

ADJUDICATED GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS:  
AN EXPLORATION OF PERCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Under the Direction of Arthur M. Horne

Abstract

Research on girls involved in the juvenile justice system is limited, but growing. A recurrent complaint made by those doing the research on girls is that past studies on juvenile justice focused almost exclusively on boys; subsequently, girls' voices and experiences were not appreciated and they were made to fit intervention models designed for boys. Literature on girls' development in general has also been growing in the last twenty years and it points to the unique interpersonal and cultural challenges girls must overcome in order to survive adolescence. As adolescent relationships are complicated for girls, a supportive relationship with their mothers, among other people, is conducive to traversing adolescence successfully. Although there are growing accounts of girls committing violent acts, the majority of girls become involved with juvenile justice because of status offenses, which, when traced, often relate to discord in their primary relationships. The present study explores the perceptions of mothers and their adjudicated adolescent daughters on internalizing and externalizing behavior. After first testing for equal or unequal variance in means, the statistical method employed here was a t-test to assess differences in means for mothers' and daughters' endorsements of internalizing and externalizing composites. Both parties endorsed their observations on the child and parent forms of the Behavior Assessment System for Children. Results offer that across age, race, and

community, mothers perceive their daughters' internalizing and externalizing problems as more severe than do the daughters. Implications of these results are offered as well as recommendations for extending the research.

**INDEX WORDS:** Adolescent girls, Juvenile justice, Adolescent development, Mother and daughter relationships, Race

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Juvenile offending has long been a concern in the United States and abroad. Although much attention is given to boys and their patterns of offending, growing attention recently is being turned toward girls and how they experience the juvenile justice system (Belknap, 2001; Belknap, Holsinger, and Dunn, 1997). In the early 1980s the interest arose to explore and understand the involvement of girls in juvenile justice. Many broad assumptions were made about their course of development and pathways into the courts (Acoca, 1998; Belknap et. al., 1997; Calhoun, 2001). Furthermore, the juvenile justice system is often highlighted in its unbalanced treatment of minorities. For example, black and Latino males and females are found to be detained, searched, and incarcerated at a higher rate than their white counterparts (Coker, 2003; Jacobs and Kleban, 2003). Females have rarely been given attention in that examination of judicial disparity (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001; Reese and Curtis, 1991). Particular attention to the relationships between female adolescent juvenile offenders and their mothers is a critical component in understanding the course leading girls into juvenile justice authority.

There are two large areas in the literature on treatment of females in juvenile justice that the present study examines. First, it adds to a small amount of literature that gives attention to the experience of female juvenile offenders. The experience of girls in the justice system has often been superimposed upon theories about adolescent male offenders without the further thought that there may be different needs, pathways, and reactions by gender to the institution of reform: prison, juvenile detention (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 2001). The present study examines responses from female juvenile offenders and their mothers and, in organizing conclusions,

considers literature related to girls. Second, this study utilizes the report of mothers in conjunction with the reports of the girls to test hypotheses. Few studies with adjudicated youth have compared the reports of meaningful others and the targeted youth. Many other studies have examined the emotional status of the youth in clinical and general populations and ratings of their well-being by individuals who are critical in their lives. The gathering data on the youth by multiple informants has been identified as clinically appropriate and has yielded results helpful in research, educational, and clinical settings (Berg-Nielsen, Vika, and Dahl, 2003; Glaser, Kronsoble, and Warner Forkner, 1997; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Youngstrom, Loeber, and Stouthamer-Loeber, 2000). A very small amount of literature is available that discusses multiple evaluators of adjudicated youth, let alone female adjudicated youth. This study explored the relationships between how adjudicated adolescent girls see themselves and how their mothers perceive them. It yields promising results that lend themselves to extended theory and program development. This study describes how critical other informants may influence the understanding of females within the juvenile justice system.

Considering that so much of juvenile delinquency literature has been focused on males, it is ironic that it was the Chicago Women's Club in 1895 that first proposed a separate system for adjudication be used to process juvenile crimes (Jackson and Knepper, 2003). It was the Chicago Women's Club along with the Illinois Bar Association that forged ahead to "create a legal atmosphere that would guarantee the just treatment of juvenile offenders" (p. 10). In 1899, their efforts culminated in the passing of the Illinois Juvenile Court act that provided a separate system for juveniles and adults in criminal processing. In Los Angeles, California too, it was the organizing of women from groups like the Friday Morning Club, the Ebell Club, and the

Women's Christian Temperance Union who played key roles in the passage of the California juvenile justice law (Odem and Schlossman, 1991).

Although there have been efforts to install components in the justice system that respond with particular sensitivity to special populations, the juvenile and adult justice systems consistently have been unable to be evenhanded in processing minorities and women (Acoca, 1998; Reese and Curtis, 1991). An example of the disparity of experiences youth have with the juvenile justice system may be found by examining differences in engagement in the system by a number of factors, such as race and gender. Much of what is written about these disparities focuses on males and considers females as an add-on. There are more than 17.5 million juveniles in the United States today and there are major differences in their experience of juvenile justice based upon race and gender (Snyder and Sickmund, 1999). "For every 100,000 non-Hispanic Black juveniles living in the U.S., 1,004 were in a residential placement facility on October 27, 1999. For Hispanics, the rate was 485, and for non-Hispanic Whites the rate was 212" (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). Another indicator of juvenile processing rates being askew is while the juvenile population in 2000 was 79% White, 42% of juvenile arrests involved Black youth. Black youth were arrested at a rate 4 times that of White youth in 2000 (Snyder, 2002). Upon analyzing the effects on juvenile justice reform, McGarrell (1991) found that as a state's non-White population expanded, it experienced greater increases in juvenile incarceration rates. Jacobs and Kleban (2003) find that "cities with larger African-American populations have higher arrest rates after the crime rates have been held constant" (p.731). They also point out that as non-white populations increase, spending on prisons and jails tend to increase. That Whites are the largest population and the fewest seen proportionally in residential facilities raises legitimate concerns about juvenile justice. Based upon rates of first incarceration, nearly one-third of Black

males will enter prison during their lifetime (Coker, 2003; and Snyder and Sickmund, 1999). In 2002, 12% of African-American men between age twenty and thirty-four were in jail or prison (Coker, 2003). Spohn, Welch, and Gruhl (1985) note that what appeared to be stark gender differences in conviction rates (males being sentenced more frequently than females) was, in fact, best accounted for by the overwhelmingly harsh rulings against African-American males relative to White males and women. In most states during 1999, minorities were three times more likely than Whites to be taken into state custody. In Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, the rate was 8 to 1 (Snyder and Sickmund, 1999). In 2001, Coker (2003) reviewed San Diego traffic stop data and found that African-American and Hispanic drivers were significantly more likely to be stopped and searched than white drivers. Further, Coker (2003) asserts that African-Americans were deliberately tried in federal court for crack cocaine offenses while whites were processed in state court where they would receive a lesser sentence for the same offense. The disparity in processing different ethnic groups has long been a source of attention. The racial differences represent one aspect of different ways the justice system addresses problems adolescents present. However, not as much direct attention has been afforded females concerning why they may be treated differentially (Pomeroy, Kiam, and Abel, 1998; Teplin, Abram, and McClelland, 1997; Calhoun, 2001).

During a time that authors noticed appreciating interest in writing about girls who offend, an increase was observed in their arrest rate. Between 1989 and 1993, the number of arrests involving female juveniles increased by 23% compared to 11% for males (Poe-Yamagata & Butts, 1996). Teplin et. al. (1997) found the female inmate population increased threefold during that time frame. Calhoun (2001) notes the increase in offending committed by girls was four times that of boys during the 1990s. Between 1992 and 1996, increases in arrest rates for females



were greater than increases for males in every offense category including violent crime. Coker (2003) writes that the group most frequently involved in these increases is African-American women. It was also observed that violent offending among girls increased 129% between 1981 and 1995; more than twice the rate for male violent offending. In 1994, despite the fact that girls accounted for nearly one-fourth of all juvenile arrests, they remained virtually invisible to the juvenile justice system (Chesney-Lind, 1997).

An explanation for female invisibility in justice policy has to do with the overly paternalistic justice system as it relates to female offenders (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Goodstein, 2001). While racism has long been pointed to as a culprit leading to the incarceration of African-American males, chivalry and paternalism have been cited as hamstringing the juvenile justice system in its treatment of women and girls. Taking into consideration gender and the social obstacles associated with gender is important in justice processing; however, some authors charge that the juvenile justice system continues to see females as needing to fit traditional male-centered molds that are not sensitive to the needs and experiences of the female offenders (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Goodstein, 2001). Some authors have posited that because women and girls standing before the court are seen as less feminine, they are more likely to receive more harsh punishment and treatment (Coker, 2003; Reese and Curtis, 1991). Paternalism, chivalry, and racism complicate the role of juvenile justice and make it difficult to adjudicate and intervene with juvenile females adequately.

Belknap (2001) describes paternalism and chivalry as two actions taken by those with power to protect, behave gallantly toward, and exalt women. Inherently in these forms of treatment is the implicit belief that women are weaker and unable to defend themselves. Therefore, Belknap states protection becomes “control,” and “we should be aware of the high

price paid for the so-called benefits of chivalry” (2001, p.133). Unfortunately, while more females than males are returned to their homes from court, it is very often their homes that they are fleeing. In the 1998 National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) study of girls in the California juvenile justice system examined by Acoca (1998), 92% of girls and 92% of women, reported having experienced one or more forms of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Often these abuses occurred on multiple occasions and were committed by relatives or other intimate persons. Also, a number of women look upon their physical and sexual abuse as a catalyst for their involvement with the juvenile justice system (Acoca, 1998; Belknap et. al., 1997). Although in her examination of this NCCD study Acoca (1998) did not offer comparisons with the male population, the numbers point to an important consideration in providing intervention pointed at the experiences of women and girl offenders. The courts may see themselves as protecting and showing sensitivity toward girls by sending them back to abusive homes, communities, or detention but these decisions are rendered through a lens of controlling, damaging paternalism. In studies by Acoca (1998) and Pomeroy et. al. (1998), very serious abuses were occurring against girls in their homes, or otherwise by intimate others. These abuses were often reflected upon by the women as their start down the path toward incarceration. Crime is an offense that should be addressed by the courts, however, because so many girls experience sexual violation as a precursor or catalyst to their entry into the justice system, consideration of this fact should be made when adjudication is rendered.

The role played by paternalism and chivalry is one that can seem contradictory. According to authors such as Belknap (2001), Coker (2003), MacDonald and Chesney-Lind (2001), and Reese and Curtis (1991), if law enforcement representatives can fit a female offender into a box assigned to traditional female roles that includes popular concepts of beauty, manners,

class, sexual orientation, and age, the female offender seems to receive less harsh sanction than if she is less able to be placed in that box. Reese and Curtis (1991) report that when an exchange occurs between an officer of the law, who is usually a male, and a female offender, the exchange is between a man and a woman. If the woman does not fit the mainstream standards of beauty and femininity, she will likely receive less favor from the law official. According to Belknap (2001) the further a girl or woman moves from these societally determined molds, the greater her likelihood for harsh sanctions by the court; sanctions more harsh than those rendered to boys for more egregious offenses (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001; Reese and Curtis, 1991).

MacDonald and Chesney-Lind (2001) found that once girls were determined by the court to be delinquent, they were more likely than boys to receive more restrictive sanctions even when their crimes were not as extraordinary. Minority women and girls are worst off in this matrix between racism and paternalism. “The role of race and gender in delinquency is complex and significant” (Belknap et. al., 1997, p. 385). Having done much of their research in Hawaii, MacDonald and Chesney-Lind (2001) found that White boys and girls stood a statistically significant lower probability of being “petitioned” by the court than Hawaiian youth of the same gender. Youth from areas of poverty were also significantly more likely to be petitioned. The literature on disparities in incarceration of minority women and girls consistently points to them being prosecuted at greater rates than their non-minority counterparts. In part, this may be due to the fact that minorities, phenotypically and economically, do not fit mainstream descriptions of femininity.

There exists a significant contemporary and historical disparity in Juvenile Justice processing with regard to gender and race. According to research on gender and race in juvenile justice, minority women are at a particular disadvantage (Belknap et. al., 1997). Since greater

interest has been shown in the experience of girls in juvenile justice over the past twenty years increases have been noted in their criminal involvement. It is important to continue exploring the experience of females in juvenile justice to stimulate the development of deeper theoretical and programmatic thinking.

Considerations in the development of deeper theoretical and programmatic thinking for girls involved in the juvenile justice system are their perceptions of themselves and the perceptions held by significant others of the girls. The perceptions of themselves held by girls relate closely to literature on female adolescent development and the experiences common to adolescent girls (Belknap et. al., 1997; Miller, Trapani, Kejes-Mendoza, Eggleston, and Dwiggins, 1995). The perceptions held by mothers of their daughters relate to literature on the experiences of mothers and daughters specifically and the relationship between parental stress and the appraisal of children's emotional and behavioral functioning generally (Berg-Nielsen et. al, 2003; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Youngstrom et. al., 2000).

Progress through adolescence is considered to be longer and more complicated for girls than for boys (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994). While experiencing biological and social changes, adolescent girls are faced with complicated societal expectations. Girls are encouraged to be quiet, nice, relational, and nurturing (Way, 1995). When they do not fit those roles, when they chose to have a voice, they risk being pushed to the margins of social networks and worse, targeted for ridicule (Gilligan, 1993; Orenstein, 1994). Being targeted for ridicule, for many girls, creates silence, concretizes a desire to fit in and strengthens the fear of being viewed as different. In addition to behavioral expectations, girls recognize pressures to be slender and attractive for boys. If they or others find them unattractive, or if they are determined to be overly solicitous of boys' attention, they risk being pushed to the margins of their social networks

(Orenstein, 1994; Simmons, 2002). The experience of girls in adolescents can be very emotional and seem treacherous. Adolescent girls perceive themselves and are seen as silenced, losing their sense of self and becoming more depressed and anxious (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994; Orenstein, 1994; Way, 1995). When monitoring is not suitable or caregivers mistreat adolescent girls, the girls are at greater risk for offending behavior and feeling worse about themselves (Acoca, 1998; Henry, Tolan, Gorman-Smith, 2001).

An important and flawed relationship consistent among girls involved in juvenile justice is that which exists between them and their parents, frequently the mother. “The mother-daughter relationship is highly significant in many cultures” (Rastogi and Wampler, 1999, p. 327). Although girls have cited sexual abuse as a catalyst for their movement into the juvenile justice system, they also cite their parents as being poor protectors of them or perpetrators against them (Belknap et. al., 1997). Harmonious mother-daughter relationships seem to promote greater appraisal of skill and needs being met (Gavin and Furman, 1996). Where there is high stress, low parental acceptance of the child, or parental dysfunction, Kolko and Kazdin (1993) found lower correspondence among parent ratings and child ratings for internalizing and externalizing behavior. Although parity between ratings of adolescents and their parents is unlikely under any circumstances, low correspondence in their reporting may be indicative of strained relationships related to family stress. For girls, these strained relationships may expose them to poorly supervised, high-risk settings which may then lead to involvement in juvenile justice.

### Purpose of the Study

Juvenile justice treatment of youth in general is in need of greater sensitivity to the experiences had by the youth it remands. One method of moving toward greater sensitivity is in

seeking to understand better the experience of girls. In attempting to better understand the experience of girls, it would be important to further explore how they perceive themselves and how their self-perception may differ from the perceptions held by significant others, particularly their mothers. Understanding the perceptions held by adjudicated adolescent girls and their mothers may be key; thus, the purpose of this study is to identify correspondence on behavioral and emotional ratings made by adolescent female offenders and their mothers. By determining this correspondence across race and community of residence, programmatic implications are offered to prevent reoffending and therefore being judged by a system that seems to act more harshly toward women of color and economically disadvantaged women and girls. The instrument used in this study is a well-known and highly regarded system for assessing adolescent behavior.

Though since the early 1980's more has been written about female adolescent offenders, there is still much ground to cover in terms of understanding who they are and the nuances of their interpersonal relationships that bring them to involvement in the juvenile justice system. Much writing pertains to girls from areas outside of the southern United States who are adjudicated and this study uses girls from smaller southern cities and rural areas (Acoca, 1998; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). Statements about the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse female offenders suffer at the hands of close relations (i.e., boyfriends, relatives, neighbors) as a precursor to their juvenile offending are rife in the literature (Acoca, 1998; Belknap et. al, 1997). Set in urban and rural areas the southeastern United States, this study utilized the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC) (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992) to examine the behaviors and feelings of female delinquents and perceptions of their mothers.

This study is additive to the literature in several ways. First, it offers further review of female adolescent offenders in general. While there is a growing body of literature on female adolescent offenders and their pathways into and experience within the juvenile justice system, what does exist tends to pertain to northern urban areas as opposed to southern rural and urban areas as this study does. Second, this study examines the behavior and feelings of rural and small city southeastern female adolescent offenders and their mothers with the expectation that the mothers will endorse internalized and externalized distress in their daughters greater than their daughters will. While there have been investigations into how the ratings of parents and children align, few have made these parent-child comparisons with adjudicated girls. Third, the BASC will be the instrument of measure in this research as few studies have been found to utilize it with this previously described population. As the BASC was not designed to offer internalizing and externalizing composites for the self-report of personality, theoretical composites were derived based implicit and explicit suggestions from the literature (Kamphaus, Petoskey, Cody, Rowe, Huberty, and Reynolds, 1999; Wangby, Bergman, and Magnusson, 1999; Youngstrom et. al., 2000). Finally, while many studies addressing the behavior of boys and youth in general examine their divergence and convergence racially, race is rarely viewed as a salient variable in studies about the female offender population (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). Comparison of behaviors and feelings of these dyads across race were made. Primarily, this study provides greater understanding about how girls and their mothers perceive the behavior and feelings of the girls. This understanding calls for a more constructive approach to intervention and additional avenues for research.

## Statement of the Problem

Delinquency among America's youth is a problem that has long been studied. Delinquency is attributable to lack of sufficient monitoring by parents and abusive parenting (Belknap et. al., 1997; Henry et. al., 2001). Some research posits that household stress and maternal distress can impair the bond between parent and child (Kolko and Kazdin, 1993). The bond between mother and daughter is important and during adolescence, a healthy bond allows the daughter to have several important needs met and may serve as a buffer against delinquency (Gavin and Furman, 1996). This bond, or lack thereof, may be reflected in the endorsements mothers and daughters make about the daughters' emotional and behavioral status. The problem to be examined in the present study represents an area of limited consideration: How do the ratings of mothers and their adjudicated adolescent daughters compare on the BASC? The present study will examine the relationship between the self-reports of adjudicated adolescent girls and those of their mothers on the BASC.

Until recently, the construction of best practices for responding to the needs of youth in the juvenile justice system has been accomplished by looking nearly exclusively at male subjects (Calhoun, 2001; Chesney-Lind and Shelden, 1992; Goodstein, 2001; Miller et. al., 1995). Understanding the pathways into the juvenile justice system has long been understood by observing and intervening with males and superimposing knowledge gained onto female offenders (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 2001). When girls and women were included in research on criminal behavior, the explanation tended to focus on a biological drive while men were allowed the more lenient rationale of economic or sociological conditions: boys are socialized and rewarded for being aggressive, mastering their environments, and taking strides for achieving economic status (Belknap, 2001). Because of the overwhelmingly lopsided



approach to research on criminal behavior, “criminology is almost quintessentially male,” women and girls’ participation as offenders has been overlooked (Chesney-Lind, 1997, p. 2). Given the amount of attention in the general discourse directed to differences in how adolescent boys and girls behave, it is puzzling why so little attention has been granted exclusively to adolescent girls’ interaction with the juvenile justice system. It is not that more girls should be incarcerated or that fewer boys should be, but an assessment in both cases should be made attending to the factors that find them entering and persisting in the juvenile justice system.

The adage ‘the squeaky wheel gets the grease’ stands as an explanation for the preponderance of literature on male delinquency. Historically, boys have found themselves arrested in numbers far surpassing girls (Belknap, 2001; Cowie, Cowie, and Slater, 1968; Poe-Yamagata and Butts, 1996). Because male delinquency tends to involve acting out behavior that is an affront to other people’s general safety (e.g., assault, breaking and entering, drug peddling), it receives much attention. Males are also socialized to play outdoors, they are rewarded for assertiveness, which can be blurred into aggression and, depending often on the monitoring effectiveness of their primary caregivers, delinquency. Calhoun (2001) offers that criminology has been attentive to overt behaviors typically exhibited by males. Few boys are incarcerated because of the status offenses typically committed by girls, but rather for offenses that, had they been adults, would have been considered criminal (National Commission on the Observance of International Women’s Year, 1977). While boys tend to act out, girls have been socialized to be more inward with their expressions.

Traditionally, girls are socialized to interact in intimate groups, indoors and in private. However, under the radar of authority figures, their aggression has been experienced as particularly vicious, calculated, relentless, and unpredictable (Simmons, 2002). One explanation

then for the overrepresentation of research on boys is their misbehavior is visible and often threatening to the public. Adolescent girls tend to use relational aggression to upset each other. This relational aggression includes but is not limited to exclusion, spreading rumors, and being selective about when it is okay to interact. It is often difficult for the victim, let alone an authority figure, to determine how and why they came to be bullied in this fashion (Simmons, 2002). Harmonious bonds between adolescent girls and their mother tend to provide mother-daughter relationships that meet the needs of these girls better and help them negotiate the complex course through adolescence (Davis and Rhodes, 1994; Gavin and Furman, 1996).

At the core of the social-behavioral explanation for why girls have taken a back seat to boys in the criminal justice literature is the gender inequality pervasive and persistent in western society. In an overview of Women in the Criminal Justice system, Lynne Goodstein (2001) points to the patriarchy that is the foundation of western society. Historically, women have been denied status in the public sector. They were denied the right to vote and still have legislation written about the parameters of their choices yet without their voices. The patriarchal society maintains an imbalance of power based upon gender. Examples of this are seen readily in politics, assets, military control, and entertainment. Although women have made great strides in the last three decades, the vestiges of a more stark oppression still linger. The mores on “appropriate” girl behavior are so rigid that girls’ acting out has been mislabeled or ignored. Girls who run away from abusive homes are often returned and admonished to mind their parents, often, the very abusers the girls seek to escape (Miller et. al., 1995). They are labeled as wayward or seen generally as bad when they exercise these survival mechanisms (Calhoun, 2001; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001).

In the mean time, girls, still in this patriarchal society, are largely socialized to not act out in ways permissible to boys. “Girls live, play, and go to school in the same neighborhoods as boys, but their lives are dramatically shaped by gender,” as are boys (Chesney-Lind, 1997, p. 31). They are taught to be polite, nice, nurturing, and valuing of relationships, although they also express a desire to speak out and express themselves openly in their relationships (Miller et. al. 1995; Orenstein, 1994; Simmons, 2002; Way, 1995). Their expressions of depression and anxiety often are turned inward or expressed through complicated communication channels (Simmons, 2002). Adolescence is generally perceived as a challenging time behaviorally and emotionally. Adolescent females are particularly at risk for losing their “sense of self” during this period (Miller et. al. 1995, p.430; Orenstein, 1994). Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus (1994) offer support to that statement finding that girls face more risk factors to their emotional well-being in pre-adolescence and more new biological and social challenges than boys in early adolescence. It is important to note that an overwhelming majority of girls in the juvenile justice and adult system are survivors of physical or sexual abuse and the responses of many adolescents to these unfavorable home conditions is to run away or otherwise get away from unpleasant circumstances (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 1992; Stanko, 2001). The traditional judicial-paternalistic response to these girls has been to criminalize their survival attempts (Chesney-Lind, 1997). Without the nurturance and open attention of their mothers during the critical time of adolescence, these girls may find themselves off track and negotiating adolescence without the guidance of their maternal forerunners (Trad, 1995). The positively oriented relationship between girls and their mothers is a key among many factors that can buffer girls from juvenile delinquency and an appropriate response to the delinquency of girls may be to realign those

fractured relationships (Davis and Rhodes, 1994; Henry et. al., 2001; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Trad, 1995).

CHAPTER 2  
ADJUDICATED GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS:  
AN EXPLORATION OF PECEPTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

This section offers a review of literature and empirical findings that point to the goodness of fit of the current study's contribution to understanding girls and their experience with the juvenile justice system by way of the girls' perceptions of themselves and their mothers' perceptions of the girls. Supportive literature is found in disparity in juvenile justice treatment, theorized and empirical social/emotional/familial pathways to delinquency, individual and constellational factors that stand as considerations in girls' healthy development, and helpful recommendations for analyzing level of parent-child agreement about emotions and behavior. Specifically, this study explores the relationship between adjudicated adolescent female offenders and their mothers on the BASC, a well-constructed assessment device for describing an adolescent's sense of self and place in the environment.

Attention devoted to girls and their experience with the juvenile justice system has been growing since the late 1970's and early 1980's (Belknap, 2001; Belknap et. al., 1997). Although a preponderance of the literature on juvenile justice concerns male offenders, a body of empirical and theoretical studies contributes to understanding the female adolescent offender, specifically, her treatment by and involvement in the juvenile justice system. The literature on female offenders tends to fall in three categories: sociological explanations for their arrival in the justice system, examinations of psychosocial pathways into the system, and analyses drawing an emotional/behavioral sketch of female offenders. Select empirical studies have offered promising

potential approaches for the analysis to be done on the sample for the present investigation. The following review of related literature offers cogent support for the additive value of this study to the current research on adolescent female offenders. More specifically, it relates to the need to examine and intervene in the relationships between adolescent girls and their mothers.

Female juvenile offenders have been given little attention in comparison to males in the juvenile justice literature (Belknap et. al., 1997; Calhoun, 2001; Kashani, Husain, Robins, Reid, and Wooderson, 1980; Obeidallah and Earls, 1999; Odem and Schlossman, 1991). Their plight has been overshadowed by males (Jackson and Knepper, 2003). There are two primary explanations for this gender disparate history. One explanation for this is fewer girls than boys violate the law (Poe-Yamagata and Butts, 1996). Another explanation for this lack of attention points to the types of behaviors exhibited by boys versus girls. Boys' delinquency often puts others at risk and is therefore seen as threatening to the public, while female crime has historically not been defined as a social problem (Belknap, 2001). Calhoun (2001) states that the acting out behavior of boys is seen as problematic by juvenile justice personnel and therefore receives treatment interventions addressing the behaviors over the "emotions fueling these behaviors" (p.88). With systemic attention directed toward reducing antisocial behaviors, girls are left with few treatment options designed to meet their needs when under judicial authority. Because the idea is supported that delinquent behavior in juveniles is often comorbid with poorly articulated emotional distress, appropriate prevention and intervention should be implemented in response to the growing population of female juvenile offenders (Acoca, 1998; Belknap et. al., 1997; Calhoun, 2001). Attention provided to realigning the relationship between girls and their mothers is offered as an effective buffer between the girls and their continued involvement in the juvenile justice system (Belknap et. al., 1997; Gavin and Furman, 1996).

Improved relationships between girls and their mothers are of grave importance as during the past twenty years more girls have moved from the aforementioned typical crimes of female adolescents to crimes against others. This trend suggests present intervention strategies are not meeting the needs of adjudicated girls and that supports for girls have deteriorated over the past twenty years. Two such areas of change are found in the rate and type of offenses committed by girls. Authors involving themselves with juvenile justice have noted that between 1981 and 1995 female violent offending increased 129% and between 1989 and 1993, female juvenile arrests increased another 23%, in both instances more than twice the rate of male juvenile offenders (Poe-Yamagata and Butts, 1996). Other authors report a 103% increase in violent crime by girls between 1984 and 1993 (Leschied, Cummings, Brunscot, Cunningham, and Cunningham, 2001). Between 1980 and 2000, Snyder (2002) writes that female's direct crimes against others increased significantly. He notes females' rate of aggravated assault increased 121% versus the male rate of 28%. Simple assault by females increased 257% versus 109% for males, and weapons law violations increased 134% for females while the male increase was 20%. The percentages offered by Snyder are dramatic, however, it is important to be mindful that the actual numbers of females involved in crimes of this sort are still small compared to males; therefore a small frequency change for girls yields a significant percentage change. Still, Poe-Yamagata and Butts (1996) assert that between 1989 and 1993, females were responsible for 17% of the growth in juvenile arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses. Calhoun (2001) points out that during the 1990's, female offending increased at four times the rate of males, a fact that causes MacDonald and Chesney-Lind (2001) to wonder how it is that such a statistic does not stimulate discussions and action around delinquency among young women. More typically, the charges assigned to girls during proceedings of adjudication are runaway, incorrigibility, unruly, shoplifting or other

status offenses (Calhoun, 2001; Kashani, et. al, 1980; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). Status offenses are acts committed by minors that would not be considered offenses if committed by adults and adjudication is the process of determining a defendant's guilt or innocence in a court of law (Jackson and Knepper, 2003). Of late, girls have become the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system (Acoca, 1998). Gavin and Furman (1996) find that girls who have harmonious relationships with their mothers are rated by their mothers and rate their mothers as being more socially competent, better at problem solving, and more cooperative. They also found that friends of girls who had harmonious relationships with their mothers reported greater need fulfillment in that relationship. Although the findings by Gavin and Furman (1996) do not suggest that this healthy interaction will preclude juvenile delinquency, there is support for the idea that improved parent-child relationships relate to improved monitoring and reduced delinquency (Henry et. al., 2001).

Although funding initiatives exist currently to support programs attempting to meet the gender specific needs of adolescent girls at risk and in the juvenile justice system, there is a history to overcome of mistreatment by the system against women. The mistreatment exists in program development, research, processing, and housing of female prisoners (Acoca, 1998). The dismissal of women and their unique needs in the justice system is mired in multilevel disparity and has more than passing significance (Elliot, 1988; Leschied et. al., 2001). One example of this disparity is girls being forced indiscriminately into programming designed for males. This happens in part because there needs have not been conceptualized as being different from males (Calhoun, 2001). Often, studies did not include girls, and when they did, it was to see how well they fit into the boy-centered model (Belknap, 2001; Elliot, 1988). Studies have shown the needs of girls are different than those of boys and nontraditional treatment methods are insisted



upon by researchers sensitive to helping girls achieve a healthy developmental trajectory (Jackson and Knepper, 2003; Obeidallah and Earls, 1999).

Another example of historical/cultural disparity in the judicial system stems from an outlook similar to Cowie et. al. (1968, p.1) who deemed girl's delinquency as merely "wayward" and "less interesting" than the delinquency of boys which is "more varied, dangerous and dramatic." Girls were often summarized as being biologically driven, their behavior trivialized to a sexual nature, or found themselves subject to harsher penalties by a paternalistic justice system (Belknap, 2001; Kashani et. al., 1980; MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). The paternalism pointed to by these writers is bound to traditional gender roles. In short, when a girl comes in contact with the court the first time, she is treated with leniency. As she appears a greater number of times before the court, sentencing against her becomes harsher than that against boys who have committed more egregious crimes (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). Therefore, the less a girl fits into a traditional gender model, the harsher her treatment will be according to these researchers. That is, the more a girl could be categorized as obedient, passive, white, middle-class, drug-free, and heterosexual, the easier her sentencing would be (Elliot, 1988).

This traditional gender model includes race and socio-economic status. Belknap et. al. (1997) point out that "the role of race and gender in delinquency is complex and significant" (p384). They found that African-American boys and girls received harsher treatment than their White counterparts in the justice system. MacDonald and Chesney-Lind (2001) found that White boys and girls had a significantly lower probability of being "petitioned" than Hawaiian youth of the same gender. They note boys and girls from areas of poverty were also significantly more likely to be petitioned by the courts. However, Jackson and Knepper (2003) suggest the

21<sup>st</sup> century female offender is of a middle-class background, under age 14, well educated, involved in serious violent crime, and is not a woman of color. Perhaps allusions to this are the hazing incident that occurred after a girl's powder-puff football game in Northbrook, IL (an affluent suburb of Chicago) in May 2003. In this incident, a group of senior class girls were video taped hitting, kicking, throwing feces and paint at a group of junior class girls. In another incident, a girl gang from an affluent area of Texas that robbed convenience stores at gun point. Some of the girls in this study who reside in an affluent county in the southeastern US are more involved heavily in drug abuse than the poor, urban, African-American girls in this study. No studies have been identified that specifically test this theory by Jackson and Knepper. However, Kashani et. al. (1980) did find the number of White female delinquents to be approaching the number of male delinquents in their sample of 73 females and 111 males in juvenile justice custody. Girls have been denied the more creative and focused thought invested in the construction of literature and program implementation for boys. Viewing girls through a different conceptual lens and responding with more appropriate programming will orient research to the successful treatment of girls (Leschied et. al., 2001). Considering the girls are widely seen as relational, that the interaction with their mothers is critical, and that quality of relationships within the family can expose or insulate girls to or from delinquency, it is important to address and enhance the relationships between girls and their mothers (Calhoun, 2001; Calhoun, Glaser, and Bartolomucci, 2001; Gavin and Furman, 1993; Henry et. al., 2001).

The types of offenses girls are charged with are addressed above. Some researchers have considered the emotional undercurrent fueling the steps of these youth toward incarceration, or at least that place youth at greater risk (Calhoun, 2001; Miller et. al., 1995; Wangby et. al., 1999). Other recent studies have explored the pathways taken by boys and girls into the juvenile justice

system (Calhoun et. al., 2001; Henry et. al., 2001). It is important to begin with some explanation of how girls approach the world.

Carol Gilligan has done extensive research on how girls develop and generally how they perceive the world. Although she is criticized for using White, middle-class girls frequently as the subjects of her work, she has been pivotal in helping other researchers formulate risk factors for girls (Way, 1995). To Gilligan (1993), the female identity is based in a context of community. Relationships are very important to girls (Calhoun, 2001). “The messages about what it means to be a girl come from anywhere and everywhere” and those messages consistently suggest that girls be quiet, nurturing, thin, and pretty (Brown, 2003, p.26). Girls are taught to see the world through a lens of cooperation and fairness while boys learn competitiveness and independence (Gilligan, 1993). Gilligan (1993) goes on to state that women are trained through their interactions that autonomy represents danger.

During preadolescence, girls are generally seen as confident in who they are (Brown, 2003). Gender roles are less of a concern for preadolescent girls as they take part in numerous “androgynous” activities during a move away from feminine characteristics (Basow and Rubin, 1992, p.29). However, at age 11, the role of the girl becomes more complex and troubled by more intense social expectations. Contributing to making this time more complex is that girls are compelled to begin playing prescribed roles. These prescribed roles are sometimes experienced as limiting to girls and discord is created within themselves and their social networks as they move from the confidence of preadolescence to the uncertainty of adolescence (Basow and Rubin, 1992). To Taylor et. al. (1995), this discord is attributable to the contradiction between girls being told about how they should be and their experience. For example, one of the conflicts in adolescence for males and females is the approach to sexual activity. For males, sexual

activity is often framed as an achievement and in terms of conquest. However, for females, although their rules suggest being sexually attractive to males, being sexually active flirts with the negative stereotype of the “slut” (Basow and Rubin, 1992; Orenstien, 1994). Another conflict presented to adolescent girls is found in their attempt to be “nice” and “good.” A common message heard by girls across childhood is that good girls don’t fight. Since they are taught to be good and “sweet,” another characteristic to which girls are encouraged to ascribe, their expression of distaste for each other can be confusing for the parties involved, and bitter (Brown, 2003). Sweet girls are not supposed to brag or believe in themselves as smart or capable. Girls who assert themselves in such fashion risk being rejected by other girls who remain inside the proverbial box. The experiences across adolescence for girls are wrought with uncertainty. While adolescent boys are encouraged in school and community for their individual assertions, girls act independently at the risk of social peril. Still, a relationship often suggested as promoting a girl’s sense of independence is that one had between a girl and her mother.

Fundamentally, a female’s sense of self is tied to the health of the relationships she takes part in. More specifically, Gilligan asserts that a female’s identity is an extension of the relationship she has with her mother. The type of attachment between a girl and her mother is critical in the girl’s development (Brown, 2003). Because their sense of self is based upon their kinship with their mother, she suggests girls take on a greater sense of empathy than boys do. Ultimately, she sees females’ identity as threatened by separation from relationships while the male identity is threatened by intimacy. However, just as peer relationships are complex for adolescent girls, messages they receive from their mothers can be confusing as mothers have internalized the same cultural-gender rules their daughters are struggling to negotiate (Taylor et. al. 1995). Brown (2003) suggests, among other things, for mothers to take advantage of their

time with their daughters when their daughters are between ages ten and eleven because this is a time when girls “struggle openly about unfairness” and it is just before they take their feelings underground (p.206).

With Gilligan’s ideas on the importance of relationship as a theoretical foundation, it is little wonder that adolescence, a time when youth are figuratively trying on their identities and attempting to gain comfort within themselves and among their peers, can lead to heightened anxiety and depression for girls particularly. To add empirical validity to Gilligan’s theory, it has been noted that preadolescent girls and boys show no significant differences in levels of depression; however, at the onset of adolescence, differences are marked (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994; Obeidallah and Earls, 1999). Calhoun (2001) goes further to suggest that throughout their lifetime, females are more likely to experience more social stress, depression, and anxiety than males. Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus (1994) studying the emergence of differences in depression during adolescence note that around age 13-14 girls consistently begin to show higher rates of depression. At age 15, girls in their sample report depression twice as frequently as boys do. They go on to suggest that personality characteristics endorsed by girls are more depressogenic than those endorsed by boys. Ultimately, the social pressures exerted on girls mount as they attempt to negotiate adolescence; therefore, the risk factors are greater for girls to become depressed as they enter adolescence than the risk factors for boys. The obstacles facing adolescent girls are both social and biological.

Other studies have shown support for the increasing distress among adolescent girls as they age. Wangby et. al. (1999) have pointed out the Isle of Wight study from 1976 in which two-thirds of girls developed psychiatric disorders after age 10. They site another study by Zoccolillo (1992) who recalculated prevalence figures for that Isle of Wight study finding that as

girls with conduct disorders passed from preadolescence to adolescence, the percentage of those expressing an emotional disorder increased. He noted that 36% of 10-11 year olds endorsed emotional disorder symptomatology and 64% of 14-15 year olds endorsed emotional disorder symptomatology. A report by Ostrov, Offer, and Howard (1989) reveals similar results. They suggest that a review of several studies on teenage psychiatric distress converges toward the idea that 80% of teens function without significant stress or turmoil. Their own results, from a study of 497 Chicago area high school boys and girls (girls n=248), reveal adolescent girls express more depression, anxiety, and problems with body image than boys. Supportive of that, 60% of girls reported having felt annoyed or easily upset during the previous two weeks. Thirty percent of boys reported having damaged property in the previous year and 51% of boys reported having been stopped by the police. These results fall neatly in line with concepts of internalizing (problems occurring within the self, often expressed through depression, anxiety, somatic complaints, and obsessive compulsive behaviors) and externalizing (problems reflecting conflict with the environment expressed through aggression, hyperactivity, and delinquent behavior) behaviors (Glaser et. al., 1997; Wangby et. al., 1999). Girls, socialized to not act out, may be seen as irritable or “moody” when they are discouraged. Boys have social license to act out, so their expression of discouragement can often be seen in assaulting others or property. Significant in the Ostrov et. al. (1989) study is that their sample was comprised of general population adolescents from a range of economic and cultural neighborhoods in the Chicagoland area. Leschied et. al. (2001) go a step further when they find that girls who express aggression concomitantly report higher levels of depression and suicidal ideation.

In a sample of 44 males and 44 females involved in the juvenile justice system, Calhoun (2001) found girls to be significantly more depressed and anxious than boys. The girls reported

significantly less control over their lives. Females reported significantly higher levels of social stress, worse relationships with parents, and significantly lower levels of self-esteem. Even when exploring only those youth who endorsed items in the at-risk or clinically significant range, she found a significantly greater number of females than males endorsing heightened anxiety, an external locus of control, and greater social stress. Calhoun's study here is significant for at least two reasons. First, it utilizes the Behavioral Assessment System for Children as the reporting instrument, the same instrument to be utilized in the current study. Second, it clearly yields results consistent with the literature that adolescent girls suffer more from anxiety and depression than boys do. Perhaps stemming from stressful and volatile relationships with boys, female friends, and parents the girls report a more external locus of control and greater stress. In a study examining crime in the context of community Obeidallah and Earls (1999) examined the reports of 754 girls aged 12 and 15. They note no differences along racial or ethnic variables with respect to mild or moderate depression, but did find 68% of girls who were mild or moderately depressed to have engaged in property crimes while 57% of the girls engaged in higher levels of aggressive behaviors. Their hypothesis is that depression may "influence girls' propensity toward antisocial behavior" (p. 1).

How girls respond to social pressures and their mental health needs is critical to their health and satisfaction with life. It has already been stated that there exists a high correlation between girls with mental health problems and involvement in the juvenile justice system. There are social and familial pathways that are theorized to introduce girls to the justice system.

It has been noted above that mounting social pressure to fit into a societally prescribed feminine framework distresses girls. It is a framework noted as being complex and often contradictory. After enjoying relative freedom from these sometimes overwhelming pressures,

girls begin to silence themselves in adolescence and maintain it throughout (Orenstein, 1994; Way, 1995). Calhoun (2001) points out that treatment for juvenile offenders tends to address their behavior problems rather than the emotional upset that is underneath. Girls tend to ruminate on the emotional upset and not act out against others (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994). It is important to discuss what specifically happens to girls causing them to recoil, become anxious, depressed, and walk down the pathway toward juvenile justice involvement.

A critical experience and major threat to adolescent girls is others violating their personal and relational boundaries. Acoca (1998) has consistently found girl and women offenders to have been the victims of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. She goes on to point out that in a 1997 survey by the Commonwealth Fund, of 6,748 boys and girls in 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 1 in 5 girls in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade reported having been physically or sexually abused. Nearly 10% of the girls reported their boyfriends or dates forced them into sexual acts. Finally, from analyzing data from a 1998 study by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) (N=956), Acoca sites a number of violations against girls. Forty percent of the girls had been forced to have sex, raped, or sodomized at least once. Fifty-six percent reported one or more forms of sexual abuse. Twenty-five percent of the girls had been stabbed at least once and 45% had been beaten or burned at least once. One-third of the girls had been forced out of their home by a parent at least once between ages 12-15. Belknap et. al. (1997) write that physical, sexual, and emotional abuse against girls are important factors to consider in the etiology of female delinquency. Abuse victims tend to run away from home to escape the abuse and ironically they are frequently returned home because running away is a status offense (Belknap et. al., 1997; Calhoun, 2001; Jackson and Knepper, 2003; Kashani et. al., 1980). Belknap et. al. (1997) found running away to be the second most common reason for arrest in their study. Rape and sexual abuse are closely



associated with depression shortly and long after the abuse (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994). Maternal and paternal physical and verbal aggression were significantly related to girls' aggression at home and with peers (Leschied et. al. 2001).

Henry et. al. (2001) hypothesized that deficient parenting practices contribute to the opportunities youth have to become involved with and influenced by deviant peers. They posit that even struggling families (those lacking in emotional cohesion, deviant beliefs, and evincing poor parenting) can benefit their children through effective monitoring. Wright and Wright (1994) reviewed a meta-analysis on 300 studies that found parental supervision, parental rejection, and parent-child involvement to be the most powerful predictors of delinquency. Societal violations that are often perpetrated by parent's or other intimate relations, depression, anxiety, and an sense of not having control over personal events all interact along the pathway to justice involvement for girls. The abuses girls suffer in childhood are correlated with lifelong coping trouble in adulthood (Acoca, 1998).

Abuse against girls and their corresponding mental health status are not the only variables along the pathways to offending behavior. Other contributing risk factors for girls are school failure and gang involvement (Acoca, 1998). Acoca found that 92% of girls in the NCCD study had failed a grade between one and three times. Seventy-one percent of the girls were very involved in gang activity. The idea is not new that childhood experiences, good or bad, shape one's adult thinking and behaving. However, it does offer illumination to a lineage of youth behavioral and emotional problems when one considers the impact a parent has on his or her child.

Anecdotally, in a clinical setting, this author has listened to parents describe the behavioral problems of their children. The parents' behavioral description is typically followed

by a list of medications their child is taking for these behaviors. The list is typically followed by, usually, the mother's previous and/or current involvement in counseling for concerns related to emotional problems stemming from past or ongoing abuse. In educational settings, it is not uncommon to hear the stories of teachers who are feeling helpless as they attempt to manage disruptive emotional/behavioral expressions in the classroom. In order to work effectively with the youth, it is vital that clinicians and researchers take into account the perspectives on behavior and emotion offered by parents and other reporters critical to the systems in which children operate. Finding the "truth" is not the goal. Rather, determining the pervasiveness and intensity of the problem across settings is an objective for offering appropriate treatment options. As the present study is concerned with the relationship between how adjudicated adolescent girls report their own feelings and behaviors and how their mothers perceive those same feelings and behaviors, it is important to respect the perceptions of both groups.

The value of capturing the reports of multiple observers is critical in understanding the problems a youth is having (Berg-Nielsen et. al., 2003; Glaser, Calhoun, Bradshaw, Bates, and Socherman, 2001; Hodges, Gordon, and Lennon, 1990; Kaczowski and Owen, 1972; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001; Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994; Youngstrom et. al., 2000). Numerous studies have shown clinical and research support for and sensitivity to the use of multiple informants' reports on child behavior and emotion. Sensitivity is admonished for several reasons. Parent's emotional state has been shown to bias their report of both externalizing and internalizing activities of youth (Mokros, Poznanski, Grossman, and Freeman, 1987; Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994). The setting too can be instrumental in how the parents evaluate the problems of their children (Glaser et. al., 2001). Youth, particularly preadolescents may have difficulty reporting their own feelings and behaviors although this is

met with some debate (Glaser et. al. 2001; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001).

Depending on the setting, parents' feelings about why they are completing a report on their child may bias their endorsements. For example, parents in the study by Glaser et. al. (2001) completed the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) during the intake process at the courthouse. Stress from the immediate environment and the child's probation status may have been a factor influencing items endorsed by parents. In fact, they found that parents consistently endorsed more items than children on externalizing and internalizing scales. They also note that although the parents rated the child's behavior as more severe, there was an above average inter-observer correlation between juveniles and their parents. That is, although the parents rated behavior and emotion more severely, both reporters saw the same scales as problematic or less problematic.

Similarly, Sagatun (1991), in a study about the perceptions of responsibility of a minor's involvement in the court system, expected parents to assign responsibility for their youth's behavior to peers or other influences. However, they discovered that parents overreported problems related to the youth's behavior. Again, this overreporting could be attributable to the parents completing assessment devices on the premises of the court. It is consistent with other research that finds parents tend to over report behavioral problems and underreport emotional problems. In both cases, Glaser et. al. (2001) and Sagatun, there was an explanation of the Fundamental Attribution Error. This concept states that when observing another's actions, it is typical for the observer to determine the observed behaviors are associated with that person's personal characteristics rather than the environment or the situation.

That the parents in the above studies completed forms in the courthouse suggests that there are deficiencies in family life and peer relations that have brought them to that point (Henry et. al., 2001). Their reports could be related to general or immediate situational stress, or more pervasive personal problems. Whichever the case may be, clinical and non-clinical studies report different findings on how parents endorse behavioral and emotional problems in children. A detailed study by Mokros et. al. (1987) points to the differences in reporting by parents of a clinical versus non-clinical sample using the Children's Depression Rating Scale- Revised. Like others, they site that parent-child concordance is greater for externalizing, observable behaviors than for internalizing states (Hodges et. al., 1990). Parent and child agreement was poor for internalizing symptoms (e.g., anxiety, depression, and phobias). Children from the clinical sample (21 males and 13 females) were rated more severely by parents on externalizing features while children reported "excessive fatigue," "sleep," and "depressed feelings" more than their parents. However, these differences in ideation were unexpectedly not significant while the significant differences in behavior ratings were expected. Accounting for their non-significant differences between parents and children in the clinical sample, Mokros et. al. (1987) turn to the idea that "mothers who were themselves depressed judged their children as being significantly more depressed than did their children or their children's teachers" (p. 622). In their larger non-clinical sample (57 males and 53 females) it was found that the children rated themselves more severely than their parents on behavioral and ideational symptoms. This finding is consistent with the self-fulfilling prophecy concept that states a person will behave to support his or her beliefs. It could be concluded in the Mokros et. al. (1987) study that non clinical parents believed their family life and relationships were healthy so they did endorse fewer behavioral and emotional difficulties than their children.

Hodges et. al. (1990) studied the relationship between parents and children using the Child Assessment Schedule. Their sample consisted of psychiatric inpatients who ranged from 6 to 12 years of age. They found an overall significant correlation for the total score, which consisted of all diagnostically related items. The highest parent-child agreement was for conduct disorder and expression of anger. Other significant correlation was observed in the content areas of school, friends, family, mood, and expression of anger. There was non-significance for anxiety, fears, worries, self-image, oppositional disorder and physical complaints. Because there was also significant correlation on mood, Major Depressive Disorder, and Dysthymia, to some extent, these results support the idea that parents in a clinical sample may have a greater ability to report internalizing states of their children.

Kolko and Kazdin (1993) also found differences in correspondence between clinical and non-clinical samples of children (ages 6-13), their parents, and teachers. They found that parents and teachers reported higher externalizing scores than children in a patient sample. Only parents reported higher externalizing scores than children in the non-patient sample. They found significant associations between non-patient child and parent reports on total behavior problems. There was greater parent-child agreement for girls on the total behavior problems scale than for boys. They note that recent stress and parental dysfunction contributed significantly to differences in internalization ratings. “The reasons why nonpatients in this study had higher correlations may be related to the greater number of untoward influences commonly seen in patient samples (e.g. low self-esteem, parent psychopathology, marital discord, social stressors) which can affect parent ratings of child dysfunction on standardized measures” (p. 1002). Among other variables, they found informant agreement to be higher for families characterized by lower stress and higher child acceptance.

Shedding further light on the reporting of internalizing and externalizing behaviors, Glaser et. al. (1997) studied a sample of 48 families rated Non-clinical, Distressed, and Abusive. All families were poor, single-parent mother headed. They used the CBCL and Teacher Report Form to explore relationships between parents and teachers as raters of children's behavior. They found overall significant correlations for mother and teacher in rating a child's externalizing behaviors; however, when the groups were split up, only the non-clinical ratings for externalizing behaviors remained significant. Children in the Distressed and Abusive group were rated in the "deviancy range" for their behavior. They suggest that familial dysfunction can contribute to rater bias and caution professionals to gather reports from multiple raters when assessing children's behavioral and emotional problems.

Youngstrom et. al. (2000) sought to find out how well 394 triads of male youths, caregivers, and teachers agreed about youth problems as reported by the CBCL. As they approached this study, they also considered the idea that caregiver depression and stress correlated with higher disagreement with other informants about all criteria. They noted that youths and caregivers are preferred to teachers as informants about internalizing problems. Their results showed significantly higher average scores on both externalizing and internalizing than the levels reported for the nonreferred standardization sample of the CBCL. Depressive symptoms and stress predicted caregiver-youth disagreement on internalizing and externalizing.

In another study pointing to the impact of reporter depression on observer-child agreement, Berg-Nielsen et. al., (2003) report that mother's level of depression emerged as a significant variable predicting CBCL-YSR discrepancy on internalizing problems. With increasing depression, they note, mothers tend to report more internalizing problems compared to their adolescents. In a general sense, this is unusual. Typically, parents will report more

externalizing problems than their children and children will report more internalizing problems. As adolescents reported increased problems with physical appearance, and global self-worth, the discrepancies between them and their mothers decreased. As the youth felt worse about themselves, their self-rating came more in line with their parents' negative belief about them. Berg-Nielsen et. al. (2003) state that mothers may have attempted to understand their children by attaching their own negative self-image to them. The youth in this study were ages 11-17 and had been referred to psychiatric outpatient clinics. Half of the youth were girls.

There is no disagreement in the literature that the reports of multiple informants are helpful in gaining an understanding of a child's internalizing and externalizing problems. In non-clinical samples, clinicians and researchers should expect to find parents over-reporting their children's externalizing problems and under-reporting internalizing problems. However, in clinical samples (including youth in the juvenile justice system) some other results may be anticipated. In families where there is considerable discord or in clinical samples, the expectation may be that over-reporting is done by the caregiver externalizing behaviors and internalizing problems. This may particularly be the case when the caregiver is suffering from mild to severe levels of depression. Also, it may be the case when the caregiver is feeling immediate stress due to the environment. For example, completing forms in the courthouse or clinic.

#### Additive Nature of Study

There are several reasons why this study is additive to the literature on girls in the juvenile justice system. In the history of juvenile justice as a practice and literature addressing juvenile justice issues, girls and women have been given little creative and thoughtful consideration. Only in the past two decades has concern been raised rallying increasing programmatic and research attention. Although there is change being made in the juvenile justice

system, there is still vast mistreatment of girls and attempts are still being made to fit their needs into treatments designed for boys. Literature supports the idea that girls report higher rates of depression, anxiety, and need for meaningful social relations, particularly with their mothers; however, few studies offer an empirical examination of this relationship for adjudicated girls. This study proposes to examine the responses of adjudicated girls and their mothers on internalizing and externalizing perspectives exclusively.

What stands out prominently in literature across disciplines is the heightened experience of anxiety and depression by girls traversing the domain of adolescence. This domain is treacherous from the start as girls enter it with the baggage of societal demands that they be nice, friendly, caring, quiet and “feminine.” As they develop physically and emotionally, they are at a greater risk than boys for violation from strangers and intimate relations. Haynie (2003) finds earlier pubertal development in girls is related to minor and serious delinquency like drinking, smoking, truancy, and disorderly conduct. Girls have been characterized as being relational; dependent upon their relationships for their self-esteem maintenance and development (Calhoun, 2001; Gilligan, 1993). A primary relationship for their healthy development is with their mothers. This study explores how girls and their mothers perceive the adjudicated adolescent girl.

Finally, the Child Behavior Check List (CBCL) has enjoyed great utilization in research on children and adolescents. The current study utilized the BASC as the instrument of choice. It is an instrument that has been carefully constructed in ways that have drawn on the CBCL and drawn on empirical and clinical acumen. It is an instrument widely used in educational and clinical settings but has seen limited use in studies published about juvenile delinquency. It is also an instrument of convenience for the present study.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter addresses the research design of the present study. The sample population is described here as well as techniques utilized in data collection. Hypotheses for this study are to follow as well as data analysis procedures. This chapter also offers a detailed description of the instrument of measurement used for the study.

#### Sample of the Study

The research participants in this study were mothers and their daughters in a rural and small urban section of the southeastern United States. Participants in this study were 85 mother-daughter dyads. The adolescent girls were on probation with the Department of Juvenile Justice in their respective counties. The girls ranged in age from 11 to 17 with the mean age being 14.75 years old. The girls used in this sample came from three different counties. County 1 is an urban area ( $n = 67$ ,  $\mu = 14.5$ ). County 2 is a rural area ( $n = 9$ ,  $\mu = 15.4$ ). County 3 is a rural area ( $n = 7$ ,  $\mu = 14.6$ ). In analyzing county data, two subjects were omitted due to missing data. Sixty-seven of the participants were African-American, 16 were Caucasian, and 2 were identified as other. The data collected for this study was part of the intake process for the Gaining Insight into Relationships for Lifelong Success (G.I.R.L.S.) Project, a psychoeducational group with the purpose of helping girls explore and enhance their relationships as a means for arresting further involvement as juvenile offenders. The offending girls resided in the community during their involvement in this program.

## Design

As a term of their probation, the female offenders participating were referred by juvenile court probation officers to take part in psychoeducational groups. In groups of five to ten, participants were informed of the purpose of the project and administered the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC) (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992) by previously trained graduate level clinicians. Adolescent participants completed the BASC Self-Report of Personality (BASC-SRP) as part of their intake process for the group. Adult participants completed the BASC Parent Rating Scale (BASC-PRS). This pre-screening process took place on the site of the juvenile court. Participants were not required to participate. However, completion of the instrument was required for their membership in the program. Participants were informed of their rights and the parameters of confidentiality prior to signing the consent form. Participants were assigned to psychoeducational groups based upon the county in which their case was processed.

## Instrument

The BASC is a multimethod rating scale designed to capture elements of children's behavior across a range of settings (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992). It provides clinicians and researchers with insight on a child's degree of psychopathology and adaptive skill level. It is comprehensive in its measurement of child and adolescent behavior (Merrell, 2003). It provides the investigator with tools to find answers to behavioral and emotional questions from a number of sources for a targeted age range of 4 to 18 years of age. This instrument utilizes any or all of its different forms to assess a child's school problems, adaptive skills, and problem behaviors.

There are five BASC forms that can be used in rating a child: Parent Rating Scale (PRS); Teacher Rating Scale (TRS); Self-Report Scale (SRP); Structured Developmental History; and

Classroom Observation System (Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001). It is strongly recommended that combinations of more than one of these forms be used to derive the most thorough understanding of the referral question.

For the present study, two of the BASC's five forms are utilized. Because this study utilizes the reports of a parent and her child, it is advantageous to use the BASC as the instrument of measure. Matazow and Kamphaus (2001) point out that several other instruments are less reliable because their developers gathered that information at different times using varying standardization samples. The PRS is a component of the BASC that requires the parent to respond to behavioral and adaptive statements about the identified child. Responses to statements are on a four point scale requiring a response of "N = Never," "S = Sometimes," "O = Often," and "A= Almost Always" (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 2001). Responses to the PRS indicate the parent's perception of how well the child is functioning on a group of 14 scales. The SRP is also a compilation of statements about behavior that asks the child to respond to 186 items by answering "true" or "false." This measure, normed on a sample of 4,448 youth across the United States, is based upon the child's self-perception while the other scales are based upon the perception of others on the child's behavior. The SRP provides insight into the child's level of functioning at school, at home, and clinically (Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001). The SRP also has 14 scales and 5 composite scales. The BASC is an appropriate instrument to use as it is designed to appraise data from different sources relating to the child.

This is a sound instrument in its design and practicality. The BASC –SRP and PRS were normed on samples of 9,861 and 3,483 subjects respectively. The BASC standardization process gleaned data of family members and youth from the same family at a similar point in time. The composite scores of the BASC-PRS have internal consistency reliability ranging from "middle

.80s to low .90s” (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992, p.129). Reynolds and Kamphaus (1992) find strong correlations between the BASC-PRS and the CBCL. This lends great support to the validity of the BASC-PRS to be measuring what it intends to measure. Internal consistency for the BASC-SRP is also found to be high across all ages, .8. Test-retest reliability is also found to be in the middle .80s for the BASC-SRP (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992). It relied on the most up to date standards and technology in test development and as a result has received positive remarks in the literature (Merrell, 2003).

The BASC was originally not designed to offer composite Internalizing and Externalizing scales for the SRP. Therefore, the scales for the BASC –PRS and –SRP cannot be scrutinized directly against each other. However, in a study by Kamphaus et. al. (1999), it was found that Anxiety, Depression, and Somatization comprise an Internalizing composite. It was determined that Locus of Control, Attitude to School, and Sensation Seeking formulated an Externalizing composite (R.W. Kamphaus, personal communication, December 15, 2003). Thus, those were the BASC-SRP scales used in this study in comparison to the Externalizing and Internalizing composites found on the BASC-PRS.

Scale	Description
Aggression	The tendency to act in a hostile manner (either verbally or physically) that is threatening to others
Conduct Problems	The tendency to engage in antisocial and rule-breaking behavior, including destroying property
Hyperactivity	The tendency to be overly active, rush through work or activities, and act without thinking
Anxiety	The tendency to be nervous, fearful, or worried about real or imagined problems
Depression	Feelings of unhappiness, sadness, and stress that may result in an inability to

	carry out everyday activities (neurovegetative symptoms) or may bring on thoughts of suicide
Somatization	The tendency to be overly sensitive to an complain about relatively minor physical problems and discomforts
Attention Problems	The tendency to be easily distracted and unable to concentrate more than momentarily
Learning Problems	The presence of academic difficulties, particularly in understanding or completing schoolwork
Atypicality	The tendency to behave in ways that are immature, considered “odd,” or commonly associated with psychosis (such as experiencing visual or auditory hallucinations).
Withdrawal	The tendency to evade others to avoid social contact.
Adaptability	The ability to adapt readily to changes in the environment
Leadership	The skills associated with accomplishing academic, social, or community goals, including, in particular, the ability to work well with others
Social Skills	The skills necessary for interacting successfully with peers and adults in home, school, and community settings
Study Skills	The skills that are conducive to strong academic performance including organizational skills and good study habits

Figure 3.1  
BASC Teacher and Parent Rating Scales and Descriptions  
(Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001)

Scale	Definition
Anxiety	Feelings of nervousness, worry, and fear, the tendency to be overwhelmed by problems
Attitude to School	Feelings of alienation, hostility, and dissatisfaction regarding school
Attitude to Teachers	Feelings of resentment and dislike of teachers; beliefs that teachers are unfair, uncaring, or overly demanding
Atypicality	The tendency toward gross mood swings,

	bizarre thoughts, subjective experiences, or obsessive-compulsive thoughts and behaviors often considered “odd”
Depression	Feelings of unhappiness, sadness, and dejection; a belief that nothing goes right
Interpersonal Relations	The perceptions of having good social relationships and friendships with peers
Locus of Control	The belief that rewards and punishments are controlled by external events or other people
Relations with Parents	A positive regard toward parents and a feeling of being esteemed by them
Self-Esteem	Feelings of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-acceptance
Self-Reliance	Confidence in one’s ability to solve problems; a belief in one’s personal dependability and decisiveness
Sensation Seeking	The tendency to take risks, to like noise, and to seek excitement
Sense of Inadequacy	Perceptions of being unsuccessful in school, unable to achieve one’s goals, and generally inadequate
Social Stress	Feelings of stress and tension in personal relationships; a feeling of being excluded from social activities
Somatization	The tendency to be overly sensitive to , experience, or complain about relatively minor physical problems and discomforts

Figure 3.2  
BASC Student Self-Report of Personality Scale Definitions  
(Matasow and Kamphaus, 2001)

Composite	Scale
Clinical Maladjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Atypicality</li> <li>• Locus of Control</li> <li>• Social Stress</li> <li>• Somatization</li> </ul>
School Maladjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitude to School</li> <li>• Attitude to Teachers</li> <li>• Sensation Seeking</li> </ul>
Other Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of Inadequacy</li> </ul>
Personal Adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relations with Parents</li> <li>• Interpersonal Relations</li> <li>• Self-Esteem</li> <li>• Self-Reliance</li> </ul>
Emotional Symptoms Index	

Figure 3.3  
Composites and Scales in the SRP  
(Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001)

Composite	Scale
Externalizing Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggression</li> <li>• Hyperactivity</li> <li>• Conduct Problems</li> </ul>
Internalizing Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Somatization</li> </ul>
School Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attention Problems</li> <li>• Learning Problems</li> </ul>
Other Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atypicality</li> <li>• Withdrawal</li> </ul>
Adaptive Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptability</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Social Skills</li> <li>• Study Skills</li> </ul>
Behavioral Symptoms Index	

Figure 3.4  
Composites and Scales in the TRS and PRS  
(Matazow and Kamphaus, 2001)

### Analytical Procedures

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationships between reports by mothers and their adjudicated adolescent daughters on the Internalizing and Externalizing composites of the BASC. Some studies reviewed in the previous review of literature mentioned above have a design similar to this proposed study and therefore offered suggested approaches to analyzing this data (Calhoun, 2001; Glaser et. al., 2001; Hodges et. al, 1990; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Mokros et. al, 1987). However, those studies analyzed interaction between several scales and multiple groups of subjects whereas this study compared the means of two groups (mothers and daughters) on two composites (Internalizing and Externalizing). As the purpose of this study was to compare the means of mothers and daughters on their reports of internalizing and externalizing behaviors of the daughters, analyses for equal variance were performed and t-tests assuming equal or unequal variance were performed to determine whether differences found between mothers and daughters on internalizing and externalizing were significant.

### Limitations

1. Although the G.I.R.L.S. project lobbied for participation from all offending girls, the participants were self-selected by probation officers. Based upon other literature, there is an assumption that the selection of these girls may be biased by court officials who may see girls as more or less in need of this intervention based upon race, SES, or compatibility with mainstream standards of femininity (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001).
2. Pre-screening for participation in this program took place on the grounds of the juvenile court. This setting may have influenced the decision of subjects to participate or not.



3. Parents in the setting too may have been more likely to over-report negative behavior by their daughters due to frustration or embarrassment related to being in court. Youth also may have been more likely to under-report distressing feelings and behaviors in this setting (Glaser et. al., 2001).
4. The demographic of the sample is a notable limitation. That the majority of youth offenders were African-American could point toward bias among the referring probation officers. A larger sample of girls from other racial backgrounds would have been helpful in drawing more robust conclusions about racial parity in the results. Much of the literature on parity in juvenile placements calls attention to the harsher treatment by the courts of people of color than Caucasians (Snyder, 2002; Belknap, 2001, Jackson and Knepper, 2003; Belknap et. al., 1997).
5. There is no control group to assess whether there is a difference between the G.I.R.L.S. participants and other females processed in the juvenile justice system.
6. Because the sample size is small for the rural girls, great caution should be taken in generalizing their results to the larger population.
7. Because there was no measure taken of the parent's emotional status, it cannot be determined to what extent the parental evaluation of the youth is or is not attributable to parent depression or other stress.

### Assumption

The BASC Parent Rating Scale and Self-Report of Personality are two instruments of the BASC family of measures that are highly reliable, valid, and used by the research community. Responses by research subjects in this study are considered to be valid.

### Hypotheses

Specifically, this study seeks to test the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Endorsements by parents on the BASC –PRS externalizing will be greater than endorsements by daughters on the BASC-SRP externalizing composite. The null hypothesis states that parents externalizing endorsements on the BASC-PRS will be equal to their daughters.

Hypothesis 2: Endorsements by daughters on the BASC-SRP and their mothers on the BASC-PRS on scales describing internalizing problems will be different. The null hypothesis states that the internalizing endorsements made by mothers and daughters will be no different.

Hypothesis 3: Internalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than internalizing endorsements by mothers from rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 3 states that a difference will be observed between endorsements by mothers from urban and rural counties.

Hypothesis 4: Externalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than externalizing endorsements by mothers of rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 4 states that there will be a difference observed between urban and rural mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 5: Externalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than externalizing endorsements by □ others of other races. The alternate hypothesis for

Hypothesis 5 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 6: Internalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than internalizing endorsements by mothers of other races. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 6 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for internalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 7: Endorsements by African-American daughters on the internalizing BASC –SRP will be greater than or less than endorsements by African-American mothers on the BASC-PRS internalizing. The null hypothesis states that there will be no difference between the reports of African-American daughters and their mothers on internalizing.

Hypothesis 8: Endorsements by African-American mothers on the externalizing BASC –PRS will be greater than externalizing endorsements by African-American daughters on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that African-American mothers externalizing endorsements on the BASC-PRS will be less than or equal to the externalizing endorsements made by their daughters on the BASC-SRP.

Hypothesis 9: Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the externalizing composite on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters on the externalizing composite for the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 10: Endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the BASC-SRP on the internalizing composite for will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states that the derived internalizing endorsement

composite for the BASC-SRP will be equal to the internalizing for the mothers on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 11: Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those made by their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the externalizing composite for the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that the externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to those made their daughters on the externalizing composite.

Hypothesis 12: Endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP for the internalizing composite will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states composite internalizing endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP will be equal to those made by their mothers on the BASC-PRS.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was designed to investigate the relationships between adjudicated adolescent girls and their mothers on internalizing and externalizing components of the Behavioral Assessment System for Children (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992). A total of 174 subjects (mothers and daughters) completed the BASC-PRS or the BASC-SRP. What follows this section is a summary and discussion of the statistical analyses utilized as they related to the research hypotheses.

#### Statistical Analysis of the Data

The hypotheses tested in this research give attention to the relationship between mothers and their daughters in general. The hypotheses also include consideration of developmental changes for the girls, county of residence, and race. These are all variables that have received consideration in the literature. Because in each analysis, two means were being compared, and each hypothesis was directional, a one tailed t-test was performed. As there were two related groups being measured, it was necessary to determine if equal or unequal variance should be assumed. Therefore an F test to determine equal variance had to be performed.

#### Hypothesis 1

Endorsements by mothers on the BASC –PRS externalizing will be greater than endorsements by daughters on the BASC-SRP externalizing composite. The null hypothesis states that mothers externalizing endorsements on the BASC-PRS will be equal to their daughters. Because this calculation involved the comparison of two means from two related groups and because the hypothesis was directional, a one tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be

computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between the two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 3.80 > F_{(86,86, .05)} = 1.43$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was one-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 1 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = 4.768\text{E-}08$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level.

Table 1  
Results of t-test comparing daughter's externalizing endorsements to mothers' externalizing endorsements.

	Externalizing Composite	PBASC-Mothers Externalizing
Mean	51.694	63.094
Variance	71.714	272.324
N	85	85
df	125	
t-statistic	-5.666	
t Critical one-tailed	1.657	
P(T<=t) one-tail	**4.768E-08	

\*  $p < .05$ .      \*\* $p < .01$ .

## Hypothesis 2

Endorsements by daughters on the internalizing BASC –SRP will be different than endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS internalizing. The null hypothesis states that daughters' internalizing endorsements on the BASC-SRP will be equal to the internalizing endorsements made by their mothers on the BASC-PRS. Because this calculation involved the comparison of two means from two related groups and because the hypothesis was non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between the two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} =$

$2.23 > F_{(85,85, .05)} = 1.43$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 2 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = .001$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 2  
Results of t-test comparing daughter's internalizing endorsements to mothers' internalizing endorsements.

	Internalizing Composite	PBASC-Mothers Internalizing
Mean	52.564	58.153
Variance	75.439	168.155
N	85	85
df	147	
t-statistic	-3.301	
t Critical two-tailed	1.976	
P(T<=t) two-tail	**.001	

\*  $p < .05$ .      \*\* $p < .01$ .

### Hypothesis 3

Internalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than internalizing endorsements by mothers from rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 3 states that a difference will be observed between endorsements by mothers from urban versus rural counties. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was accepted ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 1.48 < F_{(67,18, .05)} = 2.10$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming equal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 3 was accepted,  $P(T \leq t) = .891$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 3  
Results of t-test comparing internalizing endorsements by urban mothers  
to internalizing endorsements by rural mothers.

	Urban Mothers – Internalizing	Rural Mothers – Internalizing
Mean	58.253	57.777
Variance	185.010	112.418
N	67	18
Pooled Variance	170.142	
df	83	
t-statistic	.137	
t-critical two-tail	1.988	
P(T<=t) two-tail	.891	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

#### Hypothesis 4

Externalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than externalizing endorsements by mothers of rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 4 states that there will be a difference observed between urban and rural mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was accepted ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 1.36 < F_{(18,67, .05)} = 1.80$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming equal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 4 was accepted,  $P(T \leq t) = .319$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .



Table 4  
Results of t-test comparing externalizing endorsements by urban mothers  
to externalizing endorsements by rural mothers.

	Urban Mothers – Externalizing	Rural Mothers – Externalizing
Mean	62.164	66.555
Variance	259.290	322.849
N	67	18
Pooled Variance	272.308	
df	83	
t-statistic	-1.00	
t-critical two-tail	1.988	
P(T<=t) two-tail	.319	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 5

Externalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than externalizing endorsements by mothers of other races. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 5 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was accepted ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 1.34 < F_{(21,64, .05)} = 1.72$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming equal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 5 was accepted,  $P(T \leq t) = .149$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 5  
Results of t-test comparing externalizing endorsements by African-American mothers to externalizing endorsements by other race mothers.

	African-American Mothers – Externalizing	Other Race Mothers – Externalizing
Mean	61.609	67.619
Variance	248.464	332.547
N	64	21
Pooled Variance	268.725	
df	83	
t-statistic	-1.457	
t-critical two-tail	1.988	
P(T<=t) two-tail	.148	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 6

Internalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than internalizing endorsements by parents of other races. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 6 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for internalizing on the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was accepted ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 1.11 < F_{(21,64, .05)} = 1.72$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming equal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 6 was accepted,  $P(T \leq t) = .661$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 6  
Results of t-test comparing internalizing endorsements by African-American mothers to internalizing endorsements by other race mothers.

	African-American Mothers – Internalizing	Other Race Mothers – Internalizing
Mean	57.796	59.238
Variance	165.434	183.490
N	64	21
Pooled Variance	169.785	
df	83	
t-statistic	-.439	
t-critical two-tail	1.988	
P(T<=t) two-tail	.661	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 7

Endorsements by African-American daughters on the internalizing BASC –SRP will be greater than or less than endorsements by African-American mothers on the BASC-PRS internalizing. The null hypothesis states that there will be no difference between the reports of African-American daughters and their mothers on internalizing. Because this calculation involved the comparison of two means from two related groups and because the hypothesis was non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between the two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 2.02 > F_{(64,64, .05)} = 1.51$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 7 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = .017$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 7  
Results of t-test comparing African-American daughter's internalizing endorsements to mothers' internalizing endorsements.

	African-American Daughters Internalizing Composite	African-American Mothers-Internalizing
Mean	53.062	57.796
Variance	81.869	165.434
N	64	64
df	113	
t-statistic	-2.408	
t Critical two-tailed	1.981	
P(T<=t) one-tail	*.017	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 8

Endorsements by African-American parents on the externalizing BASC –PRS will be greater than externalizing endorsements by African-American daughters on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that African-American parents externalizing endorsements on the BASC-PRS will be equal to the externalizing endorsements made by their daughters on the BASC-SRP. Because this calculation involved the comparison of two means from two related groups and because the hypothesis was directional, a one-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between the two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 4.55 > F_{(64,64, .05)} = 1.51$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was one-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 8 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = 1.764E -06$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level

Table 8  
Results of t-test comparing African-American mothers externalizing endorsements to their daughter's endorsements on the externalizing composite.

	African-American Daughters Externalizing Composite	African-American Mothers-Externalizing
Mean	50.843	61.609
Variance	54.578	248.464
N	64	64
df	89	
t-statistic	-4.947	
t Critical one-tailed	1.662	
P(T<=t) one-tail	**1.764E -06	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 9

Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the externalizing composite on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters on the derived externalizing composite for the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means for two related groups and because the hypothesis is directional, a one-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between the two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 4.38 > F_{(16,16, .05)} = 2.33$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was one-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 9 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = .000$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 9  
Results of t-test comparing 11 to 13 year old daughter's externalizing endorsements to mothers' externalizing endorsements.

	11 to 13 year olds – Externalizing	PBASC – Mothers Externalizing
Mean	53.750	73.187
Variance	65.133	285.495
N	16	16
df	22	
t-statistic	-4.152	
t-critical one-tail	1.717	
P(T<=t) one-tail	** .000	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 10

Endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the BASC-SRP on the internalizing composite for will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states that the derived internalizing endorsement composite for the BASC-SRP will be equal to the internalizing for the mothers on the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two related groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was accepted ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 1.70 < F_{(16,16, .05)} = 2.33$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming equal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 10 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = .030$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 10

Results of t-test comparing 11 to 13 year old daughter's internalizing endorsements to mothers' internalizing endorsements.

	11 to 13 year olds – Internalizing	PBASC-Mothers Internalizing
Mean	55.687	64.375
Variance	87.029	148.250
N	16	16
df	30	
Pooled variance	117.639	
t-statistic	-2.265	
t-critical two-tail	2.04	
P(T<=t) two-tail	*.030	

\*  $p < .05$ .      \*\* $p < .01$ .

### Hypothesis 11

Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those made by their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the externalizing composite for the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that the externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to those made their daughters on the externalizing composite. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two related groups and because the hypothesis is directional, a one-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 3.34 > F_{(69,69, .05)} = 1.49$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was one-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 11 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = 1.073E -05$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .

Table 11

Results of t-test comparing 14 to 17 year old daughter's externalizing endorsements to mothers' externalizing endorsements.

	14 to 17 year olds – Externalizing	PBASC-Mothers Externalizing
Mean	51.217	60.753
Variance	72.996	243.894
N	69	69
df	105	
t-statistic	-4.449	
P(T<=t) one-tail	**1.073E –05	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

### Hypothesis 12

Endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP for the internalizing composite will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states composite internalizing endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP will be equal to those made by their mothers on the BASC-PRS. Because the calculation involved a comparison of two means of two related groups and because the hypothesis is non-directional, a two-tailed t-test was performed. Before the t-test could be computed, it was necessary to consider whether the variance between means was equal. An F-test for equal variance was performed and the null hypothesis, that the variance between two groups is equal, for that test was rejected ( $F_{\text{stat}} = 2.30 > F_{(69,69, .05)} = 1.49$ ). Therefore, the appropriate t-test was two-tailed assuming unequal variance. The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 12 was rejected,  $P(T \leq t) = .009$  for  $\alpha = .05$  level .



Table 12

Results of t-test comparing 14 to 17 year old daughter's internalizing endorsements to mothers' internalizing endorsements.

	14 to 17 year olds – Internalizing	PBASC-Mothers Internalizing
Mean	51.840	56.710
Variance	71.165	163.797
N	69	69
df	118	
t-statistic	-2.638	
t-critical two-tail	1.980	
P(T<=t) two-tail	** .009	

\* p< .05.      \*\*p< .01.

Table 13

Summary table of means and standard deviations for participants.

Race	Age Group	n	Mean	SD
COUNTY ONE				
Caucasian	11-13	1	13	--
	14-17	5	14.8	.84
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		6	14.5	1.05
African-American	11-13	14	12.57	.65
	14-17	45	15.13	.87
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		59	14.53	1.37
Other	11-14	--	--	--
	14-17	2	15	0
COUNTY TWO				
Caucasian	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	9	15.44	1.24
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		9	15.44	1.24
African-American	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	--	--	--
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		--	--	--
Other	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	--	--	--

COUNTY THREE				
Caucasian	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	4	14.75	.96
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		4	14.75	.96
African- American	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	3	14.33	.58
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		3	14.33	.58
Other	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	--	--	--
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		--	--	--
COUNTY UNKNOWN				
Caucasian	11-13	--	--	--
	14-17	--	--	--
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		--	--	--
African- American	11-13	1	13	NA
	14-17	1	14	NA
		Group n	Group Mean	Group SD
		2	13.5	.71
		Sample N	Sample Mean	Sample SD
		85	14.61	1.29

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The focus of this chapter is to offer a summary of the literature related to this study, offer a summary and discussion of the results, discuss the main conclusions, implications, and ancillary topics stemming from the analyses performed, and offer recommendations for research extending itself from the present study.

The present study considers how adjudicated adolescent girls and their mothers rate the girls on internalizing and externalizing scales of the BASC. There is considerable research that compares and encourages the comparison of scores of parents to those scores of their children on emotional/behavioral inventories (Mokros et. al., 1987; Kolko and Kazdin, 1993; Youngstrom et. al., 2000). There is much less literature that gives consideration to the experiences of adjudicated girls and much less than that evaluating the experience of adjudicated girls in southern rural and urban settings (Belknap et. al., 1997; Calhoun, 2001). The purpose here was to examine the relationship between mothers' and daughters' scores on internalizing and externalizing measures on one instrument. The value in considering the ratings made by girls and their mothers of the girls' internalizing and externalizing states is found in socialization patterns for girls and the potential buffering effects against delinquency of harmony in mother daughter relationships (Gavin and Furman, 1996; Gilligan, 1993; Henry et. al., 2001).

In much juvenile justice literature particular consideration is given to boys who offend and little, in comparison, is offered to girls (MacDonald and Chesney-Lind, 2001). There exist different assumptions for why this empirical chasm persists. Some assumptions for why boys

receive greater attention than girls are that boys commit crimes that place the general public at greater risk, girls crimes tend to be more private and passive (i.e., running away, unruly, shop lifting). However, statistics over the last 20 years have shown an increase in the numbers of girls participating in crimes against people and drug use (Haynie, 2003; Leschied et. al., 2001). Frequently cited issues related to adolescent girls affiliated with juvenile detention are sexual abuse and contradictory societal expectations. Girls are confronted sooner with the typical challenges of adolescence, establishing independence and identity, and additional challenges of physiological and psychosocial changes (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994). Despite this increase in girls acting out behavior, Calhoun (2000) and others have noted that programming for girls in juvenile justice has been historically designed for boys and has not been tailored to respond to the unique needs and socialization of girls (e.g., boot camp). One important consideration in the appropriate intervention with girls is realigning their relationships with their mothers so that bond will support them through adolescence and buffer them from exposure to risky behavior (Gavin and Furman, 1996; Henry et. al., 2001).

Additionally, children in mental health and the juvenile justice system are often regarded as the identified patients. Frequently the systems in which they operate and by which they are necessarily affected are overlooked as important components to be included in intervention. Clinically significant distress experienced by caregivers is underappreciated in the diagnosis of problems experienced by youth (Kolko and Kazdin, 1993). How much a parent who is suffering psychosocial or interpersonal distress may be biased in reporting the behavioral or psychological problems observed in his or her child is an important consideration. However, the utilization of reports from multiple parties is supported.

The GIRLS project is one such study that, by working with adjudicated adolescents in a group, incorporates consideration of those traditionally overlooked components affecting the lives of the girls. This project, from which data is derived for the present research, is designed to utilize a manual for group modality in assisting group members in identifying and responding to interpersonal conflicts which have led them to involvement in the juvenile justice system. Research participants for this project are referred by officials of their county's juvenile justice system. This project is an option for the participants in lieu of other court ordered alternatives. Research participants are voluntary to that extent and may withdraw from the study without consequence from the study's principal investigator, Dr. Georgia Calhoun.

Data for the present research is collected at the court house in the research participant's county of residence. It is collected by trained masters and doctoral level graduate students who have successfully completed graduate course work in the counseling psychology and or community counseling program. Data providers are the adjudicated adolescent girls and their primary care-givers. For this study, the primary caregivers are the mothers of the adolescent girls referred by juvenile justice representatives (e.g., probation officers, judges). Participants are provided with background information on the GIRLS project intervention, its limitations, and potential risks to participants. They are also provided with information concerning limits to confidentiality and the freedom to withdraw from the study.

Girls and their parents are provided a number of assessment measures to complete, two of which pertain to the present study. The BASC (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992) was the instrument of measure in the present study. The BASC is a multifaceted systemic tool designed to evaluate the behavioral and interpersonal functioning of an identified child across settings. For the present study, two components of the BASC were used in measurement. The BASC –PRS is

the Parent Rating Scales designed to glean information from the parent's perspective on behaviors and attitudes of the child. This instrument contains 14 scales that are clustered into Externalizing Problems, Internalizing Problems, School Problems, Other Problems, Adaptive Skills, and Behavioral Symptom Index. It is the Externalizing and Internalizing composites that are of interest in the present study. Externalizing Problems are comprised of Aggression, Hyperactivity, and Conduct Problems, while Internal Problems are comprised of Anxiety, Depression, and Somatization. In the literature, these are concepts (Externalizing and Internalizing) where large discrepancies are found among general and clinical populations alike.

The other component of the BASC system of instruments addressed in the present study is the BASC-SRP (Reynolds and Kamphaus, 1992). The Self-Report of personality is designed to glean information from the child of a particular age cohort in order to assess his or her perspective on his or her own behaviors and attitudes. The BASC –SRP is structured into composites of Clinical Maladjustment, School Maladjustment, Other Problems, Personal Adjustment, and Emotional Symptom Index.. Comparisons of means for parents and children were made to determine where there were differences across age, community, and race considering these concepts of Externalizing and Internalizing.

The following hypotheses were addressed during this study:

Hypothesis 1: Endorsements by parents on the BASC –PRS externalizing will be greater than endorsements by daughters on the BASC-SRP externalizing composite. The null hypothesis states that parents externalizing endorsements on the BASC-PRS will be equal to their daughters.

Hypothesis 2: Endorsements by daughters on the BASC-SRP and their mothers on the BASC-PRS on scales describing internalizing problems will be different. The null hypothesis states that the internalizing endorsements made by mothers and daughters will be no different.

Hypothesis 3: Internalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than internalizing endorsements by mothers from rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 3 states that a difference will be observed between endorsements by mothers from urban and rural counties.

Hypothesis 4: Externalizing endorsements by urban mothers on BASC-PRS will be no different than externalizing endorsements by mothers of rural counties. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 4 states that there will be a difference observed between urban and rural mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 5: Externalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than externalizing endorsements by mothers of other races. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 5 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for externalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 6: Internalizing endorsements by African-American mothers will be no different than internalizing endorsements by mothers of other races. The alternate hypothesis for Hypothesis 6 states that there will be a difference observed between African-American and other race mothers for internalizing on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 7: Endorsements by African-American daughters on the internalizing BASC -SRP will be greater than or less than endorsements by African-American mothers on the BASC-PRS internalizing. The null hypothesis states that there will be no difference between the reports of African-American daughters and their mothers on internalizing.

Hypothesis 8: Endorsements by African-American mothers on the externalizing BASC -PRS will be greater than externalizing endorsements by African-American daughters on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that African-American mothers externalizing endorsements on the

BASC-PRS will be less than or equal to the externalizing endorsements made by their daughters on the BASC-SRP.

Hypothesis 9: Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the externalizing composite on the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters on the externalizing composite for the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 10: Endorsements made by 11 to 13 year old daughters for the BASC-SRP on the internalizing composite for will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states that the derived internalizing endorsement composite for the BASC-SRP will be equal to the internalizing for the mothers on the BASC-PRS.

Hypothesis 11: Externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be greater than those made by their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the externalizing composite for the BASC-SRP. The null hypothesis states that the externalizing endorsements by mothers on the BASC-PRS will be equal to those made their daughters on the externalizing composite.

Hypothesis 12: Endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP for the internalizing composite will be different than those made by their mothers on internalizing for the BASC-PRS. The null hypothesis states composite internalizing endorsements by 14 to 17 year old daughters on the BASC-SRP will be equal to those made by their mothers on the BASC-PRS.

All hypotheses were tested using one- or two-tailed T-tests. In each case, an F-test for equal variance was performed in order to determine whether the T-test for assumed equal or



unequal variance should be utilized. It was necessary in each case to calculate the means and variance. The results of the 12 hypotheses are summarized below.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 1 was rejected. Parents were found to endorse higher scores on the externalizing composite for the BASC-PRS than their daughters. This means that parents perceive their daughters to be functioning less well behaviorally than their daughters perceive themselves to be functioning.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 2 was rejected. The alternative hypothesis stated that girls would endorse higher scores or lower scores on their Internalizing composite than their parents did. The result shows that parents endorsed significantly higher scores on the Internalizing composite than their daughters did.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 3 was accepted. The Null hypothesis here states that regardless of setting (urban or rural), parents will rate their daughters' internalizing problems in similar ways. There was no difference found in the reporting of internalizing scores for parents from urban versus rural counties. This means that parents from urban and rural counties regard the internalizing experience of their daughters in similar ways.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 4 was accepted. The Null hypothesis here states that regardless of setting (urban or rural), parents will rate their daughters' externalizing problems in similar ways. There was no difference found in the reporting of externalizing scores for parents from urban versus rural counties. This means that parents from urban and rural counties regard the externalizing experience of their daughters in similar ways.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 5 was accepted. The Null hypothesis here states that regardless of race, parents will rate their daughters' externalizing problems in similar ways. There was no difference found in the reporting of externalizing endorsements for African-

American parents versus parents of other races. This means that parents despite their race, mothers rate their daughters' externalizing behavior in similar ways.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 6 was accepted. The Null hypothesis here states that regardless of race, parents will rate their daughters' internalizing problems in similar ways. There was no difference found in the reporting of internalizing problems for African-American parents versus parents from other races. This means that despite their race, parents rate their daughters' internalizing behavior in similar ways.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 7 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here states that African-American girls would endorse internalizing problems equal to the endorsements of their parents. In fact, the parents rated their daughters' internalizing problems as being more severe than did the daughters.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 8 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here states that the externalizing endorsements for African-American parents will be equal to those endorsements made by their daughters. This means that the African-American parents find their daughters' externalizing behavior to be more severe than the daughters do.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 9 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here stated that there would be no difference observed in the externalizing ratings between mothers and their 11 to 13 year old daughters. The parents rated the daughters as being more severe and thereby reported higher scores for the girls.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 10 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here stated that there would be no difference observed in the internalizing ratings between mothers and their 11 to 13 year old daughters. The parents rated the daughters as being more severe and thereby reported higher scores for the girls.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 11 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here stated that no differences would be observed between reports by mothers and their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the externalizing composite. Mothers rated their 14 to 17 year old daughters as being more severe and thereby reported higher scores.

The Null hypothesis for Hypothesis 12 was rejected. The Null hypothesis here stated that no differences would be observed between reports by mothers and their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the internalizing composite. Mothers rated their 14 to 17 year old daughters on the internalizing composite more severely and thereby reported higher scores.

### Conclusions

Based upon the results obtained within this study, several conclusions can be provided. First, hypotheses considered to be primary in this study are that mothers' externalizing endorsements will be greater than daughters' externalizing endorsements. The conclusion that can be drawn from the results of testing those hypotheses is that across race, age of daughters, and community, mothers of adjudicated daughters will rate their daughters' externalizing behavior as being significantly more severe than the daughters will rate their own behavior. Second, and also considered to be primary in this study, are the hypotheses testing whether the internalizing endorsements made by daughters would be greater than or less than those made by their mothers. It can be concluded from these analyses that mothers and daughters perceive internalizing problems differently and that mothers across race, age of daughter, and community rate their daughters internalizing problems more severely than the daughters rate those problems. It should be pointed out that mean differences for internalizing and externalizing between mothers and daughters in the 11 to 13 year old group are greater than the mean differences observed between mothers and daughters in the 14 to 17 year old group. Because some literature

pointed to differences in self-reported rates of internalizing and externalizing problems across age, an ad hoc comparison was analyzed between 11 to 13 year old girls and 14 to 17 year old girls (Berg-Nielsen et. al., 2003; Wangby et. al., 1999). A third conclusion can be drawn from the hypothesis testing whether 14 to 17 year old girls would report higher scores on the externalizing than 11 to 13 year old girls. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of externalizing behavior held by 11 to 13 year old girls and 14 to 17 year old girls. A final conclusion is drawn from the expectation that 14 to 17 year old girls would more strongly endorse internalizing problems than 11 to 13 year old girls. It can be concluded from this comparison that from pre- to late- adolescence, adjudicated girls perceive their internalizing problems with similar intensity.

### Implications

Based upon the findings of this study, there are notable and interesting implications. It appears that mothers find the behavior and attitudes of their adjudicated daughters to be more severe than the daughters. This is the case across age, race and community of residence (rural or urban). Furthermore, there seems to be greater disagreement in the perception of internalizing and externalizing problems among parents and daughters in the 11 to 13 year old cohort than among parents and daughters in the 14 to 17 year old cohort. Daughters across age seem indistinguishable in their perceptions of internalizing and externalizing problems. These findings are consistent with previous studies on the correspondence of parent and child ratings. In clinical settings, parents have been found to rate their children's outward and inward expression more severely (Kolko and Kazdin, 1993). Some assumptions for that trend relate to distress in the family, between parent and child, or interpersonal distress experienced by the parent.

These findings are consistent with other literature that encourages the evaluation of youth behavior based upon data from multiple observers (Youngstrom et. al., 2000). Without input from other observers the picture of the girl would not be so rich. That there are significant differences in the perceptions of mothers and daughters on internalizing and externalizing behaviors suggests a communication problem in those dyads (Gavin and Furman, 1996; Hofer, Sassenberg, and Pikowsky, 1999; Trad, 1995). Girls tended to rate themselves in the average range while mothers tended to rate the girls in the at-risk or clinically significant range.

Essentially, the daughters do not see themselves having problems more or less than other girls their age and the mothers detect and observe the daughters having significant problems. The daughters may be minimizing or may lack insight to the severity of their troubles. This supposition alludes to the possibility of different types of girl reporters. Assuming she is of average intelligence, one type of girl may under endorse items in order to make herself look good for the researcher whom she may see as being in an evaluative role; seeing the researcher as possibly wielding the power to get her out of trouble or saddled with more trouble. This girl may recognize what socially appropriate items to endorse and may fake good in resistance to her situation. The explanation for some may not be that contrived. Instead, a possibility for girls reporting in this way may be related to them actually feeling worse, but their endorsements are a reflection of how they would like to feel rather than how they do feel. Still, it bears resemblance to the socially appropriate responder, but the difference is in the motivation. One is actually hopeful for relief of symptoms while the other is hopeful for removal of constraints. To take it a step further, the latter, the girl who wants constraints removed, may have antisocial tendencies. She may not see her behavior as troubling and be hopeful of continuing her patterns. This type of reporter may not be suitable for treatment as she lacks insight and motivation to change. On the

other hand, the former, the girl who longs for improved symptoms, recognizes her behavior as troubling and may be amenable to therapeutic intervention. Faking bad and faking good are two possible explanations for discrepancies in a reporters' observed behavior and actual endorsements on an inventory such as the BASC. Because, in this case, another reporter's data is available, other explanations can be offered.

The parents may be overreacting. In a group designed to help girls with interpersonal relationships, encouraging their own perspective taking (i.e., that of parents, teachers, friends) would be an aid in developing their own insight as well as building avenues for better communication. That the differences in ratings between mothers and their 11 to 13 year old daughters appear to be so stark may imply a sense of alarm in mothers that their daughter's who are newly arrived in adolescence are involved in the juvenile justice system. Also, early adolescence is understood as a period when girls are talking more openly about the unfairness of gender expectations. While Brown (2003) encourages mothers to see this speaking out as an opportunity to engage the girls, for mothers unprepared for conversations of an empowering nature for their daughters, it may be a time when they, the mothers, forget the challenges of their own adolescence and reply to their daughters with frustration. This also is a time, developmentally, when the daughters will begin moving away from their mothers to establish greater independence. Having a pre- or early- adolescent daughter involved with the juvenile justice system may trigger a greater reaction in mothers of this age group. Of course, there are other assumptions for this interesting result. These may be the oldest daughters in the family and therefore this is the first time the mothers have to deal with juvenile justice. Similarly, the girls in this sample could be following in the footsteps of other siblings and the mothers' endorsement on the BASC could be indicative of her frustration with this phenomenon or perceived failure as

a parent. This difference could be projection from the mother about her own perceived inability to monitor her child: this could be stimulated by deficiency in parenting skills or work schedule. The fact that these girls are involved in the juvenile justice system may indicate that there are other family problems and the mothers may report their personal frustration through a diminished perception of their daughters. The psychosocial distress experienced by the mother may be projected onto the child. Also, if the daughters' involvement with juvenile justice is indicative of insufficient communication between the mother and daughter, there may also be less than optimal interaction with the daughters' peer group. If the mother perceives the daughter's peer group as troublesome, she may endorse items for her daughter that are better fitting for others in the peer group. If, because of circumstance, the mother has little contact with the peer group and other youth of her daughter's age, she may be unaware of typical contemporary adolescent behavior. Not having a realistic referent group to which she can compare her daughter, the mother may be more distressed by the daughter's behavior. This misunderstanding could lead to frustration and subsequent unruly charges that are so common for adolescents. There are a number of plausible explanations for why the mothers in this study regard their daughters' internalizing and externalizing behavior as more severe than the girls see those behaviors. Many of those explanations may be at play in this study and that is worth further review. What is notable is that the mothers and their daughters do not perceive the magnitude of the daughters' problem similarly and this may point to ongoing miscommunication. Although it was not anticipated, the discrepancies reported are consistent across age groups.

It is interesting that despite being involved in juvenile justice, the girls did not regard their internalizing or externalizing problems to be more than moderate. Again, this could point to a lack of insight on their part. This creates an interesting consideration developmentally. There is

some literature that suggests pre-adolescent girls begin dealing with myriad bio-psycho-social challenges (Haynie, 2003; Nolen-Hoeseema and Girgus, 1994). By the time they enter the 11 to 13 year old cohort, they may have become as used to the changes of adolescence as the girls in the 14 to 17 year old cohort and therefore their perception of internalizing and externalizing problems is no different. While Brown (2003) suggests that ten to eleven year old girls are vocal in their disagreement with gender inequalities, 11 to 13 year old girls may have entered the realm of silence and confusion described by Gilligan (1993). The endorsements for internalizing and externalizing for 14 to 17 year old girls are slightly more moderate than the 11 to 13 year old girls. With a larger sample of 11 to 13 year old girls, it would be interesting to test whether a significant difference in scores would appear between that group and the group of 14 to 17 year old girls.

The results of this study support the idea that mothers across communities, race and age of daughter see their daughters' behaviors and attitudes as being more severe than the daughters do. In clinical, educational, and legal settings, groups offering mothers support and strategies for parenting pre- and late- adolescent daughters would be beneficial to enhancing those relationships. The results of the study point to concerns about what additional factors may be at play that prevent girls of other races from being adjudicated as frequently as African-American girls. Coker (2003) suggests that minority women and African-American women in particular are targeted more frequently by agents of the justice system and with lower standards than are Caucasian women. While the counties in which these girls reside are 27.3%, 27.9%, and 6.4% African-American, the sample for this study is 75% African-American. The county most represented by African-American participants has a rate of poverty of 21.8% for families with related children under age 18 while the other counties have rates of 6.5% and 10.9% poverty (US



Census Bureau, 2004, May 26). As there was no significant difference observed in how mothers from these different areas rate their daughters' experiences, it is puzzling how the sample could be overwhelmingly African-American. One explanation is in the decision making process for participation in the study. At the judicial level, judges and probation officers may have found Caucasian girls and girls of other races less in need of the kind of intervention offered by the GIRLS Project and therefore did not refer them. On the personal level, the girls or their mothers may have decided against participating because they did not want to talk about their problems in front of a group of people, they thought their problems were not quite severe enough, they may have had other resources, or they did not trust other girls. These are all common explanations for why people resist participation in groups. It would be interesting to capture the decision making strategies for why the would-be participants and court officials declined participation in the GIRLS Project. Common among all girls in this study is a significant disagreement in the kind of internalizing and externalizing experience the girls are having compared to what their mother's perceive. Based upon results from this study, the mother-daughter relationship is indicated as a significant factor related to girls' involvement in the juvenile justice system.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

1. It is recommended that a replication of this study be performed with larger samples provided from subjects in rural communities and subjects who are not African-American. Although no differences were found among reporting by mothers by race or community, a larger sample of non African-American's would make that finding more robust.
2. It is recommended that a replication of this study be performed with a larger sample of 11 to 13 year old girls as results could offer some distinction in internalizing and externalizing behaviors between that group of girls and the older cohort of 14 to 17 year old girls.

3. It is recommended that data be collected about the number of other children mothers have had involved in the juvenile justice system. This piece of data could point to differences in reporting by parents who have had one or more children involved in juvenile justice versus no previous children involved in juvenile justice.
4. Data should also be collected on the age of the mother as well as whether the mother has had previous personal involvement in juvenile justice or the adult prison system. These data could be analyzed to help explain differences in the mothers' and daughters' perception of internalizing and externalizing problems.
5. It is recommended that an analysis be done which takes into consideration the level of psychosocial distress experienced by the mothers as well as ratings by mothers and daughters of family environment. These may prove to be important variables in explaining mothers' tendency to rate their children as more severe in behavior and attitude.
6. It is recommended that a follow-up study compares these results to results obtained from a control group of randomly selected girls and their mothers. It is also recommended that a follow-up study compare these results to results of ratings by adjudicated adolescent girls and their mothers when the girls have been ordered to other placements (e.g., boot camp, detention, group home).
7. It is recommended that data for girls referred to programs similar to the GIRLS project be collected in different geographic regions of the United States to determine if these results can be generalized.
8. It is recommended that a follow-up study be done which compares internalizing and externalizing perceptions among mothers and daughters at pre- and post- GIRLS project intervention.

9. It is recommended that a follow-up study be done which compares outcomes of the GIRLS groups with girls only to the GIRLS groups with mothers included. Girls and their mothers would be randomly assigned to either group. Measurements of their ratings of internalizing and externalizing at pre- and post- intervention could be taken.
10. It is recommended that this research be extended by including data related to the type of offense committed by the girl. The number and type of charges the girls had prior to their involvement with the GIRLS project would also be an aid in tracking severity of offense over time and relating type of offense to ratings of internalizing and externalizing behaviors.
11. It is recommended that a survey of juvenile court personnel be offered to help explain the factors they consider when assigning girls to different placements.

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