in response to the spindle poison taxol, hence led to the bypass
of the SAC.

183

184 TRAIP depletion decreases Mad2 levels at unattached kinetochores.

Expression and/or localization of SAC proteins are finely modulated to regulate APC/C 185 activity (Musacchio and Salmon, 2007) in a dose-dependent manner (Collin et al., 2013; 186 Heinrich et al., 2013). The robustness of the SAC is in part determined by the MAD2 amount 187 recruited to kinetochores. To elucidate whether TRAIP deficiency is affecting the kinetochore 188 localization of SAC proteins, we performed immuno-fluorescence detection of MAD1, 189 MAD2, BUB1, and BUBR1 proteins in TRAIP siRNA-treated cells (Fig. 4D-E). SAC 190 proteins were correctly positioned at unattached kinetochores marked by an anti-CREST 191 192 antibody in prometaphase cells. However, the amount of MAD2 recruited to the kinetochores was significantly reduced in TRAIP-depleted cells compared to control cells (70.2%±10.1% 193 194 siRNA#1, 68.5%±9.9% siRNA#2, 100%±12.8% control; mean±s.d.) (Fig. 4E-F). This might be physiologically relevant since a reduction of 20% in MAD2 levels is sufficient to impair 195 196 SAC activity in yeast (Heinrich et al., 2013).

In summary, we have demonstrated that TRAIP changes its predominantly nucleolar 197 localization in interphase cells to the perichromosomal layer in mitosis. The decrease in 198 progression time from NEB to anaphase-onset and in the binding of MAD2 to kinetochores in 199 TRAIP-depleted cells leading to misalignment and segregation errors of chromosomes 200 identified TRAIP as a novel regulator of SAC activity in an ubiquitin-ligase-dependent 201 manner. Our findings most likely explain the cell death in TRAIP KO mice and NOPO 202 mutants in Drosophila embryos since inaccurate chromosome segregation negatively 203 impinges on the life of normal cells. The elucidation of how TRAIP functions at the 204 205 molecular level to regulate the SAC awaits identification of its substrates and interaction 206 partners.

208 MATERIALS AND METHODS

209

210 Cell culture

- 211 Cells were cultured in DMEM containing 10% fetal bovine serum and appropriate antibiotics
- (G418, 200 ug/ml; puromycin, 0.25 ug/ml). Cells were synchronized by a double-thymidine
- 213 (2mM) block. Transfection of siRNAs was performed after the first thymidine treatment.
- 214

215 Plasmids and lentivirus

TRAIP cDNA was amplified from a human cDNA library and cloned into pEGFP-N3
(Clontech) or the lentiviral vector pCDH-CMV-MCS-EF1-Hygro (BioCat). TRAIP cDNAs
with the C25A mutation or resistance to siRNAs were constructed by PCR amplification.
PCR products were verified by sequencing. LV-CFP expressing H2B-CFP was purchased
(Addgene #25998). Cells were infected (MOI of 10) with lentivirus (Almeida et al., 2011) and
selected with 800ug/ml hygromycin.

222

223 Protein extractions and TRAIP auto-ubiquitination

Proteins were extracted by cell lysis in 1% SDS/phosphate-buffered saline. For immunoblots
the following antibodies were used: GFP (Clontech), actin (Sigma), rabbit-anti-TRAIP
(Abcam), goat-anti-TRAIP antibody (Imgenex), MAD2 (Covance) and HA (Santa Cruz
Biotechnology). TRAIP auto-ubiquitination was carried out as described (Almeida et al.,
2008). Signals from immunoblots were captured by LAS4000 (GE) and analysed by ImageJ.

229

230 **RNA interference**

siRNA targeting human TRAIP mRNA (NM_005879.2) and Control siRNA (Origene),
hCYLD (Draviam et al., 2007; Sun et al., 2010), and hMAD2 (Uzunova et al., 2012) were
transfected into cells at 30nM final concentration using INTERFERin (Polyplus).

234

235 Live-cell imaging and immunofluorescence analysis

Experiments were performed at $37^{\circ}C/5\%CO_2$ in cell culture chambers (MatTek) in phenol red-free medium. For time-lapse experiments 24h after siRNA transfection, images were recorded every 5 min for 16h using a 20x Plan-NeofluarNA0.5 objective on a Axio Observer.Z1 microscope (Zeiss). Confocal live-cell imaging experiments were performed using 63x/1.40 oil objective on a LSM700 confocal laser scanning microscope (Zeiss). The following antibodies were used for immunofluorescence: GFP (Clontech), TRAIP (Abcam), phospho-Histone-H3(Ser28) (Cell Signaling Technology), tubulin (Sigma), nucleolin C23
(Santa Cruz Biotechnology), MAD1 (Meraldi et al., 2004), MAD2 (Bethyl Laboratories),
BUB1 (Klebig et al., 2009), BUBR1 (Klebig et al., 2009), and CREST (Klebig et al., 2009).
Images were analyzed using ImageJ. Kinetochore MAD2 levels were quantified as described
(McClelland et al., 2007).

247

248 Taxol assay

The taxol assay inHeLa cells was carried out as described (Stegmeier et al., 2007a) except for
DNA staining with Dapi. MosaiX images were acquired using 20xobjective on a Axio Imager
microscope (Zeiss) equipped with DIC and Dapi filters. Cells were scored using ImageJ.

252

253 **RNA isolation and qRT-PCR analysis**

RNA was purified using RNeasy Kit (Qiagen) and cDNA was synthesized using PrimescriptRT Kit (TakaRa). Quantitative PCR analysis was performed (Almeida et al., 2011) using
RPL13A (endogenous reference), TRAIP, CYLD, MAD1, Bub1B, Bub3 (Qiagen) or MAD2
(Universal Probe Library, Roche) primers.

258

259 Statistical analyses

Statistical significance, denoted as * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001,**** p<0.0001, was
calculated using 1way-ANOVA followed by Tukey's multiple comparisons test or 2wayANOVA followed by Tukey-Kramer's Post Hoc test (GraphPad Prism6).

263

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273

274 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

275 The authors declare no interest of conflict.

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428 Figure Legends

Fig. 1: Endogenous and ectopic TRAIP is a chromosomal peripheral protein during 429 mitosis. (A) Confocal images of mitotic HeLa cells immuno-stained with anti-TRAIP 430 431 antibody (green). (B-C) Confocal images of HeLa cells in interphase (B) or mitosis (C) immuno-stained for endogenous TRAIP (red) and a-tubulin (green) 24h after treatment with 432 433 the indicated siRNAs. Extraction was carried out with 0.1% Triton X-100 for 2 min before fixation (B). The settings for confocal imaging were identical within experiments. Scale bar = 434 435 5µm. DNA was marked with Dapi (blue). (D) Confocal images of living HeLa cells stably expressing a-tubulin-mRFP (red), H2B-CFP (blue) together with TRAIP-GFP (green). PNB 436 437 and NDF are marked by grey and white arrowheads, respectively. Scale bars = $5\mu m$.

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Fig. 2: TRAIP depletion decreased the NEB to anaphase time. (A-C) Scatter plot (median 439 with inter-quartile range) of times for full mitosis (A), NEB to anaphase onset (B), anaphase 440 onset to cytokinesis (C) in siRNA-treated HeLa cells. N=3 independent experiments, n=225 441 cells. (D) Successive frames from live-cell movies. Scale bar = $5\mu m$. (E) Cumulative 442 frequency plots of anaphase-onset times with NEB=0 min. (N=3, n=225). (F) Frequency 443 distribution of anaphase-onset times (N=3, n=225). (G) Rescue of the decreased NEB to 444 anaphase-onset time by the expression of siRNA-resistant wild-type but not by catalytically 445 inactive (ci, C25A) TRAIP. Median with inter-quartile range; N=3, n=180. 446

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Fig. 3: TRAIP depletion leads to chromosome alignment defects and lagging 448 449 chromosomes. (A) Mitotic index of siRNA-treated HeLa cells (N=3, n=7000) (B) Distribution of siRNA-treated HeLa cells in the different phases of mitosis (N=3, n=250). (C-450 D) Representative images of siRNA-transfected HeLa cells in metaphase (C) and anaphase 451 (D). Arrows show unaligned (C) or lagging chromosomes (D). Scale bar = $5\mu m$. (E) Fraction 452 453 of cells with unaligned chromosomes at metaphase plate (N=3, n>100, for siCTRL, siTRAIP1 454 and siTRAIP2; N=2, n=14 (siMAD2) and 60 (siCYLD). (F) Fraction of cells with segregation errors in anaphase (N=3, n>150, for siCTRL, siTRAIP1 and siTRAIP2; N=2, n=69 (siMAD2) 455 and 45 (siCYLD). Results in (A-B) are shown as mean±s.e.m. 456

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Fig. 4: TRAIP regulates the spindle checkpoint by reducing MAD2 at unattached
kinetochores. (A) Representative images of siRNA-transfected HeLa cells treated with 100
nM taxol for 24 hours. Scale bar = 30μm. (B-C) The percentage of mitotic cells (B) and cells

with either multilobed or interphase nuclei (C) was counted by cell rounding in DIC 461 microscopy and Dapi staining. Results are represented as mean±s.e.m. (N=4, n>2700, for 462 siCTRL, siTRAIP1 and siTRAIP2; N=2, n=400 for siMAD2 and siCYLD). (D-E) Confocal 463 images of siRNA-treated HeLa cells immuno-stained for CREST (red), and either MAD1, 464 MAD2, BUB1 (green) or BUBR1 (purple). Cells in (E) were treated with nocodazole 465 $(1\mu g/ml)$ for 1h prior to analysis. Scale bar = 5 μ m. (F) Scatter plot of MAD2 intensities at 466 467 single kinetochores in nocodazole-treated cells shown in (E). Quantification of MAD2 levels relative to the CREST signal (median with inter-quartile range). The total mean signal for 468 469 MAD2 in control cells was normalised to 1.

Supplementary Figures

Supplementary Figure S1: RNA interference in HeLa cells. Analysis of mRNA (A-C) and protein (A-B) levels were analyzed by quantitative PCR and immunoblot 24h after siRNA-transfection of HeLa cells. Results are reported as representative mean±s.d. of 2 or more independent experiments.

Supplementary Figure S2: TRAIP-GFP is a functional fusion protein. (A) Western blot of TRAIP-GFP (IB: TRAIP) and HA-ubiquitin (IB: HA) after immunoprecipitation of TRAIP-GFP from 293T cells transfected with pCMV-TRAIPGFP and/or pHA-Ub. B) Confocal images of cells after immuno-staining for GFP (green) and nucleolin (red). Scale bar = 10µm.

Figure1



Figure 2







Figure 4





Suppl. Figure S1





С







Bub3 mRNA levels



Suppl. Figure S2





В

	Dapi	GFP	Nucleolin	Merge
TRAIP-GFP	2		00	
GFP	¢?	*	4° °	*