Contemporary parenting strategies tend to involve parent-child interactions in which the parent neither repressively dominates the child nor follows a permissive laissez-faire course but respects the child's dignity as a person. This paper integrates several current theories of parenting and parent education into the construct of "respectful parenting," which is a new construct developed in this study. Family research suggests that such parenting is associated with the well-being of the child, including prosocial behavior, positive academic behavior, and physical, social, and emotional development.

This study tests two hypotheses: (a) that respectful parenting facilitates effective family problem-solving practices, and (b) that family problem-solving skills learned in the family facilitate a child's success outside the family in school and with peers. In addressing these hypotheses key variables were measured, using instruments developed both in previous research and as part of this project. The study controlled for relevant background
variables, including family income, education of parents, gender of child, and family size.

Eighty-two families with two biological-parents, of which forty-two had male target children and forty female target children, were subjects in this study. Each target child also had at least one sibling. Data was collected through questionnaires and observations of video-recorded family problem-solving sessions.

The results strongly confirmed the first hypothesis: respectful parenting positively affected family problem solving. Respectful parenting and family problem solving were positively associated with children's well-being outside the home through behavior with their peers. Evidence for effects on performance at school was marginal. Also important to this study was the finding that family problem solving has mediating effects between respectful parenting and outcome in children's behavior in terms of peer relationships.
Parenting Styles and Children's Outcomes
Mediated by Family Problem Solving

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Terry G. Hadlock

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APPROVED

Redacted for Privacy

Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences
in charge of major

Redacted for Privacy

Head of Department of Human Development and Family Sciences

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of Graduate School

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Typed by Terry G. Hadlock
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

There is growing concern over the high incidence of adolescent problems, including academic failure, delinquency, substance abuse, suicide, premarital pregnancy, and mental illness. Although numerous explanations have been proposed for these problems, recent research indicates that quality of parenting is a contributing factor. Effective parenting has been associated with the well-being of the child, which includes prosocial behavior, positive academic behavior, and physical, social, and emotional development (e.g., Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Hotaling, Finkelhor, Kirkpatrick, & Straus, 1988; Libbey & Bybee, 1979; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rohner, 1986; Simons, Conger, & Whitbeck, 1988; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Wolfe, 1987).

An important feature of effective parenting is positive parental involvement. This creates a nurturing environment (Schaefer, 1985; Swick, 1987a) that facilitates the development of language and motor skills (Schaefer, 1985; Swick, 1987b), positively influences social and emotional development (Magid & McKelvey, 1987), and promotes good peer relations, academic performance (Comer, 1986), and prosocial behaviors (Spivack & Cianci, 1987).
While positive parental involvement and nurturance are essential, they are not sufficient to ensure positive child outcome. Children inevitably engage in behavior that is not beneficial for either their present or their future. Thus parents must obtain some form of control over their children's behavior. This control may be achieved through a power-assertive strategy or another method that is disrespectful of the child's person (Hoffman, 1960). However, other methods that honor the child's dignity are more effective and considerate. Contemporary parenting strategies that involve parent-child interactions that are egalitarian, so that the parent-child relationship is balanced, are effective in minimizing psychological, social, and academic problems (Comer, 1986; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Hotaling, Finkelhor, Kirkpatrick, & Straus, 1988; Libbey & Bybee, 1979; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Magid & McKelvey, 1987; Rohner, 1986; Simons, Conger, & Whitbeck, 1988; Spivack & Cianci, 1987; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Wolfe, 1987). Such parenting is referred to as functional because it realizes effects that are salubrious to the child's development and general well-being. Effective parents neither repressively dominate with their power nor evasively follow a permissive laissez-faire course. As Dreikurs (1948) has indicated, this balanced parenting may be viewed as a democratization of the parent-
child relationship, an idea espoused by Rousseau over two hundred years ago.

A number of contemporary parenting models that are democratic (in this egalitarian, individual-honoring sense) have been proposed, including those of Dreikurs (1965, 1968), Baumrind (1968, 1971), Ginott (1965, 1969), Gordon (1975), and Babcock and Keepers (1976). In each of these approaches, parenting that does not respect the equal value of each person (as espoused by a democratic model) is theoretically inadequate, while parenting that does respect the social equality of adults and children is predicted to have beneficial effects on the child's development. Since the quintessential aspect of democratic parenting seems to be that such parents honor or respect their children as persons of their own right, I will employ the term "respectful parenting" in this paper. This term more accurately depicts the practice of effective parenting than does the term "democratic parenting." The term "democratic" implies that all members are equal in every way. Since this does not accurately reflect family relationships, the alternate term is more appropriate.

In respectful parenting models, parents are cautious regarding the destructive effects, both physical and psychological, of shaming and punishment. Instead, by responding to their children's emotional, cognitive, and physical needs, parents encourage children's growth and
development, and dysfunctionality is minimized in dynamics both inside and outside the family. Contemporary respectful parenting strategies that display honor toward children include the following four characteristics: (a) Time is spent with the child, (b) Interactions are reciprocal in nature, (c) Independence is encouraged, and (d) The parent-child interaction is constructive.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the premise that a major reason respectful parents promote well-being in children is that effective family problem solving is practiced in these families. Respectful parenting encourages independence, anticipates positive behavior, practices open communication, and is responsive and sensitive to the child's behaviors, needs, and emotions, which creates an environment that fosters problem solving. As a result, children who experience respectful parents learn to address stressful dilemmas and thereby cope with them more efficiently than do other children (Belsky, 1984). Such children are afforded an opportunity to express their feelings freely, to deal with authority figures constructively, and to develop autonomy, self-esteem, and emotional regulation, all of which also transfers to behavior outside the home.

This study tests the hypothesis that respectful parenting fosters a family interaction pattern that facilitates effective problem-solving practices. A second
hypothesis is that problem-solving skills learned in the family facilitate a child's success outside the family in school and with peers. In addressing these hypotheses this analysis will integrate previous theories of parenting and address issues associated with the measurement of respectful parenting and family problem solving.

A considerable body of literature has developed on individual and family problem solving (e.g., Forgatch, 1989; Selman, Beardslee, Schultz, Krupa, & Podosfksy, 1986; Spivack, Platt, & Shure, 1976). In a family context, problem solving involves more than the resolution of mathematical, physical, or abstract problems. It involves addressing interpersonal problems, and addressing them interactively. Problems dealt with in the social context of a family not only stem from the family members' interchanges with others in the family's ecosystem, but also from within the family's own social interactions and even from the process of problem solving itself. Thus, functionally, respectful family interactions both facilitate resolving problems and minimize the number of social problems that arise in the social interactions of the problem-solving process.

I hypothesize that respectful parenting, through the mediation of situations requiring problem solving, promotes autonomy by availing children a safely limited latitude of responsive, behavioral options from which they can choose.
In this way, parents guide their children into erudite decisions through dialogue concerning whatever problem is at hand. The parent, then, fosters autonomy by encouraging the child to participate in generating possible solutions for the problem and then to choose from among those options. Meanwhile, the parent warmly accepts and honors the child by allowing the child's opinion to count in this process, while the parent simultaneously exercises firmness by allowing only safe options to be considered. The result is a child with high self-esteem and properly developed autonomy. These characteristics promote a child's success in school and with peers.

Thus, my specific hypotheses are:

(a) Respectful parenting positively affects family problem solving.

(b) Respectful parenting and family problem solving are positively associated with children's well-being outside the home through behavior at school and with peers.

This study conceptually may be diagrammed as in Figure 1. Respectful parenting is effective because of family problem solving. Family problem solving which, in turn, fosters internal qualities, such as emotional regulation, interpersonal negotiation strategies, autonomy, and self-esteem. The child, then, employs these internal qualities to his/her benefit at school and with peers. However, this study will limit itself to analyzing the role that problem solving plays in this scheme. A future study can investigate the role of the internal qualities.
While testing the effects of respectful parenting and family problem solving on the outcome variables, academic performance and peer relationships, I will control for possible influences of the parents' income, parents' education, family size, and gender of the child.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Parenting

It has been demonstrated that the quality and style of parenting influence children's social, emotional, and cognitive development, their academic success, and their general health (Belsky, 1984; Sigel, Dreyer, & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 1984). Research strongly indicates that harsh, abusive parenting places children at risk for academic difficulties, poor peer relations, substance abuse, a variety of psychologically pathological problems, and a number of delinquency issues (Hotaling, Finkelhor, Kirkpatrick, & Straus, 1988; Rohner, 1986; Wolfe, 1987).

Conversely, responsive parenting that considers children's perspectives, feelings, and developmental abilities has been found to have positive social and psychological effects on children (Baumrind, 1971; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989). Qualities of positive, healthy parenting have been expressed in a number of contemporary models of parenting (Babcock & Keepers, 1976; Baumrind, 1967, 1971, 1989; Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1989; Dreikurs, 1965; Ginott, 1965, 1975; Gordon, 1965, 1975). Nevertheless, since the parenting concepts of two primary figures have been researched more than those of other figures—Dreikurs' "democratic" child training (1948) and Baumrind's "authoritative" parenting (1968, 1971)—I will
examine primarily the sources addressing their concepts, drawing from the contributions of other models where appropriate.

Family research has verified Dreikurs' (1948, 1965) assertion that the old feudal, authoritarian parenting methods are obsolete and no longer effective in a democratic society. Recent studies have indicated that the well-being of children whose parents practice parenting in accordance with democratic concepts tends to be higher than the well-being of children whose parents' tendency is toward nondemocratic parenting (Burchard & Burchard, 1987); Comer, 1986; Magid & McKelvey, 1987; Schaefer, 1985, Swick, 1987a; Spivack & Cianci, 1987); Swick, 1987b.

The Parenting Paradigms of Dreikurs and Baumrind

Dreikurs (1948, 1965, 1968) built his ideas of democratic parenting on the psychological construct of his mentor, Adler. Adler (1930, 1956) promoted living democratically by educating communities through clinics. In these clinics he brought together schools and teachers, parents and children, and other interested parties within the community in order to accomplish widespread dissemination of methods of effective cooperation (Christenson & Thomas, 1980). His clinics taught both by their content and through their methodology that cooperation socially occurs in open, equal, mutually honoring, democratic relationships.
Adler (1956) understood children to construct, from their own unique biological and environmental situation, a personal goal by which they could find a place socially. The family was seen as the fundamental social group by which this occurs. He understood that this goal, though unconscious, is formed by age five and virtually directs every area of one's life, determining one's "life style" (Adler, 1930). Since this goal is socially founded on an innate capacity for cooperation, human problems are more interpersonal in nature than intrapsychic. Maladjustment involves one's seeking personal superiority, which not only impedes effective interactions, but also creates an unequal, nondemocratic, style of relating.

Dreikurs (1968), building on Adlerian concepts, focused on helping families foster environments conducive not only to constructive life goals, but also to functionally efficient interactional skills, which, in turn, result in resolving interpersonal problems.

That culture greatly influences parenting practices is apparent in the historical context in which Dreikurs (1948, 1965) presented his ideas about parenting. He strongly emphasized the difference between the old, autocratic ways of Europe and the new, democratic ways of America, stating that traditional child-rearing methods have been based on the old European feudal system, being embedded in that culture socially, politically, and religiously. He also
recognized that the United States' "new experiment" of the latter 18th century has taken a long time to filter into domestic American living. According to Dreikurs' concept of democratic parenting (1948, 1965, 1968), then, egalitarian parent-child interactions are presented instead of parental assertion of power and control over children, as occurred in previous generations.

I acknowledge the veracity of Dreikurs' (1948, 1965, 1968) overall comments concerning democracy in light of his concept of democratic parenting. However, I do not in this paper confine democracy and its application to the parenting process to Dreikursian terms. Actually, democracy is a means of equally honoring all members of society as persons of their own worth and rights rather than owning only or primarily the worth and rights of members of a particular group or class (who often dominate). Democratic parents honor the dignity of children by taking their personhood seriously, so that they are fully respected members of their families and of society at large. I refer broadly to contemporary parenting that has been found to be effective as "respectful" parenting. The lack of respect toward children in dysfunctional families is easily detected in the extreme, imbalanced parenting practices that Dreikurs (1948, 1965, 1968) and Baumrind (1968, 1971, 1991b) both describe in their depictions of ineffective parents.
Dreikurs' (1948, 1965) emphasis on equality consisted of a freedom that is balanced between extremes. One extreme was autocracy, which he succinctly described as "order without freedom." The other extreme was anarchy, succinctly stated as "freedom without order." Democracy, however, entails "freedom with order."

Baumrind's (1967, 1968) well known three styles of disciplinary authority--authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative--are similar to Dreikurs' (1948, 1965) emphasis on an equality that consisted of a way of relating that was balanced between extremes. Concerning dysfunctional styles of parenting, Baumrind posited, on one extreme, an authority that is heteronomous to the child, unilaterally executed, role bound, and that belongs to the parent, on whom the child is totally dependent; on the other extreme, she placed an authority that belongs to the child and is autonomously executed by the child independently of any inhibitions imposed by adults. Between the two extremes, Baumrind posited a functional style of parenting in which authority is appropriately interdependent, reciprocal, balanced between agency and communion, and facilitative of the child's individuation.

Thus Dreikurs' (1948, 1965) extreme of autocracy (order without freedom) can be likened to Baumrind's (1967, 1968) authoritarian style of parenting. Authoritarian parenting attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the child's
behavior and attitudes according to preestablished, absolute standards, emphasizing respect for authority and obedience, which is often enforced by physical punishment. In an authoritarian parenting style, parent-child interactions are not dialogical but unilateral, from parent to child, thus restricting autonomy. Neither does it allow for developmental idiosyncracies, because it overruns them.

Dreikurs' (1948, 1965) other extreme, anarchy (freedom without order), is comparable to Baumrind's (1967, 1968) permissive style of parenting; in fact, Dreikurs even used the term "permissive" in connection with anarchical parenting. A permissive parent typically avoids exercising controls and does not encourage obedience to external standards, but allows the child to regulate his/her own behavior autonomously. Parent-child interactions are non-punitive, accepting, and often affirming, the permissive parent being only a resource for information and reasoning and often not accounting for developmental limitations on the child's abilities.

Just as Dreikurs (1948, 1965) understood democracy to be a balance of "freedom with order," Baumrind's (1967, 1968) authoritative style of parenting balances and combines the best aspects of both authoritarian and permissive parenting. Authoritative parenting honors and respects the individuality of the child, so that control is practiced in light of the child's development and personality by being
responsive to the child's thoughts, feelings, and points of view. Thus parent-child interactions are seldom punitive, but positive, reasonable, dialogical, and usually involving high standards. Parenting that is authoritative generates children whose well-being is better--more socially competent, energetic and friendly, self-reliant, self-controlled, cheerful, and so forth--than parenting that is either authoritarian or permissive (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Maccoby and Martin (1983), elaborating on Baumrind's (1967, 1968, 1971) paradigm, drafted a construct of four types of families in which parents demonstrated behavior consisting of combinations of the effects of, on the one hand, warmth, acceptance, involvement, and responsiveness, and, on the other hand, demandingness, control, and strictness.

Borrowing back from Maccoby and Martin (1983), then, Baumrind (1991b) succinctly applied these two emotional dimensions of responsiveness on the one hand and demandingness on the other to her original three prototypes--Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive--and added a fourth one--Rejecting-Neglecting. Her four prototypes can be diagrammed in light of these two emotional dimensions, then, according to Table 1.¹ We see here a tendency of each particular style or prototype of parenting toward (+) or away from (-) demandingness and responsiveness.
Table 1.
Baumrind's Parenting Prototypes and Emotional Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prototype</th>
<th>Demanding</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejecting-Neglecting</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actually, parental demandingness and responsiveness place parents in a double-bind predicament. There can be a conflict between, on the one hand, promoting their child's exploration, individuation, and self-sufficiency and, on the other hand, protecting their child from dangerous decisions and destructive environments. To resolve this double bind by taking an imbalanced posture is counterproductive to effective parenting. Egalitarian social dynamics in which there is direct parent-child engagement are essential to effective family functioning. Nonauthoritative parents do not authentically engage with their children. Such parental engagement is essential to respect for the child. Baumrind (1991b) has also stated the importance of balancing this conflict: "In sum, adolescents' developmental progress is held back by directive, officious, or unengaged practices
and facilitated by reciprocal, balanced interaction characteristics" (p. 753).

**Empirical Results of Effective Parenting**

Those raised in accordance with Baumrind's (1967, 1968, 1971) authoritative practices score higher than their peers who have experienced authoritarian or permissive rearing in numerous measures of social development, psychosocial competence, academic achievement, self-esteem, mental health, and well-being (see Maccoby & Martin, 1983, for review). Supportive, proactive parenting positively affects children (e.g., Holden, 1985; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental involvement in terms of affective, positive, educative exchanges that lack coercion has been positively associated with a child's behavior being less problematic in general (Pettit & Bates, 1989). Those parents who function respectfully toward their children are described by their children as being warm and accepting, granting them psychological autonomy, yet exercising firm, protective control over their behavior in a safe environment (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992).

Just as positive, affective parenting appears to manifest competency in all aspects of life, conversely, problematic parenting fosters problematic children, both inside and outside the home (Caspi & Elder, 1988; Hinde & Hinde, 1987; Patterson & Dishion, 1988). McCord (1990) points out that injurious parental behaviors are seen in
dysfunctional families as normal, justified, and even as being virtuous.

Not only do ineffective parenting practices foster adverse results in children, while positive parenting practices affect children positively, but findings also suggest that the mere absence of such positive parenting practices is related to the development of problem behavior in children (Pettit & Bates, 1989). Additionally, according to Holden (1985), the literature on parenting suggests that parents' positive involvement with their children inhibits children's expression of negativity. I suggest that the parents' style of interaction effectively and influentially models problem solving. Such problem solving, by addressing both social and situational difficulties, affects virtually all facets of children's lives.

The egalitarian mentality and respectful posture that accompanies respectful parenting virtually permeates all of life. According to Swick (1978a), effective parents are more involved in work and community than are dysfunctional parents. Voydanoff (1987) has found that effective parents are also more productive and involved in their work and in the community. Successful interpersonal problem solving is an habitual practice that occurs over repeated interactions as the participants reciprocally exchange information. An open exchange of ideas through genuine listening is the
matrix of intimacy, successful socialization, and satisfactory family interactions.

**Performance at School**

Academic performance is of special import to this study. In light of Baumrind's (1967, 1968, 1971) parenting framework, Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts and Fraleigh (1987) found authoritative parenting positively correlated with adolescents' academic performance, while authoritarian and permissive parenting were negatively correlated. Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, and Dornbusch (1991) also noted that children were more engaged at school when their parents were accepting and involved with them rather than strict and supervising toward them. Dornbusch et al. (1987) also showed evidence that adolescents who described their parents as being more democratic, warmer, and more encouraging attained better grades than their peers. Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, and Darling (1992) found that authoritative parenting, as depicted by three aspects—acceptance (warmth), supervision and strictness (control), and psychological autonomy (democracy)—greatly facilitate positive adolescent school performance.

Psychosocial autonomy is part of one's overall psychosocial maturity, which Steinberg, Elman, and Mounts (1989) define as the adolescents' sense of self-reliance, identity, and self-direction; authoritative parenting fosters psychosocial maturity, which in turn facilitates success at school.
Research has evidenced similar findings for school performance among younger children (see Hess & Holloway, 1984).

**Relationships with Peers.**

Patterson (1982, 1986) not only presents results depicting that healthy psychosocial development and well-being were found in children reared by positive parenting methods, but also showing that children who were socialized by parental coercive punishment learned to use aggressive behavior, since more effective and socially appropriate skills were not modeled or reinforced. These children also used a coercive style of interacting with peers and teachers that resulted in playground altercations, noncompliant and disruptive behavior, rejection by teachers, and low academic performance. Poor social skill development, and especially an aggressive interpersonal style of interacting, is related to delinquent behavior (Loeber & Dishion, 1983). Again, ineffective parenting utilizes disrespectful practices—physical punishment, inconsistent discipline, coercion, nattering (Hetherington & Martin, 1979; Patterson, 1982), and reactive discipline (e.g., power assertion) (Patterson, 1986).

**Power in Parent-Child Relationships**

The use of power is of major concern to respectful or democratic parenting (Hoffman, 1960)—even to democracy
itself. Parents need to be simultaneously responsive and non-intrusive. Obviously, an intrusive or officious stance is not respectful. Baumrind (1991a) has indicated that parents' direct control is somewhat necessary when children are young, and there is a gradual increase toward interdependence as children mature through expanding negotiations of responsibilities, obligations, and roles. When young, children's power is not equal to adults' power, simply because children lack the experience and awareness of adults. Nevertheless, children learn to reason by their parents' reasoning, so that as they get older their power gradually becomes more equal with the parents'.

However, Baumrind (1989) asserted that parents who consistently employ reasoning without control signal to their children that they are indecisive regarding compliance—-that nothing really matters and that children will, therefore, conclude that social causes and effects are not reliably related. Children who are not clearly aware that behavioral compliance is expected do not learn that there is a norm they are to internalize and obey. When compliance is reinforced the child's identity as good is confirmed. Yet control does not involve intrusiveness. An officious parent does not seriously engage with his/her child at the child's level of interaction. To Baumrind, control without intrusiveness allows for responsiveness that
constitutes a salubrious environment in which self-esteem, mental health, autonomy, and gregariousness naturally occur.

Thus authoritative parents, being balanced between extremes, not only support and openly communicate with their children but also firmly require children to follow mutually agreed upon rules that are age-appropriate. In this arrangement, parents are not intrusive but controlling enough to provide protective safety, while aspiring to promote maximum autonomy (Baumrind, 1991a). Through verbal exchange with warmth and support, the parent can indeed proceed with the child responsively in a way that fosters the natural unfolding of the child's independence and individuality.

An optimal parent-child relationship, then, acknowledges the child's immaturity by providing structure and control, while also acknowledging the child's emergence into a competent individuated person by providing stimulation, warmth, and respect. The parent, by being respectful of the child as a person, exercises control in light of an intimate knowledge of the child's developmental capabilities and circumstances.

Similarly, Meredith and Evans (1990) have pointed out that obedience to authority does not encourage children to think for themselves, act responsibly or become independent. In fact the opposite is true; emphasized obedience begets children who cannot think for themselves, are not
responsible, and become dependent. To demand such obedience does not respectfully engage the child. As Alice Miller (1981) emphasized in her classic book, The Trauma of the Gifted Child, when obedience is overly accentuated, a child is coerced into being a pretended person, since love is really not directed toward the child as a person; a child can only experience who he/she really is when fully accepted, understood, and supported. She further asserted that when obeying parents is excessively emphasized, it becomes easy for a child not to act in accordance with her/his own will (1990). By using rewards and punishments, parents annoy their children; as is true of everyone, people are not objects to be hit or bribed. Human relationships cannot endure such disrespect without dire consequences.

As parents encourage verbal exchanges of ideas, mutuality becomes an increasing reality. Mutuality occurs when there is reciprocal respect, not unilateral power and obedience. Consensus is attained by means of discourse and mutual decision making, and children learn to understand and reason through the perspectives expressed by others (Baumrind, 1989). Children have learned to respond to rational arguments rather than to coercive power plays, since the parents cordially deal with them according to their cognitive abilities and social awareness in the context of rapprochement, responsiveness, support,
consideration of others' perspectives, acceptance, and care-
that is, in short, mutual respect.

The advantage of a reciprocal social process in parent-
child problem-solving interactions can be exemplified by
Berne's transactional analysis paradigm (1964). If a parent
predominately takes a P-C (parent-child) stance, in which
the parent takes an authoritarian position over the child,
then the child is taught to allow the parent to make the
decisions. Thus, the child is practically trained to
subordinate self to the other, never experientially learning
how to personally address problems or how to interact in a
socially productive manner. Instead, the child becomes
dysfunctional in problem solving, never having an
opportunity to practice choosing alternatives and never
socially interacting with others in a functional way in
which s/he can experience cooperation, considering others'
ideas, or honestly expressing one's own ideas. Instead, the
child learns either to cower to another and fear submitting
his/her own ideas, or to model the parent and not consider
others' ideas.

If a parent primarily presents a C-P (child-parent)
environment, in which the parent sees the child as more
important than him/herself, thereby placing the child on a
pedestal while demeaning oneself, then the child is neither
trained with the parent's experiential wisdom of solving
problems nor trained to engage productively with others.
Again, the child neither is exposed to an effective model nor has a learning experience by which to overcome both an inadequate means of problem solving and a dysfunctional means of relating with others.

But if a parent generally takes a respectful stance, establishing an A-A (adult-adult) relationship with the child, in which the child is honored as having equal status with the parent, then the child experientially co-participates in the problem-solving process and is trained both how to solve problems and how to functionally relate with others.

Communication

Taking into account the other's wishes and feelings is essential to the reciprocity that occurs in a respectful family (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). This provides optimal development of identity and role-taking. Communication skills allow for an openness to change, because they foster the processing of new information (Blechman, 1991). Parents who do not listen not only cut off communication with their children, but neither will they be open to any outside instructions, requests, or even expert opinions—nor will they derive benefit from social support networks of friends and family.

In multi-problem families, the absence of skillful information exchange means that bad feelings are generated when members criticize and fail to listen nonjudgmentally
(Blechman, 1991). Family members also stifle effective communication because they interrupt, refuse the validity of others' statements, do not engage in compelling self-disclosure, wander off the topic, criticize others in ways that provoke disputes, and do not answer each other's questions, respond to each other's requests, or attend to each other's statements (Blechman, 1991). Because these families are devoid of soothing interpersonal information exchanges, children are not likely to progress to self-soothing messages, either, but are likely to produce negative messages. Ineffective communication breeds a stressful, violent climate that obstructs functional socialization of children. Stress, in return affects parents' ability to relate with their children adequately (Belsky, 1984).

In contrast, respectful parents encourage their children, which, in turn, fosters open communication. Encouragement accepts, trusts, and frees all people, including children, to feel comfortable with themselves as they are, to believe they can determine their own destiny, and to reach their own potential (Meredith & Evans, 1990). Rather than using precious energy on pleasing, defending themselves, or proving themselves, parents who are encouragers use energy to meet life's tasks, to learn, and to become their unique selves. Encouragement is basically composed of mutual trust in and respect for the other
person. Respect toward others does not seek to alter them, and, incidently, respect toward self does not allow one to become a doormat. Since encouragement manifests that human relationships are paramount, respect is more important than being right. Meredith and Evans (1990) have asserted, in accordance with Dreikurs (1948, 1965), that effective parents practice freedom with order, not order with freedom; respectful parents do not force children to suffer consequences, they only free them to experience consequences. Freedom does not change others, it nurtures them to be who they are.

Thus, respectful parenting involves parents taking their children seriously by honoring, respecting, and accepting them as persons in their own right. By truly including and honoring another, be it child or adult, one takes into account that other's perspectives, opinions, ideas, which naturally exposes both parties to alternative perspectives and approaches to problems; for this to occur consistently in the parent-child relationship, the ability to consider an array of alternatively proposed solutions is modeled. This practical manifestation of respect is but a function of a parenting style that is at the core of effective parenting.

**Problem Solving**

Most contemporary parenting theories contain approaches for addressing problems, either implicitly or explicitly.
However, in some of these theories, direct reference to problem solving is overlooked. From one perspective, this is similar to not seeing the forest for the trees; indeed, it seems to have escaped the notice of research.

Consider the following examples of the part resolving problems plays in several contemporary parenting strategies: (a) A parenting approach involving a transactional analysis revolves around the very idea of conflict resolution. Conflicts result primarily from uncomplimentary ego states and are resolved by establishing interactions of complimentary ego states; problems cannot effectively be addressed until individuals interact through complimentary ego states (Berne, 1964, Babcock & Keepers, 1976). (b) The import of problem resolution in Dreikurs' (1965) system of parenting is readily discernible in the prominence he gives to the family council; the main function of the family council is to resolve family difficulties. Importantly, in light of this paper, this resolution is accomplished interactively—in fact, Dreikurs referred to the process as "democratic conflict resolution." Dinkmeyer & McKay (1973, 1989) also emphasize problem solving in a Dreikursian framework by making the family meeting eminent in their program. (c) Baumrind's disciplinary style of authority pertains to the way parents address problems—be they behavioral or otherwise—in and with their children (Baumrind, 1967, 1971, 1989, 1991a, 1991b). That is,
problems are the main reason there is a need of discipline in the first place, and a parent's disciplinary practice results in the minimizing or augmenting of problems. (d) Ginott focuses on communicatively addressing difficult, stressful, or problematic situations, so that resolution occurs as autonomous responsibility increases (Ginott, 1965, 1975). (e) A major aspect of Gordon's classic material on Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) includes his "no-lose" method of conflict resolution that essentially models a problem-solving strategy through the parent-child interaction--identify and define the problem, generate possible alternative solutions, evaluate these solutions, decide on the best one in light of both parties' needs, execute the solution, evaluate its effectiveness (Gordon, 1965, 1975).

Respectful approaches to parenting, such as each of those in the previous paragraph, have been found to effectively foster the well-being of children (e.g., Cedar, & Levant, 1990; Forgatch, 1989; Frazier, & Matthes, 1975; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Lindahl, & Markman, 1990; Schaefer, 1985; etc.). These contemporary approaches to parenting are oriented toward family interactions that depict child-honoring, respectful practices as a fundamental premise of their respective schemes, which is conducive to effective problem solving. In contrast to these healthy approaches to parenting, Hinde
and Stevenson-Hinde (1987), observing continuous intergenerational transmission of antisocial behavior, noted the destructive impact of poor parent-child interactions upon children's behavior in such dysfunctional families. Similarly, Caspi and Elder (1988) found problematic behavior of successive generations to be transmitted by problematic family relationships.

The Two Components of Social Problem Solving

Unlike problem solving in general, social problem solving has no "correct," objective format. Yet certain behaviors and manners of relating prove to be more efficient than others in resolving problems socially. After perusing the problem-solving literature, Vuchinich, Vuchinich, and Wood (in press) pointed out that, in order for social problem solving to be effective, two basic, broad components are necessary. The first is a functional component, involving such functions as defining the problem, proposing alternate solutions, and evaluating the alternatives (steps of the problem-solving process). Vuchinich et al. indicated that the second broad component involves perspective-taking, which entails each person of an interaction understanding the other's views, feelings, needs, and goals.

All functional approaches seem to have become articulated in the problem-solving literature as some variation of the following five steps:² (a) Defining the problem; (b) Generating alternative solutions; (c)
Evaluating the alternative solutions; (d) Planning for action; and (e) Evaluating the results. Virtually all functional approaches to problem solving represent some variation of this systematic, step-wise approach (e.g., D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971; Forgatch, 1989; Rubin & Krasner, 1986; Selman, Beardslee, Schultz, Krupa, & Podorefsky, 1986).


Yeates, Schultz, and Selman (1991) also present two essential aspects of problem solving. One pertains to social information processing skills (corresponding exactly to the "functional component" of Vuchinich et al. (in press), above). The selection of specific strategies in a particular context depends on the step-by-step implementation of a set of four social information processing skills. These four skills are: defining the problem, generating alternative strategies, selecting and implementing a specific strategy, and evaluating outcomes. The other is regarding the development of cognitive
competencies—a structural perspective based on the work of Piaget and Kohlberg. Yeates et al. (1991) have recognized underlying developmental cognitive competencies by which a child is afforded the ability to address problems in a social context.

Understanding the strengths and shortcomings of each of these two aspects of problem solving—social information processing skills and the development of cognitive competencies—Yeates and Selman (1989) have synthesized the two into a single model. This integrated model focuses on the development of interpersonal negotiation strategies (INS), which are the means by which children endeavor to resolve the "felt conflicts" that occur in a dyadic interaction when attempting to accomplish a goal. In order of developmental sophistication, the four levels of INS are classified as: impulsive, unilateral, reciprocal, and collaborative. INS are based on a child's social perspective taking abilities (Yeates et al., 1991). Developmentally, a child's INS consists of an underlying cognitive ability to coordinate social perspectives according to thought patterns (INS-T). Yet behaviorally, the child exhibits INS in actual interpersonal negotiative actions (INS-A), which may or may not, to varying degrees, be consistent with his/her thought patterns.

However, a substantial portion of the literature on problem solving expresses doubt regarding what can actually
be asserted regarding developmental aspects of social problem solving. Although the INS model thus far seems to have credibility, further research is needed to verify it (Selman et al., 1986). Similarly, while Spivack, Platt, and Shure (1976) stated that perspective taking is non-existent in early childhood, Rubin and Krasnor (1986) have asserted that it is difficult to find when or how perspective taking occurs in children. A study by Rubin, Daniels-Beirness, and Bream (1982) found that, although children who were isolated from their peers during free play time in kindergarten produced fewer solutions and were less flexible about considering others' solutions, by the second grade these isolated children were performing equally with their peers on social problem thinking.

Nevertheless, some general developmental statements can be made. Dodge (1986) has related that older adolescents more often tend to define problems in a reciprocal way and to justify their negotiation in light of the relationship to a greater extent than do younger adolescents. As children get older there also tends to be an increase in their ability to utilize alternative solutions when one solution has failed (Levin & Rubin, 1983).

**Problem Solving Linked with Parenting Styles**

Although research regarding the structural development of cognitive competencies is not yet refined, perspective taking, in and of itself, is an important aspect of social
problem solving. Yeates et al. (1991) have linked INS with psychosocial adaptation, which accounts for how children establish positive interpersonal relationships with their peers (Hartup, 1983; Parker & Asher, 1987). Children who are low in psychosocial adaptation tend to be antagonistic and not prosocial, to lack social status, to experience rejection by one's peers and to manifest behavioral maladjustment (Asher, 1983). INS also positively correlate with ratings of adaptivity (Beardslee, Schultz, & Selman, 1987) and to indices of social competence (Leadbeater, Hellner, Allen, & Aber, 1989).

Similar to other perspective taking studies, Dodge (1986) found that socially deviant children are deficient in detecting the prosocial intentions of others, make errors regarding presumed hostility, and are less skilled in evaluating others' intentions than most children. In fact, he observed that aggressive children make biased interpretations of their peers. Even when their peers behaved benignly or ambiguously toward them, they inferred a hostile intention (Dodge, 1980, 1986). Aggressive children made inaccurate attributions of their peers in the direction of their expectations. Nonaggressive subjects did not tend to do this. Likewise, Rubin and Krasnor (1986) stated that peer rejected children at any grade level think differently about problem solving than do socially accepted children; those rejected by their peers tend to approach problematic
situations agonistically (i.e., they force, grab, physically attack, etc.).

Thus, perspective taking, apart from however extensive its developmental etiology may be, is an important aspect of social problem solving. In the terms of Yeates et al. (1991), since INS are actually reflective of the child's available levels of perspective taking, a person employing an impulsive or unilateral style of relating to others is actually incapable of considering alternative strategies and, therefore limited in problem-solving ability.

Importantly, Yeates et al. (1991) found that individuals generally form a pattern or cluster of one level of INS functioning, so that there is a dominant level for any particular individual. To catalogue and further define the four levels of INS, it is easy see how these levels correlate with parental and family styles of relating. The levels are:

**IMPULSIVE.** Strategies are impulsive and egocentric. The individual uses unreflective force or relies on unreflective obedience or withdrawal. Perspective-taking is undifferentiated.

**UNILATERAL.** Strategies unilaterally control or appease others. Individuals willfully assert power to control and satisfy self or "will-lessly" submit to the power and control of the other. One can differentiate subjective perspectives but does not consider two perspectives simultaneously.

**RECIPROCAL.** Strategies attempt to satisfy needs of both parties through reciprocal deals, trades, and exchanges. Individuals use either psychological influence to change the other person's mind or psychological compliance to
protect one's own interests by making them secondary to the other person's. One differentiates between subjective perspectives and considers them simultaneously.

COLLABORATIVE. Strategies involve changing one's own and the other person's wishes in order to develop mutual goals. The individuals use reflective dialogue to compromise and construct mutually satisfactory resolutions. Perspective-taking can take a third party viewpoint, which allows the coordination of the self's and the other's terms in light of the overall relationship.

These levels can be related to respectful thinking. Forgatch (1989) stated that children's patterns of responding simply mirror the order found in their parents, that the children's responses are found in their various parental antecedents. If parents operate with their children on only an impulsive or unilateral level, rather than on a reciprocal or collaborative level, it is very doubtful that their children will do any better, unless they happen on to some other role models among their relatives, teachers or other adults (Belsky & Pensky, 1988; Caspi & Elder, 1988). Perhaps individuals largely function in accordance with the style of relating that is indigenous to their own families. Thus families that are non-respectful do not function reciprocally or collaboratively and, therefore, are unable to solve problems adequately, which accounts for their dysfunctionality.

Fundamental to the execution of both the stepwise aspect and the perspective taking aspect of problem solving is communication. Since dysfunctional families tend to
communicate poorly, and since effective problem solving requires a working communication system, it appears that, as Forgatch and Patterson (1989) have pointed out, there is much overlap between dysfunctional families and relationships that ineffectively solve problems. Likewise, Blechman (1991) specifically mentioned that problematic families do not solve problems because they cannot communicate due to lack of communication skills. Further, they are especially poor at interpersonal problem solving, because the support and additional information that comes from a positive relationship is missing (Blechman, 1991). In fact, a means of therapy for troubled families is to train them in problem solving (Haley, 1976; Reis, 1981).

Forgatch (1989) observed that negative emotional patterns were negatively associated with good problem-solving outcomes and vice versa. In dysfunctional families there is a relation between habitual patterns of social interaction and problem-solving outcome, with negative emotional patterns negatively related to outcome (Forgatch, 1989). Further, any stage in the problem-solving process is vulnerable to negative emotions, since the introduction of negative emotions can likely result in increased conflict that disrupts effective problem solving. Also, resolving issues that lead to bad feelings facilitates the reduction of negative emotions. As Forgatch and Patterson (1989) have indicated, negative emotions disrupt the spirit of
cooperation that is so essential to effective communication and creative problem solving.

So the link between effective parenting and effective problem solving is strong. Baumrind (1971) did state that parenting does affect social competence, and found that authoritarian parents tend to be withdrawn socially. As Rubin and Krasnor (1986) suggested, it may be that authoritarian parenting, since it controls behavior and discourages independence and dialogue, creates a poor family environment for problem solving, while authoritative parenting, which promotes independence, expects positive behavior, practices open communication, and creates an environment that fosters problem solving. Indeed, parents' responsiveness and sensitivity to their children's behaviors, needs, and emotions and their involvement in and commitment to their children's well being have been found to be positively related with ratings of children's sociability and social competence (Pulkinnen, 1982; Sroufe, 1983).

Rubin and Krasnor (1986) have stated, "The extent to which such child-rearing factors are implicated in the development of social problem solving is currently unknown" (p. 62). The literature on parenting and social problem solving merit examining my hypotheses that (a) respectful parenting positively affects family problem solving, and (b) respectful parenting and problem solving are positively
associated with children's well-being outside the home with school performance and peer relationships.

Components of Respectful Parenting

The construct of respectful parenting is derived from the foregoing literature review. The overall tone of this body of literature seems to emphasize that the feelings and ideas of children are important, but so also are the experiences and responsibilities of parents. The literature also seems to present motifs of competent parents who respect their children's feelings and ideas. Thus, there seem to be four primary groups or categories that compose components of respectful parenting. These four components are comprised of the following:

I. TIME IS SPENT WITH THE CHILD as a person. Actually, since children are honored as persons in and of themselves, they are not a project of some sort, but are desired and respected for who they are. Thus, parents will seek their children out to spend time with them in various activities, simply because they are enjoyed and respected as persons. Parents habitually spend time with their children in egalitarian contexts that are comfortable for the child and conducive to positive parent-child interactions.

II. RECIPROCAL INTERACTIONS SURFACE, rather than unilateral interactions. For example, to use Baumrind's model, "authoritarian" parenting is largely unilateral, from parent to child, as the parent officiously controls the
child. Yet, "authoritative" parenting is largely reciprocal, since the parent engages the child as a person according to the child's interests and developmental capabilities. Thus parents, being aware that shaming and punishment, both physical and psychological, have deleterious effects, endeavor to generate healthy parent-child interactions that are free from parental power and control. Respectful parents empathically listen to their children, including them in discussions and many decisions. By considering their children's sentiments and opinions, parents focus on bonding and teamwork rather than constabulary functions. The training inherent in such reciprocity increasingly directs children toward personal self-control and responsibility.

III. INDEPENDENCE IS ENCOURAGED, as parents practice a nurturing role rather than a directive role. Independence is also fostered as parents create an encouraging environment rather than a restrictive environment. Nurture and support is in light of an understanding of who the child is as a person. Since parents understand the causes of their children's behavior in light of both their level of maturity and their developmental needs, children's behavior is perceived as natural and not as in some way faulty. Rather than solving their children's problems, parents often take a counseling posture with their children. The goal of such parenting is not to manufacture "good kids," but to
foster children's natural growth and development so that they can approach life as independent beings with their own inherent, individual potentials.

IV. THE PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION IS CONSTRUCTIVE. In the parent-child interaction, the parent exudes encouragement toward the child, confidence in the child, and an attitude of including the child in cooperative participation with the parent. As the child participates, s/he learns to contribute, cooperate and work with others through mutual trust and respect. Thus, the child is practically trained to exercise responsibility, to deal with obstacles and problems, to make mistakes and, possibly, even to evaluate how well a task is accomplished. In such a context of positive interaction, a child need not expend anxious energy on pleasing the parent or defending and proving self, but has the freedom to be his/her self, thereby fulfilling their essential capabilities by means of the individual freedom that democracy affords.

Control Variables

This study focuses on child academic performance, peer relationships, and family problem solving as outcome variables. A number of variables could affect these outcomes. Of the variables that frequently appear in the literature on family dynamics as potentially influential on these outcomes, four seem pertinent to this study: the
parents' income, the parents' education, family size, and the child's gender.

**Parents' Income**

Poverty and the stress that accompanies it adversely affect parenting (Egeland, Jacobvitz, & Sroufe, 1988; Kaufman & Zigler, 1987). Since poverty brings instability and unpredictability to everyday living, which in turn fosters chronic anger, Radke-Yarrow, Ritchers and Wilson (1988) found that the more impoverished the group, the more negativity mothers express toward their children and the more chaotic the home. Additionally, lower income homes tend to manifest lower quality home environments, which affects the quality of care children receive and, ultimately, their development (Vondra, Barnett, & Cicchetti, 1990). It seems probable that the social skills necessary for establishing positive relationships with peers would not be fostered in such homes. It also seems likely that ways of relating that are conducive to problem solving would be lacking in such homes. The literature on socio-economic status (SES), of which income is a major part, and delinquency corresponds with these conclusions (Braithwaite, 1979; Johnstone, 1978; Tittle & Meier, 1990).

Powell and Steelman (1990) have indicated there is a positive relation between income and grades. Blake (1986) found SES to affect the amount of college a child obtained. Kiker and Condon (1981) affirmed that parental income also
has a direct effect on children's education, as well as their earnings as a young adult.

Parents' Education

Although both parents' education affects children's verbal and math scores, as well as grades, the father's education has a much higher influence on children's academic performance than does the mother's (Powell & Steelman, 1990). A father's education is also positively associated with his child's IQ (Li, 1986) and with college education (Sewell, Hauser & Featherman 1976).

According to Scarr (1985), a mother's vocabulary, and to a lesser extent her educational level, is positively correlated with the effectiveness of her disciplinary practice, which would in turn affect children's skills enabling them to develop peer relationships and to socially solve problems. It seems that the parents education would also foster a more liberal and open-minded environment, which would also promote better problem solving.

Family Size

The number of children in a family is significantly associated with children's educational and occupational attainments (Hill & Duncan, 1987; Marjoribanks, 1991). According to Blake (1986), children from large families lose about a year of graded schooling when compared to children from small families. Zajonc and Markus (1975) noted that
children with several siblings scored lower on tests of intellectual abilities than children with one sibling. They further asserted that, with each additional child, a family experiences an increasingly diluted intellectual environment. The more children and especially the closer the children are spaced ("sibling density"), the lower the intellectual climate of the family, the lower the grades, and the lower the scores associated with verbal skills (Berbaum, Moreland, & Zajonc, 1986; Powell & Steelman, 1990; Zajonc and Markus, 1975). This is probably due to the diminished time and finances the parent has for the children.

Family size is also associated with social interest, small families having children with higher Social Interest scores than large families (Fakouri, Hafner, & Chaney, 1988). Low Social Interest scores would seem indicative of low ability in establishing relationships with peers and in social problem solving.

Gender of Child

Fagot and Hagan (1991) stated that, in terms of children's sex, children have effects on parents, which in turn affects the children. They also indicated that parents respond more negatively to boy's attempts to communicate and more positively to girl's attempts to communicate. Culturally sex-typed behavior has been shown to be strongly encouraged by both parents (Fagot & Hagan, 1991).
Block (1976) asserted that sex differences are very pervasive, noting a breadth of behaviors, including verbal and spatial abilities, sociability with peers and adults, nurturance tendencies, analytic abilities, activity level, and so forth. According to Sewell, Hauser, and Wolf (1980), there are sex differences in the acquisition of education and occupational status. Powell & Steelman (1984) have found that males have an advantage on both math and verbal scores. According to Fakouri, Hafner, and Chaney (1988), gender is not associated with social interest, however, so it may be questionable whether children's gender affects their relations with peers. Brems and Johnson (1989) found males to display more confidence in and have a more positive view of problem solving than females did.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study tests two hypotheses: (a) that respectful parenting facilitates effective family problem-solving practices, and (b) that problem-solving skills learned in the family facilitate a child's success outside the family in school and with peers. In addressing these hypotheses key variables were measured, using instruments developed both in previous research and as part of this project. The outcome variables involved in this analysis are family problem solving, school performance, and peer relationships. The study controls for relevant background variables, including family income, education of parents, gender of child, and family size through the use of a multiple regression analysis.

Subjects

After being informed regarding the goals and procedures of the study, the superintendents of several suburban and rural public school districts were requested to provide the addresses of the parents of all the fourth graders in their respective districts. Letters describing the general goals of the study were then sent to each independent family, asking for volunteer families in which two biological parents were present in the home. A total of 90 families volunteered (a 20% response rate of all families contacted), with half of the fourth graders being males and
half females. The subjects completed questionnaires and were videotaped in their homes. Each family was paid $135.00 for participating.

**Procedure**

The interviews, family problem-solving sessions, and completing of questionnaires took place in the subjects' homes. The home environment should facilitate natural, customary participation by family members.

Families were informed that they would be videotaped in the family problem-solving sessions, and a video camera was in plain view. For the first session, families were first directed to plan a "fun family activity" in order to become acclimated to the setting. Before the next session, the parents and the fourth grader were instructed to select independently a family problem to discuss that had been of concern to them within the past month. These selections were made from a list of 49 parent-child issues that are representative of parent-child difficulties commonly experienced in the home (e.g., bedtime, chores, fighting with siblings). After recording their selections, they were asked to choose one of these problems, then to attempt to solve or, at least, work toward resolving it for 10 minutes. The problem selected by the parents was addressed first in half of the cases, and the one selected by the fourth grader was addressed first in the remaining half of the cases. The
experimenter was not present in the room during the family problem-solving sessions.

In order to represent family interaction patterns across various problems accurately, the mean of the observational ratings in the problem-solution sessions for both parent-selected and child-selected problems was used in the analysis. After the second session families were debriefed and completed a series of questionnaires, including the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES) (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985; Farrell & Barnes, 1993), the Family Environment Scale (FES) (Moss & Moss, 1981), the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBC); Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983), demographic information on family history, and individual opinions as to family practices pertinent to this study, including peer relationships and school performance.

Measurement

Several observational instruments were employed in this study. The observational measures were developed as part of previous family research (Vuchinich, Vuchinich, & Wood, in press; Vuchinich, Wood, & Vuchinich, 1993). The videotapes of the family problem-solving sessions were coded by a team of five coders. Before officially coding, in order to learn the coding system, each coder was trained for 100 hours and achieved 80% reliability with criterion tapes, other coders, and test-retest reliability. One coder coded a
single session at a time, and each coder independently made separate ratings for each family member after watching a session. The coders observed the family problem-solving sessions for several global codings, including the positive behavior of each family member, the negative behavior of each family member, the degree of each member's participation, and dimensions of family problem solving.

Each family member was rated both for how much positive behavior and for how much negative behavior they directed toward each other family member. Each rating was given on a numerical scale ranging from one (no behavior) to seven (high levels of behavior). For example, four ratings were possible for the mother's behavior during each session: positive behavior toward the father, negative behavior toward the father, positive behavior toward the child, and negative behavior toward the child.

Positive behavior involved displays of warmth, support, positive affect, intimacy, agreement, compliments, smiles toward the person, or compliance with their requests. Negative behavior included criticizing, arguing with, accusing, disagreeing with, showing anger toward, complaining about, reprimanding, insulting, or showing other negative affect toward the other person. Scalar ratings of positive and negative behavior as these have been used in many studies of family or marital interactions that have produced considerable evidence of validity and reliability.

The positive behavior ratings were also used to provide multiple-indicator scores for calculating parental warmth toward the child and family problem-solving effectiveness. To obtain a parental warmth toward child score, the ratings of the mother-to-child positive and father-to-child positive were summed (possible range 2-14). Cronbach's alpha for this composite score was 0.79.

The coders also rated each family member regarding how much participation they displayed in the family problem-solving session. The ratings were made according to a numerical scale ranging from one to seven, one indicating no participation, and seven indicating a high level of participation. High participation included initiative behavior, high interest, active involvement, responsiveness, and conversation. Low interest was indicative of the opposite--withdrawal, lack of interest, and so forth.

Not only did coders rate the behavior of individual family members, they also rated three family-level characteristics: the quality of solutions proposed by family members, the extent of resolution of the problem that was achieved during the session, and the overall quality of the family problem-solving process, which includes
participation, engagement, and cooperation of family members, and whether they took into account each others' needs and feelings. As above, the ratings for each of these three characteristics ranged on a scale from one to seven. This analysis was based on the mean of the ratings for the parent-selected and the child-selected problem sessions. Calculating these mean ratings was the first step in the analysis.

The mean ratings were viewed as basic, non-diagnostic features of family interaction that had been identified and coded reliably in prior research. They were used to construct multiple-indicator measures of the family characteristics that are of major concern to this study, thus avoiding the problems inherent in relying on only one indicator (e.g., Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). However, the viability of composite measures is dependent on inter-coder reliability in the basic ratings.

Inter-coder reliability was assessed with the Pearson correlation coefficient of different coders' independent ratings of the same sessions. The reliability coefficients were 0.82 for father-to-mother positive behavior, 0.76 for father-to-mother negative behavior, 0.78 for father-to-child negative behavior, 0.64 for mother-to-father positive behavior, 0.86 for mother-to-father negative behavior, 0.81 for mother-to-child negative behavior. Since the study focused on parents' behavior toward the child, child
behavior toward the parents was not examined. Reliability coefficients for the family-level variables were 0.77 for the quality of solutions proposed, 0.82 for the extent of the resolution, 0.76 for the overall problem-solving process.

The family problem solving score was obtained by summing the quality of solutions proposed rating, the extent of the resolution rating, and the overall family problem-solving process rating (possible range 3-21). Cronbach's alpha for this composite score was 0.86. This is comparable with the reliability of similar family problem solving scores in previous studies (e.g., Brody, Stoneman, McCoy, & Forehand, 1992; Buhrmester, Camparo, Christensen, Gonzalez, & Hinshaw, 1992; Dubow, Tisak, Causey, Hryshko, & Reid, 1991; Forgatch, 1989) that used similar assessment tasks and found evidence supporting the validity of this approach to measuring family problem solving.

Test-retest reliability for these ratings was assessed by comparing scores from sessions of parent-selected problems with sessions of child-selected problems, using the Pearson correlation coefficient (0.68). Although some differences may be found, depending on who selected the problem, the basic family problem-solving process should not substantially vary across varying problems (Reiss, 1981).

As indicated above, several questionnaires were incorporated into the study that have been successfully used
in previous studies involving family interactions, including the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES), the Family Environment Scale (FES), and the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBC). This study draws from selected individual questions that are in these questionnaires.

This study also has assessed the construct, "respectful parenting." As conceptualized in this study, respectful parenting manifests itself in four main areas inherent to parent-child relationships: time spent with child, reciprocal interactions, independence encouraged, and constructive interactions. These four areas are referred to as components of respectful parenting. The characteristics of each component are depicted below.

I. TIME IS SPENT WITH THE CHILD
Parent honors, respects, desires, enjoys child. Parent seeks to be with child in many activities and situations. Parents endeavor to spend time in egalitarian parent-child contexts.

II. RECIPROCAL INTERACTIONS SURFACE
Parent includes child in discussions and decisions. Parent is not officious or controlling toward child. Parent engages with child according to child's interests, feelings, sentiments, opinions, development Parent listens empathically to child. Parent does not shame or punish child. Parent invites child to respond in accepting way.

III. INDEPENDENCE IS ENCOURAGED
Parent is nurturing toward child. Parent provides supportive environment. Parent is understanding of child's capacities, aptitudes, developmental needs, Parent understands causes of child's behavior.
Parent views child's behavior as natural, not faulty. Parent fosters growth/development, independence, natural potentials.

IV. THE PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION IS CONSTRUCTIVE
Parent exudes respect, encouragement, confidence toward child. Parent includes child in cooperative participation in ideas and activities. Child learns mutual trust, respect, cooperation. Parent frees child to experiment, make mistakes, cultivate capabilities. Child does not need to please parent, so is free to be self in parent-child interactions and to fill capabilities.

Each of these four components of respectful parenting has multi-indicator measures representing the characteristics listed above. The measurement items utilized for these characteristics, with their respective sources of the questions, are listed on Table 2.

Table 2.
Measurement Items for the Components of Respectful Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source &amp; Number</th>
<th>Information Observed / Asked For in Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GQ, 6</td>
<td>Number of times a parent singularly spent time in the last two weeks doing various listed activities with the child (e.g. played together, hugged or kissed, went to movie, talked about school, hobby, or interest, went shopping, other).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACES, 9</td>
<td>Family members like to spend free time with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC, 101</td>
<td>How often do you spend time with your child?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2, cont'd.

#### II. Reciprocal Interactions Surface.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source &amp; Number</th>
<th>Information Observed / Asked For in Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSQ, 12</td>
<td>Indication of how many times a parent has used disciplinary techniques, most of which are demeaning toward the child and ineffective (e.g. withdrawal of affection, threats, spankings, other physical punishment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 2</td>
<td>Family members often keep their feelings to themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 26</td>
<td>We tell each other about our personal problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 57</td>
<td>We really get along well with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 66</td>
<td>There are a lot of spontaneous discussions in our family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### III. Independence Is Encouraged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source &amp; Number</th>
<th>Information Observed / Asked For in Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part, 13-15</td>
<td>Degree of interaction of child in the family problem solving sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 8</td>
<td>Family members are rarely ordered around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 10</td>
<td>We say anything we want to around home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 12</td>
<td>In our family, we are strongly encouraged to be independent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 42</td>
<td>Someone usually gets upset if you complain in our family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 52</td>
<td>Family members strongly encourage each other to stand up for their rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 68</td>
<td>We are not really encouraged to speak up for ourselves in our family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### IV. THE PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION IS CONSTRUCTIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source &amp; Number</th>
<th>Information Observed / Asked For in Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PB, 1-6</td>
<td>Degree of positive behavior of each family member toward each other family member in the family problem solving session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACES, 11</td>
<td>Family members feel very close to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES, 72</td>
<td>You can't get away with much in our family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Through factor analysis and the conceptual ideas inherent to each component, selectivity of items composing the four components of respectful parenting were more precisely exacted subsequent to the original writing of this chapter. Thus, Table 2 is the final list that reflects those modifications. The sources include a general questionnaire (GQ), FACES, FES, CBC, observed ratings of participation (Part), the family problem solving questionnaire (PSQ) employed in this study, and observational ratings of positive behavior (PB) and negative behavior (NB).

FACES used a scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). FES used a categorical, true-false measurement. The family problem solving questionnaire (PSQ) employed in this study used a scale ranging from 1 (very easy or always) to 5 (very hard or never). Most CBC questions were either 0 (not true), 1 (sometimes true), or 3 (very true). Some of the CBC questions, though, used a scale from 1 to either 4 or 5, the scale indicating increasing (or decreasing, depending on the question) degrees of activity or attitude on the part of the one answering. The general questionnaire used continuous measures (e.g., grades, number of times parents spent time with their children).

School performance and peer relationships were multi-indicator variables. Measurements of performance at school
included three questions on the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (#'s 18, 46, & 98) and one on the general questionnaire (# 9). These questions addressed grades, poor school work, and disobedience at school. Relationships with peers were measured by five questions from the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (#'s 8, 19, 38, 92, & 97). These questions included the child's number of close friends, sense of loneliness, tendency to not get along with peers, tendency to cooperate with peers, and degree of being liked by peers.

Gender, education of parents, family income and family size were obtained from questionnaires given to the parents and the target children.

Analysis

The analysis consisted of an effort to test the two hypotheses:

(a) Respectful parenting positively affects family problem solving.

(b) Respectful parenting and family problem solving are positively associated with children's well-being outside the home through behavior at school and with peers.

Three multiple regressions were performed to test these hypotheses.

One regression tested the first hypothesis. Family problem solving was be the dependent variable, and respective parenting was be the predictor variable. This
regression also included the control variables, family income, education of parents, gender of child, and family size.

The second hypothesis was tested with two regressions. One included school performance in terms of grades and school behavior as the dependent variable, and the other had peer relationships as the dependent variable. For both regressions the independent variables were respectful parenting and family problem solving. These used the same control variables as the first regression.

To test whether the indicators of each of the four components of respectful parenting represent a unified construct, factor analysis was applied to the items within each of the four areas. The results indicated the degree of coherence among variables in each area.

Since respectful parenting with its four components is drawn from the literature on parenting and parent education, it is theoretical and deductively constructed. Because items were grouped into each component on the basis of theoretical considerations, the purpose of factor analysis was not to inductively define components of respectful parenting. Rather, its purpose was to use single factor analysis within each component to establish that the items are psychometrically consistent, with no extraneous items present. This leaves intact the original theoretical basis of each component. This study, therefore, did not utilize
factor analysis to inductively construct variables, but to confirm the internal consistency of each of the four components.

Based on the results of single factor analysis, adjustments were made to improve psychometric properties; e.g., a few questions were excluded, some questionnaire items were consolidated in order to increase the relative weight of the observational items, and some items were deleted as artifacts. The items in each component were consistent with single factor solutions. Table 3 represents the final groupings of each component. After confirming that the items in each component were consistent, scores for the components were ready to be composited, and the composite score of respectful parenting was calculated.

Respectful parenting was a single score that was assessed by a multi-indicator score from the sources listed above—time is spent with the child, reciprocal interactions surface, independence is encouraged, and the parent-child interaction is constructive. The scores for each of the four respectful parenting components were transformed into z scores, and the overall assessment of respectful parenting was the mean of these four z scores. Thus, each of the four components of respectful parenting was equally weighted.
Table 3.
Factor Loadings for the Items in Each Component of Respectful Parenting

1. Time Spent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.73</td>
<td>GQ 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.69</td>
<td>FACES 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.45</td>
<td>CBC 101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Reciprocal Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.77</td>
<td>FES 26, 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.71</td>
<td>FES 2, 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.42*</td>
<td>PSQ 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Independence Fostered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.75</td>
<td>FES 8, 10, 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.64</td>
<td>FES 12, 52, 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Part. 13-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Constructive Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.79</td>
<td>PB 1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.66</td>
<td>FES 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.42</td>
<td>FACES 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For the verbal questions corresponding to these numbers, see Table 2 of prior chapter.

* The -.42 represents a measurement of detrimental disciplinary practices.
The hypotheses were evaluated by the statistical significance and magnitude of the regression coefficients. Thus, for example, if respectful parenting had a significant unstandardized coefficient and significant p value, it was taken as evidence supporting hypothesis 1.

In order to further analyze the effects of respectful parenting on child outcome, separate regressions with the same three dependent variables were also done with each of the four components of respectful parenting as independent variables--time spent with the child by the parent, reciprocal interactions between parent and child, independence encouraged in the child, and constructive parent-child interactions.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After several families were deleted because of extensive missing data, the sample consisted of 82 families with two biological parents present, of which 42 had male target children and 40 female target children. Each target child also had at least 1 sibling. The mean of the parents' education was 2.5 years of college (almost 2 years for the mothers and 3.25 years for the fathers). The target children had an average of 1.85 siblings. Family income averaged close to $38,000 per year. Table 4 contains means, standard deviations, and ranges for the variables.

A z score for each component was obtained by computing the mean of the z scores for each of the three groups which made up each components, as described in Table 3. It was important to compute z scores for each item in each component in order to give equal weight to each of the three items. Thus, the score for each component is the sum of three z scores within that component. The total score for respectful parenting was obtained by calculating the mean of the z scores of all four components. However, prior to determining a score for respectful parenting, the items in the components were submitted to factor analysis.
Table 4.
Means, Standard Deviations, and High and Low Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Actual Range</th>
<th>Potential Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (S.D.)</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' Ed.</td>
<td>14.12 (2.17)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>3.88 (1.24)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>4.88 (0.98)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Par.*</td>
<td>0.00 (0.52)</td>
<td>-1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving+</td>
<td>60.69 (9.65)</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Relations</td>
<td>11.01 (1.34)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Perform.</td>
<td>7.33 (1.16)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because the components of respectful parenting consist of both observational and questionnaire items, the internal consistency of the items in each component was evaluated. Factor analysis was used for this evaluation, and subsequent adjustments were made in the groupings of the variables.

The items composing the four components of respectful parenting took their final form through an extended process. The raw variables were originally selected and grouped according to how they were conceptually expected to be related to each component, as listed in Table 2 of the last chapter. After converting raw scores into z scores, the items were submitted to factor analysis in order to test consistency within each component and eliminate any items that may not be related. The factor loadings for these items were listed in Table 3.

Three regressions were done. Respectful parenting was the independent variable, and family problem solving was the dependent variable in the first regression. Peer relationships was the dependent variable in another regression, and school performance was the dependent variable in the other. Respectful parenting and family problem solving were the independent variables in these latter two regressions. Each regression included family income, amount of education of parents, gender of child, and family size as control variables. Table 5 indicates the p-
value, standardized coefficient, and R-square for the first regression, and Table 6 contains the same for the latter two.

Table 5.
Standardized Coefficients for the Regression Analysis of Respectful Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Peer Relations</th>
<th>School Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Parenting</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' Education</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.22+</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R²

|        | .25 | .12 | .16 |

+ Significant at the 0.10 level.
* Significant at the 0.05 level.
** Significant at the 0.01 level.
Table 6.
Standardized Coefficients for the Regression Analysis of Respectful Parenting and Family Problem Solving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Peer Relationships</th>
<th>School Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Parenting</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Problem Solving</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' Education</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 \] = .18               .20

* Significant at the 0.05 level.

In the first regression, in which family problem solving was the dependent variable, respectful parenting was very strongly related to family problem solving (p < .0002). Respectful parenting had a standardized coefficient of .43 and, along with the control variables, had an R-square of at .25, indicating that this model accounts for 25% of the variation. Family problem solving was not significantly related to any of the control variables.

In the regression on peer relationships, only family problem solving was significant (p < .04), and had a standardized coefficient of .23. Of the control variables in
this regression, only family size approached significance (p < .06). This regression had an R-square of .21.

For the third regression the relationship between family problem solving and school performance approached significance (p < .08). However, of the other control variables, school performance was significantly related to both family income (p < .04) and family size (p < .04). The R-square for this regression was .21.

To focus more specifically on what part of respectful parenting might be predictive of outcomes, separate regressions with the same three dependent variables were subsequently done with each of the four components of respectful parenting as independent variables—time spent with the child by the parent, reciprocal interactions between parent and child, independence encouraged in the child, and constructive parent-child interactions. The results of these regressions are reported in Table 7.
Table 7.
Standardized Coefficients for the Components of Respectful Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>School Perform</th>
<th>Peer Relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Time with Child</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' Education</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>.20+</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Recip. Interacts. | -.13 | -.02 | -.05 |
| Parents' Education | .11  | .02  | .04  |
| Gender of Child    | -.03 | .11  | .03  |
| Family Income      | .22+ | .30**| .17  |
| Family Size        | -.07 | .22* | .19  |
| R²                 | .08  | .17  | .08  |

+ Significant at the 0.10 level.
* Significant at the 0.05 level.
** Significant at the 0.01 level.
Table 7, cont'd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>School Perform</th>
<th>Peer Relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Independ. Encour.</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' Education</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Child</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>.21†</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.21†</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| R²                  | .07            | .17           | .08           |

| 4. Const. P-C Interact | .55***         | .10           | .27*          |
| Parents' Education    | .11            | .02           | .04           |
| Gender of Child       | .10            | .12           | .09           |
| Family Income         | .15†           | .28*          | .13           |
| Family Size           | -.09           | .23*          | .19           |

| R²                  | .35            | .17           | .15           |

† Significant at the 0.10 level.
* Significant at the 0.05 level.
** Significant at the 0.01 level.
*** Significant at the 0.001 level.
Regarding the regressions done with the dependent variable, family problem solving, the first and last components—time a parent spent with the child (p < .0003) and constructive parent-child interactions (p < .0001)—related significantly with family problem solving. These regressions had rather large standardized coefficients: .40 for time spent with a child, and .55 for constructive parent-child interactions. The regression for the first component had an R-square of .22. The R-square for the last component was .35, accounting for a relatively high amount of variance. Of the control variables, family income approached significance in all of the components' regressions on family problem solving except for the fourth component, constructive parent-child interactions. None of the other control variables in these regressions with family problem solving were significant.

In regressions in which the effects of the four components of respectful parenting on school performance were analyzed, school performance was found to be significantly related to control variables, family size and family income. However, neither respectful parenting nor the other two control variables approached significance.

When examining the effects of the respectful-parenting components on peer relationships, two components had noteworthy effects. Time a parent spent with the child approached a significant relation with peer relationships (p < .06), and constructive parent-child interactions was
significantly related with peer relationships ($p < .02$). Standardized coefficients was $0.21$ for the first component, and $0.27$ for the last component. Family size approached significance in the first and third components—time a parent spent with the child and independence fostered in the child. R-square for these regressions of peer relationships on the four components of respectful parenting ranged from only $0.08$ to $0.15$.

Important to this study was the finding that family problem solving has mediating effects between respectful parenting and outcome in children's behavior. A mediator is a variable through which an independent variable influences the dependent variable, so that the mediator accounts for a substantial degree of the relation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The degree of this accounting is the degree of mediation. In this case, respectful parenting is the independent variable, family problem solving is the mediator, and peer relationships and school performance are dependent variables.

This study has followed the statistical guidelines for testing for mediation set forth by Baron and Kenny (1986). They state that three regressions are necessary to establish mediation: first, the mediator needs to be regressed on the independent variable and be affected by it; second, the dependent variable needs to be regressed on the independent variable and be affected by it; and third, the dependent
variable needs to be regressed on both the independent variable and the mediator, and the dependent variable needs to be affected by the mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Baron and Kenny (1986) further remark that, if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled, then there is perfect mediation. This study followed this step-wise procedure of testing for mediation.

When this test for mediation was applied to peer relationships as an independent variable, first, respectful parenting had a significant effect on family problem solving, the mediator (p < .0002). Second, respectful parenting also had a significant effect on peer relationships. (Table 5 contains the results for these first two tests.) Third, family problem solving, the mediator, was included as a control variable, so that the dependent variable, peer relationships, was regressed on both family problem solving and respectful parenting. In this regression it was found that respectful parenting did not directly affect peer relationships (p < .36), while family problem solving did (p < .04), as depicted in Table 6. Thus, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), family problem solving mediates "perfectly" between respectful parenting and peer relationships. Figure 2 is a visualization of this mediation.
When the same test for mediation was applied to school performance as the dependent variable, the results were different. The first part of the test remained the same; respectful parenting and family problem solving are very significantly related. Second, respectful parenting had no effect on school performance. However, the results of the third part of the test approached significance. When family problem solving was controlled, it did have some effect on school performance ($p < .08$), and respectful parenting did
not. Thus, there is marginal evidence that mediation is occurring. See Tables 5 and 6 and Figure 3 for these results.

**Figure 3.**

Family Problem Solving Mediated Between Respectful Parenting and School Performance

**Discussion**

The results strongly confirm the first hypothesis that respectful parenting positively affects family problem solving. However, the results regarding the second hypothesis that respectful parenting and family problem solving are positively associated with children's well-being outside the home through behavior at school and with peers, are divided. Respectful parenting and family problem solving were positively associated with children's well-
being outside the home through behavior with their peers, but not with their performance at school.

In the regression of peer relationships on respectful parenting, the strong positive correlation between family size and peer relationships was not unexpected. Evidently, sibling relationships tend to train children for peer relationships; as the adage goes, "practice makes perfect," or at least contributes to good peer relationships.

As mentioned in the literature review, research indicates a correlation between performance at school and family income, so that finding in my analysis was expected (Powell & Steelman, 1990). However, the finding that school performance was positively related to family size contradicts previous research, which suggests that more siblings tends to result in lower grades (Blake, 1986; Hill & Duncan, 1987; Marjoribanks, 1991; Powell & Steelman, 1990; Zajonc and Markus, 1975). That school performance was only significantly related to family income and family size in all the regressions that were done was unexpected. It can only be surmised that other variables, such as intelligence, contribute to school performance as well as parenting.

In order to test for the possibility of multicollinearity among the variable, especially among family income and parents' education, variance inflation factors were calculated. The results consistently and strongly indicated that there was no multicollinear bias.
In the regressions on the four respectful-parenting components, it is noteworthy that only the first and fourth components—time a parent spent with the child and constructive parent-child interactions—were significant or approached significance. These two components registered strong effects on family problem solving and peer relationships. The other two components—reciprocal interactions between parent and child and independence encouraged in the child—were not significantly related with any of the variables. This suggests a dichotomy among these four components, so that the first and fourth components—time a parent spent with the child and constructive parent-child interactions—form one side of the dichotomy, and the second and third components—reciprocal interactions between parent and child and independence encouraged in the child—form the other side. The former side could be referred to as endorsement, the latter as engagement.

This dichotomy of parenting is different from Baumrind's (1991a) two broad areas of parenting—responsiveness (warmth, acceptance, involvement) and demandingness (control). The construct of respectful parenting does not directly include the demandingness that Baumrind's does. While parental control is necessary to effective parenting, parental control can often be accomplished indirectly or even secondarily through wholesome parent-child interactions. The degree of direct
control that is required may depend on other factors, such as the parents' creativity, the child's genetic constitution, or environmental conditions.

Ideally, parental control occurs through family problem solving, as the parents engage with the child by reciprocally engaging with him/her and encouraging independence. Since, according to Baumrind's (1991a) scheme, responsiveness could be permissive (Table 1), responsiveness may not actually engage the child with a problem in a manner that regards the child's abilities. Engagement takes the child and the problem seriously enough to engage the child with the problem in a manner that is developmentally, emotionally, and environmentally appropriate to the child.

Baumrind's (1991a) concept of responsiveness is included in respectful parenting; the second and third components of respectful parenting—reciprocal interactions between parent and child and independence encouraged in the child—especially emphasize the importance of responsively engaging children in developmentally and emotionally appropriate ways. However, the characteristics of the first and last components (time a parent spent with the child and constructive parent-child interactions) goes beyond responsiveness to value the child. By valuing a child, a parent endorses, is enthusiastic about, and finds the child desirable as a person, thus spending time with him/her and
constructively interacting with her/him. This value that is openly manifest to the child is in accord with learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of such positive reinforcement in family dynamics (Bandura, 1963, 1977; Patterson, 1982; Patterson, Reid, Jones, & Conger, 1975). Perhaps valuing a child is so effectual because it lays the foundation for engaging with that child; as the adage states, "If you don't play with your child, you have no right disciplining your child." It seems notably consequential, then, for parents to purposefully spend time with and constructively interact with children around fourth-grade age.

Kingston and Nock (1985) found that the length of time dual-earner couples worked was negatively related both to the amount of time parents spent with their children and to parents' satisfaction with family life. An important finding of this study that apparently has not yet been researched much is the significant effect that time parents spend with their children has upon their children's well-being; in this study, children's relationships with peers and problem-solving skills are affected. To seek to spend time with another, child or otherwise, in a variety of egalitarian contexts not only communicates that they are allowed to be a person in their own right, but it accepts and endorses them as the person they are (Miller, 1981).
The influence of constructive parent-child interactions on children's well-being is also striking; again, in this study, on children's relationships with peers and problem-solving skills. This effect with peers may largely be a matter of children mirroring the healthy interactions they experience with their parents (Forgatch, 1989). Through supportive, constructive interactions with their parents, children learn to mirror perspective taking (Yeates, Schultz, & Selman, 1991) that does not erroneously presume hostility in others (Dodge, 1986) and is, thus, conducive to positive peer relationships.

In light of this study, it would be of value for parent education and training programs to emphasize to parents the benefits of spending time with their children and constructively interacting with them. Such would increase child-rearing skills and promote parental effectiveness.

Although this study has yielded a number of significant findings, it also has several limitations. Since only a cross section of fourth graders are studied, the results apply only to that particular age. These results may vary on children of other ages. Additionally, the effects of parenting are simultaneously measured with the parenting practices. Perhaps it takes a length of time for the effects of some parenting practices to become manifest. Also, the study consisted of intact, two-parent, middle class, white families. Generalization cannot be made
regarding families that have a single parent, low income, or other ethnic background. The low response rate of families volunteering for the study may have resulted in a self-selective bias whereby families volunteered in which there were better parenting skills than would be found in families of a general population sample.

Future research on respectful parenting could include other control variables, such as intelligence level of children, marital satisfaction of the parents, and parental cohesion. Since the questions used did not represent every facet of each component of respectful parenting, perhaps a more comprehensive battery of questions could be employed. Yet, my findings were significant, the most significant being the importance of family problem solving as a link between the parenting process and the child's competence outside the family.

Endnotes

1. Incidentally, Baumrind has recently refined her framework, expanding it to include additional categories of various kinds of control and to register increments of demandingness and responsiveness. In this refinement her employment of the term "democratic homes" is not synonymous with my employment of the term "democratic." Her employment of the term differentiates between "authoritative families," which are high on both supportive and assertive control and high on responsiveness and demandingness and "democratic homes," which are high on supportive control while medium on assertive control and are more responsive than demanding, tending to be more lenient than authoritative parents. Of course, I have described the term democratic in this paper to be more general than her usage of it, and it is not within the scope of my research to include her new myriad of categories.
2. These are actually modifications of the "reflective thinking" technique first advanced by Dewey (1933--originally written in 1910). The terms Dewey originally employed for this process were: (1) Suggestion; (2) Intellectualization; (3) Hypothesis; (4) Reasoning; and (5) Testing. Since then, these steps have been introduced to problem solving in general, from which social problem solving seems to have obtained its general paradigm.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


