

May 2023

# Who Will They Turn to? The Perspectives of Middle School Girls Regarding Trustworthy Traits in Adults

Burcu Ozturk

Wichita State University, burcu.ozturk@wichita.edu

Christina R. Miller

University of Oklahoma, crmiller@ou.edu

David A. McLeod

University of Oklahoma, damcleod@ou.edu

David Dickerson

University of Oklahoma, davidwdickerson@ou.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/mgreview>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ozturk, B., Miller, C. R., McLeod, D. A., & Dickerson, D. (2023). Who Will They Turn to? The Perspectives of Middle School Girls Regarding Trustworthy Traits in Adults. *Middle Grades Review*, 9(1).

<https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/mgreview/vol9/iss1/5>

This Research is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Education and Social Services at UVM ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Middle Grades Review by an authorized editor of UVM ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [schwrxs@uvm.edu](mailto:schwrxs@uvm.edu).

## Who Will They Turn to? The Perspectives of Middle School Girls Regarding Trustworthy Traits in Adults

**Burcu Ozturk**, *Wichita State University*  
**Christina R. Miller**, *University of Oklahoma*  
**David A. McLeod**, *University of Oklahoma*  
**David Dickerson**, *University of Oklahoma*

---

### Abstract

Early adolescence is a time marked by upheaval and change. Youth are navigating increased social pressures from constant connection with peers. Youth have access to 24 hours of social connection via technology, but they increasingly report feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression (Keles et al., 2020). They are also entering a world with increased political division, climate disasters, and decreases in public safety from events like mass shootings (Coronese et al., 2019; Follman et al., 2022). As youth navigate these new challenges, adults are seeking ways to understand better how to build meaningful connections with youth that may help mitigate the negative impacts of environmental and social stress. The potential for positive effects from adult/youth relationships is high, and even more important for girls, with research suggesting them to be at even higher levels of risk (Stallard et al., 2013). This paper explores adolescent girls' perspectives regarding who they identify as trustworthy adults and what traits make that person trustworthy. This exploration can build a foundation for fostering healthy relationships between both groups.

### Introduction

Adolescents are increasingly reporting feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression. Major depressive episodes in young women between the ages of 12-17 have increased by 8% over the past 15 years (Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality [CBHSQ], 2018). Mental health challenges are further illustrated by growing rates of suicide among young people aged 15-19 (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). Among young adults 15-24 years old, the rate of death by suicide attempt was about 14 per 100,000 people in 2019 in the US (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention [AFSP], 2022). With (42%) of inpatient adolescent females dealing with depression and anxiety stating they would rather be alone, it is becoming more evident that loneliness and isolation may impact mental health and suicidality in teenage girls (McBride & Preyde, 2022).

Many adolescents with anxiety, depression, and psychosomatic symptoms were victims of bullying (Arseneault et al., 2010; Fisher et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2017). Bullying is a public health issue in the US that peaks during adolescence (Gladden et al., 2014; Man et al., 2022; Rivara & Le Menestrel, 2016). With the rise of bullying and suicide among youth, what comes into question is the cause behind these

behaviors and the preventative measures adults can implement. Previous research has shown relationships with trustworthy adults positively impact the healthy development of youth (Sieving et al., 2017). These relationships are even more critical with girls, as they are at even higher risk, particularly during middle school (Stallard et al., 2013). This study explores adolescent girls' perspectives regarding who they identify as trustworthy adults and what traits make that person trustworthy.

### Literature Review

#### Bullying and Gender

Bullying is a social process where a person in a less powerful position is repeatedly and purposefully harassed or excluded by others (Wójcik & Mondry, 2020). This can manifest in many ways. Overt aggression is an explicit intent to cause immediate harm through physical or verbal means. In contrast, relational aggression relates to the social circle, friendships, and rejection of the victim by their peers. Relational aggression takes on many forms, such as exclusion, ignoring, and destroying the friendship networks of the victim (Wójcik & Mondry). Gender also plays a significant role (Cosma et al., 2022). Boys are more likely to be victims of physical bullying (Boel-Studt & Renner, 2013; Rosen & Nofziger, 2019; Wang et

al., 2009) while bullying among girls is more likely to be psychological (Boel-Studt & Renner; Kim et al., 2019) or relational (Boel-Studt & Renner; Wang et al.). Over half of adolescents (58.3% of males and 67.8% of girls) said they had been bullied at least once during the last year (Salmon et al., 2017). Furthermore, girls were more likely than boys to be harassed because of their body shape, size, or attractiveness, and many girls, even those within a healthy weight range, were picked on for their body size and appearance (Taylor, 2011; Rosen & Nofziger).

### **Bullying and Social Media**

Bullying not only occurs through in-person interactions but increasingly takes place in digital spaces. Cyberbullying is defined as aggression that is intentional and repeatedly carried out through electronic environments (Kowalski et al., 2019; Olweus & Limber, 2019). Cyberbullying takes place online and can be anonymous and wide-reaching via different social networking platforms and text messages (Macaulay et al., 2022; Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). Girls can be affected disproportionately and more types of victimization when compared to boys by cybervictimization (Kowalski & Limber, 2007; Merrill & Hanson, 2016; Wachs et al., 2015). One study discovered females were more likely than boys to be bullied or picked on over the internet, feel unsafe while interacting with someone online, and experience requests for personal information (Anderson, 2018; Zetterström Dahlqvist & Gadin, 2018). Cyberbullying has been documented to cause, among other things, depression, anxiety, substance abuse problems, difficulty sleeping, poor school performance, absenteeism, dropping out of school, as well as murder and suicide among adolescents (Chang et al., 2015; Giumetti & Kowalski, 2022; Kowalski et al.).

### **Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation**

Victims of bullying are highly susceptible to suicidal ideation and self-harming behaviors. In 2017, 17.2% of high school students, from a national survey, seriously considered making a suicide attempt, 13.6% made a suicide plan, and 7.4% made one or more suicide attempts (Kann et al., 2018). Some adolescents have reported self-harming as a coping mechanism to relieve negative emotions, but one study found relief diminishes over time, and hopelessness and suicidality surface (Townsend et al., 2016).

Gender, age, and sex differences can influence self-harm and suicidal ideation, particularly among girls. Notably, by 13-14, girls have been at high risk compared to their male counterparts (Stallard et al., 2013).

### **Youth Adult Relationships and Attachment Theory**

Healthy relationships between youth and adults are meaningful and influence the behaviors or attitudes an adolescent will have and whether they will be involved in risky behaviors (Jackson et al., 2012). Interactions between parent and child can have enduring effects on an individual's sense of self and interactions with others (Rivers et al., 2022). According to attachment theory, healthy parent-child relationships set a secure foundation for children to explore their environment, and securely attached children have higher social status, are less socially anxious, and experience less conflict than peers (Eliot & Cornell, 2009). On the contrary, studies have found consistent linkages between aggressive attitudes, insecure parental attachment, and bullying (Balan et al., 2018; Eliot & Cornell). Insecure individuals have lower emotion regulation abilities, maladaptive social information processing, poor social problem-solving skills, and aggressive attitudes towards others (Murphy et al., 2017), all attributes making them more prone to bullying behaviors.

In attachment theory, the emphasis on the parent and child relationship has always been a point of interest and stressed as integral to facilitating adequate social competence (Bowlby, 1969). Research has often shown that attachments with mothers are the strongest in early childhood followed by fathers (Antonucci et al. 2004; Breinholst et al., 2015; Rowe & Carnelley, 2005); however, more recent studies have explored attachment as an integrated model that examines the interactive effects of the attachment figures in tandem instead of separately (Dagan & Sagi-Schwartz, 2018). Because attachment security serves a significant function in people into their adulthood, it is vital to understand the impact it can have on adolescent behavior and functioning. Attachment is a complex and constantly evolving process that can be altered and changed vastly throughout adolescence (Ratto et al., 2016). Increased responsibility, identity, and individuality in aging teens, as well as physical, cognitive, and personality changes, can alter

their relationship with their parents (Ainsworth, 1989). Adolescents might become more critical and reflective about their relationships with their parents. They may also become more influenced and impacted by the opinions of peers and other people involved in their lives (Allen et al., 2004; Hay & Ashman, 2003; Ratto et al.). Research on the effect of gender on attachment has previously indicated female adolescents have higher levels of attachment security than males (Buist et al., 2002).

Within school-age adolescents, the impact of secure attachment and its relation to bullying is an essential topic of interest. Previous research has indicated students outside of bully/victim dynamics report higher levels of peer security than their counterparts (Burton et al., 2013). Studies have also found school-age males tend to engage in or identify with traditional bullying behavior more than school-age females (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). There might be a relationship between the lower secure attachment levels measured in males compared to females and the above-mentioned rates of bullying behavior. Another variation in attachment security and bullying behavior is indicated by the gender of the child and parent. Female adolescents who are avoidantly attached to mothers and anxiously attached to fathers are more likely to engage in aggressive bullying behavior (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). Adolescent girls who experience higher levels of separation anxiety are more likely to respond sensitively (Dubas & Gerris, 2002). More significant attachment anxiety between adolescents and their gender-corresponding parents resulted in greater relational aggression (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). Research has found that adolescent girls with higher levels of parentification and anxious attachment were more likely to engage in self-silencing behavior or be less likely to express their genuine feelings in relationships (Goldner et al., 2022). Additionally, adolescents' antisocial and aggressive behavior has been observed in those with avoidant and insecure attachment styles (Constantino et al., 2006). While peer attachment remains a crucial role in student relational behaviors, parental attachment has been shown to significantly impact the presence of bullying behaviors (Murphy et al., 2017).

### **School Climate**

School climate plays a vital role in adolescent behavior (Lundberg & Abdelzadeh, 2019;

Turhan & Akgul, 2017). School climate describes the character and quality of school experiences, such as relationships with the school community, the quality of teaching and learning, and school organization (Wang & Degol, 2016). Students' emotional well-being (Maurizi et al., 2013; Mitchell-Copeland et al., 1997; Murray & Greenberg, 2000; Tolan & Larsen, 2014), beliefs about efficacy and autonomy (Maulana et al., 2014; Murdock & Miller, 2003; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Sakiz et al., 2012), academic effort and engagement (Marchant et al., 2001; Murdock & Miller; Sánchez et al., 2005) have been related with the quality of teacher-student relationships. Previous research has revealed how school climate positively impacts the learning environment's health, resulting in positive educational and psychological outcomes for students and teachers (Kraft & Falken, 2020; Kuperminc et al., 2001). Feeling safe at school, peer support, and community support are factors of school climate that positively impact the well-being of adolescents (Lester & Cross, 2015). On the other hand, school climate can also cause negative consequences such as bullying and poor student academic achievements and mental health (Bosworth & Judkins, 2014; Craig & McCuaig-Edge, 2011; Craig & Pepler, 2007).

Scholars have argued trust could be essential for developing and maintaining healthy relationships (Ellison & Walton-Fisette, 2022; Levine et al., 2018; Pringle et al., 2019). One research was conducted for children and young people in residential care (Moore et al., 2017). The study revealed that competent and trustworthy staff were essential and helped them feel safe (Moore et al.). Another study was conducted among marginalized youth to assess trustworthiness (Sapiro, 2020). The study result emphasized that negative experiences in the past with social workers, family, and service providers ambivalence about engaging in trusting relationships with adults (Sapiro, 2020). Trust decreases conflict and increases positive perception of one's relationships and forgiveness after interpersonal transgressions (Ellison & Walton-Fisette, 2022; Levine et al.). Due to this gap in the literature, more information is needed.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Research has shown how trusted adult relationships are vital for the healthy development of youth. However, there is little is

known about adolescents' perspectives regarding trustworthy traits in adults, particularly in school settings and the present study contributes the unique perspective of eighth grade girls. Research has also indicated this could be even more important for adolescent girls. More research is needed to assess who girls rely on and why they choose to trust specific adults when facing significant problems. This study explores the perspectives of middle school girls on what traits they consider trustworthy in adults within the school setting and what adults they trust outside of school. The following research questions were posed: *What adult within the middle school is trustworthy, and why do they trust that person? Who is a trustworthy adult outside of school?*

## Method

### “Why I Matter”

Data for this study were collected prior to the Covid-19 pandemic as part of a larger, schoolwide initiative called “Why I Matter,” which was an adaptation of participatory action research combined with a gallery walk. The project was modeled after the Chelsea High School #WhyYouMatter program, which utilized photography and creative expression aimed at addressing hope and resilience by creating the conditions for individual students to feel more valued, assisting in establishing protective factors that can “buffer, ameliorate, and mitigate the effects” of stress (Henderson, 2013, p. 1). Leveraging the school’s most plentiful asset, its people, to develop a safe environment that mitigates some of the potential adverse childhood experiences was one of the aspects of the project with the most significant potential impact. When viewed as a micro-community, incorporating elements of asset-based community development (ABCD) becomes an obvious path to making school a haven from trauma children encounter. Caring adults are critical in developing a school micro-community where trust and security support students. “All caring adults in a school are potential agents of protective factors” (Henderson, p. 23). Teachers are usually the first to recognize and reinforce students’ internal protective factors by engaging students in non-academic conversations and other interactions. However, any adult staff member has the potential to do the same and become a person students trust. Creating a more community-focused environment improves peer,

teacher-student, and school staff-student relationships.

Building a school community that views “young people as resources to be nurtured versus problems to be managed” (Benson et al., 2006, p. 902) results from recognizing often overlooked talents and skills. Focusing on the development of all youths by learning about and identifying previously hidden skills and talents effectively highlight the positives and can begin to reduce or mitigate negative factors in the lives of adolescents (McCammon, 2012).

Middle school students in a suburban town in the Southern Plains completed pre- and post-surveys, open-ended questions regarding students' attitudes toward difficult situations, who they trust, and why. The selected middle school is one of four in the city of approximately 120,000, and over 30% of the student body receives free and reduced lunch. A teacher within the school presented the idea for the #WhyIMatter project and worked with her school counselor, principal, and the school of social work at a nearby university to conduct the project. This article presents the qualitative analysis of the eighth-grade girls’ responses to the open-ended survey questions.

### Qualitative Methods

Institutional Review Board approval was gained at the University, the public school district, and the site principal. Surveys were administered using the school-provided MacBook during their overtime (homeroom) period via Google Classroom. This approach also minimized the impact participation had on academic coursework and teacher workload. Grounded in Social Construction, this study seeks to build knowledge about the reality of adolescent girls and their perceptions of trustworthy adults (Charmaz, 2008). Interpretation of these findings cannot move beyond the context of this population of middle school girls (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

### Data Analysis

Qualitative data were pulled from the electronic surveys and formatted in an excel spreadsheet for manual analysis by the first two authors. The authors utilized a modified version of systematic text condensation (Malterud, 2012) to analyze the data. The authors reviewed the data individually and noted initial themes that

emerged. They met to review their initial impressions and build the first draft of the codebook. Then they separately applied the codes across the data over three weeks and met weekly to review discrepancies and resolve differences with in-depth discussion and negotiation (Bradley et al., 2007). The codebook was continually refined during these weekly discussions and ongoing analysis. This approach resulted in an agreed-upon application of the final codes to the data and promoted a less mechanistic and more in-depth creation of insight into the data (Morgan, 1997).

Not only the participants' voices shape qualitative analysis but also the researcher's lived experience (Honey et al., 2020). Following the guidelines for reporting qualitative research presented by Wu et al. (2016), the authors recognize their values, beliefs, and identities influence their interpretation of the data. To facilitate transparency, the authors have shared their identities and background (Roberts et al., 2020). The authors are not originally from the local community. Author 1 is an international scholar who worked as a school social worker and has experience in qualitative research. Author 2 is a white cis-gender woman with a background in school social work and practice with youth with disabilities. Authors 3 and 4 are both cis-gender white males with backgrounds in research and practice related to violence prevention and healthy behavior development.

## Results

The sample included  $n=160$  eighth-grade girls aged 13-14 years old. Girls were asked about a caring adult with the question, "\_\_\_\_\_ is a caring person I trust." The students filled in the blank based on who was a caring and trusted person in their life. 51.2 % percent of the girls mentioned their trusted person was their *mom*, 15% said it was their *parents*, 12.5% identified *school staff*, 9.3 % identified *faith leaders*, 5.6 % identified their *dads*, 5% identified *siblings*, 1.8% identified someone in their *extended family*, and 0.6% said their trusted person was a *therapist*. The students were also asked to identify an adult in the middle school that cared about them and whom they trusted. To explore what made this person trustworthy, the next question read, "I know they care about me because \_\_\_\_\_," and results from the analysis were grouped into five basic themes based on the student responses. In this study, we used those questions to explore who the students

trust in their life and what makes this person trustworthy. These are organized in Table 1, which illustrates each theme, sub-themes, frequency of themes, and direct quotes from the girls. Out of 160, (91.8%) of students reported their trusted person in the school and why they trusted that person in the middle school.  $N=147$  students responded to all three questions.

## Codes for Traits of a Trustworthy Adult in School Settings

**Theme 1 - Understanding:** Understanding, empathy, and support were all identified as important traits for middle school girls. The student's statements mentioned that students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts when they feel understood and supported. The sub-themes of empathy, supportive, calm, nice, and approachable were combined into the broader theme of understanding. One girl said, "She lets me talk about my problems and makes me feel comfortable with being trans and gay." Another student mentioned, "They have always supported me and encouraged me to do the best I can." Also, many girls stated how the school counselor was empathic toward students. One girl said that "They are very empathetic toward me."

**Theme 2 - Helpful:** This theme demonstrates that the students think caring adults provide help and advice. The girls mentioned that caring adults in the school assist them whenever they need help. For example, one student said, "If I'm ever struggling in her (*a teacher*) class, she will always offer to help me." Also, the students highlighted that when they need guidance, the trusted person in the school provided them with sound advice and one girl said, "My teacher always gives me good advice."

**Theme 3 - Reliability:** This theme shows that the students preferred to share and engage with someone they consider reliable, consistent, caring, and available. The sub-themes of established relationship, consistent, trustworthy, and present, were combined into the broader theme of trustworthiness. The girls mentioned that building a consistent relationship with a trusted adult in the school is crucial for them to talk with them when needed. One student said, "They were my softball coaches, and I trust them because I have known them for a long time." In addition, another girl mentioned that "my teacher can trust me and look out for me when needed." Many students identified the school

counselor as a trustworthy or caring school professional. One girl said, “I know they care about me because she is my counselor, and she

has been trained to cope with students’ troubles. She is also lovely, attentive, and respectful.”

**Table 1**

*Theme Distribution of the Study*

| Theme                  | Sub-Theme  | Number of Times Repeated | Direct Quote Related to Theme  |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Understanding problems | Empathy, supportive, approachable, nice, calm              | 43                       | “She lets me talk about my problems and makes me feel comfortable with being trans and gay.” |
| Helpful                | Advice, helpful  | 37                       | “He always gives me good advice.”  |
| Reliability            | Established relationship, present, trustworthy, consistent | 38                       | “She is very trustworthy and very caring.”   |
| Communication          | Listening, asking questions, communicating                 | 29                       | “I talk to her about everything.”  |

**Theme 4** - Communication: The theme of communication includes listening, asking questions, and talking with the students, which is a key to building trust among people. This theme demonstrates how school staff listen to students and create a trusting relationship. The girls reported that having someone who is a good listener helps them to build a trusting relationship. One girl said, “I talked to my teacher, Mr. X, about everything, and I know that he can listen to me.” Another girl said, “Ms. Y is a good listener and gives back good advice.”

### Discussion

This study expands on the limited amount of research conducted on adolescents’ trust in adults (e.g., Caulfield et al., 2016; Rickwood et al., 2007; Umemura & Serek, 2016; Ying et al., 2015). The findings provide a glimpse into the perceptions of Middle School girls about the trustworthy adults in their lives.

### Trustworthy Adults Outside of the School

When asked what adult they trusted outside of the school environment 82 girls (51.2%) reported that they trust their mother more than anyone in their life. Previous research exploring the critical importance of relationships with mothers has consistently found that adolescents feel that their mothers know them better and mothers have more responsibility for adolescents’ daily care, discipline, and recreational activities (Phares et al., 2009). For instance, several studies have found that adolescent relationships with mothers are typically more secure, and they feel close to their mothers (Hay & Ashman, 2003; Luthar & Barkin, 2012). Mothers are usually considered the primary caregivers (Bowlby, 1982; Collins & Russell, 1991; Steinberg et al., 2002). One study revealed that adolescent girls reported a significantly higher level of trust and communication with mothers and had a higher

level of felt attachment than boys (Ebbert et al., 2019).

Furthermore, 27.5% of the participants reported that they trust their family members, which includes the father (father and mother), siblings, and extended family members. Research has shown that family members play a crucial role in children's social-emotional development, including their understanding of empathy (Eisenberg et al., 2009) and prosocial behavior (Daniel et al., 2016). Previous studies showed that girls have more significant emotional needs (Cyranowski et al., 2000; Rudolph, 2002), and they display a stronger relationship with both parents (Buist et al., 2002). In addition, sibling closeness is as significant to a child's development as the closeness between parents and children (McHale et al., 2012). One study revealed that having a sibling played a substantial role in their personality and empathy (Gungordu et al., 2021).

Faith leaders were identified by 9.3% of middle school girls as the trusted adults in their lives. Previous research established that religion is an essential predictor of various behavioral outcomes, and faith leaders spend time with adolescents and develop caring relationships (Hunter & Stanford, 2014). Subsequently, the findings in the present study are consistent with the previous studies to explore who adolescents trust in their life.

### **Middle School Girls and School Climate**

Schools have been underscored as an essential means of boosting young people's trust in others, and school climate plays a significant role in adolescents' behaviors (Lundberg & Abdelzadeh, 2019; Rigby, 2012). In the current study, 91.8% of middle school girls responded to the questions that what adult within the middle school is trustworthy and why they trust that person. The middle school girls reported that they trusted their school staff, teachers, and counselors. The present study revealed the students trust the school staff and feel cared for by them because the staff are kind, helpful, professional, understanding, trustworthy, and communicate to build a relationship. The study highlights that unconditional kindness is a prime determinant of trustworthiness and, thus, a vital pillar of positive social interactions (Thielmann & Hilbig, 2015). Also, in the current study, the students mentioned that having a

trusted person in the school setting makes them feel comfortable talking about their issues and provides them with sound advice when needed. Previous studies have shown the benefits of a positive teacher-student relationship with academic achievement, affective/behavioral outcomes, and engagement (Gregory & Korth, 2016; Havik & Westergard, 2020; Martin & Collie, 2019; Wentzel et al., 2010). In addition, when adolescents perceived a positive, trustworthy relationship with their teacher, even though they had conflict in the past, they showed lower incidences of maladaptive behavior and reduced bullying involvement (Di Stasio et al., 2016; Gregory & Ripski, 2008). According to Bowlby's attachment theory (1969), adaptation depends on the joint product of development history and current circumstances (Sroufe et al., 1999). Hence, Bowlby's attachment theory (1969) supported this finding in a study that describes trust as a dynamic quality of interpersonal relationships built through reciprocity between teachers and students. Therefore, this study's findings will contribute to the literature to better understand which adults middle school girls identify as trustworthy and the traits that make that person trustworthy.

### **Implications**

Overall, the results suggest that parents and adults play a significant role in adolescents' life and development. The current study expands our understanding of what adults' middle school girls identify as trustworthy and the traits that make that person trustworthy. The results indicate that the students trust someone who has formed a relationship with them, expresses understanding, listens, and encourages them. Also, this present study's findings contribute to the literature that the relationships between adolescents, trusted family members, and non-parental adults can benefit adolescents while developing and transitioning into adulthood as these trusted adults can encourage and give them advice. The outcome of the current study might be helpful for school social workers, therapists, and teachers who work with middle school girls to understand how they identify trust and how they can build trustworthy relationships with the girls. Knowing who the trusted adults for middle school girls outside of the school can provide information to school social workers and teachers who they need to contact when they need it for the girls' safety and engagement at school and in life. This recent study can inform intervention programs in



middle schools to create safe environments for all students. To maintain trust with students, teachers should listen and never ignore or dismiss the students' feelings. Also, parents play a significant role in preventing bullying and implementing bullying intervention programs to support schools (Bellmore, 2016; Chen et al., 2020). This study highlights and provides information to teachers and school social workers to understand the ongoing importance that adolescent girls place on their relationships with their mothers. Interventions that promote positive relationships between parents and teens can lead to better well-being in teens, and adolescent girls benefit from a trusting relationship with their parents. Parents may benefit from more programs from schools and community agencies that support them in forming and maintaining trusting relationships with their adolescents. Education highlights strategies for parents to build a relationship with their children during the challenging life phase of adolescence. Many researchers have recommended schools seek parental input during the development of school policies and communicate with parents when their child has either engaged in bullying or been a victim of bullying (Jan & Hussain, 2015). Providing information to all parents about school policies is critical to gaining parental support (Jan & Hussain).

### Limitations and Future Study Direction

Despite the valuable results obtained from the present study, the study does have limitations. First, this study only focused on girls. Future studies can include girls and boys because they may differ in their description of trust and have different bullying experiences in the school environment. Second, this study included only eighth-grade adolescent girls. However, the trust perspective can be different in the various age groups. So, future studies should consider receiving viewpoints from multiple age groups to collaborate on the current findings. Another limitation is the brief nature of the questionnaire. A more in-depth interview with a smaller sample of middle school girls may have provided richer qualitative data and more context to the responses.

### Conclusion

Challenges such as bullying, social isolation, social media pressures, stress, and anxiety adolescents face making positive relationships

with trusted adults even more critical. Adolescent girls are most susceptible to cyberbullying and often adverse social, academic, and mental health impacts, including suicidal ideation. One of the primary mitigating factors of these negative experiences for adolescent girls is frequent interaction with a trusted adult. Teachers, counselors, and other school staff members are often the most trusted adult after a parent for many adolescent girls. At times, adults at school are even more trusted than parents. Therefore, it is critical for school faculty, administration, and staff members to foster positive, trusting relationships with adolescent girls (and boys) to create the best possible chance for improved academic, social, and psychological outcomes.

### References

- Ainsworth, M. S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44(4), 709.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/003-066X.44.4.709>
- Allen, J. P., McElhaney, K. B., Kuperminc, G. P., & Jodl, K. M. (2004). Stability and change in attachment security across adolescence. *Child Development*, 75(6), 1792-1805.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00817.x>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (2022, October 14). Suicide statistics.  
<https://afsp.org/suicide-statistics/>
- Anderson, M. (2018). A majority of teens have experienced some form of Cyberbullying.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/09/27/a-majority-of-teens-have-experienced-some-form-of-cyberbullying>
- Antonucci, T., Akiyama, H., & Takahashi, K. (2004). Attachment and close relationships across the life span. *Attachment & human development*, 6(4), 353-370.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461673042000303136>

- Arseneault, L., Bowes, L., & Shakoor, S. (2010). Bullying victimization in youths and mental health problems: 'Much ado about nothing'? *Psychological Medicine*, *40*(5), 717-729. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291709991383>
- Balan, R., Dobrean, A., & Balazsi, R. (2018). Indirect effects of parental and peer attachment on bullying and victimization among adolescents: The role of negative automatic thoughts. *Aggressive Behavior*, *44*(6), 561-570. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21775>
- Bellmore, A. (2016). Whose responsibility is it to stop bullying? *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *3*(1), 92-97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732215624218>
- Benson, P. L., Scales, P. C., Hamilton, S. F., & Sesma, A., Jr. (2006). Positive youth development: Theory, research, and applications. In R. M. Lerner & W. Damon (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development* (pp. 894-941). John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Boel-Studt, S., & Renner, L. M. (2013). Individual and familial risk and protective correlates of physical and psychological peer victimization. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *37*(12), 1163-1174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.07.010>
- Bosworth, K., & Judkins, M. (2014). Tapping into the power of school climate to prevent bullying: One application of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports. *Theory Into Practice*, *53*(4), 300-307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2014.947224>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. Basic.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *52*(4), 664. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.1982.tb01456.x>
- Bradley, E. H., Curry, L. A., & Devers, K. J. (2007). Qualitative data analysis for health services research: developing taxonomy, themes, and theory. *Health services research*, *42*(4), 1758-1772. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6773.2006.00684.x>
- Breinholst, S., Esbjørn, B. H., & Reinholdt-Dunne, M. L. (2015). Effects of attachment and rearing behavior on anxiety in normal developing youth: A mediational study. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *81*, 155-161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2014.08.022>
- Buist, K. L., Deković, M., Meeus, W., & van Aken, M. A. (2002). Developmental patterns in adolescent attachment to mother, father and sibling. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *31*(3), 167-176. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015074701880>
- Burton, K. A., Florell, D., & Wygant, D. B. (2013). The role of peer attachment and normative beliefs about aggression on traditional bullying and cyberbullying. *Psychology in the Schools*, *50*(2), 103-115. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21663>
- Caulfield, F., Ewing, L., Bank, S., & Rhodes, G. (2016). Judging trustworthiness from faces: Emotion cues modulate trustworthiness judgments in young children. *British Journal of Psychology*, *107*(3), 503-518. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12156>
- Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Methodological summary and definitions. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Chang, F. C., Chiu, C. H., Miao, N. F., Chen, P. H., Lee, C. M., Chiang, J. T., & Pan, Y. C. (2015). The relationship between parental mediation and Internet addiction among adolescents, and the association with cyberbullying and

- depression. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 57, 21-28.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2014.11.013>
- Charmaz, K. (2008). Constructionism and the grounded theory method. *Handbook of Constructionist Research*, 1(1), 397-412.
- Chen, C., Yang, C., Chan, M., & Jimerson, S. R. (2020). Association between school climate and bullying victimization: Advancing integrated perspectives from parents and cross-country comparisons. *School Psychology*, 35(5), 311–320. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000405>
- Collins, W. A., & Russell, G. (1991). Mother-child and father-child relationships in middle childhood and adolescence: A developmental analysis. *Developmental Review*, 11(2), 99-136.  
[https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/0273-2297\(91\)90004-8](https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/0273-2297(91)90004-8)
- Constantino, J. N., Chackes, L. M., Wartner, U. G., Gross, M., Brophy, S. L., Vitale, J., & Heath, A. C. (2006). Mental representations of attachment in identical female twins with and without conduct problems. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 37(1), 65-72.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-006-0020-y>
- Coronese, M., Lamperti, F., Keller, K., Chiaromonte, F., & Roventini, A. (2019). Evidence for sharp increase in the economic damages of extreme natural disasters. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(43), 21450-21455.
- Cosma, A., Bjereld, Y., Elgar, F. J., Richardson, C., Bilz, L., Craig, W., ... & Walsh, S. D. (2022). Gender differences in bullying reflect societal gender inequality: A multilevel study with adolescents in 46 countries. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 71(5), 601-608.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2022.05.015>
- Craig, W. M., & McCuaig-Edge, H. (2011). Bullying and fighting. In: J. Freeman, M. King, W. Pickett, W. Craig, F. Elgar, I. Janssen & D.A. Klinger (Eds.), *The health of young people in Canada: A mental health focus* (Public Health Agency of Canada), 167-183.
- Craig, W. M. & Pepler, D. J. (2007). Understanding bullying: From research to policy, *Canadian Psychology*, 48, 86-93.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/cp2007010>
- Cyranowski, J. M., Frank, E., Young, E., & Shear, M. K. (2000). Adolescent onset of the gender difference in lifetime rates of major depression: A theoretical model. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 57(1), 21–27.  
<https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.57.1.21>
- Dagan, O., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. (2018). Early attachment network with mother and father: An unsettled issue. *Child Development Perspectives*, 12(2), 115-121. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12272>
- Daniel, G. R., Wang, C., & Berthelsen, D. (2016). Early school-based parent involvement, children’s self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An Australian longitudinal study. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 36, 168-177.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2015.12.016>
- Di Stasio, M. R., Savage, R., & Burgos, G. (2016). Social comparison, competition and teacher-student relationships in junior high school classrooms predicts bullying and victimization. *Journal of Adolescence*, 53, 207-216.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.10.002>
- Dubas, J. S., & Gerris, J. R. M. (2002). Longitudinal changes in the time parents spend in activities with their adolescent children as a function of child age, pubertal status and gender. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 16(4), 415-427.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.16.4.415>

- Ebbert, A. M., Infurna, F. J., & Luthar, S. S. (2019). Mapping developmental changes in perceived parent-adolescent relationship quality throughout middle school and high school. *Development and Psychopathology*, 31(4), 1541-1556. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0954579418001219>
- Eisenberg, N., Valiente, C., Spinrad, T. L., Cumberland, A., Liew, J., Reiser, M., Zhou, Q., & Losoya, S. H. (2009). Longitudinal relations of children's effortful control, impulsivity, and negative emotionality to their externalizing, internalizing, and co-occurring behavior problems. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(4), 988-1008. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016213>
- Eliot, M., & Cornell, D. G. (2009). Bullying in middle school as a function of insecure attachment and aggressive attitudes. *School Psychology International*, 30(2), 201-214. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0143034309104148>
- Ellison, D. W., & Walton-Fisette, J. (2022). "It's more about building trust": Physical education teachers' experiences with trauma-informed practices. *European Physical Education Review*, 28(4), 906-922. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X221096603>
- Fisher, H. L., Moffitt, T. E., Houts, R. M., Belsky, D. W., Arseneault, L., & Caspi, A. (2012). Bullying victimization and risk of self-harm in early adolescence: Longitudinal cohort study. *BMJ*, 344, e2683.
- Follman, M. Aronsen, G., & Pan, D. (2022). U.S. mass shootings, 1982-2022: Data from Mother Jones' investigation. *Mother Jones*. <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/12/mass-shootings-mother-jones-full-data/>
- Giumetti, G. W., & Kowalski, R. M. (2022). Cyberbullying via social media and well-being. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 45, 101314. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101314>
- Gladden, R. M., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Hamburger, M. E., & Lumpkin, C. D. (2014). Bullying surveillance among youths: Uniform definitions for public health and recommended data elements. Version 1.0 (cdc.gov)
- Goldner, L., Jakobi, C. D., Schorr, S., Dakak, S., & Shawahne, N. (2022). Keep it quiet: Mother-daughter parentification and difficulties in separation-individuation shaping daughters' authentic/true self and self-silencing: A mediation model. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 39(2), 165-174. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pap0000352>
- Gregory, A., & Korth, J. (2016). Teacher-student relationships and behavioral engagement in the classroom. *Handbook of social influences in school contexts: Social-emotional, motivation, and cognitive outcomes*, 178-191.
- Gregory, A., & Ripski, M. B. (2008). Adolescent trust in teachers: Implications for behavior in the high school classroom. *School Psychology Review*, 37(3), 337-353. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2008.12087881>
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.
- Gungordu, N., Ozturk, B., & Hernandez-Reif, M. (2021). Empathy and sibling relationship dynamics of women in emerging adulthood: Mixed-method research. *Family Relations*, 71(1), 238-255. <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12618>
- Havik, T., & Westergård, E. (2020). Do teachers matter? Students' perceptions of classroom interactions and student engagement. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 64(4), 488-507. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2019.1577754>
- Hay, I., & Ashman, A. F. (2003). The development of adolescents' emotional stability and general self-concept: The interplay of parents, peers, and gender.

- International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 50(1), 77-91.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912032000053359>
- Henderson, N. (2013). Havens of resilience. *Educational Leadership*, 71(1), 22-27.
- Honey, A., Boydell, K. M., Coniglio, F., Do, T. T., Dunn, L., Gill, K., ... & Tooth, B. (2020). Lived experience research as a resource for recovery: A mixed methods study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 20(1), 1-13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02861-0>
- Hunter, W., & Stanford, M. (2014). Adolescent mental health: The role of youth and college pastors. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 17(10), 957-966.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2014.966663>
- Jackson, C. A. Henderson, M. Frank, J. W. Haw, S. J. (2012). An overview of prevention of multiple risk behaviour in adolescence and young adulthood. *Journal of Public Health*, 34(1), 131-140.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdr113>
- Jan, A., & Husain, S. (2015). Bullying in elementary schools: Its causes and effects on students. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(19), 43-56.
- Kann, L., McManus, T., Harris, W. A., Shanklin, S. L., Flint, K. H., Queen, B., ... & Ethier, K. A. (2018). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2017. *MMWR Surveillance Summaries*, 67(8), 1.
- Keles, B., McCrae, N., & Grealish, A. (2020). A systematic review: The influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescents. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25(1), 79-93.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590851>
- Kim, S., Kimber, M., Boyle, M. H., & Georgiades, K. (2019). Sex differences in the association between cyberbullying victimization and mental health, substance use, and suicidal ideation in adolescents. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 64(2), 126-135.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0706743718777397>
- Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & McCord, A. (2019). A developmental approach to cyberbullying: Prevalence and protective factors. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 45, 20-32.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.02.009>
- Kowalski, R. M., & Limber, S. P. (2007). Electronic bullying among middle school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41(6), S22-S30.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2007.08.017>
- Kraft, M. A., & Falken, G. T. (2020). Why school climate matters for teachers and students. *State Education Standard*, 20(2), 33.
- Kuperminc, G. P., Leadbeater, B. J., & Blatt, S. J. (2001). School social climate and individual differences in vulnerability to psychopathology among middle school students. *Journal of School Psychology*, 39(2), 141-159.  
[https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/S0022-4405\(01\)00059-0](https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/S0022-4405(01)00059-0)
- Lester, L. & Cross, D. (2015). The relationship between school climate and mental and emotional well-being over the transition from primary to secondary school. *Psychology of Well-Being*, 5(9).  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13612-015-0037-8>
- Levine, E. E., Bitterly, T. B., Cohen, T. R., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2018). Who is trustworthy? Predicting trustworthy intentions and behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 115(3), 468-494.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/psp0000136>
- Lundberg, E., & Abdelzadeh, A. (2019). The role of school climate in explaining changes in social trust over time. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 63(5), 712-724.

- <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2018.1434824>
- Luthar, S. S., & Barkin, S. H. (2012). Are affluent youth truly “at risk”? Vulnerability and resilience across three diverse samples. *Development and Psychopathology*, 24(2), 429-449. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0954579412000089>
- Macaulay, P. J., Betts, L. R., Stiller, J., & Kellezi, B. (2022). An introduction to cyberbullying. In *Cybersecurity and cognitive science* (pp. 197-213). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-90570-1.00002-4>
- Malterud, K. (2012). Systematic text condensation: A strategy for qualitative analysis. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 40(8), 795-805. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494812465030>
- Man, X., Liu, J., & Xue, Z. (2022). Effects of bullying forms on adolescent mental health and protective factors: A global cross-regional research based on 65 countries. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(4), 2374. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19042374>
- Marchant, G. J., Paulson, S. E., & Rothlisberg, B. A. (2001). Relations of middle school students’ perceptions of family and school contexts with academic achievement. *Psychology in the Schools*, 38(6), 505-519. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.1039>
- Martin, A. J., & Collie, R. J. (2019). Teacher-student relationships and students’ engagement in high school: Does the number of negative and positive relationships with teachers matter?. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 111(5), 861. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/edu0000317>
- Maulana, R., Opdenakker, M. C., & Bosker, R. (2014). Teacher-student interpersonal relationships do change and affect academic motivation: A multilevel growth curve modelling. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84(3), 459-482. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12031>
- Maurizi, L., Ceballo, R., Epstein-Ngo, Q., & Cortina, K. (2013). Does neighborhood belonging matter? Examining school and neighborhood belonging as protective factors for Latino adolescents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 83, 323-334. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1111/ajop.12017>
- McBride, S., & Preyde, M. (2020). Loneliness and social isolation in a sample of youth hospitalized for psychiatric illness. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-020-00723-y>
- McCammon, S. L. (2012). Systems of care as asset-building communities: Implementing strengths-based planning and positive youth development. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 49, 556-565. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-012-9514-x>
- McHale, S. M., Updegraff, K. A., & Whiteman, S. D. (2012). Sibling relationships and influences in childhood and adolescence. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74(5), 913-930. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1741-3737.2012.01011.x>
- Merrill, R. M., & Hanson, C. L. (2016). Risk and protective factors associated with being bullied on school property compared with cyberbullied. *BMC Public Health*, 16(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-016-2833-3>
- Mitchell-Copeland, J., Denham, S. A., & DeMulder, E. K. (1997). Q-sort assessment of child-teacher attachment relationships and social competence in the preschool. *Early Education and Development*, 8(1), 27-39. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15566935eedo801\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15566935eedo801_3)

- Moore, T., McArthur, M., Death, J., Tilbury, C., & Roche, S. (2018). Sticking with us through it all: The importance of trustworthy relationships for children and young people in residential care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 84*, 68-75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2017.10.043>
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984287>
- Murdock, T. B., & Miller, A. (2003). Teachers as sources of middle school students' motivational identity: Variable-centered and person-centered analytic approaches. *The Elementary School Journal, 103*(4), 383-399. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/499732>
- Murray, C., & Greenberg, M. T. (2000). Children's relationship with teachers and bonds with school: An investigation of patterns and correlates in middle childhood. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*(5), 423-445. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4405\(00\)00034-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4405(00)00034-0)
- Murphy, T. P., Laible, D., & Augustine, M. (2017). The influences of parent and peer attachment on bullying. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 26*(5), 1388-1397. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0663-2>
- Olweus, D., & Limber, S.P. (2019). The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). *Making an Impact on School Bullying*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351201957-2>
- Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2010). Cyberbullying and self-esteem. *The Journal of School Health, 80*(12), 614-621. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2010.00548.x>
- Phares, V., Fields, S., & Kamboukos, D. (2009). Fathers' and mothers' involvement with their adolescents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 18*(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-008-9200-7>
- Pringle, J., McAteer, J., Whitehead, R., Scott, E., Milne, D., & Jepson, R. (2019). Developing a taxonomy to characterize trusted adult support in the lives of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence, 76*, 30-36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2019.08.004>
- Ratto, N., Doyle, A.-B., & Markiewicz, D. (2016). Attachment with mother and adolescents' conflict with romantic partner or close friend. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement, 48*(1), 68-77. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cbs0000031>
- Rickwood, D., White, A., & Eckersley, R. (2007). Overview of current trends in mental health problems for Australia's youth and adolescents. *Clinical Psychologist, 11*(3), 72-78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13284200701870970>
- Rigby, K. (2012). What schools may do to reduce bullying. In S. Jimerson, A. Nickerson, M. Mayer & M. Furlong (Eds.), *Handbook of school violence and school safety: International research and practice*, (2nd ed., pp. 397-408). Routledge.
- Rivara, F., & Le Menstrel, S. (2016). *Public report release: Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy, and Practice*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/23482>
- Rivers, A. S., Bosmans, G., Piovanetti Rivera, I., Ruan-Iu, L., & Diamond, G. (2022). Maternal and paternal attachment in high-risk adolescents: Unique and interactive associations with anxiety and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Family Psychology, 36*(6), 954-963. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000989>
- Roberts, C., Kumar, K., & Finn, G. (2020). Navigating the qualitative manuscript writing process: Some tips for authors

- and reviewers. *BMC Medical Education*, 20(1), 1-4.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-020-02370-4>
- Rosen, N. L., & Nofziger, S. (2019). Boys, bullying, and gender roles: How hegemonic masculinity shapes bullying behavior. *Gender Issues*, 36(3), 295-318.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-018-9226-0>
- Rowe, A. C., & Carnelley, K. B. (2005). Preliminary support for the use of a hierarchical mapping technique to examine attachment networks. *Personal Relationships*, 12(4), 499-519.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.2005.00128.x>
- Rudolph, K. D. (2002). Gender differences in emotional responses to interpersonal stress during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 30(4), 3-13.  
[https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/S1054-139X\(01\)00383-4](https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1016/S1054-139X(01)00383-4)
- Ryan, A. M., & Patrick, H. (2001). The classroom social environment and changes in adolescents' motivation and engagement during middle school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(2), 437-460.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F00028312038002437>
- Sakiz, G., Pape, S. J., & Hoy, A. W. (2012). Does perceived teacher affective support matter for middle school students in mathematics classrooms? *Journal of School Psychology*, 50(2), 235-255.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2011.10.005>
- Salmon, S., Turner, S., Taillieu, T., Fortier, J., & Afifi, T. O. (2018). Bullying victimization experiences among middle and high school adolescents: Traditional bullying, discriminatory harassment, and cybervictimization. *Journal of Adolescence*, 63, 29-40.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2017.12.005>
- Sánchez, B., Colón, Y., & Esparza, P. (2005). The role of sense of school belonging and gender in the academic adjustment of Latino adolescents. *Journal of youth and Adolescence*, 34, 619-628.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-005-8950-4>
- Sapiro, B. (2020). Assessing trustworthiness: Marginalized youth and the central relational paradox in treatment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 116, 105178.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105178>
- Sieving, R. E., McRee, A. L., McMorris, B. J., Shlafer, R. J., Gower, A. L., Kapa, H. M., ... & Resnick, M. D. (2017). Youth-adult connectedness: A key protective factor for adolescent health. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 52(3), S275-S278.
- Sroufe, L. A., Carlson, E. A., Levy, A. K., & Egeland, B. (1999). Implications of attachment theory for developmental psychopathology. *Development and psychopathology*, 11(1), 1-13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579499001923>
- Stallard, P., Spears, M., Montgomery, A. A., Phillips, R., & Sayal, K. (2013). Self-harm in young adolescents (12-16 years): Onset and short-term continuation in a community sample. *BMC Psychiatry*, 13(1), 1-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244x-13-328>
- Steinberg, L., & Silk, J. S. (2002). Parenting adolescents. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Children and parenting* (pp. 103-133). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Taylor, N. L. (2011). "Guys, She's Humongous!": Gender and weight-based teasing in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 26(2), 178-199.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0743558410371128>
- Thielmann, I., & Hilbig, B. E. (2015). The traits one can trust: Dissecting reciprocity and kindness as determinants of trustworthy behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(11), 1523-1536.



- <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0146167215600530>
- Tolan, P. H., & Larsen, R. (2014). Trajectories of life satisfaction during middle school: Relations to developmental-ecological microsystems and student functioning. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(3), 497-511. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12156>
- Townsend, E., Wadman, R., Sayal, K., Armstrong, M., Harroe, C., Majumder, P., . . . Clarke, D. (2016). Uncovering key patterns in self-harm in adolescents: Sequence analysis using the Card Sort Task for Self-harm (CaTS). *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 206, 161-168. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2016.07.004>
- Turhan, M., & Akgül, T. (2017). The relationship between perceived school climate and the adolescents' adherence to humanitarian values. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(3), 357-365. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050308>
- Umemura, T., & Šerek, J. (2016). Different developmental pathways from parental warmth to adolescents' trust in peers and politicians: Mediating roles of adolescent-parent attachment and belief in a just world. *Social Justice Research*, 29(2), 186-205. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-016-0258-x>
- Wachs, S., Junger, M., & Sittichai, R. (2015). Traditional, cyber and combined bullying roles: Differences in risky online and offline activities. *Societies*, 5(1), 109-135. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc5010109>
- Wang, J., Iannotti, R. J., & Nansel, T. R. (2009). School bullying among adolescents in the United States: Physical, verbal, relational, and cyber. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 45(4), 368-375. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2017.12.005>
- Wang, M., & Degol, J. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28, 315-352. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9319-1>
- Wentzel, K. R., Battle, A., Russell, S. L., & Looney, L. B. (2010). Social supports from teachers and peers as predictors of academic and social motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 35(3), 193-202.
- Williams, K., & Kennedy, J. H. (2012). Bullying behaviors and attachment styles. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 14(2), 321-338.
- Williams, S. G., Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., Wornell, C., & Finnegan, H. (2017). Adolescents transitioning to high school: Sex differences in bullying victimization associated with depressive symptoms, suicide ideation, and suicide attempts. *The Journal of School Nursing*, 33(6), 467-479. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059840516686840>
- Wójcik, M., & Mondry, M. (2020). "The game of bullying": Shared beliefs and behavioral labels in bullying among middle schoolers. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 24(4), 276-293. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/gdn0000125>
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). Suicide. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide>
- Wu, S., Wyant, D. C., & Fraser, M. W. (2016). author guidelines for manuscripts reporting on qualitative research. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 7(2), 405-425. <https://doi.org/10.1086/685816>
- Ying, L., Ma, F., Huang, H., Guo, X., Chen, C., & Xu, F. (2015). Parental monitoring, parent-adolescent communication, and adolescents' trust in their parents in China. *PLoS One*, 10(8), e0134730. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0134730>
- Zetterström Dahlqvist, H., & Gillander Gådin, K. (2018). Online sexual victimization in youth: Predictors and cross-sectional associations with depressive symptoms.

*European Journal of Public Health,*  
28(6), 1018-1023.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/cky102>

