Adolescent Attachment and Family Relationships: A Secure-Base Perspective

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Central Question:

What IS a Secure Attachment Relationship in Adolescence?
Infant Security & Parenting – Findings to Date

• Mary Ainsworth (1978): .6 correlation between her in vivo ratings of maternal sensitivity and infant Strange-Situation security

• 68 studies since. Average correlation of Sensitivity to Security = .24
Infant Security & Parenting – Findings to Date

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• 68 studies since. Average correlation of Sensitivity to Security = .24

CONCLUSION

We know a little (strikingly little) about how attachment security actually shows up in parenting relationships or in parent-offspring interactions.

Sample

• 125 16-year old Adolescents and their Parents

• Adolescents selected to represent the “risky half” of their high school class
  • Based on presence of at least one academic risk factor:
    • History of grade retention
    • History of suspension
    • History of a single failing grade for one marking period
    • History of at least one period with 10 or more days absent

• 66% African American; 33% European American

• Equal numbers of Males and Females

• Highly Socio-economically Diverse (Median Family Income= $27,000)
Measures: Adult Attachment Interview (AAI)
(George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996)

- 1-hour semi-structured interview
- Attachment security:
  - Reflects coherence in discourse about episodic and semantic memories of attachment experiences.
  - Openness to remembering and discussing affectively charged attachment experiences.
  - Balance in considering positive and negative aspects of attachment relationships.
- Reliably coded using Kobak et al. (1993) Q-sort technique
  - Interrater reliability = .84; Concordance with Security Classifications = 74%

Familial Manifestations of Adolescent Attachment Security: Autonomy & Relatedness as the Adolescent Secure-Base

- Adult Security ➜ Autonomous with Respect to Attachment/ Freely Valuing, Yet Objective
- Adolescent Attachment Security ➜ Autonomy with Relatedness vis a vis Parents???
- Infant Security ➜ Exploration from a Secure Base
Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure-Base

• Step 1: Assessing Sensitivity

Adolescent Self-Perception Profile

Sample Items

For each question, identify which teen is more like you, and whether they are “sort of” like you, or “really” like you:

“Some teenagers find it hard to make friends,” but “for other teenagers it's pretty easy.”

“Some teens are disappointed with themselves,” but “some teens are pretty pleased with themselves.”

“Some teens have trouble figuring out the answers in school,” but “some teens can almost always figure out the answers in school.”

(Harter, 1988)
Test-Assessment of Maternal Sensitivity to Adolescent Self-Perceptions

\[ \text{Insensitivity} = \sum \text{Abs} [\text{Maternal Guess of Teen Rating} - \text{Actual Teen Rating}] \]

\[ \text{Sensitivity} = -1 \times \text{Insensitivity} \]

Simple Correlation

Maternal Sensitivity Test and Adolescent Attachment Security: \( .35^{***} \)
Relation of Sensitivity to Security After Accounting for Demographic Factors & Overall Teen Self-Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adolescent Attachment Security</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>Total R²</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step I.</strong></td>
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<td>Race (1=White; 2=Afr. Amer.)</td>
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<td>Overall Positivity of</td>
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<td>Teen Self-Perceptions</td>
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<td><strong>Step III.</strong></td>
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<td>Test of Maternal Sensitivity</td>
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<td>.05**</td>
<td>.24***</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: B weights are from variable’s entry into model. Model N = 123

Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure-Base

- **Step I:** Assessing Sensitivity
- **Step II:** Assessing De-Idealization
De-idealization

• A Normal Developmental Process
• Facilitated by a Relationship with Parents that Provides:
  • “Epistemic Space” or “Cognitive Autonomy” to Recognize Parental Limits
  • Safety in Expressing What is Recognized
  • NOT the Same as Wholesale Rejection of the Parent

Adolescent De-Idealization
Sample Items

**Note: All items are reverse-scored**

When I was a child, my mother:

• was never angry with me.
• and I never disagreed.
• never disappointed me.

"Mother-Father-Peer Scale" (Epstein, 1987)
Simple Correlation

Adolescent De-Idealization and Adolescent Attachment Security: .34***

Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure-Base

- Step I: Assessing Sensitivity
- Step II: Assessing De-Idealization &
- Step III: Maternal Supportiveness
Assessment of Maternal Supportiveness

- Based on 2 Adolescent-report measures:
  - Total Attachment Scale – Inventory of Parent & Peer Attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1988)
  - Acceptance Scale – Mother-Father-Peer Scale (Epstein, 1987)
- Standardized and summed to yield a measure of Perceived Maternal Supportiveness

Simple Correlation

Perceived Maternal Supportiveness and Adolescent Attachment Security: .32***
Relation of Idealization & Maternal Supportiveness to Adolescent Attachment Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Partial r</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>Total R²</th>
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<td>Step II.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adolescent De-Idealization</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.20***</td>
<td>.40***</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Variables considered in isolation</strong></td>
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Note: β weights are from variable’s entry into model. Model N = 118

Idealization & Supportiveness Suppressor Effect

When an adolescent DE-idealizes their parent, the relation of reported supportiveness to adolescent security is stronger

OR

When an adolescent in general perceives mother as supportive, signs of de-idealization will be more strongly linked to adolescent security
Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure-Base

- Step I: Assessing Sensitivity
- Step II: Assessing De-Idealization
- Step III: Maternal Supportiveness
- Step IV: Dyadic Relatedness while Disagreeing

Assessing Dyadic Relatedness while Disagreeing

- Observational Assessment of Mother and Adolescent Discussing a Major Area of Disagreement
- Relatedness Code (Autonomy & Relatedness Coding System; Allen, Hauser, Bell, McElhaney, Tate, Insabella & Schlatter, 2000).
  - Combination of Maternal & Adolescent Behaviors Promoting the Relationship in Midst of Disagreement:
    - Validation of Other’s Statements
    - Engagement/Active Listening
Simple Correlation

Dyadic Relatedness and Adolescent Attachment Security: \( .33^{**} \)

Relation of Dyadic Relatedness to Adolescent Security After Accounting for Demographic Factors

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adolescent Attachment Security</th>
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<td>Step II.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed Displays of Relatedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>While Disagreeing</td>
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Note: \( \beta \) weights are from variable’s entry into model. Model \( N = 116 \)
### Predicting Adolescent Security from Multiple Indicators of the Adolescent-Mother Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adolescent Attachment Security</th>
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<td>Family Income</td>
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<td><strong>Step II. Displays of Relatedness</strong></td>
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<td>.23**</td>
<td>.23***</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step III. Maternal Sensitivity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Step IV. Maternal Supportiveness</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Step V. Adolescent De-Idealization</strong></td>
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<td>.44***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: β weights are from variable’s entry into model. Model N = 116
Net Increase in Variance Explained = .25

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### Predicting Adolescent Security from Multiple Indicators of the Adolescent-Mother Relationship

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step I. Displays of Relatedness</strong></td>
<td>Β</td>
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<td>.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step IV. Adolescent De-Idealization</strong></td>
<td>Β</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>.39***</td>
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</table>

Note: β weights are from variable’s entry into model. Model N = 116
Final Multiple R = .63
Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure Base

- Step I: Assessing Sensitivity
- Step II: Assessing De-Idealization
- Step III: Maternal Supportiveness
- Step IV: Dyadic Relatedness while Disagreeing
- Step V: Maternal Security

Simple Correlation

Maternal Attachment Security and Adolescent Attachment Security: \(0.21^*\)
Simple Correlation

Maternal Attachment Security and Adolescent Attachment Security:  

• Correlation Appears Mediated via Measures Linked to Adolescent Autonomy Development:
  • Adolescent De-idealization of Mother
  • Dyadic Relatedness in Discussing Disagreements

One Post-hoc Model of the Prediction of Adolescent Attachment Security

RMSEA = .043
\( \chi^2 = 24.22 \quad p > .23 \)
Building a Model of the Adolescent Secure-Base

Conclusions:

• Adolescent Attachment Security remains strongly tied to the quality of familial relationships

• A “secure-base” perspective appears to capture critical elements of security in adolescent family relationships:
  
  • Maternal Sensitivity
  • Maternal Supportiveness
  • Relationship Maintenance during Disagreements
  • Adolescent De-idealization of Parent

Future Directions:

• Role of Fathers
• Extension to Other Samples
• Exploring Affective and Relational Pathways by Which Security is Linked to Social Functioning
• Familial Predictors of Change Over Time in Attachment Security
Copies of Papers Related to Today’s Talk
are available at:

faculty.virginia.edu/Allen/publications
Adolescent Attachment Organization and Family Relationships:
A Secure-Base Perspective

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Deborah J. Land
Kathleen M. Jodl

I’d like to begin by acknowledging my co-authors Kathleen McElhaney, Debbie Land, & Katie Jodl, as well as the numerous other current and former students who contributed to making these data available.
I. One of the major advances in attachment research over the past 2 decades has been what is called the “move to the level of representation” in assessing attachment.

   A. *This means that, at least for adolescents and adults, we can now measure attachment as a stable property of the individual—an internalized state of mind—*

   B. *That means we can now refer to an individual’s overall attachment organization, and not just to attachments to specific caregivers.*

   C. *Many of you are probably aware of the growing literature showing that this internalized state of mind as assessed in adolescence and adulthood is both*

      1. remarkably predictive of the attachment of one’s offspring as assessed in the strange situation, and

      2. also predictive of a wide array of indices of functioning.

II. But this move to the level of representation creates an important conceptual problem, which is particularly acute when assessing adolescents. The problem is this:

   A. *When we assess an adolescent’s state of mind regarding attachment, what if any relation does this state of mind bear to the qualities of the actual relationships the adolescent has with current attachment figures—with his or her parents?*

   B. **SLIDE#2)Central Question:** Said differently, How is an attachment “state of mind” on the part of an adolescent actually instantiated within a real, ongoing parent-adolescent relationship? OR

      1. Just What IS a Secure Attachment Relationship in Adolescence?

   C. *In theory, this doesn’t seem like a hard question to pursue.*

   D. *Although it clearly has implications for understanding how an individual’s attachment organization actually gets translated into patterns of social functioning, and how it is maintained and transmitted over time and across relationships.*

   E. *Now in trying to understand what a secure attachment relationship might actually mean in adolescence, we might start with the hope of learning from the infancy literature—where, after all, the measure of security is much more of a relationship measure than it is in adolescence.*

      1. **SLIDE#3)Infancy 1:** Mary Ainsworth seemingly took a major stride in this direction twenty years ago, when she identified *maternal sensitivity* as a primary marker of infant security and found correlations between sensitivity, as she observed it, and infant
security in the strange situation that were in the .60 range.

2. **SLIDE#4) Infancy 2:** Unfortunately, other researchers have struggled to replicate the strength of these findings.

F. **A recent meta-analysis of 68 such studies by DeWolff & Van Ijzendoorn, found a mean correlation between sensitivity and security of .24.**

1. Now one could argue about whether .24 is actually a large number or a small one in comparison to other real world phenomena.

2. **SLIDE#5) Infancy 3:** But it seems that what is clear is that we definitely know a little about how security is reflected in the parent-infant relationship, but in some ways its striking just how little we know about a construct that is, after all, a relationship construct at its heart.

G. **Our goal, quite simply, was to see if we could do better than this with adolescents.**

III. Turning first to our methods:

A. **SLIDE#6) Sample characteristics** We tested our ideas with data from a sample of 125 adolescents with a mean age of 16, who participated along with their families.

1. As you’ll see from the slide, it’s a demographically heterogeneous sample that was intended to be moderately “at-risk” in nature. Adolescents were recruited through public schools based upon presence of any single, low-level risk factor as you can see on the slide.

2. **SLIDE#7) AAI:** We assessed adolescent and maternal attachment organization using the Main Adult Attachment Interview or AAI, and Roger Kobak’s Q-sort coding system.

B. The AAI is a 1-hour interview that probes both episodic and semantic memories about attachment experiences.

C. It is coded not based on content of experiences but on the coherence, balance, perspective and openness of the individual in relaying them.

D. This approach has garnered a huge amount of attention, in part because it allows us to predict from parents’ security to the security of infant offspring with 75 to 85% accuracy rates, or Kappa’s around .50, even when the interview is administered to parents before the birth of the child.
1. We will be using the overall security scale from Kobak’s coding system, which yields reliable codes that display a high degree of concordance to classifications of AAI transcripts done using Mary Main’s classification system.

2. This is another way of saying that what we’ll be reporting really is based on attachment security as discussed in the Bowlby/Ainsworth/Main tradition.
IV. So how do we begin this task of determining just what a secure teen’s relationship with his or her mother will look like?

A. **SLIDE#8**: One starting place is to look at exactly what is coded in the AAI. Here, to be precise, what is coded as Mary Main describes it, is not security per se, but rather a state of mind that is described as “Autonomous, Yet Valuing of Relationships.”

B. Somewhat coincidentally over the years, we’ve pursued a view of adolescent social development that has been focused on adolescents’ developing autonomy and relatedness with their parents...

1. And we have argued that establishing autonomy and relatedness in adolescence is a critical task of social development with striking similarities to Mary Main’s description of adult security.

2. We also think this view bears a striking resemblance to Ainsworth’s description of the “secure-base” phenomenon in infancy, in which parents of secure infants encourage them to explore their environment (that is, to establish their autonomy) from the secure base of the parental relationship.

3. We would argue that the adolescents’ have an analogous secure-base task: to establish a degree of autonomy (especially in being able to think freely and objectively about attachment relationships), while not weakening those relationships in the process.

C. I’d like to spend the rest of my time this afternoon telling you about our efforts to identify the components of an Adolescent Secure-Base Relationship that are linked to attachment security as assessed in the AAI.

V. **SLIDE#9)Step I: Sensitivity**: The first leg of our secure base in adolescence is parental sensitivity, harkening back to what we have learned from infancy research.

A. A parent who is sensitive to the adolescent’s internal states is positioned to help the adolescent in several ways:

1. They can give optimum guidance and thus provide a sense of security to adolescents trying to make their way in the world outside the family.

2. Sensitive parents are also in a strong position to handle the inevitable conflicts in the family that are likely to be part of the adolescent’s
autonomy-gaining process.

i. For example, the parent who knows their teen is very worried about making friends, may handle a disagreement about a proposed sleepover at a friend’s house differently, and more effectively, than one who is not aware of why this is a critical issue to the teen.

B. As I’ve already mentioned, assessing sensitivity in a way that will be strongly linked to infant attachment security has been in some ways the holy grail of infancy research.

1. In infancy, however, parental sensitivity is quite difficult to measure, in part because we can’t decide if a parent is sensitive to an infant’s internal state, unless we as researchers first are able to recognize that infant’s state better than the infant’s parent.

2. This is no small feat, and it doesn’t seem entirely shocking that a clinician with Ainsworth’s sensitivity—and hundreds of hours of observational time in vivo—could do this better than most researchers observing in lab settings.

   a. In adolescence, we start with an advantage, however, which is that the adolescent can TELL us things about their state of mind that we can then compare to parental assessments.

   b. In short, we don’t have to do quite as much work, because the adolescent, unlike the infant, can use language effectively.

   c. So we set out to design a test.

C. SLIDE#10)Harter Examples What we did was to ask adolescents to tell us how they felt about themselves using Susan Harter’s adolescent self-perception profile—a widely used measure that assesses self-esteem and perceived competence in a number of domains, as you can see on the slide, ranging from social acceptance to athletic competence.

1. We then gave mothers the task of giving their best guess about exactly how their adolescent answered on this measure.

2. SLIDE#11)Algorithm- We scored sensitivity using the algorithm you see on the slide, which really just assesses how far off the parent is in their guess on each item.

   a. and then sums these items and reverse codes the result to yield a measure of sensitivity.

D. SLIDE#12)Sensitivity r: The next slide shows the simple correlation of maternal sensitivity to attachment security, and we
see that it is substantial.

1. Our test measure of maternal sensitivity is indeed related to adolescent security assessed via the AAI.

E. SLIDE#13) Sensitivity Regr.: We next considered whether this effect might just be an artifact of adolescents’ overall positive or negative views of themselves.

1. So in this next slide, we first account for demographic effects in the data, and then partial out a measure of the adolescent’s overall positivity in their self perceptions and we see at the bottom in green that maternal sensitivity still adds to the prediction of teen security.

F. So this provides support for the first leg of our “secure-base”:

1. secure teens live in families with sensitive mothers—who no doubt help the teen feel more secure both inside and outside of the family with their sensitivity.

VI. SLIDE#14)- Model Step II. For the second leg of our secure-base, we examined what we believed would be a marker of the autonomy/exploration side of the picture:

VII. The extent to which teens successfully de-idealize their parents.

A. SLIDE#15) De-idealization: We see de-idealization as a normative process that reflects the teen being able to see the parent as human and therefore imperfect.

B. We see De-idealization as an important part of the secure-base process in adolescence:

C. Recognizing that parents are imperfect, and that other social relationships outside the family may offer rewards that are in some ways better than what can be obtained solely within the family, encourages the teen to head out into the world to form strong social bonds outside the family,

D. We also expected that security would be linked to deidealization of parents because security is likely to provide teens with the mental and emotional latitude to view their parents objectively--- a state that Roger Kobak has labeled “epistemic space”, and that we might also refer to as cognitive autonomy..

E. Those of you who are familiar with the Adult Attachment Interview know that idealization is coded in this interview, based on a subtle
examination of the internal consistency of adolescents
descriptions about parents, as a marker of insecurity.

F. We wanted to see if we could assess de-idealization via self-report.

G. I should also note that de-idealization is NOT the same as
wholesale rejection of parent

H. **SLIDE#16)** De-idealization examples. We assessed de-idealization
in terms of the adolescent's willingness or unwillingness to
acknowledge minor faults in the parent or in their relationship with
their parent.

1. For example: When I was a child, my mother:
   a. was never angry with me
   b. and I never disagreed
   c. never disappointed me

2. These items are reverse-coded.

3. **SLIDE#17)** De-idealization r: Turning to our data, here we also find a
moderate sized, but quite significant, .34 correlation with overall
attachment security.

   a. Secure adolescents de-idealize their mothers and their relationships
   with their mothers.

VIII. **SLIDE#18)** Model Step III: But rather than take this
finding in isolation, we wanted to look to see whether we
might learn even more about the adolescent secure-base if
we *juxtaposed* deidealization with measures of
adolescents’ overall perceptions of their relationships with
their mothers.

A. *We do this in part, because as I said, De-idealization doesn’t equal
wholesale rejection of the parent...*

B. *Rather, we think It should be most meaningful as a marker of
security in the context of overall positive (but not idealized)
perceptions of maternal supportiveness, which I'll now turn to.*

C. **SLIDE#19)** Assessment of Supportiveness* We assessed maternal
supportiveness with two self-report measures--the Inventory of
Parent and Peer Attachment, and the Mother-Father-Peer Scale
Acceptance scale-- which were standardized and then averaged together to yield a single overall scale.

1. This is one of the few areas where self-report measures have been previously shown to be related to attachment security.

D. SLIDE#20)Support correl.: Taking a quick look at the initial data we see, again, moderate correlations with security in the expected direction.

E. But what we really wanted to do, was ask how the perceived supportiveness finding on the slide fits with the de-idealization finding we saw a minute ago.

1. Our hope was that these two measures might play off each other in a useful fashion...that adolescent self-reports about their relationships with their mothers might be more meaningful if we could account for any tendency they might have to idealize that relationship.

a. Or, to put it differently, that a secure-base will be optimally assessed with measures of both connection and autonomy/independence working in conjunction.

F. SLIDE#21)Suppressor Effect: And as you ‘ll see on the next slide, that’s exactly what we found.

1. The first column (and the key numbers are in light green) presents β weights from the final simultaneous regression model with both de-idealization and supportiveness entered as predictors.

2. The second column (in orange) presents the partial r’s for each of these constructs after demographic factors are partialled...and in essence accounts for our two predictors considered in isolation from one another.

a. What you see is technically a suppressor effect, in that both deidealization and supportiveness become stronger predictors of security when they are considered together than when they are considered in isolation,

i. and the two together account for an increment of 20% in the variance in adolescent security.
3. **Suppressor explanation**: We can interpret this effect in either of two complementary ways:

4. We can either say that
   a. when an adolescent DE-idealizes their parent, the relation of reported supportiveness to adolescent security is stronger
   
   OR
   
   b. When an adolescent in general perceives his or her mother as supportive, signs of de-idealization will be more strongly linked to adolescent security
   
   c. In some important sense, it appears that each measure makes the other more believable.

5. Overall then, we see what we interpret as further evidence of the secure-base in adolescence…secure adolescents are free to explore their parents faults and limitations, from within the comfortable confines of an overall positive relationship.

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**IX.** **Model Step IV:** Turning to our final leg in building a model of the adolescent secure base, we observed how well the mother-adolescent dyad could maintain and reaffirm its partnership, its sense of relatedness, as the teen struggled for autonomy during a disagreement.

**Assessing Relatedness**: We use the Relatedness Code from the Autonomy & Relatedness Coding system, which rates observational data in which the mother and adolescent discuss a major area of disagreement in their relationship.
1. In essence, we watch the extent to which each person works to maintain the relationship in the midst of discussing a disagreement—by validating the other person’s statements, or by engaging thoughtfully and attentively with them.

2. We add together both adolescents and mothers behaviors to produce a score for the dyad as a whole.

B. SLIDE#25) Relatedness: Here again we find that relatedness is linked to security

C. SLIDE#26) Relatedness regression: and that this effect holds up even over and above the effects of demographic factors in our data.

X. Now this is all great, but as I alluded to earlier, are we really just capturing the same modest correlations over and over again?

A. Or are we doing what we’d hoped to do: which is to capture a number of unique aspects of the secure-base phenomenon in adolescence?

B. The question, then, is: How do these correlations add up?

C. SLIDE#27) Overall reg #1: The next slide presents the results from a hierarchical regression which enters each of these markers of a secure base into a model predicting security, and we see that each does indeed add significantly to our explanation of security.

1. and that in total they are accounting for an additional 25% of the variance in security over and above demographic factors

D. SLIDE#28) Overall reg., #2: If we look at these same predictors without accounting for demographic effects, we get a picture of the absolute relationship between our measures and security—the degree of absolute concordance between these measures.

E. Assessed in this way, we see even stronger findings, with these measures accounting for 39% of the variance in Adolescents’ AAI security for a Multiple R of .63

1. which is strikingly high given that the reliability for our attachment measure across coders is only in the mid-80’s.

   a. 15:22

XI. SLIDE#29) Step V: This leaves one final question: which is
Where does Maternal security come in to play in all of this?

A. **In infancy, of course, there’s a strikingly high degree of concordance between maternal security in the AAI and infant security in the strange situation.**

B. **But by adolescence we don’t expect this kind of concordance,**

1. In part because adolescent security is not simply a dyadic marker of the mother-teen relationship, but rather an internalized state that reflects past and current relationship histories, with not only mothers, but fathers other caregivers, and even romantic partners and friends.

2. **SLIDE#30) mother-teen:** Thus, it should not be a surprise that when we look at the concordance between maternal and adolescent security, we see a very modest .21 correlation.

3. **SLIDE#31):** Further, this correlation appears to be mediated by two markers of whether the mother is allowing the adolescent to explore their autonomy and independence:

   a. First, whether the teen can de-idealize their mothers (and establish a degree of cognitive autonomy with respect to the relationship)

   b. And second, whether the dyad can maintain their sense of relatedness in the midst of disagreeing.

C. **SLIDE#32):** Putting these findings all together suggests the following structural model that depicts one possible way of summarizing and organizing all of these effects—noting of course that nothing in these data should be taken as demonstrating the presence of causal relations.

1. What we see is that maternal security is associated with the two markers of family relationships that I think are closest to capturing support for or success in autonomy/exploration processes,

2. and that all 4 of the major constructs we assessed, as the 4 legs of the adolescent secure-base, can be viewed as contributing to a latent variable of a secure-base in the adolescent-mother relationship—

3. which in turn is very strongly linked to adolescent security in the AAI.

   a. 16:50/18:20

XII. **SLIDE#33):** We see these results as having several implications
A. First, although adolescent security is now assessed as an internalized state, it still makes sense to think of it as also embodied in the current, ongoing, parent-child relationship.

1. It does not at all appear to be the case that adolescents have moved beyond this relationship, or that it may have mattered in infancy but no longer matters.

B. Second, attachment security can be most clearly seen in the adolescent-mother relationship in ways that we believe reflect an overall pattern of secure-base behavior

1. This base allows secure adolescents to move away from their mothers—in terms of cognitive independence—without jeopardizing the relationship.

2. This base consists of the parent:
   a. knowing the adolescent well and being sensitive to his or her self-perceptions
   b. Being supportive
   c. and allowing the adolescent to move beyond dependence on parents by:
      i. remaining supportive during disagreements
      ii. allowing the adolescent to de-idealize the parent.
   d. Maternal security matters in this process, but primarily in that it is associated with mothers being able to allow their adolescent to disagree with and de-idealize them without this threatening their relationship.

3. I'm speaking about mothers, but of course its really a dyadic process we're examining:
   a. secure adolescents make it easier for mothers to parent well, and good parenting makes it easier for adolescents to be secure

C. In terms of limitations and next steps: Several things stand out.

1. Future research needs to:
   a. consider fathers
   b. extend these findings to other samples from normal populations
   c. Begin to examine the pathways by which security is linked to indices
of functioning, both within and beyond the family

i.

d. And finally, we need longitudinal research to move beyond cross-sectional correlates of security to begin to understand the process that influence the development and the expression of security over time.