Youth Perceptions of Home Environment and Adolescent Development

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INTRODUCTION

- **Chaotic homes** are characterized by high levels of **disorganization**, lack of household routine, crowding, **noise**, and **unpredictability**.

- Chaos relates to higher levels of engagement in risky health behaviors, delinquency, and aggression.

- Studies of household chaos have largely relied on parent report.

- Adolescents perceptions of chaos may relate to behavior problems & academic engagement.

- No consideration of the **stability** of household chaos from **month-to-month**.

METHODS

Family Income Dynamics Study
Monthly Longitudinal Study

104 Adolescent- Caregiver dyads complete one survey a month for a period of 9 months.

Adolescent: Age M=15.18
37% Black, 43% White, 20% Another Race

Caregiver: Age M=44.26
33% Black, 61% White, 6% Another Race
Monthly income M=4,205
Household size M=4.19

Measures
Household Chaos: 15 items CHAOS (1-4 scale)
Confusion Hubbub and Order Scale

Problem Behavior: 20 items SDQ (0-2 scale)
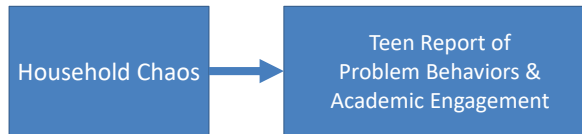Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

Academic Engagement: 11 items (1-5 scale)

Covariates
Adolescent baseline age, sex, race, Caregiver monthly income, household size
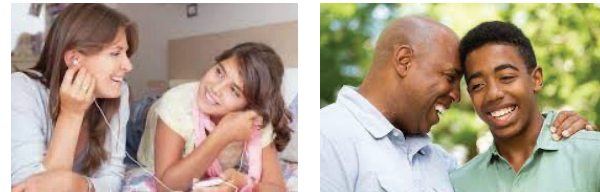
AIMS + ANALYTIC PLAN

Theoretical Model

Household Chaos → Teen Report of Problem Behaviors & Academic Engagement

Aim1. Examine stability of chaos over time using ICC's.

Aim2. Examine relations between adolescent (A) and caregiver (C) chaos reports using HLM.

Aim3. Consider how adolescent and caregiver report of household chaos relate to problem behavior & academic engagement using HLM.

RESULTS

R1. Adolescent: **ICC=.68** 95% [.60 .76]
F(95.0, 288.0) = 9.82, p<.001

Caregiver: **ICC=.82** 95% [.77 .86]
F(94.0, 285.0) = 19.24, p<.001

Adolescents report more variability in their perceptions of household chaos than caregivers.

RESULTS

R2.

Caregiver Chaos

	Coefficient	SE	z	
A_chaos W	0.04	0.05	0.71	
A_chaos B	0.52	0.09	5.97	***

Differences between families drives the association between adolescent and caregiver reports of chaos.

R3.

Problem Behaviors

	Coefficient	SE	z	
A_chaos W	0.14	0.04	3.85	***
A_chaos B	0.43	0.07	5.86	***
C_chaos W	0.04	0.04	0.88	
C_chaos B	0.02	0.07	0.30	

Academic Engagement

	Coefficient	SE	z	
A_chaos W	-0.16	0.06	-2.79	***
A_chaos B	-0.41	0.12	-3.48	***
C_chaos W	-0.03	0.07	-0.45	
C_chaos B	0.06	0.12	0.53	

DISCUSSION

- Adolescent perceptions of household chaos are **less stable over time,** compared to caregiver reports.

- Adolescent and caregiver **reports** of household **chaos are related across, but not within, households**.

- **Adolescent perceptions** of household chaos **relate to** behavior & academic engagement.

- Within person associations strengthen causal inference.

- Future work will extend these models to address reporter bias by accounting for parental monitoring, youth hardship, or perceived stress.