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Brief report

Longitudinal, reciprocal relationships between family management and antisocial peer associations



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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Poor family management and antisocial peer associations are related risk factors for negative outcomes such as adolescent substance misuse and conduct disorders. The relationship between family management and antisocial peer associations is complex. The purpose of this study was to test the reciprocal relationships between youth-reports of poor family management and antisocial peer associations over multiple time-points.

Methods: We used four data points (5th–11th grade) from the Australian arm of the longitudinal International Youth Development Study (IYDS) to test a random-intercepts cross-lagged path model ($N = 922$).

Results: The model fit the data well with path estimates showing that poor family management predicted greater antisocial peer associations at the next wave but not the reverse. A second model included a third autoregressive path to control for youth's own antisocial behavior; the direction of the relationships between poor family management and antisocial peer associations did not change.

Conclusions: These results indicate that across adolescence poor family management predicts greater antisocial peer association, which provides evidence that family-focused interventions are an important prevention strategy even in adolescence.

Poor family management (e.g., poor monitoring and ineffective limit setting) and antisocial peer associations are related risk factors for a host of negative behavioral outcomes (e.g., substance misuse, conduct disorders) in adolescence and young adulthood (Bank, Patterson, & Reid, 1987; Dishion & Loeber, 1985; Dodge et al., 2009; Espelage, Low, Rao, Hong, & Little, 2014; Fallu et al., 2010; Habib et al., 2010; Hemphill et al., 2011; Herrenkohl, Hill, Hawkins, Chung, & Nagin, 2006; Klierer et al., 2017; Rodgers-Farmer, 2001; Van Ryzin, Fosco, & Dishion, 2012). During early adolescence, peers are a critical social influence as children become increasingly persuaded by the behavior of their friends and seek social acceptance by peers (Dishion & Owen, 2002; Dodge et al., 2009; Gifford-Smith, Dodge, Dishion, & McCord, 2005; Kelly et al., 2012; Spear, 2000). Parents can impact peer associations through family management practices related to children's activities and relationships; however, adolescents who associate with antisocial

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Table 1
Pearson Correlations and Descriptive Statistics.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Gender (male = 1)	–												
2. Poor Family Mgmt (5th)	.26***	1.39(.41)											
3. Poor Family Mgmt (7th)	.14**	.34***	1.53(.48)										
4. Poor Family Mgmt (9th)	.09*	.25***	.48***	1.87(.54)									
5. Poor Family Mgmt (11th)	.19*	.28***	.36***	.60***	2.01(.55)								
6. Antisocial Peers (5th)	.25***	.27***	.07	.06	-.00	.10(.25)							
7. Antisocial Peers (7th)	.10**	.23***	.33***	.20***	.13***	.21***	.17(.37)						
8. Antisocial Peers (9th)	.13***	.13***	.24***	.27***	.17***	.25***	.36***	.44(.67)					
9. Antisocial Peers (11th)	.14***	.15***	.21***	.33***	.32***	.15***	.26***	.55***	.56(.76)				
10. Antisocial Behavior (5th)	.26***	.28***	.12***	.10**	.07	.51***	.21***	.25***	.21***	.25(.59)			
11. Antisocial Behavior (7th)	.17***	.20***	.28***	.20***	.10**	.25***	.53***	.28***	.21***	.33***	.25(.65)		
12. Antisocial Behavior (9th)	.16***	.09*	.20***	.29***	.22	.17***	.34***	.64***	.43***	.22***	.35***	.50(1.06)	
13. Antisocial Behavior (11th)	.16***	.12***	.19***	.26***	.24***	.10*	.27***	.42***	.55***	.14***	.30***	.50***	.46(1.10)

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
M(SD) on the diagonal.

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