Maryland Population Research Center

WORKING PAPER

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February 25, 2008

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The "Hurried" Child: Myth vs. Reality

Abstract

Children's lives are increasingly structured with extracurricular activities. This research addressed three questions: (1) how active are American children; (2) are there differences by social class in extent of participation in these activities, either within or across communities; and (3) are children overscheduled to the extent that they experience stress symptoms? Data came from a nationally representative survey of children and their families and a qualitative study in two communities in the American Midwest. Only one-quarter of children were "hurried," half were focused on a single activity or balanced, and 15 percent had no activities. Children of mothers with more education and higher family incomes were busier. However, higher activity levels were not associated with greater stress symptoms. Instead, children who were uninvolved were the most withdrawn, socially immature, and had the lowest self-esteem. Children who were focused or balanced in their activities had the lowest levels of stress and highest self-esteem.

Introduction

Recent writings bemoan the loss of childhood. Children are not allowed to "be kids" — to play games at home with friends, siblings, and cousins, to visit family members, to play pickup ball games in the yard, and to ride bicycles around the neighborhood. Instead, because of their own busy schedules or a focus on enrichment, parents enroll their children in lessons, team sports, and other scheduled activities outside the neighborhood. The lifestyle in which parents spend their free time driving their children from a swim meet to gymnastics to a soccer match may not only cause adults stress, but also result in potential stress and strain for their children, a syndrome some have called "the hurried child" (Elkind, 2001). A recent report by the American Academy of Pediatrics reports that a "hurried lifestyle is a source of stress and anxiety and may even contribute to depression" (Ginsburg, 2006, pp. 10-11). Organizations such as "Putting Family First" have been formed to combat the perceived pressure to overschedule the lives of children and their families (Doherty & Carlson, 2002). In spite of these concerns, little is known about the proportion of children whose involvement in activities may be excessive.

Of course, not all families choose such a lifestyle; it has been suggested that scheduling varies by social class, with middle-class families being the most likely to overschedule children (Lareau, 2003). Social class can be defined by financial resources or by values and lifestyle. A focus on financial resources implies that families of every class have the same goals, but that they differ in their access to the resources needed to implement these goals. In contrast, a focus on values or knowledge motivating parental actions implies differences in objectives resulting from differences in education, occupation, or culture (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988; Thornton, 2004). Understanding how resources and values drive these changes in family lifestyles helps us evaluate their consequences and develop potential solutions to any problems we identify.

Finally, no existing research has systematically studied children's experience of stress, which, if prevalent, could imply long-term negative effects of this "hurried child" syndrome. We simply do not know whether children are thriving in their activity-rich lifestyle or buckling under the pressure to participate in after-school activities. Because activity decisions are not random, but are based upon parental objectives for children and children's own preferences (Dunn, Kinney & Hofferth, 2003; Lareau, 2002; Lareau, 2003), the relationship between activities and child stress symptoms may be spurious. Research has examined how families manage the new pressures of structured activities (Arendell, 2001) and adults' experience of time pressure (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004; Robinson & Godbey, 1997), however, there is little comparable research on children. Earlier research was illuminated primarily by conversations with parents as well as observations in the home. Lareau (2003) reported on conversations between children and parents or professionals in 12 families, but did not directly interview the children.

This paper addresses these gaps by focusing on the out-of-school activities in which elementary school-age children are involved, by examining the prevalence of the hurried child and hurried family in the United States today, and by exploring the extent of stress symptoms that children experience. The paper addresses three questions: (1) what proportion of American children are hurried?; (2) are there differences by social class and family structure in hurriedness, either within or across communities?; and (3) are the most hurried children likely to experience symptoms of stress? Multiple methods are used to make comparisons by social class in a nationally representative sample and in a qualitative data set collected within and across two communities in the upper Midwest. The quantitative data provide the national picture and the qualitative data provide information about how families experience their children's activities.

Are Children Participating in Too Many Activities?

That children participate in more before and after-school care and extracurricular activities, and experience increased structure in their lives is well-documented. What is not documented is that a large number of children have high levels of activity. Although several theorists (Elkind, 2001; Doherty & Carlson, 2002) argue that too many children have excessive demands placed upon them, there is no empirical evidence that this is the case. Lynott and Logue (1993) argue that, from an historical perspective, concern about "lost childhood" is a misreading of history, one that romanticizes an ideal-typical childhood that may have existed in only part of the twentieth century in the U.S. — the 1950s. Before it was made compulsory in the early 20th century, a minority of children attended school, and those who did attended for only a few years. Children participated actively in the business of the family, helping on the farm, providing labor to a family business, or working as indentured servants and apprentices (Mintz, 2004).

Between 1981 and 1997, two major changes in the lives of American children have been documented. First, the amount of free time, defined as time not spent in personal care, eating, sleeping, and school, declined about 7.5 hours per week, from 56.5 hours to 49 hours, from about 34 percent of a child's week to 30 percent (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001b). Although seven and one-half hours in a week may not seem significant, it represents more than an entire school day. Second, children's time became more scheduled and organized, with structured activities such as sports, scouts, ballet, and music lessons taking up an increasing proportion of the after-school hours. For example, between 1981 and 1997, participation in sports rose 35 percent and participation in the arts (art, music, dance, drama) rose 145 percent for children between the ages of nine and twelve (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001b). Thus, there is evidence of a significant

increase in children's structured leisure activity over the past several decades. However, the data on hours in specific activities do not provide a sense of how individual children's lives are divided into time spent in extracurricular activities and whether they have too many activities or spend too much time in them.

Consequences of Increased Structured Time — Stress

In addition to having too many activities, hurriedness may be harmful to children's development (Elkind, 2001). One of the potential consequences of excessive expectations for children's future by parents and perfectionism on the part of children is stress (Luthar & Becker, 2002). From a physiological point of view, a stress reaction is the response of an organism to any aversive stimulus (Stefanello, 2004). According to Elkind, "stress is an unusual demand for adaptation that forces us to call upon our energy reserves over and beyond that which we ordinarily expend and replenish in the course of a 24-hour period" (Elkind, 2001, p. 166). In actuality, Elkind defines stress in terms of the *number of demands*, such that the greater the number of demands, the greater the stress (Elkind, 2001, p. 165). We add to this the *total amount of time*, not just the number of activities because some activities may be quite short. We also argue that control over one's time and activities may be protective against stress (Tansey, Mizelle, Ferrin, Tschopp & Frain, 2004), whereas pressure to become involved in activities in which parents have an interest may increase that stress. A final aspect of hurriedness is whether demands are age-appropriate. A narrow range of ages controls somewhat for this; of course, children differ in their ability to manage pressures by individual maturity and temperament. Although checklists to identify a number of stressors in a child's life have been developed, determining stress levels is problematic. In contrast, the literature seems to agree on a set of

symptoms, which, if present, are a reasonable indicator of stress-induced psychological problems. These include internalizing problems such as depression, problems getting along with others, anxiety, crying, stuttering, and sleep problems (Band & Weisz, 1988; Reynolds, O'Koon, Papademetriou, Szczygiel & Grant, 2001; Stefanello, 2004, p. 294). The most common physical symptoms include stomach ache, diarrhea, nervous twitches, headache, hyperactivity, stutter, muscle tension, and bedwetting (Stefanello, 2004, p. 294). If a child reports or is reported to have these symptoms, the child is said to be under stress.

Positive Consequences of Activity Participation

Children do not learn only in formal educational settings. At the beginning of the 20th century, social reformers promoted youth organizations, hobbies, and sports to foster development. Over the past century organizations such as the YMCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, Little League have proliferated. They are believed to build character, discourage delinquency, and provide opportunities for growth (Larson, 1994). Two major arguments are that the activities promote integration of youth into the community, peer group, and family and that, in addition, activities promote individual personal growth and development, including improving self-concept. Prosocial behavior, social skills, and community involvement are part of the first objective and initiative, self-regulation, and self-esteem part of the second (Larson & Verma, 1999). Research demonstrates that participation in organized activities such as sports teams, lessons, and clubs is associated with lower rates of school failure, higher school achievement, including better grades, and higher rates of participation in college (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles & Lord, 2005). Studies also show that involvement in organized activities reduces problem behavior. Finally, organized activity participation is associated with psychosocial adjustment

(Eccles & Gootman, 2002). It is linked to lower rates of anxiety and depression and higher self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Besides the social benefits of participation in activities, theory suggests that organized activities represent a context in which activities are highly valued and exciting, challenge is high and the opportunity for skill development is equally high. Research shows that the condition of high challenge and high skills (the flow) coincides with the most positive moods, self-esteem, high levels of concentration, and motivation and all these experiences are most likely to occur during structured leisure activities (Hektner, Schmidt & Csikszentmihalyi, 2007). Recent research also shows that one of the physiological indicators of stress, cortisol level, rather than being high, is lower under conditions of enjoyment, mastery and involvement (Adam, 2005). Cortisol increases under conditions in which challenges are beyond one's skill level (anxiety-producing) or when challenge is too low (boring). Adam (2005) states that challenges contribute to health and well-being and are necessary for daily functioning, growth and development. The proper balance between challenge and skill is key.

Involvement but not Hurriedness: Balance

There is substantial research on the positive aspects of activity participation; there is almost no empirical evidence for the stress and strain part of the hurried child hypothesis. Work-family studies have focused upon adults; no studies have examined children's experiences. In the lone book based upon their reports *(Ask the Children)*, children did not express dissatisfaction or unhappiness with their lives (Galinsky, 2002). Although coping skills develop with age, even children as young as 8 and 9 can express the methods they use to cope with everyday stressful events and circumstances (Band & Weisz, 1988; Pincus & Friedman, 2004). The present

research makes a unique contribution in that it focuses upon the pre-teenage years, when excessive activity is least developmentally appropriate (Elkind, 2001) and children have the least developed coping skills (Pincus & Friedman, 2004). We ask whether more active children exhibit more symptoms of stress than less active children. However, we also examine whether activities benefit children's self-esteem, an important measure of psychological health.

Concerted Cultivation and Natural Growth Theories

Although early research was motivated by an interest in the fit between early socialization and adult personality and occupations in the 1950s and 1960s, recent ethnographic research has extended this socialization paradigm to contemporary childrearing. Concerned that children develop their potential skills, middle-class parents cultivate their children's verbal skills by spending time with them in extended discussions and negotiations and their extracurricular talents and social skills by enrolling them in sports, lessons, and youth organizations (Dunn et al., 2003; Lareau, 2003). Lareau called this the "concerted cultivation" model of parenting (Lareau, 2003). The result is the transmission of middle-class advantage from parents to their children because middle-class jobs require such skills. This model is consistent with the earlier socialization paradigm of middle-class parents fostering autonomy and self-direction in their children (Alwin, 2001; Schaefer & Edgerton, 1985; Kohn & Schooler, 1983; Kohn, 1977). The major issue is whether parents are pushing their children too much — pushing them into activities in which they are not interested.

Working-class parents, in contrast, are believed to take a more passive approach in caring for children, allowing them to develop through participation in normal family-based or neighborhood peer-based activities, with less structure and adult intrusion. This model of

parenting Lareau called the "natural growth" model (Lareau, 2003). In communicating with children, working-class parents are said to be more directive, less skeptical of authority, and less interested in negotiation. As a result, children experience less control over their environments and have a sense of constraint rather than opportunity (Lareau, 2003). This is very much the obedient and conforming-to-authority set of traits discussed by Alwin (2001) and by Kohn & Schooler (1983) that working-class jobs both require and foster.

Additionally, parents are constrained by the settings in which they live and work, in particular by their personal resources and those of their communities. Compared to middle-class parents, working-class parents may be more constrained by their financial resources from making large investments in children's activities. They may depend more on free school-based activities than their middle-class counterparts, though the total number of activities may not vary. Previous research indicates that children of middle and working class parents have become increasingly involved in after-school activities over the past twenty-five years, but that the extent of children's participation still varies by social class.

Objectives of this chapter

In this paper we develop a typology of the activity levels of 9-12-year-old children and examine its distribution using both a nationally representative sample of American children and two small qualitative samples. We then use statistical techniques to describe the association of social class, maternal employment and family structure with this activity typology, controlling for gender of the child. We hypothesize that children from middle class families, defined by education, occupation, income, or community, compared with working class families, are more likely to fall into the hurried category in terms of activity commitments. Children from two

parent or dual earner families are also expected to be more likely to be hurried compared to children in single-parent families or single earner families. We examine evidence as to whether children are reported as experiencing more symptoms of stress as a consequence of being "hurried." We also examine levels of self-esteem across activity groups. Finally, returning to the qualitative data, we draw upon children's and parents' in-depth reports to enrich our understanding of the results found in the large-scale data.

Data and Methods

The Child Development Supplement to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics

Children 9 to12 years of age were drawn from the nationally representative 2002/3 *Child Development Supplement* (CDS) to the *Panel Study of Income Dynamics* (PSID); the CDS is a supplement to a thirty-four-year longitudinal survey of a representative sample of U.S. men, women, children, and the families in which they reside. With funding from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), data were collected in 1997 about children under age 13 of PSID respondents, with up to two children per household randomly selected for inclusion in the supplement. Data were collected both from the primary caregivers and from the children themselves (for children over the age of eight). In 1997, interviews were completed with individuals in 2,380 households that contained a total of 3,563 children. The response rate was 88 percent. Interviews were conducted again over the fall and winter of 2002 to 2003, with a response rate of 91 percent. Only PSID-CDS non-Hispanic white children aged nine to twelve living with their mother and who had time diary information (79 percent) were included in the present study, a total of 331 children. To match the qualitative component we also examine a subset of children 9-12 living with a mother who has completed 12 years of schooling or more,

277 children. When post-stratification weights based upon the 2002 Current Population Survey were used, such as was done here, the PSID has been found to be representative of U.S. individuals and their families (Fitzgerald, Gottschalk & Moffitt, 1998a). Thus, weighted sample characteristics reflect the characteristics of the population of non-Hispanic white children age nine to twelve in the United States in late 2002 and early 2003.

Time Spent in Different Activities: Quantitative Data from the CDS

The 2002/3 Child Development Supplement collected a complete time diary for one weekday and one weekend day. The time diary, which was interviewer-administered either to the parent or to the parent and child, asked questions about the child's flow of activities over a twenty-four hour period beginning at midnight of a randomly designated day. These questions documented each activity that occurred, when it began and ended, and whether there was another activity at the same time. Children's activities were first assigned to one of ten general activity categories (e.g., sports and active leisure[1]) and then coded into three-digit subcategories (e.g., playing soccer). Coding was conducted by professional coders employed by the data collection organization; the level of reliability exceeded 90 percent. Time spent traveling for the purpose of engaging in a specific activity was included in that category. The distribution of the total time spent across these two days was examined to identify the proportion in the upper tail of the distribution. Eighty-two percent of children spent less than 4 hours in their activities across these

[1] Included in sports are team sports such as football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, hockey, soccer, and field hockey; individual sports such as tennis, squash, and racquetball, golf, swimming, skiing, ice or roller skating, sledding, bowling, ping pong or pinball, judo, weight lifting, jogging or running, bicycling, gymnastics; and other activities such as playing Frisbee or catch, exercises such as yoga, and lessons in any of the above. Youth organizations include participation in Boy/Girl Scouts, Future Farmers of America, YMCA/YWCA, volunteer activities, and helping organizations/clubs in the community or school. Art activities include painting, drawing, sculpture, potting, creative writing, playing a musical instrument, singing, dancing, acting, and related lessons and rehearsals.

two days; 4 hours served as the cut-off for low vs. high activity levels. Although we do not have data for all seven days of the week, comparisons across weekdays and weekend days show that weekdays are quite similar to each other in types and times of activities, and weekend days are similar to each other. Two days provide a reliable representation of a child's typical week.

Child Stress Symptoms

Symptoms of stress or distress are measured in the internalizing items of standard behavior problems measures (Luthar & Becker, 2002). Here children's stress symptoms were measured by a subset of items from the 30-item Behavior Problems Index, a standard instrument used in the PSID-CDS and NLSY-79 Child Study to obtain primary caregiver reports of the incidence and severity of child behavior problems for a wide age-range of children (Peterson & Zill, 1986; Baker, Keck, Mott & Quinlan, 1993; Hofferth, Davis-Kean, Davis & Finkelstein, 1999). In this scale the caregiver reported whether a statement was often true, sometimes true, or not true of their child's behavior. Several measures were created. Six items were selected as representing stress symptoms, according to the literature. He/she is: high strung and nervous; fearful or anxious; unhappy, sad or depressed; withdrawn; cries too much; or worries too much. Responses to items (1=often true, 2=sometimes true and 3=not true of child's behavior) were reverse-coded as (2=often true, 1=sometimes true, and 0= not true) and summed so that a high value on the scale indicates more and more frequent stress symptoms and 0 means no reported stress symptoms. Means for the full scale averaged 1.9, with a standard deviation of 1.8, N=331. The reliability for the scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, was .63. A confirmatory factor analysis was not able to reject the hypothesis that one factor fit the six items. We also used the complete internalizing scale that was constructed by NLSY staff based upon 13 items. Besides

the items listed above, the complete scale includes items indicating the child has low self-esteem, has difficult getting along with others, and is highly dependent. The reliability of the complete scale (.80), is higher than the stress subscale. We created two other subscales, an internalizing scale without the stress symptom measures (alpha=.74), and a child-self-esteem subscale (alpha= .66), which consisted of five mother-reported items.

To measure positive aspects of activity participation, we used a six-item scale of child-reported global self-esteem that was included in the PSID-CDS 2002/3 wave for children 8 and older. It includes items such as "I can do things as well as most people," I'm as good as most other people," and "when I do something I do it well." Scored from 1=never to 5=always, a higher score indicates greater self-esteem and has an alpha reliability of .78. Although not the stress construct specified in the literature, a decline in self-esteem is mentioned in the literature as a potential result from overactivity, and the advantage of using this scale is that it is self-reported by the child rather than the mother. The disadvantage is that only 225 of the 331 children answered this self-administered supplement.

Qualitative Studies in Riverview and Parkside

The qualitative data presented in this paper are based on personal interviews conducted with parents and 9-12 year old children from forty-three families living in two different Midwestern medium-sized communities. Each of these families included at least one school-age child who attended the local public school. Both communities are more than 93 percent white. Because we had several dimensions of families to examine (family structure, employment, and

social class), we decided to include only non-Hispanic white families in this study.[2] Twenty families were interviewed in "Riverview" (fictional name) between November 1999 and May 2000 and twenty-three families were interviewed in "Parkside" (fictional name) between May 2000 and February 2001. For seasonal comparability, cross-data comparisons focus on the activities of the sixteen Parkside families interviewed in May and June 2000, during the 1999-2000 school year. [3]

We gained access to families through local public elementary and middle schools. Permission to use these schools as sites to recruit parents and children was granted by the superintendent of the each public school district. With the assistance of the elementary school and middle school principals, we mailed recruitment letters and brief surveys to 125 families (25 each in grades 3-7) in Riverview and received responses from 42 parents interested in participating in the project, a response rate of about 34 percent. In Parkside, we mailed letters of information about the research project to parents of 131 children in grades 4-6 and received responses from 25 families, a response rate of 19 percent.[4] To obtain diversity on our major theoretical concepts (number of earners, education, income, family structure), we interviewed a subsample of 20 Riverview families, whereas we interviewed all but two of the Parkside respondents, for a sample of 23 families. Interviews were conducted by the authors with one parent (usually, but not exclusively, the mother) either at home or in a neutral location such as a coffee shop. Riverview children were interviewed in the school with no parent present. Parkside children were interviewed in the school with no parent present or in the home with parents out of earshot; three of the Parkside children were interviewed with at least one parent present during

[2] Most of the concern to date about hurried children has focused upon white middle class families.
[3] Five of the remaining seven families were interviewed in the summer, when children participated in fewer activities, one was interviewed in early September before activities had begun, and one was interviewed the following year, judged to be too long a time period after the other interviews to include.

some of the interview. Interviews of children ranged in length from one-half hour to 45 minutes. Parent interviews averaged about an hour and a half, but a few lasted more than 2 hours. All interviews except one were taped and transcribed with the parent permission and child assent.

The first community, "Riverview," is a small city of approximately 40,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). The local economy is largely defined by the presence of several large corporations, a small private university, and a large hospital, all of which provide relatively equal numbers of white-collar and blue-collar jobs. These are linked to the relatively high educational level of its residents; almost 42 percent of the local population twenty-five years of age and over has a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.4 percent for the U.S. adult population twenty-five years and older in 2000.

The second community, "Parkside," is smaller in population (30,000 residents) and geography than Riverview, and Parkside residents feel a strong sense of community in spite of being surrounded by other suburban communities with similar characteristics. The two communities differ most significantly in terms of their adult community members' educational achievement and types of occupation. Adults in the small city of Riverview are four times more likely than parents in the suburban community of Parkside to have completed at least a bachelor's degree. Similarly, Riverview adults are twice as likely to hold white-collar jobs compared to Parkside parents, who are more than twice as likely to hold blue-collar jobs as their Riverview counterparts. These significant differences are *not* reflected in the median family incomes of these two communities, which only differ by about $6,500 ($65,000 in Riverview vs. $58,500 in Parkside in 2000 dollars). We argue that although both of these communities can be considered middle class in terms of income, in terms of occupation and education, Riverview is

[4] The sampling in Parkside was conducted towards the end of the school.year, a busy time for families.

"middle-middle" or "upper-middle" class, and Parkside is more characteristic of the "lower-middle" or "working class." In this paper we refer to it as "working class." Similar to Lareau (Lareau, 2003),[5] our definition of social class at the community level is based on the educational and occupational level of parents. At the family level it is based upon education and income.

Hurriedness and Stress in the Qualitative Data

The interviews were structured around a set of open-ended interview questions designed to elicit information about each child's daily activities and the family's weekly schedule. We obtained for each focal child a schedule of activities for the entire week in which the interview took place. We asked parents' about aspirations and goals for their children and what worked well in managing their schedules. Interviewing ended when the last parents interviewed added little new information. Parental interviews were transcribed and entered into ATLAS/ti. The interviews were initially coded using an open coding scheme based upon the questions used to structure the interview. It was during this coding that we identified the overall activity level of the child and any reports of stress in the present or past.

Axial coding was then conducted to compare the circumstances of families and children who reported experiencing stress symptoms. We attempted to link activity levels to stress symptoms and to identify family strategies for managing them. This led to our typology of hurriedness that included both number of activities and time. Finally, using selective coding we identified specific instances of hurriedness and stress as well as instances of inactivity and circumstances surrounding them. We thought that one of the potential sources of stress was extent of control over the activity — whether the child made the decision about participating in

[5] In Lareau's conceptualization, middle-class children had a parent who was employed in a managerial position or who used highly complex, educationally certified, college-level skills at work (Lareau, 2003).

the activity or whether it was parent-imposed, so we examined responses to the question: "Whose idea was it to be in this activity (or go to this place)?" To gain information on the link between activities and stress from parents, we asked, "What activities that he/she does not now do would you like to see him/her do?" How much does he/she like the activity and would he/she like to do something else? From these questions we were able to determine whether parents and children were thinking of changing or dropping activities and why. To get at the question of how activities are managed, we asked, "Overall, what do you think has really worked well for you in terms of managing your work schedule and your child's school and activity schedule?" The last question was very useful in identifying families who had made changes based upon previous difficulties managing their and their children's schedules.

We were particularly careful about questions asked of children, not wanting to bias their responses with leading questions. Eight years appears to be a lower limit for children adequately and comfortably interacting with an interviewer about their activities, especially without a parent present. Research has demonstrated that, although 9-12 year old children are beginning to learn classification and temporal relations, they have problems with abstract concepts and are very literal in interpretation (Borgers, de Leeuw & Hox, 1999). They are also very suggestible, want to please the interviewer, and are reluctant to express opinions. We did not ask directly about stress because it was too abstract a concept. Instead, we asked a number of questions in which respondents could report any symptoms or concerns about their activities without us suggesting or implying they should feel stressed and strained. The following series of questions informed our conclusions about stress symptoms. After getting the complete list of children's weekly activities, we asked the child being interviewed, "Were there other things you wanted to do?," with a probe about how they felt about each activity. We then asked, "Would you have done it

[the activity] if you didn't have to?" We also asked, "What are the things you enjoy doing the most outside of school?," "What kinds of things do you like to do with your friends?," "How about when you're by yourself, what do you like to do?," and "How about when you're with your family?" We also asked, "How much time do you have to do the things you want to do: a lot of time, some time, not very much, or hardly any time at all?" We coded instances of not wanting to go to an activity, being tired of the activity, being sore, preferring to do something else or nothing, crying, being overly tired out, and being worried, as symptoms of stress.[6] Child reports were also compared to parent reports in the selective coding phase. The strongest evidence for its existence were reports of stressful periods by both child and parent.

We also numerically coded the social and demographic characteristics of the thirty-six families in Riverview and Parkside who were interviewed during the 1999-2000 school year in order to compare their characteristics with those of the national sample of children in the PSID-CDS. Using the data from the two Midwest sites, we regressed (ordered logistic regression) our classification of activities in which the children were involved during the week of the interview on maternal education (in years), maternal education squared, maternal employment (employed part-time or employed full-time vs. not employed), family income, family structure (two parents versus one parent), and research site (Parkside vs. Riverview), controlling for the age and gender of the child. A comparable regression was conducted using the national PSID-CDS data without the "site" variable. Child age was never significant and was dropped. Part-time and full-time employment were also never statistically significant and were dropped from the analysis. Using the sample from Parkside and Riverview, additional quantitative analyses were conducted to

[6] Although being sore is not necessarily an indicator of stress, it was significant enough for the child to mention it and this occurred in the context of multiple overlapping activities in one particularly busy period.

determine whether the *type* of activity (sports, art activities, and youth groups) engaged in differed by these same variables.

Results

Characteristics of Our Participants

According to the 2000 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 42 percent of the population of Riverview had completed a bachelor's degree, compared with 9 percent in Parkside (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Our qualitative samples were better educated than the overall population in these two communities. Of the sample we obtained in "middle class" Riverview, slightly more than half of children's mothers and three-quarters of their fathers had completed a college degree. In "working class" Parkside, 30 percent of mothers and no fathers had completed a four-year degree. Of the national sample of families in which a mother had completed 12 or more years of schooling, 40 percent of mothers and 50 percent of fathers had completed a college degree. The paternal education average of 14.5 years based on the PSID-CDS lies between the Riverview and Parkside averages (16.8 and 13.4 years, respectively), and the maternal average is similar to that of Parkside.

(Table 1 about here)

Community differences are reflected in occupational categories as well. More than two-thirds of mothers in both communities were employed. Forty percent of the Riverview mothers worked in professional occupations, 25 percent worked in administrative positions, and 5 percent were in blue-collar jobs. In Parkside (full sample), 17 percent worked in professional occupations, 39 percent worked in administrative positions, and 26 percent worked in blue-collar

jobs. Fathers' occupations differed even more dramatically across the two sites. Three quarters of the Riverview fathers were employed in professional occupations, 5 percent were in administrative jobs, and only 15 percent were in blue-collar jobs. In Parkside, 9 percent were in professional occupations, 22 percent were in administrative jobs, and 52 percent of fathers were in blue-collar jobs. Based upon both education and occupation, Parkside is clearly a working class community and Riverview a middle class community.

All children lived with their mother; not all lived with their father. In Riverview, 95 percent of the 20 families were two-parent families. Parkside families are similar to the national average for family structure: 83 percent of the full sample, 88 percent of the school-year sample of Parkside families, and 87 percent of the national sample were two-parent families. Based upon Table 1, the national sample falls in-between the two communities in social characteristics. Table 1, last column, shows the full PSID-CDS sample, not restricted by maternal education.

A Typology of Children's Activity Participation

Our activity groups are based upon both number of activities and time spent in them. Table 2 shows the distribution of the PSID-CDS national sample of children in six activity groups, for all white families and just for those in which the mother had completed 12 years of schooling or more. Focusing on the latter for comparison with the community samples, in 2002/3, 15.4 percent of non-Hispanic white children aged nine to twelve had no structured activities during the two days during the school year about which they filled out the diary, and these we refer to as "uninvolved." Almost 8 percent were involved only in youth organizations, 27.2 percent were involved only in sports, and 3.3 percent were involved only in art activities. Thirty-nine percent were involved in two of the three types of activities. The 7.3 percent who

were involved in all three activities were defined as "hurried." Almost one-third of children who participated in a sport and only a small fraction of those in arts activities participated for 4 or more hours over 2 days. Our qualitative research showed that children involved for many hours in a sport were those whose families had the most time management problems. Thus children who participated in only one or two activities but who had high levels of involvement (four hours or more during the two survey days) were added to the "hurried" category. From this set of activities we developed a classification of children into four groups: Uninvolved, focused, balanced, and hurried.

(Table 2 about here)

Table 3 shows this typology of activities both for the national sample and for the two Midwest sites, Parkside and Riverview. As mentioned above, 15 percent of the children in the national sample had no activities and were classified as "uninvolved." Using the four-category typology described above, 31 percent of the children in the national sample had only one type of activity and spent fewer than four hours in this activity during the two survey days ("focused"), 27 percent of the children had two different types of activities and spent fewer than four hours in this activities during the two survey days ("balanced"), and 26 percent of the children either participated in all three types of activities or spent more than four hours in one or more activities during the two survey days ("hurried").

(Table 3 about here)

Of the sixteen Parkside children who were interviewed in the 1999–2000 school year, 13 percent were uninvolved, 25 percent were focused, 31 percent were balanced, and 31 percent were hurried. The distribution of children across the four categories is similar in the full Parkside

group. Of the twenty Riverview children, 5 percent had no activities, 10 percent were focused, 40 percent were balanced, and 45 percent were hurried. The proportion of children with balanced and high levels of activity was greater in Riverview than in Parkside, and the proportion with no activities or a single activity was lower in Riverview compared to Parkside.

What Factors are Associated with Hurriedness?

Table 4 presents the ordered logistic regression of our activity typology on education, family structure, site, income, family size and gender for children 9-12. In contrast to our hypothesis about community class differences, there is no difference in hurriedness between Riverview and Parkside; most of the variation is within rather than between communities. In all three data sets and both models, we see that *both* measures of family social class – education and income — are significantly associated with a greater chance of being in the high activity category. In the Parkside/Riverview data, we also see that the association between education and activity typology is curvilinear; children's chance of being hurried increases up to 16 years of schooling, after which it declines. In the PSID-CDS, the coefficient for the squared term was never significant (not shown), but this is because mother's education was top-coded at 17, resulting in no variation after 16 years of schooling. Children living with two parents are busier, according to the typology, than children who live with only one parent, but this is statistically significant only in the PSID-CDS. The number of children in the family is not linked to the extent of activity in either data set.

(Table 4 about here)

Parental Pressure on Children's Activity Participation

One source of stress is lack of control over one's time. How children initially become involved may affect their later willingness to participate and their experience of the activity. Based on our qualitative study, there appear to be three general ways children become involved in activities: (1) personal interest, (2) parental suggestion and pressure, and (3) the desire to be with friends. Schools send fliers home with the children announcing a variety of events and possible activities. Some flyers are discarded and others prompt action, depending on the child's interest. Parents also may suggest that the child try an activity. Probably the most common source of information and impetus for becoming involved in a particular activity is the desire to be with one's friends. We found all three routes into an activity reported by the families in our Midwest study.

A number of parents in our qualitative study were very explicit about their strategies of exposing children to a variety of activities in the hopes that their children could find something they liked and at which they could become skilled. Most seemed very sensitive to the expressed preferences of their children for activity involvement. As they explained:

> What I've tried to do is offer the kids a variety of things to try. And then if something is really what they want to do, then we go in that direction. (Billie, university teacher and mother of Tara [11] – Riverview – 2 activities)

This middle-class Riverview parent clearly stated that she explicitly provided or sought out opportunities for her child to participate in activities, but then let the child make his or her own decision. In contrast, Ann's mother, Lynn, from working-class Parkside, did not seek out activities, but responded to fliers sent from the school if and only if the child showed an interest.

> [With softball] you get the flyers that come home with different activities…. She says that she's interested and if not, we don't worry about it. (Lynn, mother of Ann [12] – Parkside – 5 activities)

Of course, this child was already highly active, with five activities. Lynn has a more passive approach than that of the previous Riverview parents, one which fits with the natural growth model, but with sensitivity to the child's preferences and interests, and in particular to Ann's tendency to try different activities.

Parents also provide pressure. This is particularly true for children who started in their activity at an early age. This pressure occurred in both communities. One Parkside child began dance classes in kindergarten and another began soccer at age five. One Riverview child also began soccer at age six. It is highly unlikely that these were child-initiated activities. Several children noted that one of their parents used to be involved in a particular activity and wanted them to try it for themselves.

One of the most common reasons we heard for being involved in an activity was to be with friends or because a sibling or other important person in the child's life (such as a father, sister, or cousin) was also involved. This was common in Parkside, the lower-middle class community, but not as common in Riverview. As this Parkside child explained:

> I used to follow my sister and do whatever she does…. So I wanted to try it [soccer] because she played. (Jen [11], daughter of Sally – Parkside – 4 activities)

Hurriedness and Child Stress Symptoms – National Data

Table 5 shows means on the various measures of stress symptoms by the typology of hurriedness, using data from the National PSID-Child Development Supplement. Contrary to our expectations, stress symptoms were found to be highest for the *uninvolved* children, lowest for those involved in activities. *In no case did hurried children have the most symptoms.*

(Table 5 about here)

These results are supported by Table 6, which shows the results of regressing the different measures of stress symptoms on categories of the activity typology, controlling for

social class, family structure, family size, and child gender. The activity typology categories are not associated with the first measure of stress symptoms (Measure A) based upon previous research. This provides the first quantitative evidence on a large national sample that increased child stress symptoms as reported by a parent are not "caused by" hurriedness. Nor is hurriedness linked to low self-esteem as reported by the child (Measure E). Contrary to our hypothesis, we found that *uninvolved* children are the ones who score highest on the internalizing measures. The largest effect was obtained using the total internalizing score. Uninvolved children scored about 1 point higher on the total internalizing scale (Measure B), an effect size of 1/3 of a standard deviation, a substantial effect. The most highly significant association was between inactivity and low self-esteem (Measure D), which includes items such as no one loves him, seems to be in a fog, feels worthless or inferior, has difficulty getting his mind off certain thoughts, and feels others are out to get him.

We also found that children of mothers with more years of education were consistently less likely to show symptoms of stress than children of mothers with fewer years. If more educated mothers were unduly pressuring their children, the latter should show increased symptoms of stress, which was not the case. We explore this further using our qualitative data.

(Table 6 about here)

Hurriedness and Child Stress Symptoms – Qualitative Data

We found evidence in both Riverview and Parkside that children and parents were under occasional stress because of a large number of activities or the amount of time spent in them, but this did not appear to be continual or frequent. Six children out of forty-three (14 percent) expressed occasional stress or strain – not wanting to go to an activity, being tired of the

activity, preferring to do something else or nothing, crying, being overly tired out, being worried, crying, showing symptoms of depression or anxiety, or having headaches or sore muscles.

For example, a nine-year-old girl in gymnastics three hours a day three days a week and with two other activities (ballet and ice skating) as well was pretty tired by Friday:

> Like usually on Fridays I'm like I don't want to be here … [but once I'm there] sometimes I just pep right up. (Serena [9], daughter of Judy – Riverview – hurried)

Another fourth-grader with five different activities (soccer, scouts, jump rope, recorder, and religious education) said:

> I just like to jump rope once in a while, but now I'm tired of it…. Every single time I do it for like five minutes and my feet are tired. (Laura [10], daughter of Jeannette (a medical billing clerk) – Parkside – hurried).

Given that the children seemed very compliant and only occasionally expressed dissatisfaction with their schedules and activities, we asked parents how they knew when children were doing too much. For example, one Riverview parent offered the following observation:

> I don't believe kids can really articulate that they're stressed. I think it comes about in other ways…. [M]y older one was, she seemed like she was tired and distracted, and distraught, and so we looked at our activity level and decided we had to cut back (Cathy, homemaker and mother of Becca [10] – Riverview – balanced)

(Billie) said that she was very sensitive to her daughter Tara's stress symptoms, such as sleep disturbances, catching a cold, and crying. Tara stopped taking piano lessons because practice led to crying. Eventually they made a conscious decision to cut back to two activities.

There are three possible explanations for the lack of evidence of major problems in terms of child- and parent-reported stress: (1) children and parents under stress were not interviewed, (2) children and parents have gotten used to this lifestyle, and (3) most children are not overly scheduled or stressed.

Nonparticipation by Stressed Families

It is possible that parents who were currently under these stresses may not have agreed to be interviewed for the qualitative study. Many parents interviewed in Riverview indicated that they had been through a very busy period in the recent past when they felt as though they were overextended in terms of their daily and weekly schedules. This recurrent theme was most often articulated in answers regarding their current weekly schedules, when parents made unsolicited comparisons to how "overwhelmed" or "totally stressed out" they had been a year or two earlier when their children were involved in multiple activities. For example, "Billie" noted how she kept track of her daughter's and son's involvement in activities along with her husband's after-work commitments, and realized that, because her daughter was moving into the fifth grade with higher academic expectations, she would need "some down time in the evenings." So she discontinued her daughter's piano lessons, took her daughter out of Girl Scouts, and only let her continue basketball and ballet. In her words, Billie "… simplified [my family members'] lives" by limiting the number of activities her daughter (and son) were involved in.

However, there is little empirical evidence that our interviews captured a particularly low-activity group of families. National data suggest that, to the contrary, our qualitative studies captured more high-activity than low-activity families. Of all the children age nine to twelve in the nationally representative PSID-CDS, only 26 percent fell in the "hurried child" category, compared with 31 percent in Parkside (sixteen-case subsample) and 45 percent in Riverview. According to the PSID-CDS, 15.4 percent of the national sample had no activities, compared with 13 percent in Parkside and 5 percent in Riverview.

Families Accustomed to Lifestyle

A second possibility is that parents and children become used to the pace they set and do not evaluate it negatively. One strategy that parents use to justify and to help themselves feel satisfied with their own choices is to continually compare themselves to "other" families. Parents compare their parenting and time-use strategies to those of "other" families, who are often presented in negative terms. Parents seem to recognize that they could be doing "worse," and use this knowledge to achieve a sense of balance between the conflicting needs of various family members and the desires of parents and their children.

With regard to this second strategy, a number of the parents were asked how they see other families in the community coping with the time crunch. Invariably, the parents interviewed cogently stated that they frequently see other parents in the community "totally stressed out," rushing their children from school to one activity after another, and traveling out of town every weekend for yet another soccer or ice hockey tournament. For example, the following is a typical comment along these lines from a Riverview parent:

> I know some people … the parents really push the kids to get involved in not just school activities, but two or three other extracurricular activities at a real young age. And the kids end up being very burned out, and then don't want to do anything. And [the parents say] "I've invested all this time and energy and money into dance lessons over the last four years and you will continue on." And then who is actually doing it? Is it the parents living through the child? Or is it because the kids want to learn a skill? (Erin, homemaker and mother of Judy [11] – Riverview – balanced)

It appears that parents draw on these vivid accounts of their harried neighbors to gain a sense of calm and contentment from their belief that, although they are busy, they are not "overdoing" it like some of the other parents in the community. Regardless of how hectic their lives were, every family could identify another family that was busier.

Children Not Over-Scheduled

Finally, a third possibility is that children are not all that busy. This interpretation is consistent with the results from the quantitative study. Children averaged 2 to 3 activities per week in both Riverview and Parkside. Most children were involved in a sport (or art activity) and one school or nonschool club. The third activity could be a second sport or an art activity. Riverview children were more likely than Parkside children to be in art activities, and Parkside children were significantly more likely than Riverview children to be involved in scouts and somewhat more likely to be enrolled in religious education. Although the average number of organized activities was the same across the two communities, the distribution of activity levels differed (Table 2). Riverview children were more likely to be hurried and less likely to be uninvolved than Parkside children and the national sample. This is because they spent more time in their activities. Riverview children were more likely than Parkside children to be involved in multiple sports during a week; the children involved in multiple sports activities were the ones most likely to complain of being tired.

Based on our qualitative study, we found little evidence that parental pressure was the major force leading to child participation in activities. There appear to be three general ways children become involved in activities: Desire to be with friends was the major factor leading to participation, followed by personal interest, and then by parental encouragement. Even when the latter was operative, it took child motivation to stick with the activity.

In fact, children with no activities caused considerable parent concern. Fifteen percent of the national sample, 13 percent of Parkside children interviewed during the school year, and 5 percent of Riverview children had no activities. For the most part, these children spent their after-school time riding their bicycles, playing with friends, reading, watching TV, playing

basketball or pick-up hockey games, roller blading, and roller skating. Parents *worried* when children did not have *any* activities.

One child (David from Parkside) was in sixth grade and his only activity earlier during the school year was a church group. He played handheld video games (e.g., Playstation) a lot. David's father (Robert) was concerned that his sixth grade son did not want to do any organized activities. Robert commented that he was disappointed that his son had stopped taking guitar lessons, and thought his son would benefit from the social aspect of being involved in a team sport. Yet, he also was concerned about pushing his son:

> I'm trying, you know, my wife and I fight back and forth a little bit about that nudge…. And I don't want to push him, then I think as soon as you push, they push back. (Robert, father of David [12] – Parkside – uninvolved)

Characteristic of several other children with low levels of activity was shyness or introversion. For example, Susan explained why her daughter, now involved in one after-school activity, stopped participating in gymnastics:

> Holly is really shy. And it's hard to get her involved in things, even with school, let alone outside of school. (Susan, mother of Holly [10] – Parkside – focused).

In both communities, parents whose children had many activities worked hard to keep them within limits, and parents whose children were participating in few or no extracurricular activities worried that their children might be missing something important.

Discussion and Conclusions

The structure of children's lives has increased over the past several decades. The number of after-school activities and weekend meets and games and the time spent in them have expanded greatly in the past two decades (Crosnoe, 2001; Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001b). As a

result, many families wonder whether they are making the right decisions for their children and themselves. This research addressed, first, how active American children are; second, whether there is evidence that children from upper-middle class families are more active than those from lower-middle class families; and third, whether children are overscheduled to the extent that they exhibit stress symptoms.

The strength of this study is that we were able to use data from a large national sample of families and quantitative and qualitative data for the same age group of children from two different communities in the Midwest, one an upper-middle-class community and the other a working-class community. We had an unusually large sample size for qualitative interviews, 43 families. The different samples are similar in characteristics. This means that we could use the qualitative data from the community samples to provide more depth to data from quantitative analyses. The limited age range was useful in keeping variability by maturity relatively low and its effects insignificant; we were unable to directly adjust for differential maturity. The major limitation of the community samples is that they were restricted to white working-class and middle-class families. However, we argue that the "hurried child" is a white middle-class issue, and proposed solutions are focused on white, middle-class families, not minority or low-income families. In addition, low-income families are likely to be female-headed, which makes the resource constraints substantially unequal and confounds class with family structure, a problem for earlier research. This research avoids that pitfall.

The first question is whether a large proportion of children are overscheduled or "hurried." The current study found about 26 percent of American children 9-12 years old who had three or more activities or were involved in one or two activities for four or more hours on two days in the week. This group exemplifies what Elkind called "hurried children." The

majority of children (58 percent) are either focused or balanced in their activities, and 15 percent are uninvolved.

Are activities a function of social class of the community or the family? Because of differences in parental education between our upper middle class and working class communities, we expected that there would be variations in the childrearing beliefs and values of parents across communities, and that these different beliefs would lead to differential involvement of their children in structured activities. However, our initial assumptions were wrong. Although children were definitely more hurried in the middle class community, children were active in both communities. Rather than activity differences being primarily *between* communities, we found that the major activity differences were *within* each community. Maternal education was more closely linked to the child's activities than any other factor, but it was not linear, rising and then falling as maternal education rose. There are two possible reasons for this nonlinearity. First, in highly educated families, such as the medical doctor married to a medical doctor, parents may be too busy to involve the children in multiple activities. Second, highly educated mothers may be more knowledgeable about professional concerns about the effects of excessive activities and limit their children's activities accordingly. This relationship between education and activities was similar in Riverview and Parkside. In both communities, parents saw education as key to the future. However, higher family income and having two parents were also linked to more activity. Besides education, financial and parental resources at home are critical to participation in activities. Both the national and community studies supported these conclusions.

The third question is whether children who are more hurried experience stress because of their schedules. We expected to find children with many activities to experience greater stress

symptoms. However, we found little evidence for this hurried child hypothesis. In the national data set we did not find hurried children to be more likely to exhibit symptoms of stress or have low self-esteem. Instead, the *least active exhibited more symptoms* of withdrawal, inability to get along with others, and low self-esteem.

The results of the qualitative analyses support our conclusion that children are, for the most part, engaged voluntarily in healthy levels of activities and that their parents are wary and watchful for stress symptoms. Parents cut back their children's schedules when these occurred. The most interesting reports were that parents of children who did not participate in activities were quite concerned about it. Qualitative reports from parents and children suggest that children who have problems getting along with others, low self-esteem, or who are socially immature are those who rarely participate in extracurricular activities.

We argue that there are three reasons why we failed to find much evidence for excessive activities. First, those families whose children are overly hurried may not have participated in our studies. However, this explanation was not supported because both Riverview and Parkside children were *more*, not *less*, active than the average child aged nine to twelve in the national sample. Second, families may be used to a busy schedule or may have been through a busy time and subsequently cut back on their activities. As evidence, we found that some families reported that they had recently scaled back their activities; perhaps we were seeing families who had already gone through the overly stressed phase, and not those who were experiencing very busy times. In addition, families saw themselves as normal, whereas they could point out other families who had "too many" activities and seemed to be overly stressed.

However, the third possibility is that it is normal for healthy children to have lots of activities. The direction of causality is reversed; those who have adjustment problems are the

ones who are uninvolved. Children today may be busier than they were in the recent past; however, that does not necessarily mean that this has caused them or their families excessive stress and strain.

Attaining Balance

The majority of children and their families in our study had attained a measure of "balance," meaning that they were involved in activities and organizations beyond the family, but within reasonable limits. Children's stresses were lowest in the "focused" and "balanced" categories. According to our definitions, such children had one or two activities, and the total weekly time in such activities was less than 4 hours over the two diary days. Such involvement appears to be both normal and valuable to child development; it was associated with lower stress and higher self-esteem on a variety of measures. Other research shows long-term benefits of organized activities as well (Mahoney et al., 2005).

What is important is that these activities not strain family members beyond their capacities. Besides each individual child's activities, parents need to balance the activities of other children and their own activities. Of the various strategies used, the most important we found was to reduce the mother's employment schedule from full-time to part-time, or, in some cases, to work at home. Mothers were most likely to alter their schedules, but fathers also made decisions to forgo promotions that would have increased their work time. Flexibility at work was helpful to both parents. The second major strategy was organization, including setting priorities and using technology, such as cell-phones. Communication among family members was critical. A third strategy was to enlist others as backup, including carpooling and getting help from relatives and neighbors. Siblings often attended each other's practices and lessons.

The fourth strategy, involving the children in family routines and chores, facilitated the smooth running of the family. Finally, parents involved themselves in children's activities — as coach, den leader, PTO leader, and volunteer. Parents were aware of the dangers of too much activity and appeared relatively successful in managing their family's schedule. As one Parkside mother put it:

> I think we've got enough going on and all the right things going on … so I think we've got a pretty good balance on everything right now. (Joanne, mother of Michael [9] – working-class Parkside – hurried).

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Table 1: Descriptive Characteristics of Data Sources

	Riverview Proportion/Mean	Parkside Proportion/Mean	Parkside (school yr) Proportion/Mean	PSID-CDS[a] Proportion/Mean	PSID-CDS[b] Proportion/Mean
Child age (yrs)	11.35	10.30	10.25	10.89	10.88
Child gender					
Boy	0.45	0.26	0.38	0.54	0.55
Girl	0.55	0.43	0.63	0.46	0.45
Family type					
Two parents	0.95	0.83	0.88	0.86	0.84
Single parent	0.05	0.17	0.13	0.14	0.16
Number of children	2.35	2.50	2.40	2.36	2.40
Maternal education (yrs)	15.65	14.45	14.34	14.38	13.67
High school (12 years of schooli	0.10	0.09	0.00	0.26	0.34
Some college (13-15 years)	0.35	0.61	0.69	0.34	0.32
College degree or more	0.55	0.30	0.31	0.40	0.34
Paternal education (yrs)	16.84	13.40	13.00	14.53	14.23
High school or less	0.00	0.26	0.36	0.26	0.32
Some college	0.20	0.74	0.64	0.25	0.23
College degree or more	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.49	0.45
Maternal Occupation					
1=Professional	0.40	0.17	0.00	na	na
2=Administrative	0.25	0.39	0.56	na	na
3=Blue collar	0.05	0.26	0.25	na	na
not employed	0.30	0.17	0.19	na	na
Maternal work schedule					
Full-time	0.45	0.39	0.38	0.50	0.49
Part time	0.20	0.43	0.38	0.31	0.31
Not employed	0.35	0.17	0.25	0.19	0.20
Paternal occupation					
1=Professional	0.75	0.09	0.06	na	na
2=Administrative	0.05	0.22	0.19	na	na
3=Blue collar	0.15	0.52	0.63	na	na
4=No dad/not employed	0.05	0.17	0.13	na	na
Paternal work schedule					
Full-time	0.95	0.83	0.88	0.79	0.79
Part-time	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.04
No dad/not employed	0.05	0.17	0.13	0.16	0.16
Income (dollars)	100,000	59,350	55,620	91,219	84,314
N	20	23	16	277	331

na - not available

[a] Children whose mother completed 12 or more years of school; [b] Full PSID-CDS sample

Table 2: Percentage of Children Participating in Sports, Art, and Youth Organization Activities, One Weekday and One Weekend Day, 2002/3 PSID-CDS

	Mom Ed 12+ years	Full Sample
Activity Category	Percent	Percent
No activities over two days	15.4	17.4
Youth organization only, <4 hours	7.5	7.4
Youth organization only, 4+ hours	0.0	0
Sports only, < 4 hours	20.4	22.4
Sports only, 4+ hours	6.8	6.5
Art only, <4 hours	2.9	3
Art only, 4+ hours	0.4	0.3
Two types of activities, <4 hours	27.3	24.5
Two types of activities, 4+ hours	11.9	12.2
All three types of activities	7.3	6.2
Total	100	100
N	277	331

Source: 2002/3 PSID-CDS. Data are for non-Hispanic White children aged nine to twelve.

Table 3
Percentage of Children in Activity Categories, One Weekday and One Weekend Day

Activity Category	PSID-CDS[a]	PSID-CDS[b]	Parkside	Parkside[c]	Riverview
Uninvolved (no activities)	15	17	13	13	5
Focused (1 activity and <4 hours)	31	33	26	25	10
Balanced (2 activities and <4 hours)	27	25	30	31	40
Hurried (3+ activities or 4+ hours)	26	25	30	31	45
Total	100	100	99	100	100
N	277	331	23	16	20

[a] Includes only non-Hispanic White children aged 9 to 12, mother has 12+ years of schooling.

[b] Includes only non-Hispanic White children aged 9 to 12, all mothers.

c This subsample was interviewed during the 1999–2000 school year.

Table 4: Ordered Logistic Regression of Activity Typology on Education, Family Structure, Site, Income, Family size, and Gender, Children 9-12

			PSID-CDS, White only			
	Parkside/Riverview[a]		Mother High School Grad plus[b]		Full Sample[b]	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Variable	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
Intercept - Focused	61.248 **	8.133	-7.848 ***	-6.373 **	-6.962 ***	-5.042 **
Intercept - Balanced	63.341 **	9.939 *	-6.585 ***	-5.105 *	-5.8 ***	-3.876 *
Intercept - Hurried	65.844 **	12.345 *	-4.877 ***	-3.389 *	-4.074 *	-2.159
Child Gender (male=1, female=0)	-1.745 *	-1.325 *	-0.05	-0.045	-0.004	0.007
Two parents	-3.455	-1.441	0.902 *	0.946 *	0.629 *	0.806 *
Mother's education (years)	7.044 **	omitted	0.107 *	omitted	0.122 **	omitted
Mother's education squared	-0.208 **	omitted	omitted	omitted	omitted	omitted
Mother completed 12 years	omitted	reference	omitted	reference	omitted	reference
Mother completed 13-15 years	omitted	reference	omitted	0.347	omitted	0.446 *
Mother completed 16 years	omitted	2.85 **	omitted	0.582 *	omitted	0.818 **
Mother completed 17+ years	omitted	1.178	omitted	0.601	omitted	0.794 *
Log of family income	2.411 *	2.961 *	0.368 *	0.339 *	0.325 *	0.256
Number of children	0.676	0.345	0.137	0.135	-0.009	-0.038
Site (Parkside=2, Riverview=1)	-0.233	0.388	na	na	na	na
N	36	36	277	277	331	331
-2 Log L			733.361	731.94	865.322	866.429

[a] Includes only families interviewed during the 1999-2000 school year.

[b] Mother's education was top-coded at 17 in the PSID-CDS

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, one-tailed test

Table 5: Mean values on different measures of stress symptoms by activity typology[a]

	Activity typology				Total	
Stress symptoms	Uninvolved	Focused	Balanced	Hurried	Mean	Stn dev
Parent reported:						
Stress symptoms	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.8
Internalizing (total)	4.4	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.3
Internalizing w/out stress	3.0	2.1	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.3
Low self esteem	1.9	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.5
N	62	108	77	84	331	
Child reported:						
Self-esteem	24.8	25.0	24.9	24.3	24.7	3.5
N	43	70	51	61	225	

[a]PSID-CDS Full Sample

Table 6: Ordinary Least Squares Regression of stress symptoms on social class, family structure and controls[a]

	Measure A Stress symptoms		Measure B Internalizing total		Measure C Internal without Stress symp		Measure D Low self-esteem (parent)		Measure E High self-esteem (child)	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Variable	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
Intercept	4.532 **	3.473 *	7.506 **	4.544	4.557 *	2.135	2.607	1.217	21.321 ***	19.489 ***
Uninvolved	0.055	0.067	0.928 +	0.894 +	0.855 *	0.823 *	0.647 **	0.630 **	-0.233	-0.150
Hurried	-0.069	-0.090	0.089	0.057	0.052	0.032	0.028	0.020	-0.538	-0.552
Child Gender (male=1, female=0)	0.178	0.172	0.183	0.168	0.028	0.017	0.062	0.057	-0.648	-0.640
Two parents	0.111	-0.046	0.164	-0.144	0.078	-0.128	0.281	0.190	0.234	-0.180
Mother's education (years)	-0.100 **		-0.189 **		-0.136 **		-0.071 *		-0.163 +	
Mother completed <13 years		reference		reference		reference		reference		reference
Mother completed 13-15 years		-0.414		-0.935 *		-0.631 *		-0.276		-1.019 +
Mother completed 16 years		-0.566 +		-1.570 **		-1.245 ***		-0.687 **		-0.836
Mother completed 17+ years		-0.276		-0.493		-0.387		-0.227		-1.427
Log of family income	-0.140	-0.132	-0.156	-0.041	-0.053	0.056	-0.045	0.021	0.442	0.485
Number of children	0.050	0.071	-0.083	-0.030	-0.103	-0.060	-0.077	-0.054	0.433 +	0.484 +
Site (Parkside=2, Riverview=1)										
N	331	331	331	331	331	331	331	331	225	225
R square	0.037	0.0301	0.050	0.057	0.060	0.072	0.051	0.061	0.048	0.050

+ p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, 2-tailed test

[a] PSID-CDS Full Sample