PARENTING STYLES AND ADOLESCENCE: PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON

CLOSENESS TO THEIR ADOLESCENTS

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Applied Child and Adolescent Psychology

DEREE - The American College of Greece

2023

THESIS APPROVAL

"A Study of the Relationship between Personality Type and Online Community Roles and Participation" a thesis prepared by Melissa Pereira in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Applied Child and Adolescent Psychology was presented January, 2024, and was approved and accepted by the thesis advisor, internal examiner and the School of Graduate and Professional Education.

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Melissa Pereira for the degree of Master of Arts

in Applied Child and Adolescent Psychology to be awarded in June 2023

Title: PARENTING STYLES AND ADOLESCENCE: PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON

CLOSENESS TO THEIR ADOLESCENTS

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Different styles of parenting create different bonds and relationships with children, and

this affects the parent-child relationship of intimacy and closeness (Bush & Peterson,

2013). The three parenting styles that will be examined in this study are authoritarian,

authoritative, and permissive. The definition of closeness in this study will be defined as

the emotional bond and connection between individuals. This research paper strives to

obtain data on parents' perception of closeness to their adolescent child based on their

different parenting styles. Specifically, what parenting style fosters a stronger sense of closeness between a parent and their child during adolescence. It is insightful to understand how parents who practice different parenting style perceive the level of closeness to their child to be. This information is also crucial for understanding the impacts of parenting approaches on the quality of parent-adolescent relationships (Bush & Peterson, 2013). One limitation of this study is that the perception of closeness will be investigated only from the point of view of the parents. Participants who practice different parenting styles and have adolescent children will answer target questions through the use of an interview guide. The results were analyzed using qualitative measures to extract patterns and key findings. They determined that parents who exercise authoritative styles of parenting report higher perceptions of closeness to their adolescent when compared to other parenting styles.

*keywords:* parenting styles, parent-child closeness, authoritative parenting, parental perceptions of closeness, qualitative research

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I. INTRODUCTION

**Parenting Styles and Their Effects on Parent-Child Relationships**

The parenting style used during a child's upbringing will very likely influence a big part of that child's future success in peer, romantic, and parenting relationships (Baumrind, 1991). Furthermore, child well-being has been found to be predicted by the parenting style used, specifically, in the categories of academic performance and psychosocial development, as well as predicting problem behavior (Baumrind, 1991). Several authors have observed that the overall pattern of parenting holds greater significance in forecasting child well-being compared to the specific practices employed by parents (Darling, 1999). Baumrind also emphasizes that the concept of parenting style is employed to encompass the typical differences parents use in order to exert control and also socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991). While there are variations among parents in their approaches to controlling and socializing their children, the underlying assumption is that the fundamental role of all parents is to influence, educate, and control their children. (Darling, 1999). Children acquire higher competence and self-confidence when their parents create high but fair and consistent expectations for their behavior, communicate well with them, are responsive and warm towards them, and use reasoning rather than force when directing their behavior (Baumrind, 2013). All this falls under the authoritative style of parenting (Baumrind, 2013). Parents who follow this approach are interested and encouraging of their child's activities, but they are not overbearing and they let them make constructive mistakes (Baumrind, 2013). This has been described as "tender teacher" approach to parenting and in Western countries it is considered the best parenting method to utilize (Baumrind, 1991; Maccoby, 1992). Research established by

child reports, parent interviews, and parent observations have steadily found that adolescents whose parents are authoritative are estimated by objective measures and also view themselves as more socially and instrumentally competent when compared to adolescents whose parents do not practice authoritative parenting (Baumrind, 1991; Darling, 1999; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). Adolescents whose parents are uninvolved rank the most poorly in these areas (Darling, 1999). Children raised by authoritative parents are most often happy, capable, and successful later in life (Maccoby, 1992). The positive effects of authoritative parenting are apparent as early as the preschool years and persist throughout adolescence and into early adulthood (Darling, 1999). The authoritarian parenting style, which has been described as the "rigid ruler" approach to parenting, is characterized by being low on emotional support and strong on demands (Baumrind, 1991). Parents provide a well-organized and structured environment with rules that are clear and specific (Baumrind, 1991). Children raised in homes where this parenting style is used are more likely to be obedient and competent in all areas of their lives (Baumrind, 1991). However, even though they tend to do moderately well in school and are not as likely to engage in problem behavior, they usually have lower self-esteem, poorer social skills, and higher levels of depression than peers who have been raised in authoritative households (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). Permissive parents who are low on emotional support and low in demands tend to rear children who exhibit lower levels of happiness as well as lower self-regulation (Baumrind, 1991). These parents avoid confrontation with their children which results in struggles with authority figures when rules are tried to be imposed on them (Baumrind, 1991). Adolescents raised in homes using the permissive style of parenting have shown to do poorer academically, however they tend to have a

higher positive self-esteem, superior social skills, and lower levels of depression in comparison to their peers who are not raised using the permissive style of parenting (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996).

**Defining the Three Main Parenting Styles**

A parenting style is the specific approach that a parent chooses to use in raising and caring for their child (Doinita & Maria, 2015). Baumrind (1991) defined three main parenting styles and divided parents into three categories based on the responsiveness and demandingness to their child. Each of these approaches to parenting represents distinct and naturally occurring patterns of parental values, actions, and practices (Baumrind, 1991). Permissive style, which is characterized by high responsiveness and low demandingness, contrasts with authoritarian style, which has poor responsiveness and high demandingness (Doinita & Maria, 2015). The permissive parent doesn't demand mature behavior, permits a substantial amount of self-regulation, and evades circumstances of confrontation (Baumrind, 1991). The third style is the authoritative style which consists of both high responsiveness and high demandingness (Doinita & Maria, 2015). Parents' levels of support, warmth, and affection toward their children are referred to as their level of responsiveness to their needs (Doinita & Maria, 2015). Parents who are more receptive to their children's needs are more likely to praise, support, and encourage them, while parents who are less receptive to their child's needs are more likely to criticize, punish, or ignore them and are also less emotionally available (Doinita & Maria, 2015). Positive developmental outcomes, including secure emotional attachments, good relationships with others, high self-esteem, and a strong sense of morality, are consistently linked to higher responsiveness in parenting (Doinita & Maria,

2015). Demandingness refers to the level of expectations parents have for their children to be responsible and mature, and the number of rules and limits established and applied to them (Doinita & Maria, 2015). In other words, this is the degree to which the parent controls their child's behavior. It is worth mentioning that a fourth parenting style was defined my Maccoby and Martin (1983) which is now considered a fourth distinct parenting style characterized by both low responsiveness and low demandingness. This neglectful/uninvolved parenting style includes parents who are generally emotionally detached and indifferent to their child (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). However, this parenting style very clearly does not foster close parent-adolescent relationships which is why it will not be investigated in this study. Apart from variations in responsiveness and demandingness, the parenting styles also vary in the degree to which they exhibit a third dimension characterized as psychological control. Psychological control can be defined as attempts to control that affect the psychological and emotional development of the child (Barber, 1996). Some examples of parenting practices that encompass a use of psychological control are guilt induction, shaming, or the withdrawal of love (Barber, 1996). One major difference between the authoritarian parenting style and the authoritative parenting style is in the measure of psychological control exercised (Darling, 1999). The authoritarian parent tends to practice a much greater level of psychological control with their children (Darling, 1999).

**Adolescents' Emotional Intelligence and Maturity Based on Different Parenting Styles**

The term "maturity" denotes a crucial stage in the development of a living organism (Valke et al., 2021). A person is deemed psychologically mature once they have

reached a specific level of intelligence and emotional perspective (Valke et al., 2021).

When an individual's development proceeds without disruption, biological and

psychological maturation typically advances equally (Valke et al., 2021). The

comprehension of adolescence provides insight into the nature of a mature state of mind

(Valke et al., 2021). Understanding emotional maturity in adolescence holds great

importance, particularly during this transitional stage marked by profound physical,

psychological, social, and emotional changes. The journey from childhood to independent

adulthood is a critical juncture, and the parenting style embraced by parents plays a

pivotal role in cultivating emotional stability and fostering healthy development in

adolescents. Adolescence is acknowledged universally as a tumultuous phase

characterized by heightened emotional swings, adolescence entails a metamorphosis from

childhood to adulthood (Arnett, 2000). This transformative period brings forth various

challenges, including identity formation, navigating peer relationships, and the pursuit of

autonomy (Arnett, 2000). The extent of emotional maturity exhibited by adolescents

significantly shapes their capacity to successfully navigate these complex challenges

(Rawat & Gulati, 2018). Providing adolescents with consistent rules and expectations

creates a structured environment that contributes to emotional stability (Arnett, 2000).

Authoritative parents excel in setting clear boundaries while allowing room for

autonomy, striking a delicate balance that promotes emotional growth (Rawat & Gulati,

2018). Moreover, authoritative parenting places a strong emphasis on providing

opportunities for independence (Rawat & Gulati, 2018). Granting adolescents the

freedom to make decisions and learn from their experiences fosters autonomy and self-

efficacy (Rawat & Gulati, 2018). This approach actively contributes to the development

of emotional resilience, empowering adolescents to navigate challenges and setbacks independently (Rawat & Gulati, 2018). The emotional maturity of adolescents is therefore tied to the parenting style chosen by their caregivers. Through the promotion of open communication, the establishment of consistent rules, and the provision of opportunities for independence, authoritative parents significantly contribute to the emotional well-being and holistic development of their adolescents (Rawat & Gulati, 2018). As we navigate the complexities of adolescence, it becomes imperative for parents to recognize the profound impact their parenting style has on shaping the emotional maturity of the upcoming generation (Rawat & Gulati, 2018). The capacity for adolescents to feel close to their parents is linked to their level of emotional maturity (Kumar, 2014). Their level of emotional maturity acts as a pivotal factor influencing the quality of connections with their parents (Kumar, 2014). Research indicates that adolescents with heightened emotional intelligence, a facet of emotional maturity, exhibit superior communication skills and interpersonal relationships (Lopes et al., 2005). These are necessary skills to develop in order to develop closeness (Lopes et al., 2005). This proficiency in articulating emotions elevates the quality of parent-child interactions, cultivating an atmosphere of trust and understanding (Kumar, 2014). Moreover, emotional maturity plays a crucial role in regulating emotional responses during conflicts (Jordan & Troth, 2002). Conflicts are inherent in parent-adolescent relationships, and how these conflicts are navigated and resolved hinges on emotional maturity. Adolescents endowed with higher emotional maturity are better equipped to handle conflicts constructively, leading to increased feelings of closeness with their parents (Jordan & Troth, 2002). In summary, emotional maturity emerges as a key factor in

shaping adolescents' capacity to experience closeness with their parents (Kumar, 2014).

As adolescents navigate the challenges of identity formation, autonomy, and

interpersonal relationships, emotional maturity profoundly influences communication,

conflict resolution, and the ability to balance autonomy with the need for parental

support. Recognizing the intricate interplay between emotional maturity and the parent-

child relationship is indispensable for creating healthy connections during this stage of

development.

**Closeness in Parent-Adolescent Relationships**

Closeness is the bond between parents and adolescents that refers to the emotional

proximity, trust, and mutual understanding shared between parents and their teenage

children (Collins & Feeney, 2004). It comes to life through the quality of communication,

shared activities, and the depth of the emotional bond. Positive parent-adolescent

closeness has been tied to numerous benefits for adolescents, including heightened self-

esteem, improved mental health, and enhanced academic performance (Barber et al.,

2005). Elements of closeness include communication strategies and shared activities.

Effective communication stands as a cornerstone of closeness. Open, supportive, and

non-judgmental communication establishes an environment where adolescents feel heard

and understood (Collins & Feeney, 2004).  Parents who actively engage in meaningful

conversations with their teenagers lay the groundwork for a closer relationship. Engaging

in shared activities provides avenues for bonding. Whether through sports, hobbies, or

family outings, these communal experiences contribute to the development of an

emotional connection between parents and adolescents. Numerous empirical studies have

scrutinized the relationship between parenting styles and closeness within parent-

adolescent dynamics (Barber et al., 2005). Research consistently underscores the positive impact of authoritative parenting on nurturing closeness. Authoritative parents, characterized by high warmth and clear expectations, tend to have adolescents who perceive their relationship as more intimate and supportive (Baumrind, 1991). On the other hand, studies have indicated that authoritarian parenting, marked by high demands and low responsiveness, can impede closeness (Baumrind, 1991). Adolescents raised in authoritarian households may experience a lack of autonomy, resulting in strained relationships and diminished emotional closeness.

The level of closeness within parent-adolescent relationships creates lasting effects on adolescents' well-being. Those perceiving high levels of closeness tend to exhibit better mental health, enhanced resilience in facing challenges, and heightened academic achievement (Barber et al., 2005). Contrarily, a lack of closeness can contribute to emotional distress, behavioral issues, and diminished self-esteem. Closeness is therefore greatly connected to parental involvement and support. Adolescents benefit significantly from knowing that their parents are actively engaged in their lives, providing guidance, and acting as a safety net during challenging times. Parental support during difficult situations, such as academic stress or peer conflicts, further fortifies the emotional bond between parents and adolescents.

In summary, closeness within parent-adolescent relationships emerges as an important factor in shaping the developmental trajectory of adolescents. The quality of this relationship is shaped by communication, shared activities, and the parenting style employed by parents. Understanding and promoting closeness in parent-adolescent relationships is not only critical for the well-being of adolescents but also lays the

foundation for their successful transition into adulthood. Parents who apply this knowledge can actively contribute to the creation of a nurturing and supportive environment that allows their adolescents to thrive emotionally and developmentally.

**The Impacts of Each Parenting Style on Parent-Adolescent Closeness**

The extent to which a parent is aware of their adolescent's lives, the choice the adolescents make to disclose information about their lives, and their decisions to comply with parent demands, even when in disagreement of them, are all influenced, to some extent, by the adolescents' perceptions of the legitimacy of parental authority and their own personal sense of obligation to be compliant (Darling et al., 2008). The legitimacy of parental authority relates to the degree to which the amount of control exercised by parents is seen as an appropriate extension of their parental role (Darling et al., 2008). There is strong evidence to suggest that large factors contributing to the positive developmental outcomes observed in adolescents with authoritative parents is that they are more inclined to view their parents as legitimate authorities (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Therefore, they feel a sense of obligation to obey them, they are more inclined to internalize their parents' values, and, as a result, they exhibit greater a receptiveness to their parent's socialization (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Additionally, they are more inclined to freely make decisions that align with parental values already (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). These factors create a substantial difference in the positive relationship created by authoritative parenting, as opposed to the resentment that is often produced by authoritarian parenting, which greatly encourages closeness (Darling et al., 2008).

An emphasis on examining the openness in communication between a parent and their child is critical because open communication fosters intimate and supportive

relationships (Bush & Peterson, 2013). Close and supportive parent-child interactions, in turn, provide the starting point for healthy conflict resolution and autonomy, which both encourage positive parent-child relationships and life outcomes (Bush & Peterson, 2013). Authoritative parenting is the only parenting style that allows and encourages these outcomes of the three parenting styles described (Bush & Peterson, 2013). Currently in Western and Chinese cultures, adolescents raised in authoritative households have been allowed to seek greater independence which is met with a balance of youth and parent goals that actually promotes a closer relationship between them (Bi et al., 2018).

Research has shown a link between individuals who grow up in authoritarian parenting style households and a development of hesitancy to express one's own feelings and needs in future close relationships (Baumrind, 1991; Fan, 2023). Furthermore, this parenting style has been linked to having a negative effect on a child's overall social outcome (Bornstein & Bornstein, 2007). Through this we can see not only that authoritarian parenting does not encourage a close parent-child relationship, but it also hinders the facilitation of any close relationship for the child (Fan, 2023). Children raised in permissive style parenting households do not experience proper parental nurturance, which then hinders their abilities to form and/or maintain close relationships with any sort of authority figure (Bush & Peterson, 2013). These findings suggest that both permissive and authoritative parenting styles do not facilitate close relationships between parents and adolescents (Baumrind, 1991; Bush & Peterson, 2013).

**The Benefits and Importance of Parent-Child Closeness**

There is a large quantity of research today that shows a link between the closeness or quality of parent-child relationships and their child's well-being (King et al., 2017).

Research also shows that adolescent closeness to parents is strongly positively correlated with feeling a sense of belonging within one's family across all family types; it should, however, be noted that parent-child closeness and family belonging are two very distinct concepts (King et al., 2017). A sense of belonging within one's family unit is also important due to the fact that family belonging is an important protective factor for adolescents (King et al., 2017). It has been found that the relationship quality between a parent and their adolescent as well as family connectedness are concurrent with less emotional distress for adolescents (King et al., 2017). Every person has a fundamental psychological need to feel as though they belong to a social group (King et al., 2017). Individuals can only function and thrive to the proportion in which their basic psychological requirements are met (King et al., 2017). This means that parents have the capacity to help their adolescents fulfill these needs by fostering a sense of belonging within the family (King et al., 2017). Family belonging refers specifically to sentiments of inclusion within the family, such as being given attention, feeling understood, and even having fun together (King et al., 2017). Additionally, a close parent-child relationship has been shown to be beneficial to the development of self-esteem (Harris et al., 2015). There is much research to support a link between parental relationships and self-esteem (Baumrind, 1991; Bornstein & Bornstein, 2007; Bush & Peterson, 2013). This relationship has been observed throughout countries and ages, including Norway, Australia, the United States, China, and Japan (Harris et al., 2015). On the other hand, parent-child closeness also plays a role in decreasing the likelihood of having depression during adolescence (Ge et al., 2009). This is seen by how the effects of negative life experiences seem to differ significantly between people with different levels of social

support available to them (Ge et al., 2009). Having this higher level of social support from a parent can be described as creating a "stress-buffer" between experiencing negative life events and developing a greater risk for the diagnosis of depression (Ge et al., 2009).

A close parent-child relationship, however, is not only crucial for adolescents, but it also affects parental wellbeing (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990). A study carried out on parents' perceptions of closeness to their show that a parent's satisfaction and well-being in their own life begins to decline when they feel their child is "detaching" from them (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990). In conclusion, a healthy and close relationship between parents and their child is important for the wellbeing of both (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990).

**A Mother's Role vs. A Father's Role in Parenting**

Parenting is a dynamic partnership in which unique roles are played by mothers and fathers. In the past, societal norms often classified mothers as the primary caregivers and fathers as providers (Bowlby, 1969). Extensive research, including the foundational work of Bowlby (1969), consistently emphasizes the role mothers play in establishing emotional bonds and secure attachments with their children. Mothers are often primary caregivers during the formative years, engaging in nurturing behaviors that create a foundation for emotional well-being (Bowlby, 1969). Mothers typically assume the primary caregiving role, attending to the daily needs of their children. Maternal communication patterns are often characterized by frequent, emotionally oriented interactions (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2004). Mothers play a crucial role in language development and socialization by engaging in conversations that focus on feelings and

personal experiences (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2004). Historically, fathers usually

contribute a distinct standpoint to parenting, often engaging in more playful and

challenging interactions with their children (Russell & Russell, 1987). Empirical

evidence suggests that fathers play a pivotal role in fostering independence and risk-

taking behavior in children (Russell & Russell, 1987). Father-child play often involves

exploration and physical activity, contributing significantly to the development of

autonomy and self-confidence (Russell & Russell, 1987). Fathers tend to take on the role

of exerting influence over children's moral development by emphasizing rules, discipline,

and ethical decision-making (Russell & Russell, 1987). Their role in setting boundaries

and expectations contributes to a comprehensive understanding of social norms (Russell

& Russell, 1987). These developed cultural norms in parenting roles play a large part in

what parenting styles a mother or father will choose to practice.

**Significance of Researching Parents' Perception of Closeness to Their Adolescent**

**Based on Different Parenting Styles**

Promoting healthy development and wellbeing in teenagers requires an

understanding of the dynamics of the parent-child interaction during adolescence.

Researching parents' perceptions of closeness to their teenagers based on different

parenting styles is critical for understanding the impact of parenting approaches on the

quality of parent-adolescent relationships. Close relationships stimulate psychosocial

growth and allow the chance to learn about the complexities of relationships, which are

crucial parts of adjustment (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990). Investigating parents'

perception of closeness to their adolescent in the context of differences between parenting

styles grants further understanding for how these styles influence parent-adolescent

relationships. A complete understanding of the variables that contribute to the development and continual growth of the parent-adolescent connection and relationship can be gained by studying parents' perceptions of proximity based on different parenting methods. It enables a more in-depth analysis of the dynamics and processes in each parenting style and the impact they have on parent-child closeness. The relationship between parents and their child during adolescence is important for the development of identity. A teenagers' sense of self and identity are shaped by parental influence, closeness, and support (Erikson, 1968). Investigating perceptions of closeness from a parent's point of view based on parenting styles allows for a better understanding of how different approaches influence an adolescent's life trajectory. Researchers can acquire insights into the factors that contribute to the establishment and quality of these connections by investigating the links between parenting methods and parents' feeling of closeness. This understanding can assist in the promotion of healthy parent-adolescent interactions and the promotion of positive teenage development.

**Aim of This Research**

The primary objective of this study is to assess parents' perceptions of closeness to their adolescents based on their diverse parenting methods. The research centers on this specific theme with the following overarching aims.

To investigate the relationship between parenting styles and perceptions of closeness. More specifically, the exploration of the dynamics between different parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—and how each style influences parents' perceptions of closeness to their adolescent children is the main objective through which all other themes will stem. This study will identify trends and connections

between the three primary parenting techniques and the reported level of closeness through the utilization of online interviews.

In this research we will also examine the influencing factors in detail. Uncovering potential influencing factors that contribute to the intricate relationship between parenting styles, parent-child closeness, and teenage development. Furthermore, the aim is to identify and analyze the factors that may act as facilitators or barriers to the perceived closeness reported by parents. Evaluating specific aspects of parenting styles, such as parent-adolescent communication, parental participation in the child's life, and the degree of parental control will allow for insight on the subject.

This study will also aim to contribute to the existing knowledge of parenting styles and perceptions of closeness, but also provide further understanding of the roles of various elements within parenting styles in order to offer a comprehensive view of their influence on the perceived closeness in parent-adolescent relationships. Furthermore, it will aim to address existing research gaps and respond to the need for more clear-cut and specific data on the relationship between parenting styles and parent-child closeness. Acknowledging existing research and evidence that suggest hypotheses but lack detailed exploration, it will also contribute to filling the gap in the low number of qualitative studies available on this particular topic, aligning with recommendations for additional research to explore various aspects of parenting styles in depth (Farzand et al., 2017). In essence, this research aims to enrich the comprehension of the relationship between parenting styles and the perceived closeness of parents to their adolescents.

As a result of this study cultural influences will also be reflected upon by examining the influence of cultural factors on parenting styles and their impact on parent-

child closeness. Recognizing that cultural norms and expectations may shape the way parents approach closeness in the parent-adolescent relationship.

From the perspective of long-term goals this study also investigates the lasting effects of perceived closeness on the overall well-being of adolescents as they transition into adulthood. Which then explores whether certain parenting styles contribute to more positive long-term outcomes in terms of mental health and relationship satisfaction. It should also contribute to the exploration of potential gender differences in the impact of parenting styles on perceived closeness and investigate whether sons and daughters perceive closeness differently under the same parenting style. New information will also be considered on the topic of parental reflection. Examining parental self-reflection and awareness in shaping the perceptions of closeness. Explore whether certain parenting styles and closeness, consequentially contribute to positive interactions within the educational environment. Gaining insights into how parenting styles and perceived closeness influence adolescents' interactions with educational institutions, including teacher relationships and academic engagement. Furthermore, for the future exploration of whether specific parenting styles are associated with greater support for adolescents' academic and career pursuits. Assessing whether perceived closeness contributes to adolescents' motivation and success in academic and career endeavors. Also, for the investigation of how parenting styles contribute to the development of adolescents' relationships with peers. Exploring whether perceived closeness with parents influences the quality of peer relationships. Assessing the impact of parenting styles and perceived closeness on the mental health outcomes of adolescents. And finally, investigating whether certain parenting styles act as protective factors against mental health challenges.

II. METHODOLOGY

**Participants**

This study includes a total of six participants who were recruited via email. Limiting the number of participants to six is appropriate due to the nature of qualitative research. Data collection and analysis will focus on depth and quality of participant responses which was made possible through the use of a small sample size. This allowed for an in-depth investigation of each individual's experiences and perceptions. The sample size also enabled a more profound evaluation of each participant's responses. The interview guide is included in the appendices under "Appendix A" and was sent out along with an explanation of the purpose of this study and the option to participate. A convenience sample was utilized as the email can only be sent to individuals the researcher knows that have adolescent children. The sample size was limited due to the factor of not having extensive access to parents of adolescents who were willing to participate in this study. All of the participants who did voluntarily take part in the study provided their informed consent, which is attached in the appendices under "Appendix B", before the interview took place. A video and audio release form is attached under "Appendix C" and was also sent to the participants beforehand in order to obtain the right to record the interview for later transcription. The parents that will serve as participants were selected according to specific inclusion criteria to guarantee their suitability in the sample and address this research's objectives. This inclusion criteria includes currently parenting an adolescent between the ages of 12 to 19 years old. The sample contains both mothers and fathers (male and female participants). All parent's included are the biological parents of their

adolescents. Further demographic information (ethnicity and age) was collected from the participants through the informed consent form prior to the interview.

In order to assure confidentiality, the participants were labeled with numbers 1-6. Participant #1 is female, 42 years old, and Hispanic. She is the mother of a 14-year-old boy. Participant #2 is female, 47 years old, and Hispanic. She is the mother of a 16-year-old girl. Participant #3 is male, 50 years old, and African American. He is the father of a 15-year-old boy. Participant #4 is male, 47 years old and Hispanic. He is the father of a 16-year-old girl. Participant #5 is female, 46 years old, and African American. She is the mother of a 16-year-old boy. Participant #6 is male, 40 years old, and White. He is the father of an 18-year-old boy.

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines set forth by American College of Greece. Ethical approval was obtained from the American College of Greece before the beginning of data collection. There was also a debriefing form sent to the participants after the completion of the interview which is located under "Appendix D".

**Research Design**

A qualitative design was chosen based on its compatibility with the objectives for this study. Perceptions of closeness is the topic that will be investigated. Closeness refers to the extent of the emotional bond and connection between individuals. The interview guide aims to provide insight into the parenting style being used as well as the emotional connection and trust between the parent and their adolescent. A qualitative design is especially well adapted for research of subjective experiences and the meanings people give to these experiences. Closeness is a very subjective and personal experience,

therefore open-ended questions gave the individuals an opportunity to fully express their unique emotions, perceptions, and interpretations of closeness as in depth as they want. Participants are given the chance to elaborate on their feelings and put their idea of closeness into context. This qualitative thesis seeks to investigate subjective experiences and add to the further understanding of the issue under consideration.

**Procedure**

Once parents received the email invitation to participate in this research, they were instructed to carefully read the informed consent document. Once they consented to participate, the participants were be asked to electronically sign and return the informed consent document through email. A zoom meeting was scheduled and recorded for future transcription. The interviews lasted between 25-35 minutes. The researcher asked the participant the questions and provide prompts if and when needed. After the interview was complete the replies were recorded and transcribed for data analysis.

**Setting and Materials**

This study used the interview guide under "Appendix A" as the primary means of data collection. In regard to setting, the interview took place online wherever the participants wished to be (i.e., in different settings wherever they had access to a computer and felt comfortable). The materials included were the interview guide, the informed consent and visual/audio release form, and a debriefing form. The interview guide was designed with the intention to collect data relevant to the study's goals and it consists of 12 open-ended questions. An introduction and explanation of the study is included in the informed consent document sent with each email invitation. It also assured the parents that their responses would be kept private and anonymous. The

informed consent form can be found under "Appendix B" and also ensured ethical

considerations were met and sufficient in providing each participants' informed consent.

The procedure involved and any potential risks were clearly indicated on the form as

well. The informed consent document also explains the participants' right to withdraw

from the study at any time or request that their answers not be included in the study upon

request. Parents were instructed to read the informed consent form thoroughly before

sending it back with their signature. The video and audio release form can be found under

"Appendix C". This document ensures that participants voluntarily agree to be

videotaped during the experiment, understand that the tapes will be used only for

transcribing the data acquired, and that after data is collected the tapes will be destroyed.

The debriefing form can be found under "Appendix D". This document assures that the

participants further understand the study overview and main questions, how it was tested,

and what to do if they have questions, want to know more, or would like additional

resources.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethics plays a crucial role in research, prioritizing the protection, rights, and well-

being of participants. In the context of conducting a qualitative study using an interview

guide, it's important to adhere to a set of ethical principles to uphold integrity, trust, and

respect throughout the research process. Obtaining informed consent is a primary ethical

consideration, requiring researchers to provide participants with comprehensive

information about the study's purpose, potential risks and benefits, and the voluntary

nature of participation. Preserving the anonymity of participants is also essential to

protecting their identity. Confidentiality measures, such as securely storing data and using

pseudonyms in reporting, will also be used and is vital to protect participants' privacy.

Adhering to these ethical guidelines not only upholds the rights and well-being of

participants but also contributes to the credibility and trustworthiness of the research

outcomes.

III. RESULTS

**Data Analysis**

The data acquired from the online interview was comprehensively analyzed in order to address the study's research objectives. Each participant's answers can be found under "Appendix F" in the appendix section of this study. Thematic analysis was utilized, which is the qualitative research method used for "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following data analysis plans were carried out. The recordings of the interviews were listened to and carefully transcribed to ensure complete accuracy of data. Key points were highlighted for later use during this process. The interview responses were then analyzed to extract all potential codes and themes. The initial codes were developed from quotes in the participant's answers; descriptive and concise labelling of this data to make codes is an essential in order to clearly define the data in a more analytic manner. The codes were then used to produce a theme which "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data-set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once completed these codes, quotes, and emerging themes were put into tables which can be found under "List of Tables" in the additional documents of this study. The aforementioned tables allowed for a thorough examination of the data which easily gave insights for the formation of evidence-based conclusions, later presented in the discussion of this study. The next step in data analysis was to assess the themes in order to guarantee that each theme was recurrent enough to be of significance to the extracted list of themes. The study's limitations were also investigated and examined. The interpretation of data and its reporting includes summarized key findings

and significant relationships presented in a clear manner in the next section. The research complies to the following principles to ensure methodological excellence in accordance with Yardley's (2000) evaluation criteria for qualitative research initiatives. The study is built on a solid theoretical framework with defined research objectives. The selection and method of data collection procedures (interviews) to comprehensively capture the participants' complex perspectives, is evidence of methodological rigor. Yardley (2000) outlines that reflexivity is when a researcher is able to acknowledge their assumptions, biases, and/or perspectives that could potentially affect the research process and its findings. This is done throughout the investigation and presentation of results. Providing an unbiased analytical is kept among the study's top strategies. The findings and conclusions presented are founded within the data, which is a characteristic of qualitative research integrity, validating the study's reliability and its relevant contribution to the existing studies available on this topic. This research study attains degrees of validity, reliability, and relevance by meeting Yardley's (2000) evaluation criteria. Methodological rigor strengthens the overall impact of the research, increasing its credibility and emphasizing its significance within academic and practical settings.

**Results**

## Parenting Style

The purpose of questions 1-4 of the interview guide is to identify each parents' style of parenting. Through the analysis of participant quotes, codes, and themes Participants #1-3 were identified as practicing an authoritative approach to parenting;

Participants #4-5 were identified as practicing an authoritarian approach to parenting; and Participant #6 was identified as practicing a permissive approach to parenting.

Question 1 of the interview guide assesses what each parent thinks their role is in their adolescent's life. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fall under the code "Autonomy" and highlighted an emerging theme of "The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy". Participants #4 and #5 fall under the code "Rules" to reveal an emerging theme of "The Parental Role of Teaching Rules". Participant #6 was placed under the code "Noninterventionist" to reveal an emerging theme of "A Hands-Off View of Parental Role".

Question 2 of the interview guide evaluates the participants' opinions on giving reasons and explanations for the rules that are set for their adolescent. The code extracted from Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 for this question was "Limits and Explanations" with the emerging of "Setting Limits and Providing Explanations". Participants #4 and #5 fell under the code "No Explanations Needed" to reveal an emerging theme of "Views that Reasoning and Explanations for Rules is Unnecessary". Participant #6 was placed in their own category under the code "Passive Approach" with an emerging theme of "Minimal Rule Setting".

Question 3 of the interview guide examines what the participants' views are when it comes to the limits and rules that they set for your adolescent. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 were all found to fall under the code "Rules and Leniency" to reveal an emerging theme of "Balancing Rules and Leniency". Participant #4 and Participant #5 were placed under the code "Obedience" to reveal an emerging theme of "Prioritizing Obedience and Rules". Participant #6 was placed in a category of

their own under the code "No Rules" with an emerging theme of "No Rules or Limits Being Enforced".

Question 4 of the interview guide further investigates the participants' views on independence during adolescence. The responses of Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fell into the code "Teaching Independence" showing an emerging theme of "Teaching Independence During Adolescence". Participant #4 and Participant #5 were placed under the code "Minimal Independence" to reveal an emerging theme of "Minimal Independence During Adolescence". Participant #6's response was placed under the code "Self-Direction" to reveal an emerging theme of "Encouraging A Sense of Self Direction".

## Closeness

The purpose of questions 5-12 of the interview guide is to identify each parents' perception of closeness to their adolescent. Through analysis of the data acquired Participants #1-3 were shown to have a greater perception of closeness to their adolescents than Participants #4-6.

Question 5 of the interview guide asks each parent how they perceive the closeness between them and their adolescent. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fall under the code "Availability and Closeness" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Maintaining Availability and Closeness".  Participant #4 fell under the code "Closeness" and an emerging theme of "A Perception of Closeness".  Participant #5 fell under the code "Barrier to Closeness" to reveal an emerging theme of "Strict Parenting Creating a Barrier to Closeness". Participant #6 fell under the code "Feelings"

to reveal an emerging theme of "Surface Level Feelings of Fondness Between Each Other".

Question 6 of the interview guide asks the parent how they think that their adolescent perceives the level of closeness between them. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fall under the code "Closeness and Interests" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests".  Participant #4 fell under the code "Closeness" and an emerging theme of "Uncertainty About Adolescent's Feelings of Closeness".  Participant #5 fell under the code "Parent Role and Closeness" to reveal an emerging theme of "Perceived Parent Role Above Closeness". Participant #6 fell under the code "Communication and Interactions" to reveal an emerging theme of "Surface Level Communication and Interactions".

Question 7 of the interview guide asks the parent how they would help their adolescent feel more at ease sharing their ideas and feelings with them. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fall under the code "Questions and Understanding" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Asking Questions and Being Understanding". Participant #4 fell under the code "Communication" and an emerging theme of "Awkwardness Surrounding Communication".  Participant #5 also fell under the code "Communication" but revealed an emerging theme of "Challenges with Communication and Closeness". Participant #6 fell under the code "Communication" as well but revealed an emerging theme of "Very Low Levels of Emotional Communication".

Question 8 of the interview guide asks the parent if they can recognize any indications or behaviors that suggest that their adolescent feels close to them. Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all fall under the code "Close Relationship" and had

an emerging theme of "Indications of a Close Relationship".  Participant #4 and

Participant #6 fell under the code "Shared Activities and Communication" and an

emerging theme of "Low Levels of Shared Activities and Communication".  Participant

#5 fell under the code "Communication and Closeness" but revealed an emerging theme

of "Challenges with Communication and Closeness".

Question 9 of the interview guide asks the parent if they think that there are any

barriers or challenges that keep their adolescent from feeling close to them. Participant #1

fell under the code "Personality Traits" to reveal an emerging theme of "Distinct

Personality Traits Hindering Closeness". Participant #2 and Participant #3 both fell under

the code "Approachability" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Being Available and

Approachable".  Participant #4 fell under the code "Gender" and an emerging theme of

"Barriers to Closeness Due to Gender".  Participant #5 also fell under the code

"Strictness" but revealed an emerging theme of "Barriers to Closeness Due to Strictness".

Participant #6 fell under the code "Emotional Support" but revealed an emerging theme

of "Difficulties Being Emotionally Supportive".

Question 10 of the interview guide asks the parent what they do to maintain

involvement in their adolescent's life. Participant #1 fell under the code "Maintaining

Closeness" to reveal an emerging theme of "Maintaining Closeness While Respecting

Boundaries". Participant #2 and Participant #6 both fell under the code "Bonding" and

showed evidence of an emerging theme of "Shared Activities and Bonding". Participant

#3 fell under the code "Quality Time" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Prioritizing

Quality Time".  Participant #4 fell under the code "Involvement" and an emerging theme

of "Moderate Involvement in Activities".  Participant #5 fell under the code "Comfort

and Challenges" but revealed an emerging theme of "Efforts to Comfort and Challenges to Emotional Connections".

Question 11 of the interview guide asks the parent how they approach situations where their adolescent shows a need for emotional support or comfort. Participant #1 fell under the code "Proactive Attitude" to reveal an emerging theme of "A Proactive Attitude Towards Assistance". Participant #2 fell under the code "Supportive Gestures" to reveal an emerging theme of "Efforts to Show Supportive Gestures". Participant #3 fell under the code "of Support and Openness" and highlighted an emerging theme of "Assurance of Support and Openness".  Participant #4 fell under the code "Emotional Expression" and an emerging theme of "Low Emotional Expression".  Participant #5 and Participant #6 both fell under the code "Emotional Needs" revealing an emerging theme of "Challenges in Responding to Emotional Needs".

Question 12 of the interview guide asks the parent if there have been any times they can recall where their adolescent looked for their support or guidance that made them feel that they could trust them with their troubles? Participant #1 fell under the code "Initiating" to reveal an emerging theme of "Initiating Conversations". Participant #2 and Participant #3 both fell under the code "Troubles and Advice" and demonstrated an emerging theme of "Sharing Troubles and Giving Advice".  Participant #4 and Participant #5 both fell under the code "Advice Seeking" and an emerging theme of "Rare Occurrences of Advice Seeking". Participant #6 fell under the code "Advice Seeking" as well but revealed an emerging theme of "No Occurrences of Advice Seeking".

These results are indicative of the theory that authoritative parenting fosters a greater perception of closeness between parents and adolescents when compared to the authoritarian and permissive styles of parenting. This is shown through Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 all being identified as following authoritative parenting methods and also demonstrating more positive experiences of closeness with their adolescents when compared to Participant #4, Participant #5, and Participant #6.

IV. DISCUSSION

**Applying Meaning to the Codes and Themes**

*Participant #1*

The concept of struggle with adolescents' independence becomes apparent as parents deal with the evolving autonomy of their teenagers. Both parents and adolescents are managing their way through this transition. The emotional conflict and the metaphorical image of hands slipping, in the quote "It's almost like the hands are slipping", depicts the challenge of adapting to this novel phase. The code "Autonomy" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy".

The stress on clarifying the justifications behind rules and decisions shows a parenting strategy grounded in rationality. The parent's prior experiences shaped this preference, aiming to teach comprehension rather than relying solely on authority. This theme underscores the significance of cultivating communication and mutual understanding. The code "Limits and Explanations" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Setting Limits and Providing Explanations".

Recognizing the necessity for a sensible approach that combines firmness with understanding, the parent acknowledges the need to be more lenient with the awareness, however, that certain rules must be followed. This theme emphasizes the balance that parents strive to achieve in guiding their teenagers. The code "Rules and Leniency" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Balancing Rules and Leniency".

The theme of instilling independence occurs again, emphasizing the active role of the parent in instructing and guiding their teenager toward self-sufficiency. The parent

acknowledges the importance of fostering independence while facing the challenge of giving up control and allowing their teenager to learn from mistakes. The code "Teaching Independence" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Teaching Independence During Adolescence".

The theme of building connections through shared interests, such as football, underscores the deliberate efforts of the parent to create a bond with their teenager. Engaging in activities that resonate with the teenager manifests a commitment to developing a connection, even if it involves acquiring new knowledge and interests. The code "Availability and Closeness" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Maintaining Availability and Closeness".

Promoting open communication involves the parent establishing a non-judgmental space for their teenager to express themselves. Actively listening and responding without imposing personal experiences contribute to cultivating a trusting and communicative relationship. The code "Closeness and Interests" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests".

The parent perceives closeness through shared activities, such as when the teenager puts aside their phone to engage in conversation. This theme underscores the importance of quality time and shared experiences in fostering a sense of closeness within the family. She also relays a conscious effort to ask relevant questions and give thoughtful answers. The code "Questions and Understanding" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Asking Questions and Being Understanding".

The parent shares instances where their teenager willingly participates in family activities, demonstrating a desire to spend time together. The parent observes signs of

emotional closeness, such as the teenager spontaneously joining family outings despite initially expressing a preference to stay home. The parent emphasizes that the teenager's increased willingness to engage in shared experiences signifies a growing sense of familial closeness and a desire to be an active part of the family unit. The code "Close Relationship" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Indications of a Close Relationship".

The parent discusses how their teenager's reserved and less talkative nature creates challenges in developing closeness. The parent attributes the teenager's reluctance to share feelings or initiate conversations to inherent personality traits. This theme underscores the impact of individual differences in hindering the development of emotional closeness within the parent-adolescent relationship. The parent expresses the need to navigate these traits carefully to create an environment where the teenager feels comfortable opening up and sharing their thoughts and emotions. The code "Personality Traits" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Distinct Personality Traits Hindering Closeness".

The parent expresses a proactive approach to understanding their teenager by constantly tuning in to the teenager's likes and interests. This theme revolves around the parent's keen awareness and anticipation, ensuring they remain aware of their teenager's needs. The use of metaphors such as "antennas" and "pouncing" suggests an active engagement, emphasizing the parent's commitment to not being oblivious to the teenager's world. The balance between listening and respecting the teenager's space is highlighted, as well as the parent's openness to alternative sources of support, such as therapy, recognizing the unique perspective shaped by the teenager's ADHD. The code

"Maintaining Closeness" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Maintaining Closeness While Respecting Boundaries".

This theme centers on the parent's proactive attitude towards problem-solving within the family dynamics. The parent acknowledges their active role as the problem-solver and recognizes the potential consequences of being too available. Despite concerns about potential handicaps, the parent's proactive stance is evident in their willingness to address and navigate challenges faced by family members. The theme emphasizes the parent's sense of responsibility and commitment to supporting the family unit, even if it raises questions about the balance between assistance and fostering independence. The code "Proactive Attitude" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "A Proactive Attitude Towards Assistance".

The parent's proactive role in initiating communication is evident, as they express being the one to inquire about their teenager's feelings and experiences. This theme highlights the parent's effort in creating opportunities for dialogue and understanding. The code "Initiating" was extracted and translated into the emerging theme "Initiating Conversations".

These themes collectively show aspects in the parent-adolescent relationship, portraying the interactions between autonomy, communication, shared activities, and the parent's role in guiding and connecting with their teenagers. The emphasis on setting limits and providing explanations aligns with the literature's recognition of the positive impact of open communication on parent-adolescent closeness (Collins & Feeney, 2004). Additionally, the themes of being available and approachable corresponds with the literature's emphasis on the importance of parents being approachable figures in their

teenagers' lives (Bush & Peterson, 2013). The parent's proactive attitude towards assistance and their role as a problem solver align with the authoritative style's focus on responsiveness and involvement (Darling, 1999). These all together give evidence of closeness and an authoritative parenting style, as it is described by Baumrind (1991).

*Participant #2*

The theme of navigating decision-making emerges as the parent faces the challenging position of being both a decider and a supporter of their teenager's choices. The parent acknowledges the importance of allowing their teenager to have a say in decisions, fostering a sense of autonomy while recognizing the limitations of aligning everything with personal preferences. The code "Autonomy" was extracted, and this response was put into the emerging theme "The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy".

Setting limits was a prominent theme as the parent emphasizes the importance of providing explanations for rules and limits. The parent exemplifies this approach by addressing concerns about their teenager's extensive use of social media. The emphasis on communication and the rationale behind limitations underscores the commitment to mutual understanding and open dialogue. The code "Limits and Explanations" was extracted, and this response was put into the emerging theme "Setting Limits and Providing Explanations".

A theme of flexibility in parenting can be observed as the parent strives to create a balance between allowing their teenager freedom and preventing them from repeating their past mistakes. The parent's flexibility is grounded in the desire to protect their teenager while acknowledging the inevitability of them making decisions independently.

The code "Rules and Leniency" was extracted, and this response was put into the emerging theme "Balancing Rules and Leniency".

Preparing their adolescent for independence is evident as the parent acknowledges and emphasizes that there will be times when they cannot be with their teenager. The parent expresses the hope that their efforts in guiding and instilling values will empower their teenager to make informed choices when navigating independent situations. The code "Teaching Independence" was extracted, and this response was put into the emerging theme "Teaching Independence During Adolescence".

Emphasizing availability becomes evident as the parent relays their continuous efforts to be available for their teenager. The parent actively engages in conversations about their teenager's experiences, expressing concern and interest. They also highlight the importance of fostering an environment where the teenager feels comfortable sharing and seeking support. The code "Availability and Closeness" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Maintaining Availability and Closeness".

A theme of quality time and closeness is shown as the parent describes shared activities and intimate moments spent with their teenager. Whether it's going to the gym, getting nails done, or simply having talks at night, the parent actively fosters a sense of connection, contributing to the perceived closeness in their relationship. The code "Closeness and Interests" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests".

Encouraging open communication is a recurring theme as the parent aims to create a non-judgmental space for their teenager to share feelings and experiences.

Actively listening and proactively inquiring about their teenager's well-being contribute to building a trusting and communicative relationship. The code "Questions and Understanding" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Asking Questions and Being Understanding".

The theme of closeness through evening talks is apparent as the parent describes a nightly routine where their teenager comes into their bed before sleep. During these moments, the parent and teenager engage in conversation, although sometimes in silence. This theme emphasizes the significance of these shared moments, creating a space for communication and connection. The parent perceives these talks as a contributing factor to the overall closeness in their relationship. The code "Close Relationship" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Indications of a Close Relationship".

Acknowledging differing perspectives emerges as a theme, as the parent recognizes the teenager's distinct opinions and viewpoints. The parent acknowledges their teenager's strong opinions and remains open to understanding their point of view, creating a space for dialogue and mutual respect. The code "Approachability" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Being Available and Approachable".

Shared activities as a means of bonding is highlighted as the parent actively participates in activities chosen by their teenager. Whether it's going to the gym, getting nails done, or engaging in everyday tasks, the parent invests time and effort to connect with their teenager on a personal level. The code "Bonding" was extracted, and this response was categorized under the emerging theme "Shared Activities and Bonding".

Supportive gestures during challenging moments is evident as the parent describes comforting actions such as hugging and offering prayers. The parent reassures their teenager of their support, highlighting a commitment to being there in times of emotional need. The code "Supportive Gestures" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Efforts to Show Supportive Gestures".

The theme of comfort when their adolescent is seeking guidance is evident as the parent asserts that their teenager feels comfortable discussing troubling issues. The parent describes their teenager seeking advice on matters such as relationship troubles, indicating a sense of trust and confidence in the parent's support and guidance. The code "Troubles and Advice" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Being Comfortable Sharing Troubles and Giving Advice".

These themes collectively show evidence of closeness and an authoritative style of parenting, as it is described by Baumrind (1991) within the parent-adolescent relationship. Specifically, surrounding decision-making, communication, flexibility, shared activities, and emotional support. The theme of teaching autonomy aligns with the literature's emphasis on the importance of adolescents perceiving parental authority as legitimate (Darling et al., 2008). Similarly, the theme of setting limits and providing explanations corresponds to the literature's recognition of the positive effects of open communication on parent-adolescent closeness (Collins & Feeney, 2004).

*Participant #3*

A theme of teaching responsibility and respect is shown as the parent's main goal during their child's teenage years. By emphasizing the importance of self-sufficiency, the parent recognizes the transitional phase in their child's life, made evident by increasing

independence. This theme highlights the parent's commitment to teaching essential life skills and fostering a sense of responsibility in their teenager. The code "Autonomy" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy".

The emphasis on explaining the reasons behind rules shows to the parent's philosophy of creating a foundation of understanding and respect. The parent relayed their belief that respect is not merely demanded but earned through transparent communication. By providing a rationale for rules, the parent seeks to teach their teenager a deeper comprehension of the principles guiding the family's expectations. The code "Limits and Explanations" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Setting Limits and Providing Explanations".

Highlighting the balance between leniency and rules shows the approach that the parent takes with their teenager. Recognizing the importance of both obedience and leniency, the parent acknowledges that mistakes are inherent to the learning process. The code "Rules and Leniency" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Balancing Rules and Leniency".

Underlining the importance of building independence reflects the parent's recognition of their role in facilitating the teenager's journey toward self-sufficiency. Despite the acknowledgment that the teenager still needs guidance, the parent understands the necessity of allowing the teenager to navigate certain aspects independently. This shows the delicate balance between providing support and fostering autonomy. The code "Teaching Independence" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Teaching Independence During Adolescence".

A father-son bond is shown through shared interests and the parent's intentional efforts to connect with their teenager. By engaging in activities like sports and fishing, the parent not only creates shared experiences but also opens avenues for meaningful conversations. This theme illustrates the parent's commitment to nurturing closeness through shared passions and quality time spent together. The code "Availability and Closeness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Maintaining Availability and Closeness".

A perception of closeness is illustrated and offers insight into the parent's perspective on the nature of their relationship with their teenager. The emphasis on shared activities and the teenager's apparent enjoyment of spending time together serves as indicators of the perceived closeness. This theme sheds light on the parent's attunement to the subtle cues that signify emotional connection. The code "Closeness and Interests" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests".

Open and direct communication is shown the parent's belief that straightforward dialogue is a necessity. The parent recognizes that fostering an environment where ideas and feelings can be openly shared requires proactive communication. This theme reflects the parent's commitment to being receptive, creating a space where the teenager feels comfortable expressing themselves without hesitation. The code "Questions and Understanding" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Asking Questions and Being Understanding".

Expressing closeness through actions and emotions illustrates the parent's observant approach to understanding their teenager. Noticing small everyday gestures,

such as sharing daily experiences and expressing emotions, becomes a means of judging closeness. This theme underscores the significance of non-verbal communication and emotional openness in reinforcing the bond between the parent and the teenager. The code "Close Relationship" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Indications of a Close Relationship".

Availability and approachability is shown through the balance the parent maintains between being a nurturing figure and a supportive friend. The commitment to maintaining an open and understanding relationship highlights the parent's awareness of the teenager's need for guidance while also valuing their independence. This theme emphasizes the importance of being an approachable figure in the teenager's life. The code "Approachability" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Being Available and Approachable".

Prioritizing quality time is evident through the parent's proactive view on fostering the parent-teenager relationship. Acknowledging the challenges of staying connected during adolescence, the parent makes a deliberate effort to spend time together. The code "Quality Time" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Prioritizing Quality Time".

Assurance of support and openness is illustrated in the parent's role as a reliable and understanding source of assistance. By expressing unwavering support and a non-judgmental attitude, the parent seeks to create an environment where the teenager feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns. This shows the parent's commitment to being a trusted figure in their adolescent's life. The code "Support and Openness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Assurance of Support and Openness".

Significant bonding moments in specific instances are shown to have contributed to the bond between the parent and teenager. The recollection of advice sought about the teenager's first crush exemplifies the depth of the relationship. This emphasizes the lasting impact of shared experiences and moments of guidance, which contributes to a bond that he believes not many parents have with their child. The code "Troubles and Advice" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Sharing Troubles and Giving Advice".

These themes collectively illustrate evidence of closeness and an authoritative parenting style, as it is described by Baumrind (1991), within the parent-adolescent relationship. Furthermore, prioritizing quality time, availability and approachability, communication, flexibility, shared activities, and emotional support. Maintaining availability and closeness, as depicted in the results, is consistent with the literature highlighting the positive outcomes associated with parental involvement and support (Barber et al., 2005). The parent's active engagement in shared activities and efforts to connect with their teenager also align with authoritative parenting, known for its responsiveness and warmth (Baumrind, 1991).

*Participant #4*

The parent sees their role as an enforcer of rules and setting boundaries in order to teach good values and responsibility. This theme reflects a sense of responsibility and the desire to convey life principles. The code "Rules" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "The Parental Role of Teaching Rules".

The parent illustrates a perspective of not always needing to provide reasons behind rules. He believes that sometimes compliance without detailed explanations is

necessary, emphasizing the importance of respect for authority. The code "No Explanations Needed" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Views that Reasoning and Explanations for Rules is Unnecessary".

An emphasis on the parent's belief in the necessity of rules and limits for teenagers is shown. He considers it vital for his adolescent's well-being and understanding of the world. Flexibility is considered but within the framework of ensuring safety. The code "Obedience" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Prioritizing Obedience and Rules".

The participant recognizes the natural limitations of teenage independence, relaying, "teens can't be independent, or they wouldn't need parents at all." Balancing a small amount of flexibility with the need for boundaries shows the parent's belief in maintaining a watchful eye. This perspective aligns with a sense of responsibility to provide a structured framework within which the teenager can navigate of adolescence. The code "Minimal Independence" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Minimal Independence During Adolescence".

There is acknowledgment of the teenager's desire to spend time with friends, where the desire to spend time with friends takes precedence over spending time together.

He also relays that he might not fully grasp the teenager's interests, which is attributed to gender differences. However, the phrase "I think we are close" reflects an overall belief that they are. The code "Closeness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "A Perception of Closeness".

The parent reflected on uncertainty about the teenager's perception of closeness but believes in the existence of a mutual love and respect between them, even if not

explicitly expressed. The code "Closeness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Uncertainty About Adolescent's Feelings of Closeness".

The parent highlights the traditional role of the mother in deeper conversations and expresses a perception of awkwardness around sharing ideas and feelings with his teenage daughter. He uses words of uncertainty like "I guess". The parent does, however, recognize the importance of creating a non-judgmental space for the adolescent to share their thoughts and feelings if they ever were to have that conversation. The code "Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Awkwardness Surrounding Communication".

Limited instances of advice-seeking are noted, and shared activities are described as somewhat constrained by the teenager's focus on friends. The parent recalls his adolescent asking for advice "once or twice". The code "Shared Activities and Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Low Levels of Shared Activities and Communication".

Gender-related barriers are emphasized once again. The adolescent's frustration related to rules is also given as a potential challenge in mutual understanding and communication. The parent acknowledges the impact of rules on the teenager's emotions and anticipates a better understanding of them once she is older. The code "Gender" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Barriers to Closeness Due to Gender".

The parent illustrates participation in the teenager's activities by attending volleyball games and eating out as a family. The code "Involvement" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Moderate Involvement in Activities".

The parent acknowledges personal limitations in emotional expression and concedes emotional discussions with the adolescent to the mother. This reflects a recognition of individual limitations within the parental role. The code "Emotional Expression" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Low Emotional Expression".

The parent expresses gratitude when the teenager seeks and values their opinion. This highlights their view on the importance of having an impact on the teenager's decision-making. However, the use of wording "one time or another" indicates that it is a rare occurrence. The code "Advice Seeking" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Rare Occurrences of Advice Seeking".

These themes collectively show evidence of an authoritarian style of parenting, as it is described by Baumrind (1991), and low perceptions of closeness within the parent-adolescent relationship surrounding their levels of communication, shared activities, and emotional support. Authoritarian parents often prioritize authority and obedience over explanation and negotiation which is shown here (Baumrind, 1991). Furthermore, these responses align with the broader societal context in which traditional gender roles may influence parenting practices (Russell & Russell, 1987).

*Participant #5*

The parent's shows a perspective on parenting grounded on the idea of teaching values and ensuring rule adherence. They consider it their responsibility to impart a sense of right and wrong to their children. This involves not only setting rules but also instilling a set of principles that the children are expected to follow. The parent emphasizes the importance of keeping values in mind, even when influenced by external factors like

friends. The overarching theme here is the parental role as a moral guide and rule enforcer. The code "Rules" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "The Parental Role of Teaching Rules".

The parent illustrates knowledge in the value of explanations, but they assert that it is not always necessary. Instead, the emphasis is on the children understanding that certain rules are in their best interest. This approach reflects an expectation of establishing rules that are to be followed without exhaustive justification. The code "No Explanations Needed" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Views that Reasoning and Explanations for Rules is Unnecessary".

A recurring theme is the parent's firmness in setting and upholding rules. There is an unwavering commitment to the establishment of rules within the household. The parent maintains a clear expectation of obedience without negotiation. The teenager is portrayed as having a comprehensive understanding of the rules, emphasizing the structured nature of the parent-child dynamic. The code "Obedience" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Prioritizing Obedience and Rules".

The parent shares their perspective on independence, highlighting that rather than viewing it solely as autonomy, the parent associates independence with responsibility. The implementation of a checklist for chores serves as a method to instill a sense of responsibility in the teenager. Additionally, the idea that newfound freedoms come with age and are contingent on adhering to established rules adds dimensions to their view independence. The code "Minimal Independence" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Minimal Independence During Adolescence".

The parent reflects on the effects of her strictness on the relationship with her teenager. While acknowledging that strictness might lead to temporary distancing, the parent observes a pattern where, despite disagreements, the teenager returns to normal interactions when they need something. This reflects an awareness of the impact of a rigid parenting style on the parent-child dynamic. The parent's reaction to the adolescent's silent treatment or reduced communication is shown to be one of acceptance, by stating that it doesn't bother them and expressing confidence that the teenager will get over it eventually. The code "Barrier to Closeness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Strict Parenting Creating a Barrier to Closeness".

The parent illustrates that a significant role in her identity is one of a strict figure. She intentionally distinguishes herself from being a friend to the teenager, asserting that her role is not one of companionship but rather of a guiding authority. The strictness is portrayed as a deliberate choice aimed at instilling strong values that will be beneficial for the teenager's future. The code "Parent Role and Closeness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Perceived Parent Role Above Closeness".

The parent further emphasizes challenges associated with her teenager opening up to her, attributing it to both age and personality. The parent expresses a desire to create a more communicative environment but recognizes the teenager's reluctance to share personal thoughts and feelings. The difficulty in communication is framed as a combination of the teenager's personality and a broader challenge associated with adolescence. The code "Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Challenges with Communication and Closeness".

One of the teenager's expressions of connection is highlighted through discussions about future career plans. This specific topic becomes a channel for communication and shared decision-making between the parent and teenager. The parent also illustrates that her son occasionally shows affection physically through hugs. The parent views these as indicators of their positive relationship, especially the teenager's willingness to seek guidance on significant life choices. The code "Affection and Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Physical Expressions of Affection and a Shared Topic of Communication".

The potential barrier posed by strictness is acknowledged by the parent. However, the parent views strictness not as a means to be feared but as a way to be taken seriously as a parental figure. The emphasis is on her stance being a form of love despite her strict approach, underlining the importance of a balanced perspective on discipline. The code "Strictness" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Barriers to Closeness Due to Strictness".

The parent actively participates in monitoring the teenager's activities, ensuring adherence to rules. This involvement extends to having access to the teenager's phone password, with the understanding that it would only be used in extreme circumstances. The parent's monitoring activities extend to academic performance and emergency contacts, portraying a commitment to the teenager's overall safety/well-being.

The parent actively encourages openness, expressing love and support. The reassurance that the teenager can discuss anything, especially in moments requiring comfort, underscores a commitment to maintaining an open line of communication. The parent's approach reflects a desire to create a supportive environment for the teenager's

emotional well-being. The code "Being Involved" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Being Involved to an Extent".

Instances where the parent provided comfort and support during challenging times are discussed. This includes emotional support during setbacks, such as not making the football team. The parent's approach involves acknowledging setbacks, providing reassurance, and encouraging resilience. While the teenager is portrayed as independent, the parent remains a source of support in navigating life's challenges. She shares that these moments of reaching out for comfort don't happen often. The code "Emotional Needs" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Challenges in Responding to Emotional Needs".

These themes give evidence to the parent's authoritarian style of parenting as reasoning and explanations for rules are unnecessary, and where authority and compliance may take precedence over negotiation and explanation (Baumrind, 1991). Furthermore, this perspective aligns with the authoritarian tendency to control and limit autonomy in favor of maintaining authority (Baumrind, 1991). It also shows low perceptions of closeness within the parent-adolescent relationship shown through strained communication and connection, as well as barriers to emotional needs and bonding. Barriers to closeness due to strictness align with the literature on authoritarian parenting, where a strict approach may create challenges in achieving optimal parent-adolescent closeness (Baumrind, 1991).

*Participant #6*

The parent embraces a philosophy of allowing their teenager to make mistakes as part of the learning process. This theme reflects a hands-off approach to parenting. The

code "Noninterventionist" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "A Hands-Off View of Parental Role".

The parent highlights a stance of minimal rule enforcement, focusing mostly on the fundamental aspect of safety. The absence of strict curfews and chores is justified by the belief that as long as the teenager checks in and is safe, rule enforcement becomes secondary or unnecessary all together. The code "Passive Approach" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Minimal Rule Setting".

Prioritizing safety emerges as a dominant perspective. The parent's primary concern revolves around the safety of their teenager and not much else. This approach reflects a very lenient parenting style. The code "No Rules" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "No Rules or Limits Being Enforced".

Highlighting a viewpoint of very high levels of adolescent independence is evident. The parent acknowledges the inevitability of their teenager making independent choices and opts for a non-interfering approach, pushing for the autonomy of their teenager. The code "Self-Direction" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Encouraging A Sense of Self-Direction".

The parent perceives a positive relationship with their teenager, highlighting a sense of mutual liking as far as he knows. However, the answer given is very brief and shallow. The code "Feelings" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Surface Level Feelings of Fondness Between Each Other".

From the parent's perspective, parenting does not necessarily need to involve knowing the deepest thoughts of their adolescent. He believes his son feels an apparent satisfaction with the parenting approach he implements. The parent values the impact of

their actions from their own viewpoint. The code "Communication and Interactions" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Surface Level Communication and Interactions".

The avoidance of deep conversations emerges as a theme, reflecting a stereotypical reluctance among males, as perceived by the parent. This illustrates the parent's perspective on the limited discussion of emotions and feelings. The code "Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Very Low Levels of Emotional Communication".

The parent engages in casual conversations and shared activities, such as watching TV and discussing relevant day-to-day topics. This shows what most of their everyday interactions and shared interests look like. The code "Shared Activities and Communication" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Low Levels of Shared Activities and Communication".

The parent acknowledges a challenge in discussing deep topics, recognizing personal limitations in expressing emotions and feelings. This illustrates the potential difficulty in engaging with his adolescent in profound conversations. The code "Emotional Support" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Difficulties Being Emotionally Supportive".

Bonding through shared interests, specifically sports, is evident. Attending games together and spending time watching TV contribute to the parent-teenager bond, emphasizing the role of shared activities in their connection. The code "Bonding" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Shared Activities and Bonding".

The parent expresses that he wouldn't know how to respond to his son's emotional needs and doesn't believe the topic will ever come up. A belief of his adolescent's reliance on his mother for discussions on more serious matters is also relayed. This highlights the perceived division of communication roles between parents. The code "Emotional Needs" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "Challenges in Responding to Emotional Needs".

The parent characterizes both himself and his teenager as emotionally reserved, particularly in discussing deeper feelings. He states that he cannot recall any situation of discussing feelings or personal troubles with his son. This suggests a commonality in emotional reserve and an acknowledgment of societal expectations regarding male communication. The code "Advice Seeking" was extracted and translated to the emerging theme "No Occurrences of Advice Seeking".

The emerging theme of a hands-off view of the parental role aligns with existing literature on noninterventionist or permissive parenting styles (Baumrind, 1991). Moreover, we see evidence of a belief of the societal norm that fathers are the providers and mothers should be relied on for emotional support (Russell & Russell, 1987). Therefore, a low perception of closeness within the parent-adolescent relationship can be seen.

**Relevance of Results and Reflexivity**

The comprehensive analysis of parenting styles and their correlation with parent-adolescent closeness within the context of the broader research study reveals important insights into the dynamics that shape adolescent development. This study explores the complex dimensions of closeness, incorporating elements such as communication

strategies, shared activities, and parental involvement. Notably, the research aligns with established frameworks, such as Baumrind's authoritative parenting style, which emerges as a consistent positive influence on parent-adolescent relationships. The emphasis on effective communication, as echoed in the interviews, finds validation in empirical evidence linking open, non-judgmental communication to increased levels of trust and understanding. The study further contributes by exploring the determinants of closeness, including the impact of various parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—on the emotional bonds forged during adolescence. The examination of the relationship between parenting styles and their consequences on adolescent well-being improves the depth of understanding. The emphasis on parental involvement, support, and the balance between setting boundaries and allowing autonomy reinforces the relevance of the research in guiding parenting practices. In essence, the results of this study provide a valuable contribution to the field, offering practical insights that can promote interventions and support mechanisms to enhance the parent-adolescent relationship, thereby influencing the broader landscape of adolescent well-being and development.

In regard to reflexivity- a key aspect of maintaining methodological rigor in qualitative research- which played a vital role in bolstering the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, the researcher consistently acknowledged and addressed potential biases and assumptions throughout the research process to mitigate subjectivity in interpretations. Strategies, such as setting aside personal beliefs during data analysis and engaging in self-reflection, were employed to minimize any impact on the research outcomes. Triangulating data from multiple participants was also utilized to validate

interpretations, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship

between parenting styles and perceived closeness. These reflexive practices were

implemented to reduce researcher bias, strengthen the credibility of the study, and uphold

methodological excellence in the research design. Furthermore, Throughout the research

process, engaging with diverse parental perspectives was enlightening, providing

valuable insights into the parent-adolescent relationships. It was evident that each parent

brought a unique perspective shaped by personal beliefs, cultural influences, and societal

norms. These narratives highlight the spectrum of parenting approaches, with varying

degrees of closeness and communication. Reflecting on this, it could be observed that

individual values and beliefs significantly impact the interpretation of parenting practices

and the perceived closeness within these relationships. It emphasized the subjectivity

inherent in understanding and analyzing qualitative data, acknowledging the role of

personal biases and experiences in shaping interpretations. The research process

prompted reflection on the broader societal influences shaping these parental

perspectives. Cultural norms, gender roles, and evolving societal expectations emerged as

powerful forces that contribute to the diverse range of parenting styles when coming up

with codes and emerging themes. The acknowledgment of gender-related barriers in

communication, as seen in some participants' narratives, aligns with existing literature on

traditional gender roles impacting parent-child relationships and was a clear necessary

component in creating codes. Additionally, the contrasting viewpoints on the necessity of

providing explanations for rules reveal the ways cultural values influence parenting

practices was also a necessary theme that was essential for inclusion. This reflexivity

underscores the importance of considering the broader context when interpreting research

findings. It serves as a reminder that individual experiences are embedded within larger socio-cultural frameworks, contributing to the complexity of understanding and interpreting the dynamics within parent-adolescent relationships. Examining these narratives, it became evident that personal experiences and societal influences significantly shape the lens through which individuals perceive their roles as parents and the nature of their connections with their teenagers.

**Limitations**

This study is subject to a number of limitations due to the nature of its research. The environmental control of the interview was out of the researcher's control. In other words, the participants' environment during a Zoom interview could not be properly manipulated in order to maintain consistent settings. Background noise, disruptions, and other environmental variables affect the quality of data that was collected. Digital fatigue also becomes a factor to be considered which results from the extended use of virtual communication platforms (Zoom), and therefore impacts the participants' engagement. This means that during lengthy interviews the participants could become fatigued, which potentially leads to a less thorough or detailed response.

Further limitations include the potential confounding variables that must be noted, which includes the influences of gender (parental and adolescent), age (parental and adolescent), ethnicity, culture, and personality differences. In the field of research, recognizing and addressing confounding variables is fundamental in order to ensure the accuracy and dependability of study results. Gender significantly shapes individual perspectives and behaviors (Eccles et al., 1990). In studies investigating psychological phenomena, gender differences introduce confounding variables that can distort results.

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Researchers must acknowledge and control for gender-related factors, considering how societal expectations, roles, and experiences may impact participant responses (Eccles et al., 1990). Neglecting to address gender as a confounder can lead to biased conclusions, limiting the generalizability of findings. Age is a multifaceted variable influencing cognitive, emotional, and physical development (Brewster et al., 2014). Failure to address age-related confounding jeopardizes the internal and external validity of research outcomes (Brewster et al., 2014). The undeniable influence of ethnicity on individual experiences and perspectives introduces confounding variables related to cultural distinctions and socio-economic factors (Brewster et al., 2014). It is important to exercise caution when drawing conclusions across diverse ethnic groups (Desmet et al., 2017). Culture, encompassing shared beliefs, values, and norms can all act as a pervasive confounding variable in research (Desmet et al., 2017). Differences in cultural backgrounds can lead to varied interpretations of stimuli, which can impact participant responses (Desmet et al., 2017). Individual differences in personality traits add another layer of complexity to research, with confounding variables related to introversion/extroversion, openness, and conscientiousness influencing participant responses (Madhura, 2020). Recognizing and the impact of personality as a confounder ensures that study outcomes are not mistakenly attributed to the variables of interest.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parenting styles and parents' perceptions of closeness to their adolescents. The primary aim is to investigate the dynamics among authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles and their influence on the reported level of closeness in parent-adolescent relationships. Through online interviews, the study aims to identify trends and connections between these parenting techniques and the perceived level of closeness.

Additionally, by evaluating specific aspects of parenting styles, such as communication, parental participation, and control, the study seeks to uncover facilitators or barriers to perceived closeness reported by parents. The overarching goal, however, is to contribute to existing knowledge on parenting styles and closeness perceptions while offering a more detailed understanding of the roles played by various elements within parenting styles. Addressing research gaps and responding to the need for clearer and more specific data, this study aligns with recommendations for in-depth exploration of parenting styles.

In the context of long-term goals, the study investigates the lasting effects of perceived closeness on adolescents as they transition into adulthood. It explores whether certain parenting styles contribute to positive long-term outcomes in mental health and relationship satisfaction. The study also considers potential gender differences in how sons and daughters perceive closeness under the same parenting style. Insights into the impact of parenting styles and perceived closeness on academic engagement, career pursuits, and peer relationships are also contemplated.

This research adopts a qualitative design, aligning with its specific objectives to explore parents' perceptions of closeness with their adolescents. The decision to limit the participant pool to six individuals was to emphasize the depth and quality of responses over quantity in line with the qualitative nature of the study. Thematic analysis was employed to uncover patterns and meanings within the data, focusing on the subjective experiences and interpretations of closeness. The chosen sample size allowed for an in-depth investigation of each participant's unique experiences, facilitating a more profound evaluation of their responses.

Participants, recruited via email, provided informed consent, and were labeled numerically to ensure confidentiality. The study, conducted in adherence to ethical guidelines, involved both mothers and fathers with adolescents aged 12 to 19. The demographic details and responses were meticulously recorded and analyzed. The methodology ensures methodological rigor, meeting Yardley's (2000) criteria for qualitative research, with reflexivity incorporated to acknowledge potential biases.

The results of this study reveal distinctive patterns in parenting styles and their corresponding impact on perceived closeness between parents and adolescents. Through the analysis of responses, Participant #1, Participant #2, and Participant #3 show evidence of practicing authoritative parenting, emphasizing autonomy, rules with explanations, balanced leniency, and an active teaching of independence. In contrast, Participants #4 and #5 exhibited authoritarian parenting traits, emphasizing rule prioritization, limited independence, and a focus on obedience. Participant #6, representing permissive parenting, demonstrating a noninterventionist approach, minimal rule-setting, and encouragement of self-direction. Examining perceptions of closeness, Participants #1-3

consistently reported a greater sense of closeness compared to Participants #4-6. Notably, authoritative parenting styles were associated with positive perceptions of closeness, as evidenced by themes such as maintaining availability, shared interests, and proactive communication. In contrast, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were linked to increased barriers like strictness, challenges in communication, and low emotional expression.

These findings align with existing theories, suggesting that authoritative parenting fosters a more positive and closer parent-adolescent relationship. The study reinforces the importance of adopting an authoritative approach for fostering positive connections during adolescence.

In essence, this research aims to enrich our comprehension of the multifaceted relationship between parenting styles and perceived closeness, contributing valuable insights for the well-being and development of adolescents.

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**Interview Guide**

1. How would you describe your role as a parent in your adolescent's life?

   Prompt: How would you describe the part you play in their lives?

2. What is your opinion on giving reasons and explanations behind the rules that are set for your adolescent?

3. What are your views when it comes to the limits and rules that you set for your adolescent?

   Prompt: Are you more flexible and lenient, or do you believe obedience and compliance is more important?

4. What are your views on independence during adolescence?

   Prompt: How do you determine when something should be decided by you or by your adolescent?

5. How do you perceive closeness between you and your adolescent?

   Prompt: What would you say are indicators of a close relationship between you?

6. How do you think your adolescent perceives the level of closeness between the two of you?

7. How would you help your adolescent feel more at ease sharing their ideas and feelings with you?

8. Can you recognize any indications or behaviors that suggest that your adolescent feels close to you?

9. Do you think there are any barriers or challenges that keep your adolescent from feeling close to you?

10. What do you do to maintain your involvement in your adolescent's life?

    Prompt: What are ways that you use to stay involved in their life?

11. How do you approach situations where your adolescent shows a need for emotional support or wants your comfort?

12. Have there been any times you can recall where your adolescent looked for your support or guidance that made you feel that they could trust you with their troubles?

**Informed Consent Form**

**Purpose of the research:** To obtain data on parents' perception of closeness to their adolescent child based on their different parenting styles.

**What you will do in this research:** If you decide to participate, you will complete an online interview. Some of the questions will be about your parenting style. Others will be about your feelings and the relationship you have with your adolescent.

**Time required:** The interview should take around 25-35 minutes to complete.

**Risks:** Some of the questions may cause slight discomfort.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits, but you may find it interesting to consider your responses to questions about your parenting style and parent-child relationship.

**Confidentiality:** Your responses will be kept confidential. Your data and identity will be accessible only to the principal investigator and the co-investigators of the present study. Records and data will be kept confidential by secure storage. When research results are reported, responses will be combined and described in summary.

**Participation and withdrawal:** Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may quit at any time without penalty. You may also skip any question and continue to complete the rest of the interview.

**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**

**Gender:** _____

**Age:** _____

**Ethnicity:** _____

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |
This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review
Board of The American College of Greece.

Signature of main investigator: _____
**I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

**Signature _____          Date _____**

## Appendix C

**Video and Audio Release Form**

I voluntarily agree to be videotaped during the experiment being conducted by Melissa Pereira.
I understand that the tapes will be used only for transcribing the data acquired. These tapes will be identified by Melissa Pereira. The tapes will be kept for one month. After data is collected the tapes will be destroyed.


_____                                              Date _____
Signature of the Participant


_____                                              Date _____
Signature of Investigator

**Debriefing Form**
Thank you for participating in this study. This debriefing form will give you further information regarding the study, answer potential questions or concerns you might have, and guarantee that you understand your part in the research process.

**Study overview and main questions:**
In this study, we are investigating parents' perceptions of closeness to their adolescent based on their different parenting styles. Your participation is crucial in helping us gain insights and contribute to the understanding of this. The main questions to be examined are if parenting styles affect parent-child closeness in adolescence and what parenting style creates the greatest sense of closeness.

**How was this tested?**
During the interview, you were asked to answer questions about your parenting style and other questions to determine how close you feel emotionally to your child. After this your answer will be compared to those of other participants in order to extract patterns and significant relationships between variables.

**What if I have questions or want to know more?**
If you have any further questions or concerns about the study, you can contact Melissa Pereira at (+1) 954 701 0385 or via email: mpereira@acg.edu. If you are interested, we can also provide you with a summary of the study's findings once it's completed.

Whom to contact about your rights in this research or for questions, concerns, suggestions, complaints that are not being addressed by the research team, or in case of research-related harm: Institutional Review Board at the American College of Greece. E-mail: irb@acg.edu

If the interview caused any harm to your mental health "**BetterHelp"** is a mental health platform that offers people online therapies. Web-based interaction, as well as phone and text conversations, are used to deliver online counseling and therapy services.

**Acknowledgment:**
By participating in this study, you acknowledge that you have read and understood this debriefing form, as well as consented to participate and provided your valuable insights for research purposes. Furthermore, please do not disclose research procedures and hypotheses to anyone who might participate in this study between now and the end of the data collection (October, 2023) as this could affect the results of the study. Thank you for your participation!

**Appendix F**

Participant #1

1. Now that they're teenagers they're more independent and they don't feel like they need me for everything. I have a hard time with that because it's a different phase in their life so it's kind of like we're both letting go at the same time; they're letting go in one way and I'm letting go in another. It's almost like the hands are slipping you know.

2. To me that is one of the main things I've always tried to do. Even when they were little I never said, "don't touch the stove" I would tell them "Don't touch the stove because it'll burn you and hurt". There was always a reason and now that they're older there's things that I have to explain further. I always felt the need to explain, and I think it has to do a lot with my past, because to me it was never really explained. I grew up in a very different way you know- so I tried to make it different for them so that way it wasn't just all because "I told you so". I never liked "I told you so" and I'd rather feel like they understand the reason why, because then there would never be a question as to why the rules are in place. If it's to get home on time, if it's not to hang out with certain people, or if it's not to go to certain places there's always a reason.

3. Sometimes I think I'm somewhere in the middle. I want to I want to be more lenient because I want to try to be more understanding, but sometimes I do feel like they have to follow my rules you know. Basically, I know what's best for them but I'm also flexible because I want to give them some freedom and space to mess up and make their own mistakes- and learn from their own mistakes. So, I feel like there is an in between but I'm leaning towards being a more relaxed mom, especially now because I feel like it just stresses me out too much to be extremely strict with them. I also just don't want to be like that.

4. I had a very hard time letting my kids be independent and make their own decisions, or like even question my decisions as a parent. I had a hard time with them asking me "why" and that's why- going back to that other question about like telling them why- became important. Although, I literally had to teach him independence. I have to be like ok here's your laundry, you know you have to do this, and I have to teach him how to do it. The other day he told me, he's like "I feel like I'm getting more independent" and I'm like "Okay I guess I'm doing my job". I believe that it's super important because I always think like I want to raise them to not need me anymore and it's hard because I want them to stay little, but he he's definitely been showing more signs of independence. I mean I do still have to stay on top of him, but he still kind of surprises me when he shows independence. When he makes plans with his friends on his own and just comes and asks me if he can leave, that's sort of like an independence thing. It's the emotional independence too and that's what I'm starting to see more and more.

5. That was the thing that I was very concerned about, ever since I the minute I had kids I was like, I want to be my kids' lives - I want to talk to them, I want to be involved in their lives. I was like, I have to find something to connect me to him. So then I was like video games is not my thing, like that's something I'm ever going to be able to get on. So then, he really likes football, and he really likes sports so then I was like OK I'll learn football go watch football together and that's what we do so now every weekend. He like looks really forward to it. He like sits with us and then you know it's like 2-3 hours of us just watching him talking about all the stats and sometimes it goes right over my head, but I try to become interested, and I even started like watching videos on it and things like that just because I want to have that connection with him. and I was like if it's nothing else it's this one thing so that's the way I try to stay connected even if I have to learn something new to be connected with him.

6. I think it's interesting because he just randomly will get in the car or like I'll just be sitting doing something and he randomly comes and starts telling me about some fact about the sport that he you know he's watching or he wants to watch or about random things that he wants to do so I think it's interesting because it feels like there's something for us to talk about like we have something in common now right so and I feel like he's even become closer like with his dad because like the relationship has always been a little but I it's closer to his dad now also because of that because we are all involved in it like as a family

7. One way I found that to get him to talk because he's very he's a lot more quiet he's a lot more reserved is that it sure that I'm not judging him when he talks to me because I felt like I was always ready to like give my insight on the situation and he's usually not the kind to come and ask me for advice so like when he does come and talk to me about something maybe a little bit deeper than I have to be willing to just listen to him and answer from listening and not from like Oh my experience of this situation is this so basically just -um- really listening to him in order to in order to answer and even with my daughter it's the same thing like I always have to practice all a lot of listening so I wasn't so preachy all the time and it's hard because like you know the kind of environment like we grew up people like we're very judgy and we're very unhappy yeah so like it's hard because like I have to put my like Brazilian side of my American side and that's how I grew up and put them together and make the best out of it but just not being preachy I think it makes them more open to come and you know like talk to you as a parent talk to their parents because otherwise they just close off and then they're like I don't want to hear it you know so I'd rather not say anything

8. I'm telling you just the fact that sometimes he like puts his phone down and like looks at me and when he's talking, like these days I believe that that's closeness. Also, usually I'm like "Oh me and your dad are going to go out to eat" and then he's like "I don't want to go, I'm going to stay home" and then all of a sudden, I see him getting ready he's like "Oh no I'm coming too", like just randomly. So, as he's getting a little bit older now he wants to hang out with us more, so just the

fact that he wants to participate. And, I'd never make him do something that he didn't really want to do, unless it was like really required of him, so now if he does it it's because he really wants to do it. Some things are non-negotiables obviously, but certain things are like, you know, you don't have to go but then he's like "Oh no I want to go", and then he comes and he like hangs out and does stuff with us.

9. Yes, I think there are, sometimes I feel like he doesn't he doesn't feel comfortable, and I think it has a lot to do with his personality. He's less talkative and like he's more, you know, he holds his feelings in. Like they don't spill out, so that's the only thing I can think of.

10. Yeah, I feel like I just try to learn what he likes you know. I feel like my antennas are on all the time because like anything he says, I'm just like, I pounce on it. I don't want to be oblivious to like what he's thinking and what he's saying or the comments that he's making. I try to listen as much as I can, but I also try to give him his space. I also always tell him "If you ever feel like you need to talk to somebody that's not me, like if you want to see a therapist or somebody that you want to talk to you can". Because he has ADHD, so his mind works differently, and he has told me that. I try to be very understanding that my kids are very different.

11. I feel like I am right there. Sometimes I feel like I am too available and to tell you the truth I don't know if that's a good thing. I feel like I've kind of handicapped them in the way, because problem solving for them has become like my job. Everybody in the house knows that I'm the one that solves their problems.

12. It's very rare that he comes up to me. I'm usually the one that's like poking and prying things out of him, saying like "How you feel, how was your day?". Sometimes I can tell by just like looking at his face that something is not right. Like the first couple weeks of school was very rough for him. He was at a different school and then I had to switch him back to his old school. He was physically showing signs that, like you know, something wasn't right. He was like sleeping a lot, but he wouldn't talk about it. So, one day he finally asked if he could go back to his old school. So, you know, I try to make myself available, but at the same time I want them to also, like, come to me. It doesn't always happen, so I do feel like I have to pull it from him.


Participant #2

1. I think it's a hard position to be in and I try to be understanding you know. I think I have the right to be the decider sometimes, but I also want them to be able to have a say in what they wear and what they do. They want things their own way and I'm okay with that. I know that everything can't be the way that I want it, right.

2. I think they need to have limits and I am the one to give them. I think it is important to give them explanations for things. So they can understand. An example is like the social media. I know she's on it a lot. She spends a lot of time on it and I hate it, you know, I'm always worried about that and I'm always trying to limit it. I explain the dangers of it to her and why I don't want her on it all the time. I think it's important as a mom to talk to her and let her open up to me and talk to me too.

3. I think I'm flexible. I just want to keep her from making mistakes like I did, you know. Now as a parent I want just to protect her, because I remember being a teenager and I thought I knew so much, just like she probably thinks she knows everything. But she still needs me to help her.

4. I think there will definitely be times when I can't be with her so she will have to think independently whether I like it or not. I just hope I'm doing everything I can so that she makes good choices when she does have to be independent.

5. Well, I try to let her know that I'm always available. Like yesterday she went to a party so I asked her how it went and if she took any pictures so I could see. She usually talks to me about everything. I also think I can always tell when she's not okay and when it happens, she comes to my room and I'll ask her "are you okay, what's going on?". So, she knows that I'm here for her and I would say that shows that we are pretty close.

6. I don't think she would come to me about her feelings and advice if she didn't feel that we're close. We spend a lot of time one on one together, going to the gym or to do our nails together, and she always loves it and we talk a lot. So, yes, I would say that she would agree that we're close.

7. I think that I already ask a lot and I'm very understanding so that she will feel comfortable sharing things with me. More than that I don't know.

8. At night before it's her time to sleep she'll come in my bed and lay next to me. Usually then we'll have talks too, but sometimes we don't say anything and just stay next to each other. I think we talk about almost everything there could be to talk about. I'm sure she keeps some things private like we all do, but for the most part she's very open with me.

9. I think the only thing would be the fact that we usually see things very differently. She's very opinionated and so am I. Maybe sometimes she won't say certain things because she knows I have a different view on it or that maybe I won't understand something specific.

10. Like I said, I we go to the gym- and I only really started to go so I could spend time with her- and we get our nails done together, go grocery shopping, and other

things like that just us two. I also make sure to always ask what's going on in her life.

11. In those moments I always hug her and sometimes I ask if she wants me to pray with her. I tell her that I will always be her for her and then I ask what she needs that I could help her with.

12. Well, she always comes and talks to me when something is wrong. So, I believe she does feel comfortable talking to me about things that trouble her. These days she mostly has boy troubles, so we've been talking a lot about that. I believe she does feel supported, and I think she takes my advice into consideration too.


Participant #3

1. I think my role as a parent in these years is to make sure they grow up knowing how to take care of themselves. To teach them what they should know and be there to help when they mess up. More than anything I just want my son to be responsible and respectful.

2. Explaining the reasons behind rules is fundamental. I am a strong believer in providing a foundation of understanding and respect for authority in my house. Respect is earned so of course my kid needs to understand the reasoning behind rules.

3. I emphasize rules and limits to a certain degree. I can be very lenient if the respect and accountability is there. Obedience is important but so is balance. I know that in order for my kid to learn he has to make a couple mistakes here and there.

4. Since my boy is only 14 years old there's a lot about independence that I still have to teach him. He definitely still needs me a lot, but I let him do his own thing at times when I know he can handle it.

5. I think that compared to what I've seen in other families and other father/son relationships me and my boy are pretty close. We have similar interests like sports and we fish together a lot. Spending a lot of time together gives us a chance to talk more than we would otherwise, so it definitely keeps us close.

6. I would guess that he thinks we're close too. I would hope so at least. Since he seems to like spending time with me too, I think that's a pretty good indication that he sees us as close. We've never explicitly talked about it, so I can't tell you for sure.

7. I think the only way to go about it is to be straight forward and ask. If not, I don't think the conversation would ever come about. And once ideas or feelings were

shared, I would be open and receptive to whatever is said. So, yea, that would be more of the how.

8.  I think I can tell at times when he feels close to me in small everyday things. Like, sometimes he'll tell me something that happened to him that day without me even having to ask. He also loves to tell jokes and make me laugh. I love when he tells jokes. He also opens up when something really bothers him and that's a pretty big deal for a teenage boy in my opinion.

9.  Nothing really comes to mind. I feel like I'm as available timewise and emotionally as possible. I really try to keep the right balance between being his dad and his friend. I think it's important to be approachable and as understanding as possible.

10. I make time for him as often as I can. I move my schedule around to spend time with him if I feel like we've been disconnected. I think it's so easy to lose touch with them at this age, so I try to make it a priority to spend quality time together.

11. I let him know that I'm always on his side. I'm here for him and I'll always help, no matter what. I never want him to be scared to tell me things and I make sure he understands that he can tell me anything and count on me to be there.

12. I can remember this one time that I don't think I'll ever forget. He asked me for advice about the very first girl he liked in middle school. I think it was his first real crush and he asked me how he should go about it. That really meant a lot to me. I really think the bond we have is something that not every parent gets to have with their kid.


Participant #4

1.  My role as a parent is to guide them, but also to enforce the rules and set boundaries. Without me they would be allowed to do whatever they wanted, and I'm not ok with that. I want to teach them good values too, and make sure she understands the importance of responsibility growing up.

2.  I don't really believe in giving reasons behind rules. If she asks, I'll usually have an answer, but sometimes she just needs to listen no matter what the reason is.

3.  I think at every age, until they move out, kids need limits and rules because they have no idea what's good for them or how the world really works. Their only job as a teen is to follow rules which is for their own benefit. I can be flexible sometimes to what my daughter has to say, but only if sure it's not something that could put her in danger or be bad for her in any way.

4. Like I said I try to be flexible where I can but obviously teens can't be independent, or they wouldn't need parents at all. I really believe that setting boundaries and keeping a close eye on them is the best thing you can do for them.

5. I think we are close. I try to be around as much as possible. We don't talk a lot, but that's mostly because she's a girl and I don't understand half the things she's interested in. I think all teenagers are like that though. They're just at an age where all they want to do is go out and be around their friends.

6. I actually have no idea if she thinks we're close or not. I think she likes and respects me. And we have a mutual love for each other even if we don't talk about it or say it every day.

7. I guess I could ask her if she wants to talk about anything. I think that's more of her mom's role. It would be pretty awkward, and I don't think she would say much if I asked. However, when she does tell me things I think I do a pretty good job of listening.

8. I think she's asked me for my advice once or twice if that counts. She also watches TV with me on Saturdays sometimes. But, like I said, she's mostly interested in going out with her friends at this age.

9. A barrier to closeness would definitely be the fact that she's a girl and I don't understand what teenage girls are interested in right now. I also know that sometimes the rules and things like that make her angry. She doesn't want to be around me when I have to tell her no. I get that my rules can be frustrating, but when she grows up she'll understand better.

10. She plays volleyball so I got to her games when I can. Sometimes on the weekends we all go out to eat as a family too.

11. That really never happens. I'm not a very emotional guy and I don't know how I would react if she needed me to talk about her feelings. I don't think I talk to anyone about feelings, but that's just how I am. She would definitely talk to her mom, but I think my wife would handle it better anyway, so it's better that way.

12. She has definitely asked for my opinion one time or another. I have seen her take my advice for situations in school or with her friends before. The times when that happened felt really nice because even though I wasn't forcing her to do what I said she still wanted to. That's a nice feeling.


Participant #5

1. Well, I think that as adults and parents it's our job to teach our kids right from wrong. They can make mistakes, but the mistakes shouldn't be repeated. Sure,

they will be influenced by friends and other things, but under my roof they will keep their values in mind. I don't want to hear things like, but she did this or he did that. I don't care what other houses do, that's up to them. A set of rules has to be followed. Just like in life. Rules are everywhere. So, my role is to basically teach those rules and make sure that my kids follow them.

2.  Honestly, I don't think it's necessary. Like I get wanting an explanation sure. I want one for things I don't like just as much as the next person. But it's honestly not my priority to teach reasoning and be constantly explaining. There are things you have to follow and sometimes an explanation isn't needed. As a mother of three, you can't always be answering "why this and that". My kids only have to keep in mind that it's in their best interest. That's all.

3.  It for sure depends on what the kids are asking to do or things like that. But whatever it is there has to be obedience. If I say no, then it's no. There's no negotiating, no buts and no ifs. By 16 years old he knows every rule of the house. To ask to do something outside of those rules would be irrational in my opinion. He knows what the answer will be and honestly, I haven't had a problem with that.

4.  Independence is a tricky thing at this age. I feel like teenagers always have a misguided belief of what's best for them when they don't really know in reality. I don't see independence as my kid just doing things alone. I see independence as doing responsible things an adult would be doing. So like chores. There's a checklist at home for things to be done. Mind you I don't make him do everything of course, but he has to do at least 4 things from the list. Each thing he does he checks off and I can see if it's really been done or not. I feel like this teaches him independence in a way that maybe he doesn't really like, but it teaches it for sure. As for freedoms? They come with age and rules are set again for any new-found freedom basically.

5.  I think it's up and down, if that makes sense. Sure, I sometimes feel that me being strict might push him away but like with all kids it never seems to last that long. For example, if he doesn't like a rule or the fact that I'm not lenient in changing the rule, he could spend the rest of the day not talking to me much. But then as soon as he needs something he talks to me and acts like normal. It's just a reaction so it doesn't bother me. And he'll always get over it eventually.

6.  He's closer with his father, so I feel like with me there's a different relationship. I'm not his friend, and I don't want to be. That isn't my role in his life and he knows that. He knows the boundaries and he doesn't cross them. Only if his father tries to reason with me, will he try to push more than usual, but it doesn't work mostly. So, I would have to say that he probably sees me as the strict parent. That's what I feel like I have to be to make sure he learns strong values that he'll use later in his life.

7. At 16? Even with his dad he doesn't open up that much. Whether it's the age or just his personality, he doesn't really share personal things. It's nearly impossible. Like a closed clam. I've tried several times to talk to him about things that might be preoccupying his mind, but he shuts down. Like, he says I won't understand, or that I won't really listen and I'll just give my opinion. I won't lie, it makes me sad. And I really don't know what I could do for that. Because, like I said, I don't think it has to do with me being strict, because he doesn't really talk to his father about things either.

8. Um, well he does throw in the occasional hug every now and then. Unprompted even, but I think the one thing I could really say is he does talk to me about his potential future career a lot. That's the one thing I can say he tries to talk about frequently with me. He mostly asks about which path is better and the pros and cons and things like that. Maybe because I've been so meticulous in planning out his life and setting rules and being his main authority figure. I would hope that's what he's thinking. But I am glad that he does choose to talk about that with me at least.

9. I feel like my strictness could be a barrier, but I have mixed feelings about it. I'm not strict to be feared or anything like that, but on the other hand I do have to parent. I'm strict to be taken seriously as parental figure, just like my parents were, and in the end I realized they were only doing what was best for me. At the end of the day I still love my parents too.

10. I try to stay involved as much as I can. I always to try to find ways. For example, I know his phone password. But I have been very clear that I would use it in case of extreme measures. If the rules are being followed about social media and other things, then I wouldn't need to use it. He knows this and it's worked so far. So really, what happens is entirely up to him and his actions. Other than that, I try to stay updated about school things as well. To make sure his grades aren't dropping to a point of concern. I have his close friends' phone numbers in case of emergency. Things like that. Basic things in my opinion.

11. Like I mentioned before, I have tried to get him to open up about things that worry him. I mostly just try and remind him that I love him and always want what's best for him. And I always tell him that he can come to me for anything and we can discuss it; especially if it's something he needs comforting in. Picking colleges has been really stressful and he's expressed that to me sometimes. I always try to relax him and tell him that he still has plenty of time to decide. But overall, he is the type of kid to just handle it on his own, even though I encourage talking about things whenever he needs to.

12. Like I said, I have supported him in choosing career paths. But another time I remember well is when he didn't make the football team two years ago. This wasn't really academic, but he did see it as a failure and I tried to comfort him as much as I could. Just reminding him that he can try out again and that one athletic

setback doesn't define his life. I do wish it happened more often that he asked for my advice or support.

Participant #6

1. I think my role as a parent is to let them make mistakes and learn from it. They need to do their own thing, or they won't ever really learn.

2. Honestly, we never really need to have those kinds of talks because if I ever do set a rule it's a pretty obvious one like "don't drink and drive". I've never enforced house rules like curfews or chores because I don't think they're that necessary. As long as he checks in every now and then and I know he's safe, we're good. I think that's the most important thing.

3. I basically just answered that- all I care about is if he's safe. He's an 18-year-old boy. He's going to get in to trouble and be dumb. Every once and a while I'll give advice, but he's a good kid for the most part and I don't ever really have to seriously worry about him.

4. These are the years they have to be independent. The teenage years are made for them to start learning how to be their own person and what kind of life they're going to make for themselves. Honestly, they're most likely going to make their own choices no matter what I say, so I just don't even bother most of the time. It's just how teenagers are.

5. I mean we have a good relationship if that's what you're asking. We get along way better than me and my parents ever did. I like him and I'm pretty sure he likes me too.

6. I don't know. He's not like telling me all his deepest fears and secrets, but like I said, from my perspective, he seems to like how I parent. We live in the same house, and we get along- I think that's a pretty good deal.

7. I don't know. That's a hard question. We're guys so we don't talk about feelings and stuff.

8. We watch TV together sometimes. We have conversations around the house at least twice a day, sometimes we talk about sports or whatever other relevant topic there is.

9. I'm not the best with words and feelings. I'm just not that kind of guy. So, if he ever did want to talk about deep stuff, I guess it would be kind of a challenge.

10. We've been to a couple of sports games together. We really like watching Miami Heat play. We watch TV together and that's what we spend most of our time together doing.

11. I really wouldn't know. I don't think it's ever going to happen. If there was something serious going on he would definitely talk to his mom about that stuff before he would ever ask me.

No, like me he keeps the emotional stuff to himself. Maybe that's not too healthy, but I

don't know any men who talk about their feelings, especially their dad

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1
Participant #1

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|---|---|---|
| Autonomy | "Now that they're teenagers they're more independent and they don't feel like they need me for everything." "It's a different phase in their life so it's kind of like we're both letting go at the same time." "It's almost like the hands are slipping you know." | The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy |
| Limits and Explanations | "I always felt the need to explain, and I think it has to do a lot with my past." "I never liked 'I told you so' and I'd rather feel like they understand the reason why, because then there would never be a question as to why the rules are in place." | Setting Limits and Providing Explanations |
| Rules and Leniency | "Sometimes I think I'm somewhere in the middle." "I want to be more lenient because I want to try to be more understanding, but sometimes I do feel like they have to follow my rules." | Balancing Rules and Leniency |
| Teaching Independence | "I had a very hard time letting my kids be independent and make their own decisions." "I believe that it's super important because I always think like I want to raise them to not need me anymore." | Teaching Independence During Adolescence |
| Availability and Closeness | " That was the thing that I was very concerned about, ever since I the minute I had kids I was like, I want to be my kids' lives - I want to talk to them, I want to be involved in their lives." | Maintaining Availability and Closeness |

| Closeness and Interests | "It's interesting because he just randomly will get in the car or like I'll just be sitting doing something and he randomly comes and starts telling me about some fact about the sport."<br>"I think it's interesting because it feels like there's something for us to talk about like we have something in common now." | Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests |

" I was like, I have to find something to connect me to him..."
"…I even started like watching videos on it and things like that just because I want to have that connection with him."

Closeness and Interests | "It's interesting because he just randomly will get in the car or like I'll just be sitting doing something and he randomly comes and starts telling me about some fact about the sport."
"I think it's interesting because it feels like there's something for us to talk about like we have something in common now." | Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests

Questions and Understanding | "One way I found that to get him to talk [...] is to make sure that I'm not judging him when he talks to me."
"Basically, just- um- really listening to him in order to answer and even with my daughter it's the same thing." | Asking Questions and Being Understanding

Close Relationship | "Just the fact that sometimes he like puts his phone down and like looks at me and when he's talking, like these days I believe that that's closeness."
"Just the fact that he wants to participate [...] and he like hangs out and does stuff with us." | Indications of a Close Relationship

Personality Traits | "…sometimes I feel like he doesn't he doesn't feel comfortable, and I think it has a lot to do with his personality"
"He's less talkative and like he's more, you know, he holds his feelings in." | Distinct Personality Traits Hindering Closeness

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Maintaining Closeness | "I try to learn what he likes [...] I try to listen to it, but I also try to give him his space."<br>"I always tell him like I leave it open also like if you ever feel like you need to talk to somebody that's not me." | Maintaining Closeness While Respecting Boundaries |
| Proactive Attitude | "I feel like I am right there."<br>"…problem solving for them has become like my job."<br>"Everybody in the house knows that I'm the one that solves their problems." | A Proactive Attitude Towards Assistance |
| Initiating | "It's very rare that he comes up to me."<br>"I'm usually the one that's like poking and prying things out of him, saying like "How you feel, how was your day?"<br>"So, you know, I try to make myself available, but at the same time I want them to also, like, come to me." | Initiating Conversations |

Table 2

Participant #2

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|------|-----------------|----------------|
| Autonomy | " I think I have the right to be the decider sometimes, but I also want them to be able to have a say in what they wear and what they do." " They want things their own way and I'm okay with that." | The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy |
| Limits and Explanations | "I think they need to have limits and I am the one to give them." "I explain the dangers of it [social media] to her and why I don't want her on it [social media] all the time." "I think it's important as a mom to talk to her and let her open up to me and talk to me too." | Setting Limits and Providing Explanations |
| Rules and Leniency | "I think I'm flexible." "I just want to keep her from making mistakes like I did." "Now as a parent I want just to protect her." | Balancing Rules and Leniency |
| Teaching Independence | "I think there will definitely be times when I can't be with her so she will have to think independently." "I just hope I'm doing everything I can so that she makes good choices when she does have to be independent." | Teaching Independence During Adolescence |
| Availability and Closeness | "Well, I try to let her know that I'm always available." "She knows that I'm here for her and I would say that shows that we are pretty close." | Maintaining Availability and Closeness |
| Closeness and Interests | "We spend a lot of time one on one together, going to the gym or to do our | Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | nails together, and she always loves it, and we talk a lot."<br><br>"I don't think she would come to me about her feelings and advice if she didn't feel that we're close."<br><br>"So, yes, I would say that she would agree that we're close." | |
| Questions and Understanding | "I think that I already ask a lot and I'm very understanding so that she will feel comfortable sharing things with me." | Asking Questions and Being Understanding |
| Close Relationship | "At night before it's her time to sleep she'll come in my bed and lay next to me."<br><br>"Usually then we'll have talks too, but sometimes we don't say anything and just stay next to each other." | Indications of a Close Relationship |
| Approachability | "I think the only thing would be the fact that we usually see things very differently."<br><br>"Maybe sometimes she won't say certain things because she knows I have a different view on it or that maybe I won't understand something specific." | Being Available and Approachable |
| Bonding | "Like I said, I we go to the gym- and I only really started to go so I could spend time with her- and we get our nails done together, go grocery shopping, and other things like that just us two."<br><br>"I also make sure to always ask what's going on in her life." | Shared Activities and Bonding |
| Supportive Gestures | "In those moments I always hug her and sometimes I ask if she wants me to pray with her." | Efforts to Show Supportive Gestures |

"I tell her that I will always be her for her and then I ask what she needs that I could help her with."

| Troubles and Advice | "Well, she always comes and talks to me when something is wrong." "These days she mostly has boy troubles, so we've been talking a lot about that." "I believe she does feel supported, and I think she takes my advice into consideration too." | Sharing Troubles and Giving Advice |

Table 3

Participant #3

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|---|---|---|
| Autonomy | "I think my role as a parent in these years is to make sure they grow up knowing how to take care of themselves." " To teach them what they should know and be there to help when they mess up." | The Parental Role of Teaching Autonomy |
| Limits and Explanations | "Explaining the reasons behind rules is fundamental." "Respect is earned so of course my kid needs to understand the reasoning behind rules." | Setting Limits and Providing Explanations |
| Rules and Leniency | "I emphasize rules and limits to a certain degree." "Obedience is important but so is balance." "I know that in order for my kid to learn he has to make a couple mistakes here and there." | Balancing Rules and Leniency |
| Teaching Independence | "Since my boy is only 14 years old there's a lot about independence that I still have to teach him." "He definitely still needs me a lot, but I let him do his own thing at times when I know he can handle it." | Teaching Independence During Adolescence |
| Availability and Closeness | "I think that compared to what I've seen in other families and other father/son relationships me and my boy are pretty close." "Spending a lot of time together gives us a chance to talk more than we would otherwise, so it definitely keeps us close." | Maintaining Availability and Closeness |

| Closeness and Interests | "I would guess that he thinks we're close too. I would hope so at least." "Since he seems to like spending time with me too, I think that's a pretty good indication that he sees us as close." | Perceived Closeness and Shared Interests |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Questions and Understanding | "I think the only way to go about it is to be straightforward and ask." "And once ideas or feelings were shared, I would be open and receptive to whatever is said." | Asking Questions and Being Understanding |
| Close Relationship | "I think I can tell at times when he feels close to me in small everyday things." "Sometimes he'll tell me something that happened to him that day without me even having to ask." "He also loves to tell jokes and make me laugh." "He also opens up when something really bothers him and that's a pretty big deal for a teenage boy in my opinion." | Indications of a Close Relationship |
| Approachability | "I feel like I'm as available timewise and emotionally as possible." "I really try to keep the right balance between being his dad and his friend." "I think it's important to be approachable and as understanding as possible." | Being Available and Approachable |
| Quality Time | "I make time for him as often as I can." "I move my schedule around to spend time with him if I feel like we've been disconnected." "I think it's so easy to lose touch with them at this age, so I try to make it a priority to spend quality time together." | Prioritizing Quality Time |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Support and Openness | "I let him know that I'm always on his side."<br>"I'm here for him and I'll always help, no matter what."<br>"I never want him to be scared to tell me things and I make sure he understands that he can tell me anything and count on me to be there." | Assurance of Support and Openness |
| Troubles and Advice | "I can remember this one time that I don't think I'll ever forget."<br>"He asked me for advice about the very first girl he liked in middle school."<br>"I really think the bond we have is something that not every parent gets to have with their kid." | Sharing Troubles and Giving Advice |

Table 4

Participant #4

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|------|-----------------|----------------|
| Rules | "My role as a parent is to guide them, but also to enforce the rules and set boundaries." "I want to teach them good values too, and make sure she understands the importance of responsibility growing up." | The Parental Role of Teaching Rules |
| No Explanations Needed | "I don't really believe in giving reasons behind rules." "If she asks I'll usually have an answer, but sometimes she just needs to listen no matter what the reason is." | Views that Reasoning and Explanations for Rules is Unnecessary |
| Obedience | "I think at every age, until they move out, kids need limits and rules." "Their only job as a teen is to follow rules which is for their own benefit." | Prioritizing Obedience and Rules |
| Minimal Independence | "Like I said I try to be flexible where I can but obviously teens can't be independent." "I really believe that setting boundaries and keeping a close eye on them is the best thing you can do for them." | Minimal Independence During Adolescence |
| Closeness | "I think we are close." "We don't talk a lot, but that's mostly because she's a girl and I don't understand half the things she's interested in." "I think all teenagers are like that though. They're just at an age where all they want to do is go out and be around their friends." | A Perception of Closeness |

| Closeness | "I actually have no idea if she thinks we're close or not."<br>"I think she likes and respects me."<br>"We have a mutual love for each other even if we don't talk about it or say it every day." | Uncertainty About Adolescent's Feelings of Closeness |
|---|---|---|
| Communication | "I guess I could ask her if she wants to talk about anything."<br>"It would be pretty awkward, and I don't think she would say much if I asked." | Awkwardness Surrounding Communication |
| Shared Activities and Communication | "I think she's asked me for my advice once or twice if that counts."<br>"She also watches TV with me on Saturdays sometimes."<br>"But, like I said, she's mostly interested in going out with her friends at this age." | Low Levels of Shared Activities and Communication |
| Gender | "A barrier to closeness would definitely be the fact that she's a girl and I don't understand what teenage girls are interested in right now."<br>"I also know that sometimes the rules and things like that make her angry."<br>"She doesn't want to be around me when I have to tell her no." | Barriers to Closeness Due to Gender |
| Involvement | "She plays volleyball so I got to her games when I can."<br>"Sometimes on the weekends we all go out to eat as a family too." | Moderate Involvement in Activities |
| Emotional Expression | "That really never happens."<br>"I'm not a very emotional guy and I don't know how I would react if she needed me to talk about her feelings."<br>"I don't think I talk to anyone about feelings, but that's just how I am." | Low Emotional Expression |
| Advice Seeking | "She has definitely asked for my opinion one time or another." | Rare Occurrences of Advice Seeking |

"I have seen her take my advice for situations in school or with her friends before."
"The times when that happened felt really nice because even though I wasn't forcing her to do what I said she still wanted to. That's a nice feeling."

Table 5

Participant #5

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|---|---|---|
| Rules | "Well, I think that as adults and parents it's our job to teach our kids right from wrong." "A set of rules has to be followed. Just like in life. Rules are everywhere." "So, my role is to basically teach those rules and make sure that my kids follow them." | The Parental Role of Teaching Rules |
| No Explanations Needed | "Honestly, I don't think it's necessary." "You can't always be answering 'why this and that'." "My kids only have to keep in mind that it's in their best interest. That's all." | Views that Reasoning and Explanations for Rules is Unnecessary |
| Obedience | "But whatever it is there has to be obedience." "If I say no, then it's no. There's no negotiating, no buts and no ifs." "By 16 years old she knows every rule of the house." | Prioritizing Obedience and Rules |
| Minimal Independence | "Since my boy is only 14 years old there's not a lot of independence I can give yet." "He definitely still needs me a lot, but I let him do his own thing at times when I know he can handle it." | Minimal Independence During Adolescence |
| Barrier to Closeness | "I think it's up and down, if that makes sense." "Sure, I sometimes feel that me being strict might push him away, but like with all kids it never seems to last that long." "For example, if he doesn't like a rule or the fact that I'm not lenient in changing the rule, he could spend the | Strict Parenting Creating a Barrier to Closeness |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | rest of the day not talking to me much." | |
| Parent Role and Closeness | " I'm not his friend, and I don't want to be." "I would have to say that he probably sees me as a strict parent." "That's what I've been and that's what I feel like I should be — to make sure he takes away strong values from this house." | Perceived Parent Role Above Closeness |
| Communication | "Whether it's the age or just his personality, he doesn't really share personal things." "I've tried several times to talk to him about things that might be preoccupying his mind, but he shuts down." "He says I won't understand or that I won't really listen, and I'll just give my opinion." | Challenges with Communication and Closeness |
| Affection and Communication | "Um, well he does throw in the occasional hug every now and then." "… he does talk to me about his potential future career a lot." "Maybe because I've been so meticulous in planning out his life and setting rules and being his main authority figure." | Physical Expressions of Affection and a Shared Topic of Communication |
| Strictness | "I feel like my strictness could be a barrier, but I have mixed feelings about it." "I'm strict to be taken seriously as parental figure, just like my parents were, and in the end I realized they were only doing what was best for me." | Barriers to Closeness Due to Strictness |
| Being Involved | "I try to stay involved as much as I can." "If the rules are being followed about social media and other things, then I | Being Involved to an Extent |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | wouldn't need to use [his phone password]." "… I try to stay updated about school things as well." "I have his close friends' phone numbers in case of emergency." | |
| Emotional Needs | "I mostly just try and remind him that I love him and always want what's best for him." "And I always tell him that he can come to me for anything and we can discuss it; especially if it's something he needs comforting in. "But overall, he is the type of kid to just handle it on his own, even though I encourage talking about things whenever he needs to." | Challenges in Responding to Emotional Needs |
| Advice Seeking | "But another time I remember well is when he didn't make the football team two years ago." "I do wish it happened more often that he asked for my advice or support" | Rare Occurrences of Advice Seeking |

Table 6

Participant #6

| Code | Interview Quote | Emerging Theme |
|---|---|---|
| Noninterventionist | "I think my role as a parent is to let them make mistakes and learn from it."<br>"They need to do their own thing, or they won't ever really learn." | A Hands-Off View of Parental Role |
| Passive Approach | "I've never enforced house rules like curfews or chores because I don't think they're that necessary."<br>"As long as he checks in every now and then and I know he's safe, we're good." | Minimal Rule Setting |
| No Rules | "… all I care about is if he's safe."<br>"Every once and a while I'll give advice, but he's a good kid for the most part and I don't ever really have to seriously worry about him." | No Rules or Limits Being Enforced |
| Self-Direction | "These are the years they have to be independent."<br>"The teenage years are made for them to start learning how to be their own person and what kind of life they're going to make for themselves."<br>"Honestly, they're most likely going to make their own choices no matter what I say, so I just don't even bother most of the time." | Encouraging A Sense of Self-Direction |
| Feelings | "I like him and I'm pretty sure he likes me too." | Surface Level Feelings of Fondness Between Each Other |
| Communication and Interactions | "He's not like telling me all his deepest fears and secrets, but like I said, from my perspective, he seems to like how I parent." | Surface Level Communication and Interactions |

|  | "We live in the same house, and we get along- I think that's a pretty good deal." | |

| Communication | "I don't know."<br>"We're guys so we don't talk about feelings and stuff." | Very Low Levels of Emotional Communication |
| Shared Activities and Communication | "We watch TV together sometimes."<br>"We have conversations around the house at least twice a day, sometimes we talk about sports or whatever other relevant topic there is." | Low Levels of Shared Activities and Communication |
| Emotional Support | "I'm not the best with words and feelings."<br>"So, if he ever did want to talk about deep stuff, I guess it would be kind of a challenge." | Difficulties Being Emotionally Supportive |
| Bonding | "We've been to a couple of sports games together."<br>"We watch TV together and that's what we spend most of our time together doing." | Shared Activities and Bonding |
| Emotional Needs | "I really wouldn't know."<br>"If there was something serious going on he would definitely talk to his mom about that stuff before he would ever ask me." | Challenges in Responding to Emotional Needs |
| Advice Seeking | "… like me he keeps the emotional stuff to himself."<br>"Maybe that's not too healthy, but I don't know any men who talk about their feelings, especially their dads." | No Occurrences of Advice Seeking |

**Informed Consent Form**

**Purpose of the research:** To obtain data on parents' perception of closeness to their adolescent child based on their different parenting styles.

**What you will do in this research:** If you decide to participate, you will complete an online interview. Some of the questions will be about your parenting style. Others will be about your feelings and the relationship you have with your adolescent.

**Time required:** The interview should take around 35-45 minutes to complete.

**Risks:** Some of the questions may cause slight discomfort.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits, but you may find it interesting to consider your responses to questions about your parenting style and parent-child relationship.

**Confidentiality:** Your responses will be kept confidential. Your data and identity will be accessible only to the principal investigator and the co-investigators of the present study. Records and data will be kept confidential by secure storage. When research results are reported, responses will be combined and described in summary.

**Participation and withdrawal:** Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may quit at any time without penalty. You may also skip any question and continue to complete the rest of the interview.

**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**

**Gender:** F

**Age:** 42

**Adolescent's Age:** 14

**Ethnicity:** Hispanic

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of The American College of Greece.

Name and signature of main investigator: _____ Melissa Pereira _____

**I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

**Signature** ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬  **Date** 10/19/23

**Video and Audio Release Form**

I voluntarily agree to be videotaped during the experiment being conducted by Melissa Pereira. I understand that the tapes will be used only for transcribing the data acquired. These tapes will be identified by Melissa Pereira. The tapes will be kept for one month. After data is collected the tapes will be destroyed.

Signature of the Participant                          Date 10/19/23

Signature of Investigator                             Date _____

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**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**

Gender: FEMALE

Age: 47

Adolescent's Age: 16

Ethnicity: HISPANIC or LATINO

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |
This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of The American College of Greece.

Name and signature of main investigator:

**I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

Signature ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛      Date 12/4/23

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_____

Signature            of            the            Participant
Date    12/4/23

_____

Signature of Investigator                                    Date _____

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**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**
**Gender: ____Male_____**
**Age: _50___**
**Adolescent's Age: ___14__**
**Ethnicity: ____African American_____**

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |
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Signature of main investigator: _____
**I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

**Signature _____          Date   ___11/16/23_____**

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_____                         Date _____11/16/23_____
Signature of the Participant

_____                              Date _____11-16-23_____
Signature of Investigator

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**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**

Gender: MALE
Age: 47
Adolescent's Age: 16
Ethnicity: HISPANIC OR LATIN

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Name and signature of main investigator: _____

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Signature ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬          Date _____

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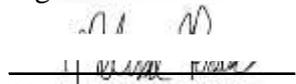**Video and Audio Release Form**

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_____
Signature of the Participant

Date __12 - 06-23__

_____
Signature of Investigator

Date ___12-06-23___

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**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**
**Gender: _____F_____**
**Age: ___46__**
**Adolescent's Age: ___16__**
**Ethnicity: _____African American_____**

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |
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Signature of main investigator: _____

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**Signature _____ Date ____11/23/23_____**

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_____
Signature of the Participant                                   Date \_\_\_\_11/23/23_____

_____
Signature of Investigator                                        Date \_\_\_\_11-23-23_____

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**Please fill out the following for background information before returning this document:**

Gender: ____Male____

Age: _40____

Adolescent's Age: ___18__

Ethnicity: _____White_____

**To Contact the Researcher:** If you have questions or concerns about this research at any time, please contact: Melissa Pereira | Email: m.pereira@acg.edu | You may also contact the faculty member supervising this work: Dr. Remos Armaos | Email: r.armaos@acg.edu |
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Name and signature of main investigator:
_____

**I have read and understood the information provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

Signature _____          Date ___11-16-23_____

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_____
Signature of the Participant                                    Date _____**11-16-23**_____

_____
Signature of Investigator                                       Date ___**11-16-23**_____