



PARENTAL PROBLEM DRINKING, SUPPORT, AND EMERGING ADULT

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PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

This study examined associations among parental support, parental problem drinking, and emerging adult (EA) problem behavior. Results indicated that high parental problem drinking and low maternal support were positively associated with EA drug use. For antisocial behavior, results revealed more complex interactions among parental problem drinking and parental support.

BACKGROUND

- The instability associated with an alcoholic parent may exacerbate problem behaviors, including drug use and antisocial personality symptoms (Harter, 2000; Finan et al., 2015).
- In the presence of parental problem drinking, support from one or both parents may help mitigate the negative effects (Cleveland et al., 2014; Kuendig & Kuntsche, 2006).
- The interactive relationship among parental support and problem drinking among mothers and fathers and EA problem behaviors is unclear.

METHODS

Participants:

- N = 600 emerging adults from a nationally representative sample of U.S. EA (50% female; 62% white; Mean age = 20, SD = 1.42 years).

Procedures:

- Emerging adults were recruited online by Lightspeed GMI.
- The Connecticut Children's Medical Center IRB approved all procedures.

Measures:

- The Short Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (Crews & Sher, 1992)
- Parental Support Scale (Cornwell, 2005; Harker, 2001)
- Self-report illicit drug use, including marijuana
- 11-item questionnaire for antisocial behaviors, including criminal activities
- Controls: Age, gender, college and residential status

Table 1.

Linear OLS regression coefficients for emerging adult alcohol use, drug use, and antisocial behavior

	Drug Use			Antisocial Behavior		
	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
Age	-.008	.035	-.010	.041	.024	.070
Gender	-.311	.098	-.130**	-.089	.068	-.054
Student Status	.110	.101	.045	-.069	.070	-.041
Living with parents	-.095	.103	-.038	-.068	.072	-.040
Maternal Problem Drinking (MPD)	.096	.055	.094	.138	.038	0.200***
Paternal Problem Drinking (PPD)	.070	.039	.087	.080	.027	0.144**
Maternal Support (MS)	-.002	.011	-.009	.000	.008	.002
Paternal Support (PS)	-.011	.009	-.054	-.009	.007	-.070
MPD * MS	-.002	.008	-.012	.002	.006	.019
MPD * PS	-.012	.009	-.073	-.006	.006	-.055
PPD * MS	.001	.007	.007	.003	.005	.030
PPD * PS	.012	.006	0.094*	.007	.004	.078
MPD * PPD	.096	.027	0.193***	.033	.017	.100
MS * PS	-.001	.001	-.035	-.001	.001	-.044
MPD * PPD * MS	-.014	.005	-.0145**	-.002	.003	-.034
MPD * PPD * DS	.003	.005	.030	.006	.003	0.104*
MPD * MS * DS	-.002	.001	-.080	-.002	.001	-.0113*
PPD * MS * DS	.000	.001	.006	.002	.001	0.118*
MPD * PPD * MS * DS	-.001	.001	-.067	.001	.000	.053
F		5.43***			5.57***	

Note. Males, those not in college, and those living apart from parents served as the reference group.

RESULTS

- Two OLS regression models indicated that controls, parental support, parental problem drinking, and interactions accounted for significant proportions of EA drug use and antisocial behavior variance ($R^2 = .17, .17, ps < .05$).
- A three-way interaction indicated that low maternal support, in the presence of high maternal and paternal problem drinking, was associated with higher EA drug use (Figure 1, Part A).
- Two three-way interactions indicate that high support from one or both parents, in the presence of high paternal problem drinking, was associated with greater antisocial behavior (Figure 1, Part B & C).
- A three-way interaction indicated that there was a positive association between maternal problem drinking and EA antisocial behavior in all contexts, except when both maternal and paternal support was high (Figure 1, Part D).

CONCLUSIONS

- Findings highlight the role of low maternal support in exacerbating the link between parental problem drinking and EA drug use.
- Conversely, antisocial behavior results suggest that high support from problem drinking parents is problematic in some contexts.
- Antisocial behavior findings may reflect parental responses to earlier antisocial behavior.
- Alternatively, antisocial behavior results suggest that support from problem drinking parents sends mixed messages for youth regulatory behaviors.

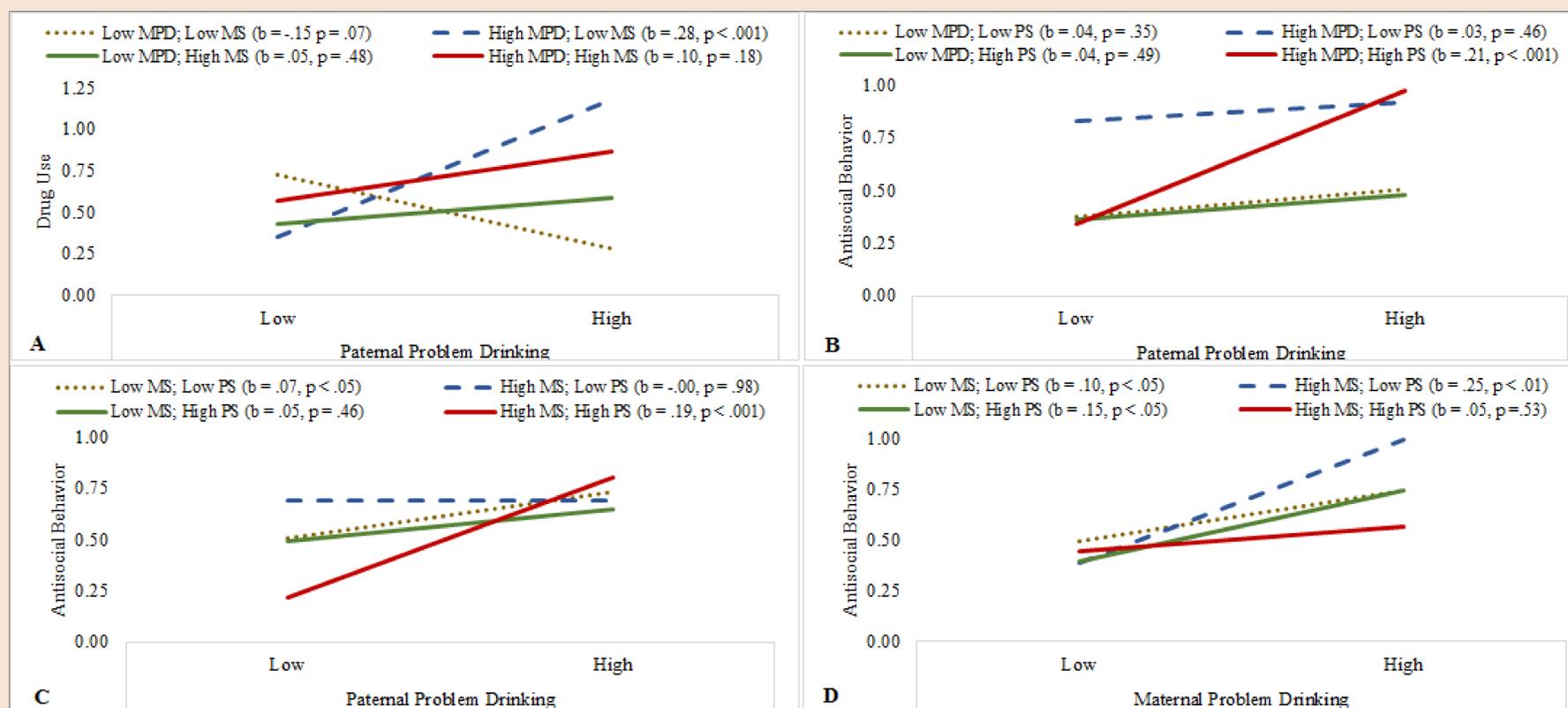


Figure 1. Estimated interactions among maternal and paternal problem drinking (MPD/PPD) and support (MS/PS) for drug use (part A) and antisocial behavior (part B-D). Low and high parental problem drinking ranges represent ± 1 SD around the mean.

Poster may be viewed at Adolescentadjustmentproject.org